Kindergarten Summer School students practice cutting skills. These students are in Deanna Dawson's class at Bridle Ridge Elementary School.

We are looking forward to a great year!

The return to school looks very different this year, but Ray-Pec staff are working hard to plan for a successful 2020-2021 school year! Thanks to the teachers, staff, parents, and community members who have provided insight and feedback as the Board of Education and district leaders develop plans for our school re-entry.

We are implementing many changes to reduce risk and increase safety for students and staff.

As you register your students for school, you may choose between:

- a risk-reduced in-person learning experience, or
- a virtual learning experience for students and parents who want an alternative.

Ray-Pec's plan for in-person learning

In-person learning will take place at school in a traditional classroom environment.

To reduce the risk of virus transmission, we are implementing many health, safety, and hygiene protocols.

General safety measures include instruction about infection prevention, frequent handwashing, and daily wellness checks. Hand sanitizer also will be available and encouraged. Social distancing will be practiced as much as possible. Large gatherings, such as assemblies, will not be scheduled. Visitors to the school and
classroom will not be permitted. Students will not share supplies. School bus transportation will be available for those who need it.

- **What about recess?**
  - Students in PreK-5 will have recess, but times will be staggered to limit the number of classes on the playground. Staff will monitor for physical distancing, and commonly touched equipment will be disinfected between groups of students, when feasible.

- **What about lunch?**
  - Breakfast and lunch will be consumed in the classroom, if possible.
  - Disposable packaging and utensils will be utilized.
  - Students will select pre-assembled meals from the cafeteria.
  - Students will not have access to a microwave or refrigerator.

- **What about face coverings?**
  - Face coverings will be utilized by students and staff members whenever physical distancing of 6 feet for grades 6-12 and 3 feet for grades K-5 cannot be achieved. This includes when moving throughout the school during such times as arrival, dismissal, passing time, bathroom break, transitioning to a special class, etc.
  - Face coverings will be optional in the classroom when physical distancing of 6 feet for grades 6-12 or 3 feet for grades can be achieved.
  - For students with special needs, exceptions to face coverings may be granted on a case-by-case basis.
  - Face coverings will be utilized by students and bus employees while on the bus.

*Summary of safety protocols for fall.*

Read the more detailed [School Procedures for the August 24 Re-Entry Phase](#).

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**Online option: Virtual Instruction Program of Ray-Pec**

If you desire an alternative to in-person school, we are providing a rigorous virtual learning experience. We are proud to introduce the Virtual Instruction Program of Ray-Pec (VIPR), a platform by which any Ray-Pec student can access their education online.

**It won't be like Spring 2020!**

We heard your feedback! During the unexpected school closure in Spring 2020, teachers provided the absolute essentials for each grade level/course, and generally, a short time period was required to complete assignments. VIPR will be different.

Some key elements of VIPR:

- Built by Ray-Pec
- Daily online instruction by Ray-Pec certified teachers
- VIPR includes many, but not all, of the courses offered for in-person school.
- Follows regular Ray-Pec curriculum
- Includes live instruction with online activities and independent work
- Students who select VIPR are still eligible for MSHSAA sports and activities
- Students who select VIPR are still eligible for free/reduced price meals
- K-5 students will be given feedback through the standards-based grading system (TeacherEase gradebook)
6-12 students will be given feedback through the A-F grading system (SIS gradebook).

Live Google Meets will be offered for students to engage with their teacher and classmates. These Meets will also be recorded by the teacher and shared in the event a student cannot attend.

Since a student will be enrolled in a full course load of up to seven subjects a day, families should expect the student to be working online for multiple hours each day. This may include direct instruction, group instruction, watching an instructional video and independent work. Many more details are included in these documents:

VIPR FAQ
VIPR Student/Parent Handbook

Alternative schedule for grades 6-12 is a possibility

Based on the enrollment choices made by families, there may be a need for an alternative schedule for grades 6-12.

If a large number of our student population opts to return to in-person learning at the middle school and high school level, the District will implement an alternate scheduling plan that allows for fewer students in the high school and middle schools each day. The reason for this would be to allow for physical distancing to a greater extent. One such example of an alternative schedule would be that one-half of the student body would attend school every other day. The days when students are not in school physically will be used for self-directed and independent learning.

If a move to an alternative schedule is made, more information will be made available at that time.

Please note: This plan only affects students in grades 6-12. Students in elementary school would continue with a full 5-day in-person experience.

Next steps: Complete registration and make choice

This year, the District will not have an in-person Centralized Registration event. Most returning students and new students will be able to complete the required registration forms totally online.

Watch for an email from the District on Monday, July 13, about registration for the 2020-2021 school year. The message will provide instructions to complete the online registration forms and submit proof of residency online.

When you complete the registration forms, you will be asked to select In-Person School or virtual learning (VIPR). In order for the District to plan for the reopening of school, families must make their choice by July 21.

What if I need assistance with registration?

In-person registration times will be available for families who are new to the district, who do not have Internet accessibility, or who would like assistance in completing the forms. Families who need documents notarized and others with special circumstances may also find it beneficial to register in-person.

VIPR FAQ
VIPR Student/Parent Handbook
Verify residency
When you register your student(s) for the 2020-2021 school year, you must provide one document to verify residency. Acceptable proofs of residency include utility bills (water, electric or gas), in the resident's name, showing the service address. The documents must be recent (within 30 days). How to verify residency

Future backup plans
If the District must become more strict about physical distancing, we plan to continue providing elementary students with a full 5-day in-person experience by spreading out using space at the elementary and middle schools. At that point, we would transition grades 6-12 to a full virtual environment with opportunities for small group intervention instruction at the high school for our middle and high school students. More information would be shared at that time.

Our last approach would be to go to a full virtual instructional model for all students.