



Glen Ridge Board of Education Facilities Update August 2019

SAFETY & SECURITY

We are all painfully aware of the tragic events that have occurred throughout the country during the summer months. As always, school safety and security continue to be a top priority for all of us. As we go forward into the new school year, we will continue to evaluate and improve our facilities and practices. We will also continue to work collaboratively with the Glen Ridge Police Department to provide our students and staff with a safe school environment.

Wellness and safety will be a theme throughout the school year. At the July BOE meeting, Effective School Solutions made a presentation about the therapeutic services they provide to our students. The Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide has trained our staff members on the “Lifelines” curriculum, which will be implemented this fall at Ridgewood Avenue School and Glen Ridge High School. A parent presentation about the program will be scheduled in September.

Several security-related facilities improvements will also be ready for the start of the school year with additional work being completed in the fall.

Visitor Management System:

ALL visitors will be required to provide a driver’s license or a government-issued identification to enter the school buildings during school hours. Visitor management readers have been installed on the exterior of the main entrances of all school buildings. A detailed letter about the new procedures will be emailed home prior to the start of the school year.

High School Main Entrance:

The main entrance to the high school has moved to the set of doors on the left side of the existing entrance area. Visitors will have to use the visitor management system to enter the building, and then must report to the attendance desk. The new entrance eliminates the ability for visitors to enter the building and immediately head up the stairs. It will also provide a reduction in the number of incidents where students open the door for individuals on the exterior of the building.



Strobe Lights:

This fall, safety strobe lights will be installed on the exterior and interior areas of the building. The strobe lights act as an integrated emergency communications system. In the event of an emergency, the strobe lights will be activated, communicating to any students, staff, and parents who are outside the building that they should stay away and not attempt to enter. The safety strobe lights are required as part of the new state mandate.

Additional Upgrades:

This fall, we will also upgrade security cameras in all the buildings, and complete installation of cellular extenders to improve mobile reception. The staff will be trained on our safety protocols, which include additional features based on recommendations from our security consultants and the Glen Ridge Police Department. The district's safety practices and protocols are kept confidential to maintain the safety of our students and staff.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

Updates about the construction projects can be found on our website:

[GRPS Construction Website](#)

Central School:

The ground floor, where the students will be housed during the first year of Central School occupancy, is nearly complete. Furniture for the classrooms and offices was delivered on Monday, and is being assembled this week. The playground will be milled during the week, along with the drilling of anchors for the playground equipment. Early next week we expect the playground paving to occur. A final building inspection will also happen next week.



HVAC PROJECTS

The three HVAC projects at LAS, FAS, and RAS have been underway all summer, but we have come to the point where we must shift our focus to ensuring that the buildings will be clean, safe and ready for the opening of school. All three projects will extend beyond the start of the school year. I want to emphasize that any work done in the buildings will be completed in isolated areas or after school hours. We require that all contractors have a background check, (just like teachers), to work in the buildings or on school grounds. Air quality tests will be performed before the students report to schools, and we will post the results on the construction webpage.

RAS HVAC:

RAS has passed its above-ceiling electrical and safety inspection. The switch panel and transformer have been installed in the RAS parking lot and the chiller is on the cafeteria roof. The unit ventilators are set in the walls of the classrooms. The classrooms have been cleaned and are ready for teacher set-up. Additional electrical and boiler room work needs to be finished before connecting the unit ventilators to the system. The units in both gymnasiums will be installed within the next ten days.

FAS/LAS HVAC:

The majority of the piping is completed at LAS and FAS. New ceiling grids, ceiling tiles, and lights have been installed on the first floors. Unfortunately, there have been unforeseen delays in the shipping of the unit ventilators, chillers, and switchboards. The schools will be ready for the students on September 3rd, but there will be visible signs to indicate that construction is still in progress. Classrooms will have box units covering the walls and pipes where the unit ventilators will be located. The unit ventilators are scheduled to arrive in mid-September. Affected classes will be moved into alternative classrooms while the unit ventilators are anchored to the walls, and the plumbing and heating are connected. The exteriors of the buildings will continue to have fenced-in areas to house building supplies. The chillers will be placed on school grounds until their permanent location is prepared for installation. Work in the boiler rooms will continue throughout September. Necessary exterior work requires aligning with utility companies, which may result in delays.

As the school year begins and we work towards the completion of these projects, our objective will be to maintain a safe learning environment and minimize possible distractions to the students and staff. We will provide additional updates throughout the fall.

Dirk Phillips

Superintendent of Schools
Glen Ridge Board of Education