

Health & Safety Plan

Freeport Area
School District



August 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Facial Coverings
Page 3

Prevention and
Mitigation
Pages 4-5

School Health Services
Pages 6-10

Transportation
Page 11

Social/Emotional Well-
being & Mental Health
Page 12

Cafeterias/Food Service
Page 13

Athletics/Activities
Page 14

Instruction
Page 15

1:1 Device Program
Page 16

Phased Re-Opening
Page 17

BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented schools across the world with a myriad of challenges concerning this highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. Some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, Freeport Area School District will take necessary precautions and to every extent possible comply with guidelines from public health authorities, such as the Centers for Disease Control and the Pennsylvania Department of Health, as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Education, to attempt to mitigate the risks to students, employees, and their families. As knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing, Freeport Area School District reserves the right to adjust and implement precautionary methods as necessary to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and school community.

COMMUNICATION

The District intends to continue its ready use of the Blackboard messaging system, similar to communicating weather-related delays and cancellations. As we are all preparing for almost anything this year, communication and response is important among our entire school community. Local childcare providers and partners have been added to our communication system so they can receive timely information as well.

Since important information regarding related schedule changes or notices of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the schools will be communicated home via this system, please ensure that your contact information was made current during the re-registration process over the Summer and immediately communicate any changes in demographics or contact information to the school office throughout the school year.

FACIAL COVERINGS

As you are aware, masks/facial coverings are now required at all times. Although the July 1st Commonwealth-wide Order mandates their use, our District recognizes the importance of mask use as 'my mask keeps you safe; your mask keeps me safe.' Leveraging the use of masks, including after the Order expires, in strategic ways throughout our school day will be evaluated over the entirety of this school year and will remain in place for the protection of all. It is also important to note that, regardless of an Order, all students and staff will be required to have a mask on their person and available at all times every school day.

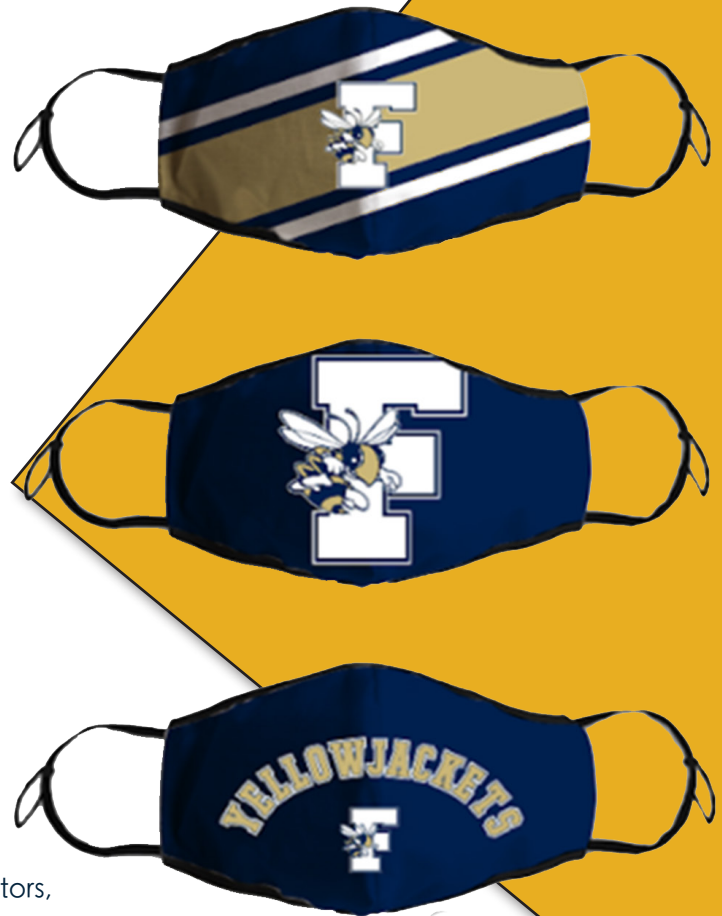
On July 1, 2020, the Secretary of Health issued an Order requiring all individuals to wear a face covering when they leave their homes. The order outlines situations when a face covering must be worn and includes limited exceptions. The Secretary issued this Order to continue to protect all in the Commonwealth from the spread of COVID-19, mindful of the need to slow the increase in the number of cases as the Commonwealth reopens and in order to avoid the resurgence that is overwhelming the health care systems and public health systems in other states that have been less successful in reopening than the Commonwealth.

“Face covering” means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. “Face coverings” may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or improvised from household items, including but not limited to, scarves, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. Our District has purchased a reusable face covering and plastic shield for every student for their protection. Face coverings against the face will be required at all times; however, in certain instructional settings identified by building administrators, face shields may be used but only in those identified areas.

For more guidance on appropriate masks, visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

Children two years and older are required to wear a face covering unless they have a medical or mental health condition or disability, documented in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or IDEA, that precludes the wearing of a face covering in school. Accommodations for such students should be made in partnership with the student's health care provider, school nurse, and IEP/504 team. At minimum, even with documentation, a face shield will be required and considered an appropriate accommodation.



PREVENTION & MITIGATION

Prevention and mitigation strategies remain our most effective approaches that our entire school community can engage and play an important role in for protecting one another, especially our students and staff. To this end, the following are standard mitigation strategies that our district will deploy:

CLEANING/SANITIZING/DISINFECTING

Each classroom will be equipped with a kit of items including hand sanitizer, extra masks and shields, sanitizing wipes, hand wipes, among other items. Keeping ourselves and our personal spaces clean and sanitized is a community effort. As always, students are encouraged to carry their own hand sanitizer and/or wipes on them and use and dispose them as needed.

Other formal strategies include:

- ▶ Restructuring custodial shift schedules to have as many as 3 custodians in each building while students are present.
- ▶ Disinfect high touch common surfaces consistently throughout the day, especially in frequently used and traveled areas of buildings, including after class changes.
- ▶ Disinfect classrooms throughout the day when unoccupied.
- ▶ Utilize increased MERV rating filters and replace them more frequently.
- ▶ Increase the circulation of outside air into each building.

SYMPTOM SCREENINGS

All parents will be asked to conduct daily symptom screenings on your children before sending them to the bus stop or bringing them to school (see screening tool). Temperature and screening checks will be randomly conducted throughout the day in the schools, for example, around lunches.



PRACTICING PERSONAL HYGIENE

As was preached prior to the closure in March, we will continue modeling and practicing these healthy habits with students, including holding each other accountable toward their use:



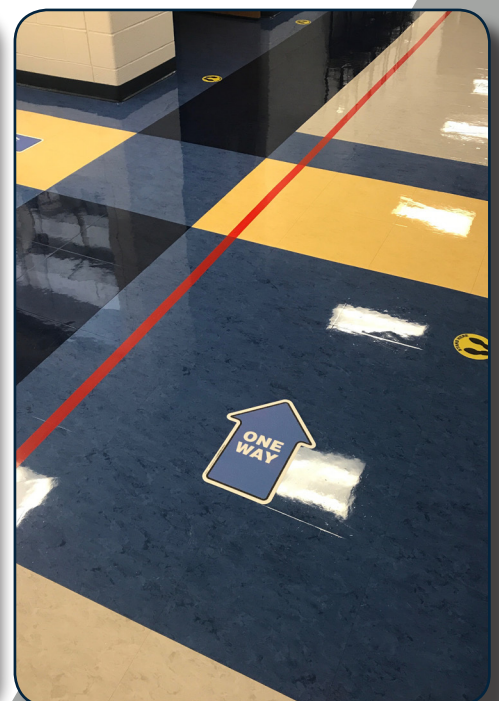
- Covering coughs and sneezes
- Proper hand-washing (20 seconds)
- Frequent use of hand sanitizer, which will be available in classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and other common areas
- Posted signage and reminders and announcements regarding personal hygiene throughout the buildings and school day
- Consistent modeling of hygiene practices

PRACTICING PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Although the Centers for Disease Control and PA Department of Health have recommended, “where feasible,” to distance students by 6ft, it must be recognized that schools were simply not designed for distancing and if welcoming back all of our students to our buildings, 6 ft simply cannot be achieved at all times. The World Health Organization has recommended a distance of 1 meter or approximately 3 ft - a distance that is more achievable on a consistent basis.

OTHER ACTIONS REGARDING DISTANCING:

- ▶ Even in the absence of a Commonwealth-wide mask mandate, masks will always be required to be worn on buses and during all class changes, especially at the secondary level
- ▶ Additional furniture and unique learning spaces have been removed from classrooms to create more space to ensure distancing
- ▶ Various types of dividers are installed in frequently visited areas (masking will likely still be required in these areas)
- ▶ Distancing reminders and one-way hallways installed
- ▶ Performing arts classes will be using even larger spaces, such as auditoriums and outdoor spaces to hold regularly scheduled classes
- ▶ To achieve a consistent 6 ft of distancing and to maximize all recommendations, alternative or staggered schedules may be utilized regardless of color-coded phase of our Counties
- ▶ Face shield and face covering provided for all students and staff.



SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Students with Underlying Health Concerns

Even given best efforts to mitigate risk, risk still remains. Families are encouraged to reach out to building administrators and guidance counselors to discuss options, as a remote or cyber option may be encouraged or recommended. These options were developed specifically so that our district could accommodate unique needs and circumstances.

Daily Screenings

Families will be required to screen their children for symptoms each day prior to sending them to the bus stop or dropping them off at school. Temperature checks will be conducted randomly throughout each school day. Students exhibiting symptoms, especially those with temperatures over 100 degrees will immediately be isolated and a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the child from school.

Please use the following screening tool to determine if you should keep your child home:

GROUP A **ONE or more symptoms**

- » Fever (100 or higher)
- » Cough
- » Shortness of breath
- » Difficulty breathing

GROUP B **TWO or more symptoms**

- » Sore throat
- » Runny nose/congestion
- » Chills
- » New lack of smell or taste
- » Muscle pain
- » Nausea or Vomiting
- » Headache
- » Diarrhea

STAY HOME if THE STUDENT:

- ▶ **Has ONE or more symptoms in Group A OR**
- ▶ **Has TWO or more symptoms in Group B OR**
- ▶ **Is taking fever reducing medication**

Note: students should be fever-free for 24 hours WITHOUT the use of fever reducing medications and no remaining symptoms before being sent back to school.

RESPONDING TO INFECTION



In all cases, our District will work closely with professionals at the Department of Health to determine response to confirmed cases of COVID-19 among students or staff. Additionally, the DOH will be engaging in contact tracing to assist our school community in the prevention of further spread. DOH defines close contact as being within 6 ft of someone with COVID-19 for 15 or more minutes. School closures and a shift to remote instruction may be necessary to fully disinfect areas/buildings while also finishing a subsequent contact tracing investigation. Closures could last between 2-5 days to achieve these goals, with the intent to engage in remote instruction throughout the closure.

Important note: It is the responsibility of Department of Health or County and Municipal Health Departments staff to contact a student or staff person with COVID-19, inform close contacts of their possible exposure, and give instructions to those involved, including siblings and other household members, regarding self-quarantine and exclusions. The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications from DOH or the CMHD to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the DOH or CMHD staff.



To further prevent even the potential of exposure, please screen for symptoms daily and if anyone is exhibiting symptoms, stay home and consult your healthcare provider.

RESPONDING TO STUDENTS AS SUSPECTED OR POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19 AND RELATED EXPOSURES

IF

YOU have travelled to a state that is on the Pennsylvania Department of Health's list of states that require a quarantine...



- » Notify the school office of probable extended absence
- » Monitor symptoms
- » Quarantine for 14 days

YOU have made close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 or any health dept. or a health care provider has been in contact with you and advised you to quarantine and you DO NOT have symptoms...



- » Notify the school office of probable extended absence
- » Monitor symptoms
- » Quarantine for 14 days

YOU have made close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 or any health dept. or a health care provider has been in contact with you and advised you to quarantine and you DO have symptoms...



- » Notify the school office of probable extended absence
- » Monitor symptoms
- » Quarantine for 14 days

YOU get a COVID-19 test completed either due to known exposure or presentation of symptoms...



- » Notify the school office of probable extended absence
- » Quarantine until you receive your test results
- » If your doctor determines the symptoms are not COVID-19 related, follow your doctor's orders.
- » If test results confirmed, see "If you test positive"...box on page 9.

YOU suspect you have COVID-19...



- » The building nurse should question you to determine the symptoms you are experiencing.
- » Note – the questions of symptoms should help to determine if they are new or related to a non-COVID 19 causes or pre-existing conditions.
- » If you are experiencing new or related COVID-19 symptoms, you will be sent home.
- » You will be advised to contact your doctor for guidance and possible testing. Quarantine until you receive your test results. If your doctor determines the symptoms are not COVID-19 related, follow your doctor's orders.

RESPONDING TO STUDENTS AS SUSPECTED OR POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19 AND RELATED EXPOSURES

IF

YOU test positive for COVID-19...

OR

YOU were exposed to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19...



THEN

- » Notify your school office of probable extended absence
- » The district will communicate with local health authorities regarding a confirmed COVID-19 case among children/staff (follow recommendations)
- » The district will ensure that if a person with COVID-19 was in the school setting while infectious, school administrators will coordinate with DOH to notify staff and families immediately while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with FERPA, PDE and all state and federal laws.
- » Do not return to school until cleared to do so by DOH or the appropriate CMHD

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. You can take steps to slow the spread.

1. Maintain good physical distance (about 6 feet). This is very important in preventing the spread of COVID-19.
2. Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
3. Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
4. Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when around others.

cdc.gov

RESPONDING TO STUDENTS AS SUSPECTED OR POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19 AND RELATED EXPOSURES

RETURN TO SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS:

Staff and students with fevers or symptoms associated with COVID-19 should seek medical attention for further evaluation and instructions before returning to school.

Staff and students with fever or symptoms that may be associated with COVID-19 and no known direct exposure to a person with COVID-19 may return to school when they are asymptomatic and have been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine or have confirmation of an alternative diagnosis from a health care provider that explains the COVID-19-like symptom(s).

Staff or students with symptoms who have had a direct exposure to a person with COVID-19 will be considered probable cases and should remain excluded from school/work until release from isolation criteria established by your healthcare provider or public health official has been met.

A student or staff member who is quarantined following close contact with a case may not return to school until cleared to do so by DOH or the appropriate CMHD. A negative test obtained prior to the end of quarantine does not clear an individual for return. The entire quarantine period must be completed. See CDC guidance on [Quarantine if You Might be Sick](#).

IMMUNIZATIONS

Ensuring that children are properly immunized may be more critical than ever. It is highly recommended and important that families keep their children up to date on their immunizations. Please work with your pediatrician or healthcare provider to determine an appropriate plan for immunizations for your child.

Although not mandated this year, the PA Department of Health is emphasizing the importance of everyone having a flu shot, stating that, "The flu vaccine is vital to reducing the impact of respiratory illness in communities." The American Academy of Pediatrics also reminds that the flu shot "should be highly encouraged for all students."



TRANSPORTATION

Physical distancing while getting our students to school on a bus is a significant challenge. From our first draft of our reopening plan, our district has and will continue to mandate the wearing of a mask at all times while on a school bus. The rationale behind this practice is based on the confined space on a bus.

Our district and our transportation partners at Roenigk's and Valley Lines are committed to the following mitigation strategies for transportation:



- » Masks must be worn at all times.
- » As students board the bus, seats should be occupied from the back of the bus first, then moving to the front.
- » Students will be limited to two (2) per seat.
- » Siblings or students from the same household will sit together, regardless of age (up to 3 in a seat at Elementary)
- » Sanitizing efforts on a bus between each run

Given the social distancing challenges presented on a bus, we encourage as many families as possible to drop off/pick up their children each day at school.

Each school building has made modifications to arrival and dismissal procedures that will maximize our capacity to handle an increased number of drop offs/pick ups.

With families transporting their own children whenever possible, we can further promote an efficient and timely transportation schedule, but, more importantly, allow our entire school community to continue our best efforts to physically distance wherever possible.



SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING & MENTAL HEALTH

Our district has been aggressive in developing programming and processes that support the social-emotional well-being and growth and development of our students from K-12. These efforts include the addition to our full-time staff of a Licensed Professional Counselor, focused on supporting families by meeting the sometimes dynamic mental health needs of our students. Even during the closure of the Spring of 2020, office hours and consultations and interventions continued.

Although our plans to have students return to school includes operating our system of multi-tiered supports for our students, including classroom lessons, small group counseling and intensive therapeutic counseling, our preparations have been proactive toward providing these supports whether physically present in school or participating from home. These efforts have led our district to develop a tele-mental health approach to meet the needs of our students and families.

Telemental health or telecounseling refers to the provision of mental health care remotely by means of telecommunications technology — including videoconferencing, streaming media, wireless communications and other electronic means. Telecounseling services offer comfortable, safe, ongoing, individualized care through the transition to a virtual session.

With the uncertainty of the 2020-2021 school year, it is important to recognize that educators, children and families may experience stress, confusion, fear, anger, sadness, or anxiety during the return to school. Recent research examining telecounseling in education settings, specifically, finds that telecounseling is an effective and sustainable approach to student care, with evidence that outcomes are comparable to in-person delivery. Utilizing a virtual platform will help normalize mental health care among the student population as well as keep a line of communication between school personnel and families. For more information on supports or how to access our Licensed Professional Counselor, please reach out to your school's Guidance Counselor(s).

Results Show Teletherapy's Importance to Districts' Overall Care Strategy



“Students have expressed how much they have enjoyed teletherapy: being able to go into a room without their parents bugging them, or not having to go at an inconvenient time of the day or take time away from being with their friends.

I haven't had anyone say they didn't want teletherapy or start teletherapy and then change to in-person.”

Andrea Ambrosio,
Director of Special Services & Student Services, Smithville SD, MO



Study In Brief:

Telemental Health for Children and Adolescents (2015)

- Systematic review examining the evidence base on telemental health on children and adolescents across settings
- Finds that **care is effective**, alongside early evidence that **outcomes are comparable to in-person delivery**
- Concludes that “*Child and adolescent telepsychiatry is a feasible, acceptable and sustainable approach to address the gap in access to services for underserved populations.*”

Clear Benefits to Any School District

“...Advantages of school telemental health (TMH) include greater efficiency, the capacity for higher volume, and increased access to care for many students who would be unlikely to reach traditional community mental healthcare because of barriers such as transportation and healthcare coverage.”

Stephan et al., *Telemental Health in Schools*, *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology*, 2016

Source: Smithville School District, Smithville, MO; Gloff, NE., et. al., “*Telemental Health for Children and Adolescents*,” *International Review of Psychiatry* 2015, 27(6), pp. 513-523; Stephan S., et. al., “*Telemental Health in Schools*,” *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology*, April 2016, 26(3), pp. 266-272; EAB interviews and analysis.

CAFETERIAS/FOOD SERVICE

Our cafeteria staff is to be commended for their service to our school community during the closure of the Spring of 2020, as they worked diligently to provide 7 days/week worth of meals to our students. This experience, along with our partnership with Nutrition, Inc, has assisted and informed our modifications to meal preparation and service, as well as general operations in our cafeterias.



We recognize how important traditional lunch operations are, not only to health and wellness, but also for socializing and serving as a needed break in the day for students. Recognizing this, we plan to continue use of our cafeterias, including expanded space to serve meals and provide the time for students to eat lunch among their peers.

To achieve this, the following strategies will be utilized:

- ▶ Expansion of cafeteria space into other large, common spaces to better promote 6 ft of distancing for the removal of a mask to consume food.
- ▶ Integration of touchless scanning technologies for purchasing of lunches, items. Each student will receive their own ID card and lanyard.
- ▶ Distancing markings on the floor in cafeteria lines to serve as reminders
- ▶ Utilize single-use, disposable trays and flatware



Another mitigation strategy recommended by the CDC and PA DOH is to keep students in their regular classroom to eat lunch. This strategy remains a possibility should conditions dictate and the further limitation of movement in buildings during the school day be necessary.

ATHLETICS/ACTIVITIES

The FASD Resocialization of Athletics and Activities Plan is available on our District's website. This plan sets forth a comprehensive plan for permitting our students' ongoing involvement in, for example, any number of sports and marching band.

This phased approach represents a sensible plan driven by best practices that include, but are not limited to:

- ➔ All student participants/coaches/directors/sponsors engaging in symptom screening and reporting prior to every practice/game
- ➔ Use of social distancing and masking and smaller groupings, even during practices/competition/performance
- ➔ Promoting personal hygiene best practices
- ➔ Use of personal water bottles and equipment
- ➔ Limited use of shared equipment/instruments with sanitizing between uses
- ➔ Avoid shaking hands, fist bumps, or high fives before, during, or after games and practices. Limit unnecessary physical contact
- ➔ Reducing the number of students/adults on a bus/van to competitions.
- ➔ Signed Parental Consent/Waiver to participate

To review the full plan, please visit the District website:

www.freeport.k12.pa.us



INSTRUCTION

The three delivery methods of instruction that the District has made available to our families remain:

▶ TRADITIONAL SCHOOL SETTING

In-person instruction as normal, with recommended safety precautions in place

▶ REMOTE INSTRUCTION

Enrolled as an active FASD student with a grade level schedule, assigned to teachers as normal, but participating from home full-time in our Schoology platform. Students are assigned to FASD teachers and instruction will be both synchronous and asynchronous

▶ CYBER SCHOOLING

Enrolled as an active FASD student in a full-time cyber school environment at home. In the cyber environment, the instruction is not conducted by FASD teachers and is primarily asynchronous.



All students K-12 will have a Chromebook laptop available to them, with Kindergarten and 1st grade students receiving touchscreen Chromebooks.

Our teachers have been working diligently to develop their content on our Schoology platform. The goal of this content is to mirror as close as possible the live instruction, assignments, and assessments students would normally receive during live instruction. This instruction will take any number of modes - direct instruction, self-guided assignments, synchronous (live), and asynchronous (recorded), among others.

Regardless of your instructional choice for 2020-2021, it is extremely important to recognize that, in the event of a school closure of any length, in addition to the remote instruction days embedded into our current school calendar on select Fridays, all students will be engaging in some level of remote instruction this year and will be using Schoology to access their instruction.



1:1 DEVICE PROGRAM

To promote greater equity of access to our content and instruction, our District has invested in a Chromebook for every K-12 student. (Grades K-1 will receive Chromebooks with a touch-screen) While this device will help us build upon our remote instruction programming and interactivity, as well as enrich in-person instruction, it is important to note that the device is school property and just like textbooks, equipment, and other school property, students are responsible for its care and appropriate use.



To assist families in limiting their exposure to damage costs, our District has partnered with Gallagher Insurance to provide very low cost insurance coverage.

For more information, please visit the device insurance page at:

<https://one2onerisk.com/>

A screenshot of a web browser displaying the 'one2one risk solutions' website. The page is titled 'The Complete 1:1 Risk Management Administrative Solution'. The navigation bar includes links for Home, Login, and Help. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for 'Select Language', 'Powered by Google Translate', 'Home', 'About Our Program', 'Enroll My Device', and 'Process My Claim'. The main content area is divided into three sections: 'Participant Registration', 'Select your School', and 'Participant Info'. The 'Participant Registration' section has a sidebar with links for 'District & School >', 'Participant >', 'Personal Info >', 'Acknowledgement >', and 'Payment Method >'. The 'Select your School' section has a dropdown menu for 'Pennsylvania' and another for 'Freeport Area School District'. Below these, there is a list of schools: 'Buffalo Elementary School', 'Freeport Area High School', 'Freeport Area Middle School', 'Lenape Technical School', and 'South Buffalo Elementary School'. The 'Participant Info' section is currently empty. At the bottom of the form, there are 'Back' and 'Next' buttons.

Once your child has received their device, please be prepared to enroll by viewing the following instructional video:

<https://one2onerisk.com/how-to-enroll-my-device-video.aspx>

PA PHASED REOPENING AND SCHOOLS

Our plan for the purposes of submission to the Department of Education is divided into or defined by the phases identified in the Governor's Phased Reopening Plan.



In the **RED** phase, all schools will be closed and it should be assumed that all students would engage in remote instruction from home at all times.



In the **YELLOW** phase, more restrictive strategies and settings are favored that will reduce the number of students in a building at one time and/or the number of days students report to the schools for face-to-face instruction. Therefore, it is likely that a mix of both in-person and remote instruction would be utilized. There also exists the possibility that the District could elect to engage in fully remote instruction in this phase.



In the **GREEN** phase, mitigation strategies, such as distancing, cleaning/disinfecting, are favored for the purposes of attempting to get as many students in buildings for face-to-face instruction on a daily basis, as much as possible.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Commonwealth has more recently worked across these phases and implemented strategies that might be listed in one phase, yet implemented in a less restrictive phase. This bleeding together of these phase colors should also be assumed in our District Plan. It should be understood that local conditions or circumstances could absolutely dictate that our District could elect, or even be required, to implement more restrictive strategies, even if our Counties remain in a Green phase. As an example, to more aggressively physically distance students and staff, scheduling strategies could be deployed that achieve the goal of reducing building capacities by 50%.

For a complete and updated list of PA Reopening phases, please visit:
<https://www.governor.pa.gov/process-to-reopen-pennsylvania/>