

January 15, 2024

Dear Flemington-Raritan Preschool Parents,

We are very excited that tomorrow, January 16, 2024, begins the first day of our newly expanded preschool program. As shared in the [January 5 letter with parents](#), preschool hours will be the same as those for grades K-4. Specifically, the preschool program housed at Copper Hill School and Robert Hunter School will have the same start and end times as the rest of the school. The preschool program hours are as follows:

Regular Day: 8:55 a.m. - 3:35 p.m.
Scheduled/Unscheduled Early Dismissal: 8:55 a.m. - 1:20 p.m.
Delayed Opening: 10:25 a.m. - 3:35 p.m.

There is the potential for slippery, snowy weather tomorrow morning. Be sure to notice the delayed opening time.

Transportation Challenges:

Transportation for expanded preschool remains a challenge. There is important information for preschool parents regarding transportation. Please read carefully and communicate with your child's school and preschool teacher.

For students attending Copper Hill:



1. Preschool students who have already been receiving transportation services can select to continue with current transportation services, as previously established. Students will be picked up in the morning and returned home in the afternoon at the previously established time. Transportation for these Copper Hill preschool students will be at 2 PM.

OR

2. Preschool students who have already been receiving transportation services can choose to continue with the extended preschool program day and remain at school until 3:35. For this selection, parents must provide transportation home from Copper Hill Elementary School.

For students attending Robert Hunter and First Friends Child Developmental Center:



Transportation for all preschool students has not yet been established. Drop off and pick off at the start and end of the day is necessary for all preschool students at this time.

Families who have not been receiving preschool transportation services will still need to continue arranging transportation to and from preschool until further notice. We will contact families once we have confirmed transportation with all the relevant transportation information.

Strategic Goals:

Goal Area #1: The District will provide a comprehensive and rigorous educational experience that connects and expands students' knowledge while engaging and empowering all learners to synthesize and apply their skills and understandings in meaningful ways.

Goal Area #2: Develop a continuation of a multi-tiered system of support within the District to target the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students.

Goal Area #3: The District will create opportunities to foster unity between the community and the school District in order to strengthen partnerships and develop a shared responsibility for student success.

Goal Area #4: Create an enticing and competitive work environment to attract and retain high-quality candidates representative of students' diverse backgrounds in the Flemington Raritan Regional School District community.

Goal Area #5: Ensure the finance and facilities needs are budgeted to upkeep and meet the needs of the growing District.

Our Sincere Apologies on Behalf of the District

We have been working diligently to resolve the matter. The issue lies with Flemington-Raritan Regional School District, which co-owns the transportation bus services with Hunterdon Central Regional High School. The Flemington-Raritan Regional School District has a joint transportation arrangement with Hunterdon Central Regional School District, which is monitored by the Transportation Committee of the two school boards and the School Business Administrators from each District. The primary disagreement between the two entities is the number of preschool students transported on a single bus.

Beginning in August of 2023, Flemington-Raritan communicated with Hunterdon Central about preschool expanding and needing more than five preschoolers on a single bus to transport all preschool students to and from school. Flemington-Raritan has advocated from the beginning for up to ten preschool students on a small bus, which can transport up to 29 students per vehicle. We continue to agree with placing a transportation aide on every bus with preschoolers.

The Flemington-Raritan Regional School District also agrees to transport preschool students with a child safety restraint system suitable for each child and in accordance with the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. We are following all safety recommendations. The Hunterdon County Executive Superintendent has ruled in favor of Flemington-Raritan Regional School District and provided a letter ruling that all buses/large vans (with available capacity) may transport up to ten (10) preschool students at any given time. The New Jersey Department of Education supports the ruling. Hunterdon Central disagrees and only wants five preschool students on a small bus.

We are very sorry about the difficulty with the transportation issue. Parents can contact the transportation office with questions and to support the resolution of transportation issues. The phone number for transportation is (908) 284-7154, or the Director of Transportation, Sue Gouldey, at sgouldey@hcrhs.org

Great News about Preschool Expansion:

The District remains ready, willing, and able to provide our preschool students with a nurturing, high-quality preschool experience. Preschool classrooms at all locations are beautiful and prepared for students.

At the January 4, 2024 Board of Education meeting, we shared information and an update about the preschool expansion program. The presentation is [linked here](#). In addition, we aired a new preschool video, [linked here](#). It features some of our preschool teachers and an overview of the program. Our District also launched a new preschool website with contact information, Frequently Asked Questions and a preschool Virtual Backpack. The site is [linked here](#).

We are set to select a new preschool mascot. The District continues to seek our community's input on our Preschool Mascot! The community is encouraged to take this [simple survey](#) to help us select our Flemington-Raritan Preschool mascot. Please take a moment to complete the survey before February 1st. The final color theme and mascot design will follow, along with a new line of preschool spirit wear!

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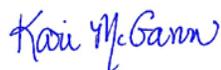
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Goal Area #5: Ensure the finance and facilities needs are budgeted to upkeep and meet the needs of the growing District.

We are very excited about the great opportunities we offer our youngest learners in the Flemington-Raritan School District community.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kari McGann
Superintendent of Schools

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