



# **2020-2021 Reopening Plan**

## A Message from the Superintendent

These are unprecedented times and the last six months have been extraordinarily challenging for all of us. As we prepare to start another school year, we are planning for all the different situations and scenarios that may occur. First and foremost, the health and safety of our students, our staff and their families remains our top priority, and our reopening plan has been developed with that in mind. We want students and employees to feel comfortable and safe returning to our school buildings. We know that our students need to be back in school and we have developed this plan with the goal of getting as many students as possible to safely return in person.

Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED). The plan has been developed with input from stakeholders at every level and area of the district, and utilizes the responses from our staff and community surveys. We understand that the decisions made impact students, their families, and our employees, and we have done our best to incorporate all the feedback we received during this process, while adhering to the strict guidelines we were presented with.

At this time, with all the safety protocols and social distancing requirements, we simply cannot bring all students back on a daily basis. We have developed a plan that we are confident addresses the needs of our students, and prioritizes in-person, full-time instruction for those groups identified as needing the most support, while ensuring a high quality instructional program for everyone, whether a student is in-person or learning virtually. While our goal remains maximizing the number of students safely returning in person, we also understand that some families, for health or other reasons, will feel more comfortable with an all remote option. We will make that available through a registration form that will be available the first week of August. Families that do select this option will have to commit to remote learning for the first semester.

While this pandemic and subsequent school closure has been difficult for everyone, it has been particularly challenging for young people. We understand that our students will need extra support as they return to school, and this plan includes significant resources for our students' mental health and emotional wellbeing.

This reopening plan is based on the information that we currently have available. This will be a fluid process and the plan can and will change at some point. It is possible that we may need to alternate between in-person and remote learning throughout the year due to recommendations and guidance from our partnering agencies, as well as orders from the Governor. We will keep everyone informed in a timely manner when those changes are deemed necessary, and we appreciate everyone's patience and understanding throughout the process.

This is going to be a very different start to the school year and it will take some getting used to for students and staff alike. We are looking forward to seeing everyone, and to working together to ensure that every student receives the high quality education that they have come to expect from the Troy City School District.

**John Carmello**

**Superintendent of Schools**

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## Communication/Family and Community Engagement

To help inform our reopening plan, the District has sought feedback and input from stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, families, local health department officials and health care providers, employee unions and community groups. Engagement efforts included online surveys, meetings and one-on-one conversations.

The District remains committed to communicating all elements of this reopening plan to students, parents and guardians, staff and visitors. The plan is available to all stakeholders via the district website at [www.troycsd.org/reopening](http://www.troycsd.org/reopening), and will be updated throughout the school year, as necessary, to respond to local circumstances. The link to the plan appears on the website homepage and a link is included in the navigation on every school webpage. Every effort has been made to ensure that the plan is accessible to all individuals in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level A/AA. The plan can also be translated into other languages, via the G-Translate feature available on the district website. In addition, the ENL staff will be utilizing district interpretation resources including the Lexikeet software to translate the plan into other languages.

As part of its planning for the reopening of schools and the new academic year, the District has developed a plan for communicating all necessary information to district staff, students, parents/guardians, visitors and education partners and vendors. The District will use its existing communication channels – including website, social media, phone/text alerts, emails – as well as appropriate signage and training opportunities to support the dissemination of consistent messaging regarding new protocols and procedures, expectations, requirements and options related to school operations throughout the pandemic. The District Communications Office and ENL staff will work together to create a centralized website [[www.troycsd.org/ENL](http://www.troycsd.org/ENL)] where all translated materials will be posted for easy access.

The District is committed to establishing and maintaining regular channels of communication and has reviewed and determined which methods have proven to be the most effective in communications with our school community. The District will rely on its website to communicate news, requirements and updates related to reopening and in-person instruction, including social distancing requirements, proper wearing of face coverings and proper hand and respiratory hygiene. Email and text alerts will be utilized to direct the school community to the website for this information. The information that we will share will be based on state guidance and the district-level reopening committee.

In support of remote learning, the District will make computer devices available to students and teachers who need them. The District will provide students and their families with multiple ways to contact schools and teachers during remote learning, including, but not limited to, email, phone, SeeSaw and Google Meet.

The District will use existing internal and external communications channels such as mail, email and Student/Parent Portal to notify staff, students and families/caregivers about in-person, remote and hybrid school schedules with as much advance notice as possible.

The District will follow its existing engagement and communication protocols with parents regarding the provision of special education services for their child.

In addition, the District will make every effort to ensure that communication to parents/legal guardians is in their preferred language and mode of communication. This will be accomplished via the G-Translate feature available on the district website, the centralized ENL website and other district interpretation resources including the translation option in School Messenger, the Lexikeet service and the ENL staff.

The District is committed to ensuring that all of its students and their families are taught and re-taught new expectations related to all public health policies and protocols. As part of this continuous training, the District will assess the best approach to communicating the information for each students' age group and will provide frequent opportunities for students to review these policies and protocols. This targeted education will help ensure that all students and their families know what is expected of them as they successfully return to the school setting. These will include in-person demonstrations as well as video tutorials, flyers and posters, all in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. These trainings/materials will cover:

- Hand hygiene
- Proper face covering procedures (how to wear and remove)
- Social distancing
- Respiratory hygiene
- Identifying symptoms

The District will create and deploy signage throughout the district to address public health protections surrounding COVID-19. Signage will address protocols and recommendations in the following areas:

- Proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Acceptable face coverings and requirements related to their wear
- Hand washing
- Adherence to social distancing instructions
- Symptoms/prevention of COVID-19

In addition to signage, the District will encourage all students, faculty, staff and visitors through verbal and written communication to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE through additional means such as posters, flyers and infographics to be shared in backpacks, via email and social media, and displayed prominently in buildings. Videos will be shared in classrooms and via social media.

The District is committed to creating a learning environment that protects student and staff health, safety and privacy. Our district will operate under a standard procedure for addressing situations in which an individual has tested positive for COVID-19 or appears symptomatic. These procedures are outlined in the Health & Safety section of our reopening plan.

In the event that a student or staff member is sick or symptomatic, notification to exposed individuals will occur pursuant to the state's contact tracing protocols as implemented by the local health department. The District will not notify the wider community unless specifically directed to do so by local health officials. This notification will also include information on containment and will be communicated to parents and memo posted to the district website.

## School Closures

The District is preparing for situations in which one or more school buildings need to close due to a significant number of students or staff testing positive for COVID-19 or a considerable regional increase in COVID-19 cases.

The District may choose to modify operations in one or more schools prior to closing to help mitigate a rise in cases. The District will consult its local health department when making such decisions.

School closures will be communicated via Phone/Text, email, website, social media and local news media.

## Health & Safety

The health and safety of our students, our staff and their families is our top priority. We want students and employees to feel comfortable and safe returning to school campuses. Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#) and the [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\)](#).

## Health Checks

The District will share resources to educate parents/guardians and staff members regarding the careful observation of symptoms of COVID-19 and health screening measures that must be conducted each morning before coming to school. The resources include the requirement for any student or staff member with a fever of 100°F or greater and/or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection to not come to school. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [list of Coronavirus symptoms](#) was used to develop these resources.

The Troy City School District will implement the following practices to conduct mandated health screening.

- For staff, daily self-reported temperature checks and completion of the screening questionnaire.
- For students, daily temperature check and screening upon arrival at their designated entrance
- Records will be maintained according to guidance and regulations.
- If an individual has a temperature of 100°F or greater or has a positive response to a screening question, they will be isolated from others and immediately dismissed from school.
- If an individual develops symptoms during the school day, they will be isolated from others and immediately dismissed from school.
- If an individual develops symptoms outside of school, they should not report to school and immediately contact their medical provider.
- Staff and families will be sent regular reminders about the health screening policy.

## Social Distancing, Face Coverings & PPE

The District has developed a plan with policies and procedures for maintaining social distancing of all students, faculty, and staff when on school facilities, grounds and transportation.

- The District will strive to limit in-person classes to 15 students to ensure proper social distancing
- When social distancing is not possible, face coverings will be mandatory
- The District will issue face coverings to every student and staff member. Extra disposable masks will be available when needed

- Face coverings will be mandatory in all common areas, such as hallways, lobbies, gymnasiums, etc (*Please see Transportation and Child Nutrition sections for additional information*)
- Secondary schools will have directional rules for certain hallways and stairwells to limit congregation
- For those medically unable to wear face coverings, a face shield will be available.

Students, staff and visitors to our schools will be expected to wear face coverings indoors and outside, including on the school bus, when six-foot physical distancing is not possible. Students will be allowed to remove face coverings during meals, instruction, and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance. Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering will not be required to wear one.

Because students and staff will need to be prepared to wear a face covering if another person unexpectedly cannot socially distance, they will be required to wear a face covering in all common areas (e.g., entrances and exits) and when traveling around the school.

Face coverings will be provided to students and staff, if needed, at no cost. Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include, but are not limited to, cloth-based coverings and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose.

An employee is allowed to wear their own acceptable face covering if they choose. Employees with healthcare provider documentation stating they are not medically able to tolerate face covering will not be required to do so.

Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school, so there may be periods of time when masks are not worn.

Face coverings should not be placed on:

- Children younger than 2 years old
- Students where such covering would impair their health or mental health, or where such covering would present a challenge, distraction, or obstruction to education services and instruction
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance

The District will instruct students, parents/guardians and staff, contractors and vendors on:

- The proper way to wear face coverings
- Washing hands before putting on and after removing their face covering
- Proper way to discard disposable face coverings

### Infection Control Strategies

- Each classroom will be issued hand sanitizer, to be used upon entry to the room.

- In secondary classrooms, desks and high touch points will be sprayed and sanitized prior to beginning class.
- Students and staff will be reminded daily to wash hands, use hand sanitizer, be socially distant or wear face coverings when social distancing is not possible, and keep hands away from their face
- Any student or staff member will be isolated when displaying symptoms.
- Nursing staff will have proper PPE for performing their health-related functions, such as gloves, face coverings, face shields, and gowns. Nurses will use best practices when dealing with potential exposure.

### Plumbing Facilities and Fixtures

- The number of bathroom/toilet fixtures will meet the minimum requirements established in the building code.
- The number of drinking fountains will meet the minimum requirements established in the building code. Students and staff will be permitted to bring their own water supply, when appropriate.
- Signage will be used to reduce restroom occupancy at any given time, and ensure distancing rules are adhered to.

### Ventilation

- The District will maintain adequate, code required ventilation (natural or mechanical) as designed.
- Staff will be instructed to increase ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining health and safety protocols, particularly for younger students.
- For schools with natural ventilation, standalone medical grade HEPA air filters will be provided to assist in moving and cleaning air throughout the building.
- In the event staff or students are occupying internal rooms without windows OR mechanical ventilation, medical grade HEPA air filters will be provided to assist in moving and cleaning air in that space

### Management of Ill Persons, Contact Tracing and Monitoring

The District requires students, faculty, or staff members who develop COVID-19 symptoms during the school day to report to the nurse's office. If there are several students waiting to see the school nurse, students must wait at least six feet apart. The District has designated areas to separate individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 from others until they can go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on severity of illness. One area will be used to treat injuries, provide medications or nursing treatments, and the other area will be used for assessing and caring for ill students and staff. Both areas will be supervised by an adult and have easy access to a bathroom and sink with hand hygiene supplies.

Nursing staff will have proper PPE for performing their health-related functions, such as gloves, face coverings, face shields, and gowns. Nurses will use best practices when dealing with potential exposure.



### If Students or Staff Become Ill with Symptoms of COVID-19 at School

In the event an individual screens confirmed for COVID-19 symptoms while at school, meaning that they have a fever, or appear symptomatic while at school with any of the [COVID-19 symptoms identified by the CDC](#), they will be placed in an isolation area. For students, parents/guardians will be called to pick the student up from school immediately. Staff members will be asked to leave immediately. Individuals will be referred to their primary care provider (PCP) for evaluation. If the primary care provider (PCP) determines that the symptoms *are not* COVID-19 related, a note from the primary care provider (PCP) stating such diagnosis must be provided in order to return to school or work. If the primary care provider (PCP) determines that the symptoms *are* COVID-19 related, testing must occur.

It is imperative that individuals seek medical evaluation from their primary care provider (PCP) to determine whether or not these symptoms are related to a known or diagnosed condition other than COVID-19 (i.e. ear infection, allergies, etc.).

At the minimum, [New York State Department of Health Guidelines](#) requires “documentation from a health care provider following evaluation, negative COVID 19 diagnostic test result and symptom resolution, or if COVID 19 positive, release from isolation.” If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, isolation protocols will be required and release from isolation will be determined by the Rensselaer County Health Department. Any symptomatic student or staff awaiting testing results should self-quarantine and will not be allowed to return to school until released by a *negative* COVID-19 test result.

If an individual is confirmed as positive for COVID-19, isolation protocols will be required for 10 days per CDC guidelines. An individual must be in isolation for 10 days and symptom free for 72 hours before a release from isolation may be considered. Release from isolation will be determined solely by the Rensselaer County Health Department. A release letter provided the Rensselaer County Health Department will be required for the return to school.

If a confirmed test result occurs, the county of residence will be notified by the laboratory performing the test. Individuals will be also be notified by either the initial testing facility or their local health department for negative results. **The parents of any student who has tested positive must notify the school district as soon as possible.** If this were to occur, the school district will contact the county of residence for confirmation and collaboration in beginning contact tracing activities. The district COVID-19 School Resource Person for the school will coordinate with the Rensselaer County Health Department for contact tracing purposes.

In the event a student is under mandatory quarantine by the Rensselaer County Health Department, the school district will provide remote learning options for the student for the length of their quarantine.

## Return to School After Illness

The District will follow CDC guidance and will work with the local health department to determine when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment at school. This protocol includes:

1. Documentation from a health care provider following evaluation,
2. Negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result,
3. Symptom resolution as recommended by the Department of Health, or,
4. If a person is placed under mandatory quarantine by the local Health Department, they may not return to school until that quarantine is over.

The District will refer to DOH's ["Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure"](#) regarding protocols and policies for faculty and staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the faculty or staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.

## Contact Tracing and COVID-19 Testing

### CONTACT TRACING

As noted in the New York State Department of Education's guidance to schools for reopening, [Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing: The Spirit of New York's Schools](#), *"Contact tracing is a public health function performed by local public health departments to trace all persons who had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. This allows public health officials to put in place isolation or other measures to limit the spread of the virus. Schools must cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing. Schools can assist public health departments in knowing who may have had contact at school with a confirmed case by:*

- *keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members;*
- *ensuring student schedules are up to date;*
- *keeping a log of any visitors which includes date, time and where in the school they visited; and*
- *assist local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual at school in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.*

*Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. School staff should not try to determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the local department of health."*

In the event an individual is identified as a confirmed case within a school, the Rensselaer County Health Department will determine a starting date for which the school will need to provide contact tracing information. This date will be 48 hours prior to the individual becoming symptomatic. To this end, the school district will need to keep records that will be made available to the Rensselaer County Health

Department for those who may have been in close contact with the confirmed case. Any close contacts will be identified by the Rensselaer County Health Department. The district COVID-19 School Resource Person will be asked to assist the county with quarantine surveillance monitoring of contacts in connection with a confirmed case in a school.

If a student or staff member is identified by the Rensselaer County Health Department as a contact, they will be contacted by a county Case Manager and be instructed to quarantine for 14 days. Any contact identified by the Rensselaer County Health Department may not return to school until such a time as they are released from mandatory quarantine by the Case Manager.

## COVID-19 TESTING

Per the New York State Department of Education's guidance to schools for reopening, [Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing: The Spirit of New York's Schools](#), *"it is strongly recommended that schools comply with CDC guidance and not conduct COVID-19 testing or require testing or antibody testing of students or staff members. The decision of whether a test needs to be conducted should be determined by a healthcare provider or the local department of health. [CDC Interim Considerations for K-12 School Administrators for SARS-CoV-2 Testing](#) Schools should identify who in the community is responsible for referring, sourcing, and administering testing (e.g., local health department testing site, physician offices, hospital system) particularly in the event that large-scale testing at the school is needed. Schools wanting to perform COVID-19 testing must apply and be approved as a limited service laboratory (LSL). Please refer to the [instructions and application materials](#), and if applicable, the worksheet for [multiple locations](#)."* Therefore, the school district will not be testing individuals. A list of regionally available testing locations is available on the school district website at <http://www.troycsd.org/reopening/> for individuals that may want to be tested on their own. School district health care professionals will refer symptomatic individuals to their primary care provider (PCP) for testing.

## School Closures

School closure decisions will occur in consultation with the Rensselaer County Health Department. This may involve the closure of a classroom or entire facility depending on the quantity of suspected and/or confirmed cases. There may be no need to close to a school building if the Rensselaer County Health Department determines that the identified close contacts are excluded from school and the facility may continue normal operations. Full closure of a school facility may be necessary in some situations and will be implemented on a case-by-case basis. Such closures may also be directed by the Governor.

## TRAVEL ADVISORY

Any staff or students who travel out of state to any location listed on the [Governor's Travel Advisory](#) list, will be required to quarantine for 14 days after returning to New York State. Persons who travel to any states listed on the Travel Advisory list should self-report their travel to the district COVID-19 School Resource Person for instructions. Persons who travel via airplane and are required to complete a survey upon arrival in NYS, should still self-report their travel to the district COVID-19 School Resource Person. If a location has been removed from the travel advisory list while a person is serving their related 14 day mandatory quarantine, that person must still complete the full 14 days of mandatory quarantine before returning to school.

In the event that someone within a household travels to a state on the travel advisory list and returns to New York State, but the student or staff member does not travel, that student or staff member may be allowed to return to school *without* a 14 day mandatory quarantine. In the event that person in a household who has traveled becomes a positive case, the Rensselaer County Health Department will identify all household members as close contacts and quarantine all members of the household for 14 days.

## Health Hygiene

The District will emphasize healthy hygiene practices for students and staff by providing initial and refresher education in hand and respiratory hygiene, along with providing adequate supplies and time for frequent hand hygiene. Signs will be posted throughout the school (e.g., entrances, restrooms, cafeteria, classrooms, administrative offices, auditorium, custodial staff areas) and regular messaging will be shared with the school community. Signage will be used to remind individuals to:

1. Stay home if they feel sick.
2. Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others or in accordance with any stricter policy implemented by the school.
3. Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
4. Adhere to social distancing instructions.
5. Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19.
6. Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
7. Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

## Hand Hygiene

Students and staff must carry out the following hand hygiene practices.

- Wash hands routinely with soap (any kind) and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Dry hands completely after washing. Use paper towels to dry hands if available instead of a hand dryer if they are available.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol. Hand sanitizer should be rubbed on the hands until it is completely absorbed. DO NOT dry hands if sanitizer is used.

Hand washing/sanitizing should occur:

- Before and after eating (e.g. snacks and lunch).
- After going to the restroom or after assisting a student with toileting.
- After using a tissue.
- Before and after using shared materials.
- Before and after putting on or taking off face masks.
- After coming in from the outdoors.
- Anytime hands are visibly soiled.

## Respiratory Hygiene

The District will emphasize the importance of respiratory hygiene.

Students and staff must carry out the following respiratory hygiene practices:

- Cover a cough or sneeze using a tissue. If a tissue is used, it should be thrown away immediately.
- If you don't have a tissue when sneezing or coughing, sneeze into your elbow.
- Wash your hands after sneezing or coughing.
- Face coverings are protective. Wearing a face covering will keep respiratory droplets and aerosols from being widely dispersed into the air.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

The District will ensure adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including "Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19," and the "STOP THE SPREAD" poster, as applicable. Cleaning and disinfection logs will be maintained that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.

Examples of facility types where cleaning and disinfection frequency will be distinguished include:

- Bathrooms
- Athletic training rooms, locker rooms
- Health offices, isolation rooms
- Administrative offices (main office, reception area)
- Frequently touched surfaces in common areas (door handles, elevator buttons, copy machine keypads, etc.)
- Breakrooms
- Cafeterias/Kitchens
- Computer labs
- Science labs
- Classrooms
- Maintenance offices and work areas
- Buses, school vehicles
- Libraries
- Large meeting areas (auditoriums, gymnasiums, music rooms)
- Playgrounds (cleaning only)

Students, faculty, and staff will be trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, and such information will be provided to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home.

The District will provide and maintain hand hygiene stations around the school, as follows:

- For handwashing: soap, running water, and disposable paper towels.
- For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.

Regular cleaning and disinfection of the facilities will occur, including more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high-risk and frequently touched surfaces. This will include desks and cafeteria tables, which should be cleaned and disinfected between each individual's use. Cleaning and disinfection will be rigorous and ongoing and will occur at least daily, or more frequently as needed.

The District will ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms should be cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use.

### Vulnerable Populations/Accommodations

We recognize that some students and staff members are at an increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness, live with a person who is at an increased risk, or simply do not feel comfortable returning to an in-person educational environment. It is our goal that these individuals are able to safely participate in educational activities.

- Families of students in this category may select an all remote learning option.
- All students will be screened upon arrival at their designated entrance.
- All employees must submit daily health screening form before reporting to work or upon arrival
- All employees and students will wear face coverings while in school buildings unless social distancing is possible
- Allow medically vulnerable individuals to participate in educational activities, and when appropriate, accommodate their specific needs including providing accommodations such as additional personal protective equipment (PPE) or leaves of absence consistent with all state and federal requirements.
- Engage in an interactive dialogue with individual employees who may have a reason for not returning to work in person. Medical documentation will be needed.

### Visitors on Campus

No outside visitors or volunteers will be allowed on school campuses, except for in emergency circumstances or to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. Essential visitors to facilities will be required to wear face coverings, need to be screened through our visitor management software system, and follow the district's health screening protocols.

### School Safety Drills

Schools will continue to conduct mandatory fire and lockdown drills according to the existing statutory schedule. Drills will be conducted in a manner that maintains social distancing at exits and gathering points outside the building, while still preparing students to respond in emergencies. As such, it may be necessary for schools to conduct drills in the school year using protocols that are different than they are used to.

## Facilities

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection in the district, facilities operations will be geared toward meeting social distancing requirements and regularly cleaning frequently touched spaces . In carrying out projects or tasks supporting infection control, requirements will be met for changes associated with building spaces. Plans for changes or additions to facilities that require review by the Office of Facilities Planning (OFP), will be submitted to comply with the requirements of the 2020 New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (BC) and the State Energy Conservation Code.

The function, position and operation of stairs and corridor doors, which have closers with automatic hold opens (and are automatically released by the fire alarm system), will remain unchanged.

The District plans to meet the deadline for submission of Building Condition Survey or Visual Inspections on time. In addition, lead in water sampling will be carried out upon the reopening of school under conditions consistent with when the building is “normally occupied.”

Upon reopening, the District plans to increase ventilation, to the greatest extent possible. Water systems will be flushed in buildings that have been unoccupied.

- In accordance with standard protocols, air flow filters will be replaced every 3 months per the manufacturer’s guidelines. For older buildings without mechanical ventilation systems, staff will be instructed to increase ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining health and safety protocols, particularly for younger students. In addition, standalone medical grade HEPA air filters will be provided to assist in moving and cleaning air throughout the building.

## Child Nutrition

School meals will continue to be available to all students, including those attending school in-person and those learning remotely.

### Meals Onsite

For students onsite, meals will be provided while maintaining appropriate social distancing between students. Students do not need to wear face coverings when seated and eating so long as they are appropriately socially distanced.

The District will ensure social distancing between individuals while eating in the school cafeteria, when use of the cafeteria is allowed. If not feasible, meals may be served in alternate areas (e.g., classrooms) or in staggered meal periods to ensure social distancing and proper cleaning and disinfection between meal periods.

The sharing of food and beverages (e.g., buffet style meals, snacks) is prohibited, unless individuals are members of the same household. Adequate space will be reserved for students, faculty, and staff to observe social distancing while eating meals.

#### Meal Service:

- Grades K-5 meals will be served in the classroom, which includes breakfast and lunch.
- Grades 6-12 meals will be served in the cafeteria, students will have assigned seating and their food will be brought to their table.
- Extra meal periods may be needed.
- All food allergies are noted in the Nutri Kids system, these guidelines will be followed for all students with allergies.
- Students will have access to hand sanitizer in the Cafeteria and their classrooms.
- Signage will be throughout the school and cafeteria promoting hand washing and using hand sanitizer.
- Students will have seating socially distant from one another while eating in the Cafeterias.
- Students will be advised not to share food or drinks with anyone.

#### Meals Offsite/Remote

- Bagged breakfast and lunch meals will be made available for all students learning remotely. Meals will be made available for pick up at a designated site.

## Transportation

The District will conduct transportation activities that are consistent with state-issued public transit guidance and NYSED School Reopening guidelines. Students and school staff must wear acceptable face coverings at all times on school buses (e.g., entering, exiting, and seated) and should maintain appropriate social distancing to the extent practicable. When social distancing is not practicable, student seating will be limited to one student per seat. In accordance with State guidance, members of the same household may be seated within 6 feet of each other and can share a seat.

Students who are able will be required to wear masks and social distance on the bus to the extent practicable; however, students whose health would be impaired are not required to wear a face covering, but must be appropriately socially distanced. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to drop off or walk students to school to reduce density on buses. In the instance when students do not have a face mask, emergency disposable face masks will be provided on the school bus.

All school buses that are used every day by districts and contract carriers will be cleaned/ disinfected at least once a day. High contact spots will be wiped down after each bus run, including in between tiered runs that occur in the AM or PM.

School buses shall not be equipped with hand sanitizer due to its combustible composition and potential liability to the carrier or district. School bus drivers, monitors and attendants must not carry personal bottles of hand sanitizer with them on school buses.

Wheelchair school buses will configure wheelchair placement to ensure social distancing of six feet.



Whether school is in session remotely or otherwise, pupil transportation will be provided to nonpublic, parochial, private, charter schools or students whose Individualized Education Plans have placed them out of district whose schools are meeting in in-person sessions.

### School Bus Staff

School bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics are required to perform a self-health assessment for symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving to work. If personnel are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19, they will notify their employer as per the reporting policies and seek medical attention.

School bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics must wear a face covering along with an optional face shield.

Transportation staff (drivers, monitors, attendants, mechanics and cleaners) will be trained and provided periodic refreshers on the proper use of personal protective equipment and the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Transportation departments/carriers will need to provide Personal Protective Equipment such as masks and gloves for drivers, monitors and attendants in buses as well as hand sanitizer for all staff in their transportation locations such as dispatch offices, employee lunch/break rooms and/or bus garages.

Drivers, monitors and attendants who must have direct physical contact with a child must wear gloves.

When temperatures are above 45 degrees Fahrenheit, school buses should transport passengers with roof hatches or windows slightly opened to provide air flow.

### Transportation Schedules and Ridership

To reduce density on the school bus, ridership will be capped at one child per seat, or approximately 50% capacity, with the exception of shared household riders. To achieve this goal, certain school building start times may be staggered. In addition, public service carrier (CDTA) will assist with the High School transportation.

Student drop off and pick-up:

- When students embark and disembark the bus, they should follow social distancing protocols. Buses will be boarded and disembarked one bus at a time to minimize large congregations. This will increase the time required to load and unload buses at schools in the morning and afternoon.

### Social Emotional Well-Being

We recognize that the social emotional well-being of our students and staff during these challenging times is critically important. The District has made resources and referrals available to address the mental health, behavioral, and emotional needs of students, faculty, and staff when school reopens for in-person instruction. We have done this by providing:

- Tiers of Intervention for Social Emotional/Behavioral needs.
- Social-Emotional Development and Learning (SEDL) Committee will provide
  - Updated Community Agency referral/contact/procedure information to support staff.
  - Provide a list of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Resources to address adult social-emotional needs.
- Use of building-level social emotional teams to:
  - Use building data to identify students already targeted for social-emotional and behavioral needs to develop specific follow-up plans
  - Share simple screening tool for teachers to use with parents and students to gather information on current social-emotional/behavioral functioning. \*ENL staff will collaborate on these efforts to ensure there are versions for parents that require translation.
  - Develop a plan for how social emotional curriculum (SecondStep K-8) will be delivered in different models of the reopening plan (in-person, remote, hybrid).
  - Develop virtual /video pre-set of what to expect as same and different for reentry to share out with families.\*ENL staff will collaborate on these efforts to ensure there are versions for parents that require translation.
  - Utilize resources from the SEDL Committee to develop common language, scripts, and response protocols for the building to address anticipated emotional/behavioral needs to be shared out with all staff including monitors, TAs, cafeteria staff and transportation staff.
  - The district-wide and Building Level Comprehensive Development School Counseling Program Plan has informed the comprehensive developmental school counseling program plan, which has been reviewed and updated to meet current needs.

The District addresses professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on how to talk with and support students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, as well as provide support for developing coping and resilience skills for students, faculty, and staff. This is addressed by our

- SEDL Committee
  - Monthly Committee meetings
  - SEDL shared google folders and Website with resources/materials available to all staff.
- Consultants to the District: focusing on Trauma and Emotional Supports
  - Building a trauma-informed culture to support connection, healing and restorative justice practices.
  - Developing and sustaining emotional/behavioral supports and interventions.
- Equity Committee (2020-2021)
  - Building a culture to support culturally responsive practices and core competencies for engaging in conversations around equity and racism.
- New Teacher Mentor Program
- Professional Development Planning Committee

## School Schedules

All students will receive a full schedule of courses as required by the New York State Education Department for their grade level. This includes students who are learning in an in-person model, hybrid model or completely remote model. Essential components of elementary and secondary schedules are outlined below.

### Elementary (K-5)

The standard elementary schedule for students in Kindergarten through Grade 5, learning either in-person or remotely will minimally include the following:

- Reading - 60 minutes for Reading daily
  - In addition to the Reading times above, students also participate in the following:
  - Read Aloud
  - Shared Reading
  - Phonics Workshop for K-2 students
  - Word Study for grades 3-5 students
- Writing - 45 minutes daily
- Mathematics - 60 minutes daily
- Science - 40 minutes every other day and integrated into Reading, Writing and Mathematics
- Social Studies - 40 minutes every other day and integrated into Reading, Writing and Mathematics
- Intervention/Enrichment - 15 minutes daily
- Art/Music/Physical Education/Library - with some modifications

### Secondary (6-12)

The standard schedule for students in Grades 6-12, learning either in person or remotely will minimally include the following (subject to change based upon students' individual program choices):

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Science
- Other Grade Specific Courses (i.e. Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses, Health, Foreign Language, etc.)
- Art/Music/Physical Education/Library - with some modifications
- Lunch to be delivered flexibly this year

The District is considering staggered start and end times for some of its schools to accommodate transportation requirements. Once the District confirms the number of families choosing remote instruction, final determinations regarding school start and end times. All schedules will be posted on the website and shared with families as soon as practicable.

## School Activities

### Extracurriculars

All clubs/extracurricular activities will be virtual in nature for the first semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. Advisors will need to submit written plans to the district office for each club/extracurricular activity outlining the manner in which it will be delivered virtually. The goal will be to resume all clubs/extracurricular activities in person as soon as possible on or after the first day of the second semester, if such clubs/extracurricular activities can be conducted in a safe environment with appropriate social distancing protocols.

For Interscholastic sports, we will follow the direction of New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHAA).

### Afterschool Programming

At this time, there will be no after school programming in-person at our schools. This will allow enough time for the proper cleaning protocols to take place.

Virtual after school programming may be offered in a limited fashion.

## Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism

Student attendance will be taken for all students using the District's student management system. Teachers will take and report attendance on a period by period basis, as required by the New York State Education Department. Any student identified as "at risk" for chronic absenteeism will receive district interventions targeted at improving attendance. This applies to all students including those learning in-person, in the secondary hybrid model or via remote learning.

## Technology and Connectivity

The District is committed to providing equitable access to technology and internet connectivity.

The District has sent surveys home to all families and staff in the district to determine level of access to devices and high speed internet. Additionally, the building principals have worked with their building teams to make contact with all families and staff regarding this and have reported back to the district. Buildings principals and their teams are responsible for keeping this information up to date.

The District has provided devices to any student or staff member who needs a device and will continue to do so as needs arise. The District is not only moving towards a 1:1 model but also allowing for BYOD (Bring Your Own Device).

The District is continuing to work to find solutions so all students have equitable access to high speed internet. We have put access points in all parking lots, playgrounds, and fields of all of our buildings. We have worked with the City of Troy and Massive Mesh to provide free wifi in a number of public areas throughout the city. Finally, we are providing families with support to take advantage of free or discounted opportunities with vendors like Spectrum, Massive Mesh, Verizon, etc. to get internet access into their homes. The District will also utilize phones and Google Voice to connect live with students who do not have internet access. Work can be downloaded onto devices and provided to students who cannot access the internet through the various options provided, or hard copies of work will be

delivered to students when necessary. We are also in the process of procuring additional hotspots to deploy to families still without internet access.

Students will continue to have access to multiple modalities for learning. Teachers and staff will continue to receive training and embedded support on effectively integrating technology into all modalities of instruction. The district technology coaches and building technology liaisons will oversee most of this work.

Students will have all of the hardware, software and training they need to actively and successfully participate in in-person, remote, and virtual learning.

## Teaching and Learning

The school calendar typically includes staff-only days before students arrive at school. Acknowledging the challenges that our teachers and staff have faced this spring delivering remote instruction under stressful circumstances, the District will focus these in-service days on providing support to staff in the areas of social-emotional health and technology integration.

As we enter the new school year, teachers will be encouraged to spend time building relationships, supporting students with the transition back to school, and teaching social distancing etiquette at developmentally appropriate levels.

When a remote or hybrid learning model is necessary, certain groups of students will be prioritized for in-person learning to the greatest extent possible. This includes, but is not limited to, special education students in self-contained settings and English language learners.

Assessing student learning gaps or areas of need will be critical. Formative assessment before a unit of instruction to assess student understanding of pre-requisite skills will be common practice.

Acknowledging that the typical content in a given grade level or course may need to be adjusted, content will be prioritized to ensure that students receive instruction for the prioritized learning standards, key understandings, and skills necessary for students' success in future study.

Grading practices will follow a standards-based framework at the Pre-kindergarten through sixth grade levels, and traditional grading models using percentages (0 - 100) at grades 7-12. Both approaches are designed to provide direct feedback regarding students' mastery of course content as it relates to the standards.

For information relating to teaching and learning in BOCES special education and Career and Technical Education programs, please see the BOCES website [www.questar.org](http://www.questar.org).

The District will be offering two options for families at both the elementary and secondary levels. Elementary families (K-5) will choose from a daily, in-person instruction model or a daily remote learning model. Secondary families (6-12) will choose from a hybrid model (two days of in-person

learning followed by two days of remote learning) or a daily remote learning model. Families will be asked to opt-in to the remote learning model.

### Elementary and Secondary In-person Instruction

(Daily for Students in K-5, Two Day Rotation for Students in 6-12)

Upon reopening, the number of students in each of our classrooms will be reduced to adhere to CDC guidance regarding proper social distancing.

Accommodating a six-foot radius between students may necessitate the identification of additional rooms and common-area spaces that can be converted into classrooms.

All instruction will continue to be aligned to the New York State Learning Standards.

To the extent possible, students will remain in small cohorts if/when leaving the classroom, such as for recess or any necessary transition, so as to reduce their exposure to additional students.

### Secondary In-Person (Hybrid) Instruction

At the secondary level (grades 6-12), after two days of in-person learning, students will rotate to two days of remote learning, following their personal schedule for that specific day in real time. Again, student schedules will remain the same whether instruction is in person or remote.

Teachers will work to ensure that remote teaching and learning opportunities build upon and extend classroom instruction. To ensure high-quality remote learning experiences, we will standardize the use of a single online learning platform and develop a common, coordinated set of guidelines for teachers to follow when using the platform with students. During days of remote instruction for secondary students, it is important to note that assignments will be able to be completed with limited resources.

New instruction will only be provided with direct support from a certified teacher. Consideration has been given to prioritizing hands-on and lab-based activities while students are onsite in school buildings. All instruction will continue to be aligned to the New York State Learning Standards.

### Daily Remote Instruction

For those families who choose the remote learning ONLY option, students will participate in a stand alone distance learning format. Families will be asked to commit to this format minimally for the first semester of the 2020-2021 academic year.

Students who choose the remote learning option will receive a combination of **Virtual Educational Opportunities** and **Continuity of Instruction**. **Virtual Educational Opportunities** include a wealth of resources relevant to a grade level and/or course of study, ensuring students can be intellectually engaged and continue practicing skills already mastered. **Continuity of Instruction** includes online learning opportunities designed and delivered by certified teachers that allow students to move forward with virtual instruction in course content and skills. Students will have a full schedule of classes as determined for their grade level by the New York State Education Department.

Instruction will be delivered at the elementary level using only Google Classroom and Seesaw. Teachers may deliver synchronous learning opportunities through Google Hangouts Meet only. Zoom is not an option as it is not Ed Law 2D compliant. All instruction will only be provided with direct support from a

certified teacher. Students will have opportunities to interact with teachers and other students in a number of ways, including but not limited to the following:

- Emails using the district issued e-mail addresses;
- Discussion boards where teachers and students can participate with each other in real time; or
- Google Hangouts/Meet for groups and meetings with individual students.

Teachers may use a host of supplemental tools to enhance their instruction (i.e. Dreambox Math, Reading Eggs, and other [digital resources](#)).

Remote instruction will be delivered at the secondary level using Google Classroom as the primary platform, with the use of other learning management systems (i.e. Apex, Edmentum, etc.) to enhance instruction as appropriate. We will develop a common, coordinated set of guidelines for teachers to follow when using online systems with students. Teachers may deliver synchronous learning opportunities through Google Hangouts Meet **only**. Zoom is not an option as it is not Ed Law 2D compliant. Instruction may include the use of pre-recorded video (e.g., Screencastify, Recorded Google Hangouts Meet, or other options as approved by the Technology Department) to ensure all students have the benefit of learning from a content expert.

New instruction will only be provided with direct support from a certified teacher. All instruction will continue to be aligned to the New York State Learning Standards.

During remote instruction for secondary students, it is important to note that assignments will be able to be completed with limited resources. Teachers are encouraged to create meaningful learning opportunities for students through the use of short instructional videos and by providing small-group and one on one virtual support as needed.

Please note, the district is prepared to pivot to a model that is completely virtual in nature for all students, should the district be required to close if directed at any time by New York State to do so.

## Special Education

Special Education services will address the provision of free appropriate public education (FAPE), consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those providing special education services, as follows:

- All Special Education Self-Contained classes will attend in-person daily.
- All accommodations, supports and services written in student IEP's will be provided
- e-Learning Log to document provision of Special Education services
- Ensure students and district personnel have access to instructional technology prior to the start of the school year in the event a remote or hybrid model is needed at anytime throughout the school year
- Establish protocols for how school personnel will check in with students with disabilities on non-academic matters (e.g. discussing the social emotional impact level when in the building, etc.)

- Develop a protocol to support students with IEPs who may need virtual special education services when in-person services resume - synchronous/asynchronous learning using ChromeBooks and delivered within a consistent schedule
- Develop protocols for IEP teams to determine if additional educational and/or related/compensatory services are needed and document information used to make determination.
- District will collaborate with tall outside providers to ensure services and accommodations are met in all programs.

#### Parent Engagement

- Ongoing collaboration with parents regarding Special Education services will be provided through, but not limited to, the following methods of delivery: phone calls, emails, letters from the PPS office, Prior Written Notice. ENL staff will collaborate on these efforts to ensure there are versions for parents that require translation.
- Provide trainings and guided practice for students and parents to ensure they can effectively access and use instructional technology at home, especially for those families who have struggled with engagement through virtual learning.
- Provide a presentation to parents to explain the Reopening Model, offerings a Virtual Special Education Open House for discussion and/or questions, creating a designated email for Special Education questions or concerns .

## Bilingual Education and World Languages

English Language Learners will be provided with equitable opportunities to fully participate in all models of instruction (in-person, hybrid, and remote). To ensure this, we have created an ENL Pandemic Response Team to ensure district, building, and ENL Department planning is responsive to the academic, social-emotional, and communication needs of our ELLs and their families as a result of school closures.

- To ensure NYS requirements for ELL Programs are being met and implemented K-12 as outlined in CR Part 154, the following steps will be taken:
  - o Develop ENL student schedules with building scheduling teams that reflect the required units of study as outlined in CR Part 154 K-12 based on the most recently measured English language proficiency level of each ELL
  - o Utilize district and ENL baseline assessment tools to determine areas of strengths and needs of ELLs related to their English language development to inform instruction and appropriate scaffolding
  - o Develop an instructional plan that ensures flexible means and modes of participation in hybrid, remote, and in-person learning that is responsive to the language and learning needs of ELLs
  - o Collaborate with District Technology Coaches to curate and develop high leverage, multimodal curriculum supports to address identified academic gaps of ELLs in English and home languages



- We will complete final steps of the NYS ELL Screening and Identification Process as outlined by CR Part 154 for newly enrolled students during COVID closure in 2019-2020 and newly enrolled students during the summer of 2020, including Kindergarteners utilizing the following guidelines:
  - Collaborate with district and building level administration to create in-person assessment protocol and schedule for formal NYSITELL administration of new entrants
  - Coordinate with District Data Coordinator on NERIC operations for NYSITELL answer sheet request and service
  - Notify parents, in their preferred language, staff and administration of NYSITELL results/ELL status
  - Digitize parent orientation process for new ENL families
  - Collaborate with building level scheduling teams to ensure ELL student schedules reflect mandated units of study for ELL services
  
- We will provide all communications to parents/guardians of ELLs in their preferred language and mode of communication to ensure that they have equitable access to critical information about their children's education. We will:
  - Utilize appointed district interpreters, Lexikeet Translation Service, and TalkingPoints platform to provide ongoing translation for families and students in their preferred language
  - Develop updated ENL family communication chart for each building that indicates the preferred mode and language of each family for all school-related communication
  - Develop ENL Family Website to centralize multilingual ENL Program information and tutorials to support families and students with technology
  - Collaborate with the District Communications Specialist to ensure all District communication is provided in the languages preferred by our families on all platforms utilized by TCSD.
  - Collaborate with guidance, counseling staff and district SEL committee to provide updated SEL assessments, supports, and resources in the preferred languages of our ELLs and their families
  
- We will provide professional learning opportunities for all administrators and staff on best practices and equitable instruction for ELLs. We will:
  - Collaborate with the Capital Region RBER-N resource specialists to schedule, design and provide ongoing PD specific to the needs of ELLs both in-person and remotely
  - Continue ENL participation on the TCSD Professional Development Committee to plan and provide ongoing professional development opportunities on topics, strategies and resources related to the needs of ELLs

## Staff

### Teacher and Principal Evaluation System

All teachers and principals will continue to be evaluated pursuant to the District's approved APPR plan.

### Certification, Incidental Teaching and Substitute Teaching

All teachers will hold valid and appropriate certificates for teaching assignment, except where otherwise allowable under the Commissioner's regulations (e.g., incidental teaching) or education law.

- We will continue to use incidental teaching when needed to staff classrooms.
- We will employ substitute teachers for the allowable number of days, to address staffing needs.

### Key References

- [State Education Department Issues Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 16, 2020)
- [State Education Department Presents Framework of Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 13, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, NYS Department of Health](#) (July 13, 2020)

### Additional References

- [Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) (June 26, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Food Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.](#) (June 26, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Office-Based Work during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.](#) (June 26, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Public Transportation Activities during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.](#) (June 26, 2020)
- [New York State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [New York State Education Department Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19 Website](#)

*Once finalized, reopening plans must be posted on the district's website. By July 31, 2020, districts will need to complete a survey through the Portal, providing NYSED with:*

- *A link to the public website where each school plan has been publicly posted*
- *A set of mandatory assurances that the reopening plan includes all of the mandatory elements outlined in the NYSED guidance*

*NOTE: Information submitted through the Portal will not include detailed narratives or descriptions of specific actions to be taken by a school or district as part of their reopening Plan; those details must be articulated in the materials that are publicly posted on the school/district website.*

*Also by July 31, 2020, districts must complete a short companion [Department of Health survey that includes a link to the publicly posted plan on the district/school website](#).*