



WEST LONG BRANCH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

135 Locust Avenue
West Long Branch, NJ 07764
TELEPHONE: (732) 222-5900 FAX: (732) 222-9325

Mrs. Christina M. Egan
Superintendent of Schools

May 6, 2021

Dear West Long Branch Families,

The first few days of our expanded afternoon sessions are in the books, and it is wonderful to see so many of our students happily engaged in meaningful learning after the bell, both in-person and virtually. During this first week of implementation, we've been working hard to fine-tune the details and troubleshoot, and we are grateful for everyone's collaboration and problem-solving. We have received a few questions that I would like to address and clarify:

Q: Are my children *required* to stay in-person for the afternoon sessions?

A: No. While we encourage our families to avail themselves of the in-person sessions if possible, we understand that, for a variety of reasons, families might decide that it is best for their child(ren) to come home at the regular dismissal time and log in to the sessions virtually instead.

Q: Do students have the opportunity to eat before/during their afternoon sessions?

A: Yes. All students have the opportunity to eat.

Q: What if my child doesn't have a snack, but is hungry in the afternoon?

A: No hungry child in our district will ever be allowed to remain hungry. As a reminder, we continue to provide free daily lunches for all students this year. Each day, the bags are labeled and placed on tables outside individual classroom doors. Students take these grab-and-go bagged lunches at regular dismissal time, whether they are headed home or headed to eat before/during their afternoon instructional sessions.

If you are interested in having your child receive a free bagged lunch/snack each day, please reach out to the main office and let us know so that we can arrange to have the correct number outside each room. There is no paperwork to fill out, we only ask for you to notify us once so that we can prepare the right number and have them waiting each day through the end of the year. Many, many of our students are receiving these lunches, and we welcome anyone else to please participate as well.

Regardless of what you choose, please be assured that we have an extra supply of snacks/lunches each day, and we will not allow any child to remain hungry in the afternoon.

This expansion of in-person afternoon instruction is intended to be a tangible next step toward normal school operations, yet one that is respectful of the fact that we continue to hear from families that are still experiencing individual circumstances with work, transportation, and health/safety preferences that require us to act in a measured and reasonable way. We are also hard at work planning fun and exciting



WEST LONG BRANCH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

135 Locust Avenue
West Long Branch, NJ 07764
TELEPHONE: (732) 222-5900 FAX: (732) 222-9325

Mrs. Christina M. Egan
Superintendent of Schools

spring events for our students, a beautiful 8th grade graduation, as well as a strong summer program to help jumpstart our students into an exciting new school year.

We have identified our district's key barriers to full day instruction and have planned next year's budget and allocation of resources to address those barriers and prepare for full days of school. Further specific details will be forthcoming as we receive critical reopening guidance from the state and plan together as a school community, but I can share that returning to full day instruction will require: hiring additional personnel to supervise lunches, purchasing furnishings for expanded lunch spaces (all students K-8 use the same lunch room during three periods of the day, and we must anticipate that some form of social distancing while eating will still be in effect), the return of courtesy busing to address transportation needs, and a revision of the master schedule to accommodate smaller cohorts of students dining at once. We have budgeted for and are actively planning and working on the above, and will be opening our doors for full days of instruction for the 2021-2022 school year.

If you have specific concerns or questions, I encourage you to reach out to your child's school directly. We are always happy to assist.

Sincerely,

Christina Egan
Superintendent of Schools