

JULY 29, 2020



INFORMED LEARNING OPTIONS FOR REOPENING

INDIANA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT



FLEXIBILITY & COMPASSION

IASD families and students have been at the heart of our decision-making during these uncertain times of closure due to COVID-19. As a district, we have emphasized flexibility and compassion during the stressful events surrounding our nation. Our ultimate goal is to return to normal with our students in the classrooms, connecting daily with their teachers. This is a process that will occur over time, and also a process that requires us to establish procedures and protocols to ensure the safety of our students and staff. The district's plan and your options are outlined in this document.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Families:

I hope you are doing well and I want to thank you for all of your support during these turbulent times. You may have seen a variety of scenarios and different guidelines for how schools should operate this fall discussed in the media. As we learned this year, the Commonwealth could impose directives upon us. The choice to be open or closed or operate in some modified manner may not be a local decision. Given the uncertainties of the situation surrounding COVID-19 we are preparing for any of the following four potential scenarios to be presented to us by the Commonwealth:

- PA opens schools with no restrictions
- PA schools remain closed and distance learning must continue
- PA imposes strict safety restrictions and mandates health protocols which limit our capacity
- PA leaves the decision to reopen up to the local districts with safety guidelines and recommendations in place.

As a result, this document is designed to inform your family's decision making in case we are in the fourth scenario. I feel it is important to be upfront with our planning and supporting details so you can make an informed choice based on the information we have at the current time. ***Again, to be clear, we have not received information about reopening at this point and we are eagerly awaiting this information. We intentionally left out information regarding social distancing and whether or not students will be required to wear masks for the 2020-21 school year as we want to make sure we have a clear understanding of the Commonwealth's expectations and guidelines before we communicate regarding these two areas of discussion.*** We are asking for your patience with us in these aspects of planning, as we will be sure to communicate with you as soon as we are made aware of the Commonwealth's expectations.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT CONTINUED

Based on the information you provided in the parent survey, we feel it is best to offer three options for your children's learning this fall. ***Again, final determinations will be made taking into account state, federal, and CDC guidelines. Until such time, IASD is planning for a variety of options so we are best prepared to meet the needs of our students within prescribed parameters.***

We believe that family choice is critical, especially during this uncertain time. There is, however, the possibility that the Commonwealth could impose strict safety restrictions and mandate health protocols which will limit our operating capacity. The District is preparing for the case in which schools are required to implement a variety of these restrictions such as limited occupancy, social-distancing, etc. In this situation, students would be divided into two groups. The feedback you provided on the survey clearly indicated that, while none of the options for this situation are ideal, the majority of you preferred the scenario in which half the students would attend on Monday and Tuesday, while the other half attend on Thursday and Friday. Wednesdays would have all students and staff work online, from home, to allow the District to thoroughly clean the buildings before the other groups of students arrive, limiting the exposure to each group. Each group will attend school virtually on the days when the opposite group is attending live, in-house instruction. This virtual learning, based on your overwhelming input/feedback, would be very similar to the plan we are currently implementing - asynchronous, teacher-designed, and as flexible as possible.

IASD will ensure that family members attend on the same days so child care arrangements can be made. We recognize this is not an ideal solution, but we must plan for this option in case we are directed to impose social distancing practices. We are also working with our local early learning providers to provide technical assistance in the areas of literacy and social-emotional learning for our youngest learners.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT CONTINUED

In closing, we are waiting for public health guidance and/or social restrictions from the Department of Health and/or the Department of Education. As updates come in, this document will be revised and modified as necessary. We will be sure to communicate accordingly when updates become available and I apologize for all of the emails in advance. ***I appreciate all you have done to support our community during these unique times and want you to know that we will continue to do the best we can to provide you with appropriate, flexible, safe, and equitable options for your family. We cannot wait to see our families back in our schools once again.***

Respectfully yours,



Mr. Michael J. Vuckovich
Superintendent of Schools



LEARNING OPTIONS FOR YOUR CHILD

Based on the information you provided in the parent survey, we feel it is best to offer three options for your children's learning this fall. Final determinations will be made taking into account state, federal, and CDC guidelines. Until such time, IASD is planning for these three options so we are prepared to meet the needs of our students within prescribed parameters. At the end of this document is a survey we are asking each family to complete to select the learning option that is best for your family's needs, so we can plan accordingly. Your help is appreciated!



Traditional Model

This scenario will enable students to attend school Monday-Friday. Our schools will follow traditional hours unless directed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or a localized emergency occurs that would prevent the normal operation of school.



Distance Learning Model

This scenario will enable students to learn online via either a synchronous or asynchronous approach. Students will not be expected to attend school in person. All of their classes will take place remotely with constant access and support from certified teachers from the district.



Health Hybrid Model

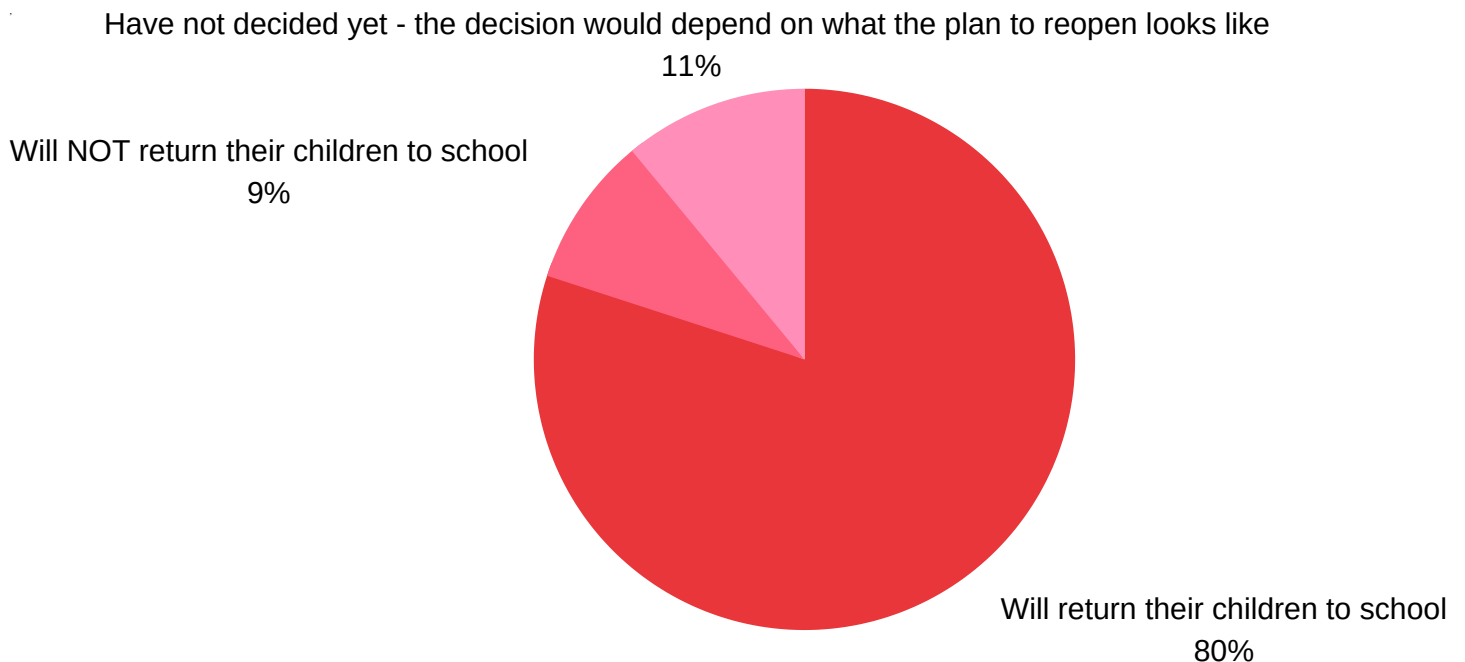
We are providing virtual learning housed within our schools for those families who might have a child, or someone else in their household who has a health condition that elevates their risk of serious infection, but who cannot keep their children home due to their family situation. Masks will be worn at all times in these rooms regardless of social distancing, and the students will be completely isolated from the rest of the student population. Special schedules will be developed for busing, lunches, recess, and mask breaks so the students are not exposed to the other students. Learning will take place online, and can be done synchronously or asynchronously.

SURVEY RESULTS

Thank you to the nearly 1000 families who responded to the survey! We are very fortunate to have such an involved and supportive community.

According to the questions we asked and comments you submitted, we gained the following insights:

1. An overwhelming majority of you want the schools to reopen.
2. Most families intend to utilize the school buses for transportation.
3. Many of you have concerns about your family's health and well-being and want to know what school will look like before you decide.
4. Many of you feel that the inconsistencies of an on-again, off-again schedule present serious challenges to your family's situation.
5. Many of you are concerned about the social and emotional well-being of your children and how the school closure may be affecting that aspect of your children's health.



Thank you once again for the feedback and for participating in the survey. The comments many of you provided were insightful and informative. The data collected will assist us in designing a system that will be flexible and considerate to the needs of all students and their families.

AREAS OF FOCUS

The challenge to reopen schools responsibly is a multi-layered issue. In designing our educational options for our families, the district examined this through multiple lenses to create a system that is reflective of the needs of our community.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As mentioned, we are planning for several different possibilities this fall. Regardless of the scenario, we are using several guiding principles to assist in building options that will meet the needs of our community.



SAFETY

- Our ultimate guiding principle in building our reopening options is to place the safety and welfare of our staff, students, and families first and foremost

FLEXIBILITY

- Flexibility and compassion is the hallmark of our efforts. Our goal is to give our families flexible options that are considerate and compassionate to each families needs and circumstances

CONSISTENCY

- Providing consistency, structure, and multiple levels of support for our staff, students, and families is an important part of our reopening. This includes a tiered approach to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of all

COMMUNITY INPUT

- Input from our families and staff is essential to our planning efforts so that we can create a model that is reflective of their needs and responsive to their concerns



TRADITIONAL MODEL

This model will enable students to attend school Monday-Friday. Our schools will follow the traditional schedule unless otherwise directed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or if a localized emergency occurs that would prevent the normal operation of school.

Under this model, we will do our very best to maintain a safe and positive school climate with heightened preventative measures being enacted to maintain a safe and proper learning environment for all. Please see the protocols on the right.

****The District will be required to adhere to all directives from the Commonwealth, Federal Government, and/or Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding health and safety protocols. IASD will communicate with our families once these expectations are made available.***

HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS

IASD

BUSING

- Daily cleaning and disinfection of equipment
- Changes in the loading/unloading procedures
- Check-in and check-out health procedures for drivers
- Additional safety training of drivers related to the pandemic



FACILITIES

- 2-hour cycle of cleaning during school day for high frequency areas: hand rails, door knobs, restrooms, light switches, and other touch points
- 2-hour cycle during evening shift and use of electrostatic sprayers and/or thorough cleaning of handrails, door knobs, restrooms, countertops, desks, tables, and telephones



CLASSROOMS

- Frequent cleaning of classrooms on a daily basis
- Use of QT3 and/or BruTabs for disinfecting w/ electrostatic sprayers
- Disinfectant wipes provided to all classrooms
- Frequent scheduled hand washing for staff and students
- Provide enough "high touch" supplies to students



HEALTH SERVICES

- Staff and students will be highly encouraged to stay home when sick
- Education to staff and students on COVID-19 symptoms and preventative strategies (hand washing techniques and proper hygiene)
- Temperature checks



DISTANCE LEARNING MODEL

Synchronous vs. Asynchronous Learning

Synchronous learning happens in real time. This means that you, your classmates, and your instructor interact in a specific virtual place, through a specific online medium, at a specific time. Students in a synchronous learning environment would attend classes by joining through regularly scheduled classes, through live-streaming lectures, or through pre-arranged times in small groups in a virtual space.

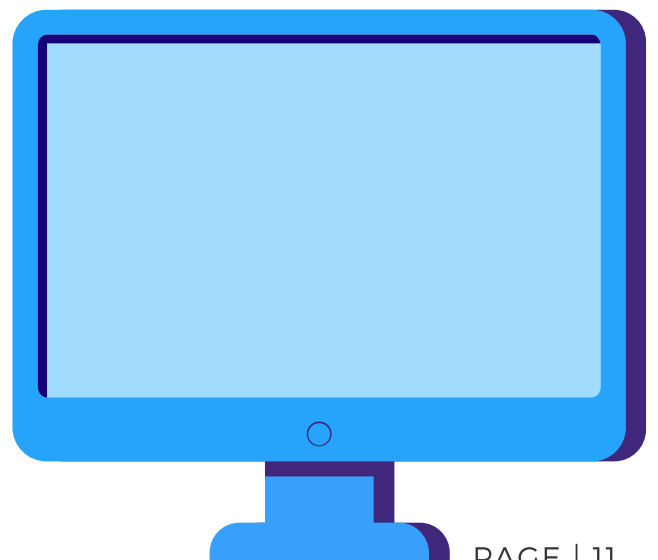
Synchronous learning provides students with:

- The structure of a rigid schedule.
- The benefit of real-time interactions with classmates/teachers.
- Immediate responses to questions or problems.

Asynchronous learning happens on the individual student's preferred schedule. While the asynchronous student's classwork, assignments and materials will cover the same content, and will be similar to those of students in a traditional classroom, they will not always be exactly the same, or live and in-person. Lectures for viewing, reading passages, assignments, projects and exams will be posted on a learning platform along with due dates or deadlines. Students can then work on these items when they are able, as long as they meet the specific expectations for each assignment in each class.

Asynchronous learning provides students with:

- The freedom of a flexible schedule.
- The benefit of moving at their own pace.



DISTANCE LEARNING CONTINUED

Regardless of which option you choose, IASD teachers and staff will support your student every step of the way in order to provide your child with the best outcomes possible. **Students in our distance learning program (IDEAL) outperformed students in cyber/charter schools on state standardized tests by:**

30% in ELA
43% in Math
51% in Biology

Students have access to our District's full array of services, and can always reach out for help if they need.

SYNCHRONOUS VERSUS ASYNCHRONOUS

COMPARING THE 2 TYPES OF LEARNING

<p>Synchronous Learning is a more rigid, "real-time" approach</p> <p>Its purpose is to provide structure and consistency to distance learning</p> <p>It uses live lessons and the same IASD curriculum as that being implemented in the traditional classroom</p> <p>Daily attendance is expected</p> <p>It gives students the benefits of social learning and immediate responses to questions or misunderstandings</p>	<p>Asynchronous Learning is a more flexible, "work when you can" approach</p> <p>Its purpose is to provide flexibility and individuality to distance learning</p> <p>It uses an online learning program that is similar in content, but could be significantly different from the instruction of the traditional classroom</p> <p>Attendance is calculated by weekly progress toward a goal</p> <p>It gives students the benefits of customization and the ability to work at their own pace</p>
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EDGENUITY AWARD-WINNING PLATFORM

The IDEAL platform uses the Edgenuity software which offers a comprehensive suite of award-winning K-12 digital curriculum.

Combining the software with IASD-certified staff is a perfect match designed to provide the support, flexibility, and high expectations that our families deserve because we are vested in your child's growth and success.

- EdTech Digest, Digital Courseware Solution 2020 Winner
- EdTech Digest, Personalized Learning Solution 2020 Winner
- EdTech Digest, Content Provider Solution 2020 Finalist
- EdTech Digest, Language Arts Solution 2020 Finalist
- EdTech Digest, Math Solution 2020 Finalist
- EdTech Digest, Science Solution 2020 Finalist
- <https://www.edgenuity.com/about-edgenuity/awards/>



IDEAL

VERSUS

OTHER CYBER SCHOOLS

OUR STUDENTS. OUR SCHOOL. OUR COMMUNITY.

IDEAL	Other Cybers
Offers online, distance learning and provides students with devices and internet access ✓	Offers online, distance learning and provides students with devices and internet access ✓
Uses a multiple award-winning distance learning platform ✓	Uses a multiple award-winning distance learning platform ✗
Offers live in-person support with a custom-designed work space with the availability to take some classes live and in-person and others online ✓	Offers live in-person support with a custom-designed work space with the availability to take some classes live and in-person and others online ✗
Diploma from one of the highest performing school districts in the Commonwealth along with a variety of support services personalized to meet your family's needs ✓	Diploma from one of the highest performing school districts in the Commonwealth along with a variety of support services personalized to meet your family's needs ✗



HEALTH HYBRID MODEL

Our Health-Hybrid option for your child's education is essentially online learning administered in our facilities. The purpose is to accommodate families who are worried that the health precautions in place in the traditional model are inadequate for their child/family's needs, but who cannot accommodate online learning at home. These spaces are intended for students who have health issues that significantly increase their risk of serious infection, or for students who have someone in their home whose health is a serious concern. The Health-Hybrid spaces will follow more strict adherence to the health safety guidelines. All staff and students will be required to wear a mask at all times, regardless of the space available for social distancing. Students attending the Health-Hybrid model should be brought to school by the families if at all possible. If that is impossible, they will be transported on a separate bus with more space provided between each student (contact Mike Travis at mtravis@iasd.cc for more specifics). Students in the Health-Hybrid model will operate on a modified schedule, arriving at a different time, and dismissed early, to allow for the complete separation from the other students. Students will have the option to work from home, or to utilize the hybrid rooms when needed. Attendance will be determined through a collaboration between the hybrid room teacher and the parent/guardian.

Instruction will be conducted through our distance learning options. Families can choose between the synchronous or asynchronous models explained earlier in this document. In grades K-5, the learning programs designed for your child will be supported by highly qualified, certified teachers, and IEPs will be monitored and implemented by certified special education teachers. At the secondary level, teachers will be in the room, but they might not necessarily be certified in the area in which your child needs assistance at every moment. Regardless of their expertise, the teacher will be very capable at connecting the students with experts in all academic areas. Students who choose the synchronous model will have access to their teachers at regularly scheduled times, and those who choose the asynchronous approach will always have the ability to email, or video chat with content area teachers who are assigned to manage their online course. The response from these teachers might not be immediate in every case, but it will be as quick as possible.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

The goal of Behavioral Health Services is to provide supports to students and staff with established routines and expectations, while also reassuring students of their physical and emotional safety. Additionally, the school counselors and school psychologists will be prepared and available to offer a continuum of supports to meet more intensive needs.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

SCHOOL PANDEMIC RECOVERY PLAN

1

PREVENT PHYSICAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL INJURY

Promote healthy behaviors and minimize exposure to potentially traumatizing media.

2

REAFFIRM & ENSURE PHYSICAL SAFETY

Re-educate students on school procedures, routines, and procedures on physical safety actions and the rationale behind these actions.

3

EVALUATE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA

START TRAINING BASED ON EXISTING DATA - Who was at-risk before the pandemic? Who may be at risk due to loss or poverty? Who may be at increased risk for anxiety, depression or other mental health conditions?

4

PROVIDE INTERVENTIONS & RESPOND TO PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS

- Reestablish social supports
- Provide psychological education
- Provide psychological interventions

5

EXAMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MENTAL HEALTH RESPONSE

Document actions and reflections to improve future crisis response and intervention



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUED

Our Tier 1 Behavioral Health Plan has multiple supports embedded into the school day to support our students to the best of our ability. We will include the following activities, programs, initiatives, and supports for all students:

- School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS)
- Social-Emotional Learning Instruction & Support
- Psychological First Aid for Staff and Students
 - Listen, Protect, Connect – Model & Teach
 - Common emotional, behavioral, and cognitive reactions
- Trauma Resilient School and Classroom Practices
 - Maintain normal routines as much as possible
 - Ensure safety
 - Consistent response to behavioral responses
- Mental health and wellness activities and lessons to build students’ coping toolboxes

TIER 1 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TASKS

INDIANA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

 BEFORE REOPENING	 UPON REOPENING
<p>Staff trainings: suicide prevention & awareness, trauma resilient schools, and behavioral health awareness</p>	<p>Reteach behavioral expectations and classroom routines; acknowledge and praise</p> <p>Teach SEL lessons (as currently established in the MTSS framework)</p>
<p>Review and revise SWPBIS program – matrices, lessons, & acknowledgements</p>	<p>Monitor students’ behavioral and emotional needs</p>
<p>Prepare for students’ mental and behavioral health needs</p>	<p>Promote mental health wellness</p> <p>Conduct universal screening</p>

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUED

Our school counseling department as well as school psychologists will have a large role in our reopening plan to provide students with the support they need so they can be healthy and thrive academically. See below for some of the specific activities, services that will be provided by these two groups.

- **School Counselors**

- Classroom guidance, individual counseling, group counseling, referrals, student support team referrals, community referrals.
- Provide classroom lessons on school expectations and structure to help students re-adjust to a full school schedule.
- Facilitate classroom guidance on social distance practices in school, community, home, etc.
- Assist teachers with behavioral concerns and counsel students to determine root causes.

- **School Psychologists**

- Consult with teachers and administration on school-wide behavioral and mental health needs of students.
- Consult with teachers, school counselors, parents, and school social workers to deliver services to students who display outward signs of trauma.
- Refer students to outside agencies as needed.
- Provide age-appropriate information/counseling and support to students related to student anxiety, fears, and loss.



CHILD CARE SERVICES

If the District is required to implement social distancing, we will not be able to have all of our students in the building at one time. As a result, we have reached out to our Early Learning providers in the area to gather their input as well as work with them to provide your child with continuous care and instruction that is aligned with the mission and vision of IASD.

The District has implemented a great deal of resources in improving our literacy program to be aligned with the science of reading and best practices. IASD will provide technical support, if needed, to our Early Learning providers to help them implement our curricula which includes Heggerty and Wilson FUNdations.

Additionally, IASD will provide technical support in the area of social-emotional learning. This includes the use School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) systems approach. The illustration to the right explains our coordination efforts.



CHILD CARE COLLABORATION

Informed Learning Options - IASD

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies



IASD is working with area Early Learning providers to discuss our current social-emotional programming. IASD used the evidence-based program titled Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS). Our team is supporting our local providers by providing technical assistance in this curriculum so the topics, methods, and strategies can be reinforced on the days child care services are needed.

SWPBIS

IASD uses systems approach for establishing the social culture and behavioral supports needed for a school to be an effective learning environment for all students. Our team is supporting our local providers by providing technical assistance in this area to help reinforce what we are doing while students are in school. This includes: defining and teaching positive social expectations, acknowledging positive behavior, on-going collection and use of data for decision-making and providing a continuum of intensive, individual intervention supports to name a few.



Literacy Support



The IASD reading program is designed to provide all students with an engaging learning environment rooted in the scientific evidence of reading best practices, which includes high-quality instruction in oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension. The vision is to demonstrate fidelity to the core reading program by providing scientifically-based reading instruction and expecting reading proficiency for ALL students. Our team is supporting our local providers by providing technical assistance in this area to help reinforce what we are doing while students are in school.

Indiana Area School District

2020-21 Reopening - IASD

WWW.IASD.CC

WE NEED YOUR HELP

We know that this is a lot of information. We also understand that this situation is constantly changing. ***You and your family might need time to consider these options. You might want to wait to see how the COVID numbers respond to the state reopening, or want to see if the state releases more information. Please take your time and consider all your options.*** Reach out to us with questions or concerns you may have. When you are ready, we are asking that you take a few minutes and complete the survey(s) that will provide us with the information we need to be ready to accommodate your children this fall.

Please complete the following to let us know which option you will be choosing for your child this fall. The survey will give you the ability to indicate selections for multiple students for families with more than one child.

Please choose the enrollment option that is best for your student(s) by completing the appropriate survey below by August 7, 2020. This will give us the time to adjust teacher schedules, bus routes, order Chromebooks, and make all the other necessary preparations to accommodate your student(s).

Contact Information

Communication Matters!

We realize there is a great deal of information contained in this document and it could easily become overwhelming. If you have questions or would like to speak to some one about this document and its contents, please contact your child's principal. We look forward to having a dialogue with you on our current planning efforts to make sure you are comfortable with the upcoming school year approaching quickly.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Wade McElheny - Principal
wmcelheny@iasd.cc

724-463-8562

Mr. Douglas Johnson - Assistant Principal
djohnson@iasd.cc

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. Michael Minnick - Principal
mminnick@iasd.cc

724-463-8568

Ms. Marilyn Walther - Principal
mwalther@iasd.cc

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Ms. Kelly Urbani - Principal - Ben Franklin Elementary
kurbani@iasd.cc

724-465-5637 (BF)

724-463-8567 (EP)

Mr. Donald Springer - Principal - East Pike Elementary
dspringer@iasd.cc

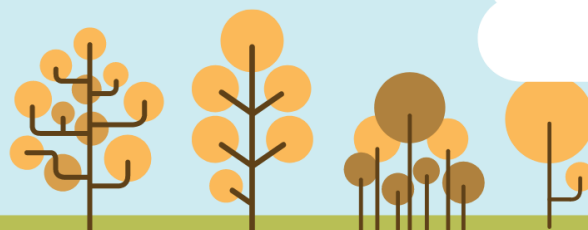
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS

Ms. Erin Eisenman - Principal - Eisenhower Elementary
eesienman@iasd.cc

724-463-8566 (IKE)

724-463-8560 (HM)

Ms. Krista Sevajian - Principal - Horace Mann Elementary
ksevajian@iasd.cc



www.iasd.cc

INDIANA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

[Click here for the survey.](#)