



HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY

SAFE RETURN PLAN

June 2021 (updated 2/1/2022)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Safe Return Plan

A. Introduction	2
B. Schedule for Return	5
C. Conditions for Learning	6
Safety Mandates	6
Education	7
Physical Education	7
Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms	8
Transportation	8
Facilities	9
Food Services	10
Operations	10
Technology	10
Human Resources - Attendance	10
Screening and Testing	11
Contact Tracing	12
D. Conditions for Closure	13
Appendix A - Board Policy Updates	14
Appendix B - Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports	16
A. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Culture and Climate	16
B. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)	17
C. Wraparound Supports	17



I. Safe Return Plan

A. Introduction

As announced in the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) 's April 28, 2021 broadcast, in March 2021, President Biden signed the [Federal American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act, Public Law 117-2](#), into law. The ARP Act provides an additional \$122 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) to States and school districts to help safely reopen, sustain the safe operation of schools, and address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation's students. As with the previous ESSER funds available under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA), the purpose of the additional funding is to support local educational agencies (LEAs) in preparing for and responding to the impacts of COVID-19 on educators, students, and Families.

Section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act requires each District that receives ARP ESSER funds develop and make publicly available on the website, no later than 30 days after receiving ARP ESSER funds, a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools. The ARP Act requires a Safe Return Plan of all fund recipients, including those that have already returned to in-person instruction. Section 2001(i)(2) of the ARP Act requires that the LEA seek public comment on the Safe Return Plan and take those comments into account in the finalization of the Safe Return Plan. Under the interim final requirements published in [Volume 86, No. 76](#) of the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), an LEA must periodically, but no less frequently than every six months through September 30, 2023, review and, as appropriate, re, revise its Safe Return Plan.

According to those requirements, the District must submit to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and post on their website their Safe Return Plans by June 24, 2021. The NJDOE made available the ARP ESSER Fund applications available in EWEG on May 24, 2021. All the school systems will submit their Safe Return Plans to the NJDOE via EWEG. To assist school districts, the NJDOE provided a specific list of topics every school must answer and upload in EWEG by June 24, 2021.

On May 17, 2021, Governor Murphy announced that upon the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year, portions of Executive Order 175 allowing remote learning will be rescinded. This announcement means that schools will be required to provide full-day, in-person instruction as they were before the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The Governor also made it clear that NJDOE and the NJ Department of Health will share additional information regarding State requirements and guidance for the health and safety protocols recommended for the upcoming school year. While school districts must open buildings beginning in September of 2021, remote learning will only be permitted if there is a localized outbreak or another emergency. Additionally, parents and guardians will not be



HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY
SAFE RETURN PLAN
JUNE 2021 (LAST UPDATED 06/28/21)

allowed to opt their children out of in-person instruction as they could do this school year.

The Hudson County Schools of Technology followed [The HCST ReStart Plan](#) to successfully reopen schools with a hybrid schedule on April 19, 2021. HCST has organized a Safe Return Committee and Subcommittees to engage in collaborative sessions and brainstorm ideas and procedures for [Safe Return to In-Person Instruction & Continuity of Services](#) for September 2021.

The committees had representatives from the following groups:

- Board of Education Members;
- Senior Level Administrators;
- Principals and Supervisors;
- Specialists;
- Teachers;
- Maintenance and custodial personnel;
- Transportation personnel;
- Medical personnel;
- Hudson Regional Health Department;
- A representative from the various bargaining units; and
- Parents

The Safe Return Committees and Subcommittees reflected a diverse perspective due to its composition and allowed for the division tasks while providing guidance based on different expertise and views.

Department	Representative	Title
Superintendent's Office	Amy Lin-Rodriguez	Superintendent, HCST
Board Office	Joseph M. Muniz	Board Secretary, HCST
Business Office	Nicholas Fargo	Business Administrator, HCST
Curriculum & Instruction	Joseph Sirangelo	Director of Planning, Research & Evaluation, HCST
Safety/Transportation	John Shinnick	School Safety Specialist, Transportation Supervisor
Medical	Karen Fargo	School Nurse, HCST
Board of Education	Geraldine Perez	Board Member, HCST Board Member
Board of Education	Monica Fondora	Board Member, HCST Board Member
HCST Parent	Christine Harman	Parent Representative
NJEA	Elektra Paslowski	Union President



HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY
SAFE RETURN PLAN
JUNE 2021 (LAST UPDATED 06/28/21)

The district level Emergency Management Task Force was enhanced to further support our Safe Return effort.

Department	Representative	Title
Board of Education	Geraldine Perez	Board Member, UCBOE Administrator
Board of Education	Hugo Cabrera	Board Member, NBBOE Board Secretary
Board Office	Joseph M. Muniz	Board Secretary, HCST
Business Office	Nicholas Fargo	Business Administrator, HCST
Child Study Team	Ann Gherardi	Director of Special Education , HCST
Counselor/Curriculum	Carrie Rapaport	Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction, HCST
Communications	Caitlin Mota	Public Relations Representative, Vision Media
Curriculum & Instruction	Joseph Sirangelo	Director of Planning, Research & Evaluation, HCST
Facilities	Anthony D'Alessandro	Facilities Director, EWBC/EXP
	Wayne Zitt	Facilities Director, FJGC/NHC
Food Services	Mario M. Rodriguez III	Food Service Coordinator, HCST
Human Resources	Colleen Smith	Director of Personnel, HCST
Medical	Karen Fargo	School Nurse, FJGC
	Eileen Garrett	School Nurse, EWBC
Building Principals	Barbara Mendolla	Principal, CPHS/ATD
	Kathleen Young	Principal, HTHS/ACTE
	Allyson Krone	Principal, EXP MS
Safety/Transportation	John Shinnick	Asst. BA, School Safety Specialist, Transportation Supervisor
Superintendent's Office	Amy Lin-Rodriguez	Superintendent, HCST
Teacher Representative	Daniel Greco	Instructor, HTHS
Technology	Christine Carroll	Network & IT Support Services Coordinator, HCST
	Asuncion Los Banos	Data Management and Technology Resource Coordinator, HCST



B. Schedule for Return

On May 17, 2021, Governor Murphy announced that upon the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year, portions of Executive Order 175 allowing remote learning will be rescinded. This announcement means that schools will be required to provide full-day, in-person instruction as they were before the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The Governor also made it clear that NJDOE and the NJ Department of Health will share additional information regarding State requirements and guidance for the health and safety protocols recommended for the upcoming school year. While school districts must open buildings beginning in September of 2021, remote learning will only be permitted if there is a localized outbreak or another emergency. Additionally, parents and guardians will not be allowed to opt their children out of in-person instruction as they could do this school year.

Important Dates:

- **September 7, 2021** - On-Site Faculty In-Service
- **September 8, 2021** - School's Open

2021-2022

July '21						
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September '21						
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November '21						
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May '22						
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June '22						
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District Calendar - Notable Dates

July 2 - July 9, 2021	4th of July Break
September 6, 2021	Labor Day
September 7, 2021	On-site Faculty In-Service
September 8, 2021	Schools Open, see school calendar for reporting
October 7, 2021	Early Dismissal - Students Only, Staff PD*
October 8, 2021	Virtual Faculty & Staff In-Service, No Students*
October 11, 2021	Columbus Day
November 2, 2021	Election Day
November 4-5, 2021	NJEA Teacher Convention
November 11	In-School Veteran's Day Remembrance
November 24, 2021	Early Dismissal - District
November 25-26, 2021	Thanksgiving Recess
December 23, 2021	Early Dismissal - Students Only
December 24-31, 2021	Winter Recess
January 17, 2022	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 14, 2022	Delayed Opening - Students Only, Staff PD*
February 18-21, 2022	Presidents' Weekend
March 3, 2022	Early Dismissal - Students Only, Staff PD*
March 4, 2022	Virtual Faculty & Staff In-Service, No Students*
March 18, 2022	District-wide Closure (in lieu of Veteran's Day)
April 15-22, 2022	Spring Break
May 26, 2022	Early Dismissal - Students Only, Staff PD*
May 27, 2022	Virtual Faculty & Staff In-Service, No Students*
May 30, 2022	Memorial Day
June 24, 2022	Tentative 180th Day of School for Students
*Some in-service will be hosted on-site	
*Perkins Advisory Board Meetings	
6.19 May 2021 - Board Approved	

Calendar is Subject to Change Due to Inclement Weather, Health-Related Concerns, or Extenuating Circumstances - 2 Snow Days Built into Schedule

For more information visit www.hcstonline.org



C. Conditions for Learning

Conditions for learning involve the social, emotional, and environmental factors that can impact educator capacity to teach and student capacity to learn, including standards for maintaining healthy and safe school conditions.

Topic	Actionable Objectives	Person(s) Responsible
<p>Safety Mandates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and Procedures: health procedures led by school nurse, CDC guidelines and adherence, collaboration with HC Office of Emergency, Hudson Regional Health and the County of Hudson. • Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students and staff identified as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including older adults and individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions. • Policy Updates, see Appendix A. • Daily Health Screenings: Staff and students will be screened daily before entering the building. This screening will include a mask check, a temperature check, and a symptom review. Detailed procedures for this are currently being reviewed and updated on a daily basis. This process includes signage, floor markings, thermal imaging and temperature checks. • Disinfecting/Sanitizing: Cleaning protocols and procedures will be done daily and with deep disinfecting as scheduled. All classrooms will be equipped with sanitizer, masks and disinfectant and all vehicles will be cleaned and fogged daily. • Face Coverings: As of June 2021, Executive Order no. 175, remains in place. The Order includes an exception to masking requirements in public outdoor settings and during periods of extreme heat. <u>Masks will be required by students and staff while on school property and while in school vehicles.</u> We will do what is possible to make necessary accommodations for those with medical conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Safety Specialist • School Restart Committee



HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY
SAFE RETURN PLAN
JUNE 2021 (LAST UPDATED 06/28/21)

<p>Education</p>	<p>In September the Hudson County Schools of Technology will return to a full day of in-person instruction, and additional support will be provided for our entire learning community through the existing staff's use of social emotional lessons and with internal and contracted providers who will assist with clinical support, see Appendix B.</p> <p>Provide professional development opportunities for staff, students, and their families to maintain distance from each other in the school. Educate staff, students, and their families at the same time and explain why this is important. Teach and reinforce healthy hygiene practices. Train staff on healthy hygiene practices so they can teach these to students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Educational Administrator ● Certified Academic Instructors ● Certified CTE Instructors ● CST Members School Counselors ● School Nurse ● Support Staff
<p>Physical Education</p>	<p>SHAPE America's <i>2020-2021 School Reentry Considerations: K-12 Physical Education, Health Education, and Physical Activity</i> is a supportive instruction using one of three models of learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-school instruction with social distancing <p>This is supported by our state organization, NJAPHERD and will be utilized as our guide to provide our students with the most efficient and effective program of student learning in all models mentioned above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to address all five National Standards for K-12 Physical Education by selecting associated activities that require little or no use of shared equipment by students. ● Educators may need to shift the focus of their curriculum to Standard 3 (health-enhancing fitness), Standard 4 (personal and social responsibility) and Standard 5 (value of physical activity) and incorporate activities for Standard 1 (motor skills and movement patterns) and Standard 2 (movement concepts) that are safe and appropriate. NOTE: In some situations, it may not be possible to address all Grade-Level Outcomes due to the constraints of social distancing. ● Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a critical component and key component of health and physical education instruction. In preparing for school reentry, intentionally incorporating SEL will be essential to supporting students through the COVID-19 pandemic. The utilization of other staff members (e.g., school counselor, school nurse, social worker, school psychologist, other teachers) to share SEL-specific skills being taught in support of our programs will be utilized. <p>Our top priority is to prepare an environment for safe and supportive instruction in physical education, health education, and physical activity. In doing so spaces within classrooms, gymnasiums and outdoor spaces will be marked/staggered to ensure social distancing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Locker rooms will not be utilized. ● Masks will be worn prior/post physical activity. ● Students will wear proper footwear and clothing to accommodate comfort when moving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administrators ● Certified Instructors ● CST Members School Counselors ● School Nurse ● Support Staff



HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY
SAFE RETURN PLAN
JUNE 2021 (LAST UPDATED 06/28/21)

<p>Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms</p>	<p>Schools in the district will allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable. If a school in the district is not able to maintain this physical distance, additional modifications should be considered including using physical barriers between desks, turning desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other), and/or having students sit on only one side of the table, spaced apart.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When social distance is difficult or impossible, face coverings will be required for students, and face coverings are always required for visitors and staff unless it will inhibit the individual's health. ● All instructional and non-instructional rooms in schools and district facilities must comply with social distancing standards to the maximum extent practicable. ● Use of shared objects should be limited when possible or cleaned between uses. ● All indoor facilities will have adequate ventilation, including operational heating and ventilation systems where appropriate. Recirculated air must have a fresh air component, windows will be opened, if practical, if air conditioning is not provided, and filter(s) for A/C units must be maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations. ● Hand sanitizing stations or kits with alcohol-based hand sanitizers are prepared and maintained (at least 60% alcohol): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer). ○ At entrances and exits of buildings. Near lunchrooms and toilets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building Administrators ● Instructional Staff ● Director of Special Education ● Facilities Directors ● Maintenance ● Janitors ● Security ● Other Operations Personnel
<p>Transportation</p>	<p><u>Masks will be required by students and staff while on school property and while in school vehicles as per Executive Order 175 Requirements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhanced routing to ensure social distancing, maximum efficiency and emergency procedures. ● All students and staff will be required to wear masks and exercise social distancing/spacing on our buses. Students will disembark on a staggered schedule to expedite safe entry with clear signage on buses and entrances. ● All buses will be equipped with sanitizer, masks and disinfectant; all vehicles will be cleaned daily and fogged after each run. ● Use of natural ventilation (i.e., opening windows) to increase outdoor air dilution of indoor air will be practiced. ● Post signs and reminders at entry doors and in strategic places providing instruction on social distancing, changes in processes, hand hygiene, use of cloth face coverings or masks, and cough and sneeze etiquette. ● Provide training and other administrative policies to prevent the spread of COVID-19: use of mask, social distancing, disinfecting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transportation Supervisor ● Transportation Management



HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY
SAFE RETURN PLAN
JUNE 2021 (LAST UPDATED 06/28/21)

<p>Facilities</p>	<p>All facilities are safe, clean and instructionally sound; We have instituted all safety precautions including: entrance screening, temperature checks, social distancing and directional signage, mask requirements, partitions, outdoor instructional areas, airflow/HVAC inspections with increased cleaning schedules; all classrooms will be fogged daily.</p> <p>HCST per the Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) standards, all schools are covered by the Indoor Air Quality standard (N.J.A.C. 12:100-13).</p> <p>The standard provides requirements for HVAC inspection, maintenance and maintaining acceptable IAQ indicators, i.e., temperature, carbon dioxide levels, etc. There is extensive information on the PEOSH website, including guidance, checklists and a model of a written Indoor Air Quality program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical guides or markings added to help ensure that staff and students remain at least six feet apart in lines to enter or exit the building and at other times, and require utilization of face coverings when social distancing (six feet) cannot be maintained for individuals waiting to enter or exit a building while providing accommodations as appropriate for young students or students with disabilities ● Isolation rooms identified and required at all facilities ● Visitors entering the building upon check-in, complete the Mandatory Health Questionnaire and must wear face masks; they are further escorted by security designated area(s) ● Maintain Health Survey distributed to any individual entering the building and provide copy for nurse's files ● All Maintenance staff wear masks while working ● Continue to provide guidance on how to prevent spread of germs ● Implement additional measures that reflect the recommended standards of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) ● In conjunction with the School Safety Specialist, guide personnel who wishes to come on-site with building safety regulations ● Professional Development Training provided for all cleaning/custodial staff to increase awareness of Coronavirus (COVID-19) to familiarize staff members with precautionary measures needed to safeguard themselves and prevent the spread of the virus ● School Safety Specialist to explore options for protective gear available for staff; prepare staff with technology tools and training ● Plan school closure procedures for an non-essential employees ● Schedule rotation of Full-time operations personnel to address specific building needs and provide security ● Individual workspaces and office spaces cleaned daily when occupied ● Restrooms, lounges and Security areas are cleaned and disinfected daily ● Cleaning products used are approved by the CDC. This includes Lysol, disinfecting wipes and Envirox ● Inventory of existing cleaning supplies and products at all schools, and place order for additional needed materials ● Procedures in place to clean all HVAC vents in classrooms and offices. Replace air filters quarterly. Work order to document ● BMS controls all outside air dampers. Dampers are set to take in 15% fresh outside air. This can be increased or decreased. ● HVAC: All units have a journal containing all maintenance, repair and filter changes by date and description. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilities Directors ● Maintenance ● Janitors ● Security ● Other Operations Personnel
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HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY
SAFE RETURN PLAN
JUNE 2021 (LAST UPDATED 06/28/21)

<p>Food Services</p>	<p>The HCST Meal Program will continue to be offered to our students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adherence to all CDC standards and sanitation recommendations to ensure everyone’s safety. • All food service workers have been trained in handwashing, disinfecting and all COVID-19 precautions and procedures. • Menus will be available online on the Food Service Website, check www.hcstonline.org for updates. • All meals will be individually wrapped and separated in a Grab-and-Go style. Suspension of salad bars and service lines in all locations. • Staggered food service periods to be scheduled with increased cleaning and disinfection planned. • Meals will be served in individual, non-styrofoam containers. • All common areas will be clearly marked and spaced to support social distancing measures. • ID badges will be displayed and visible to make checkout at the register faster and contactless. • Virtual Learning Students will have meal packages available for pick-up at their school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Service Coordinator • Food Service Managers • Line Cooks • Cafeteria Aides
<p>Operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations personnel to be assigned in accordance with updated procedures. • Professional development opportunities to prevent the spread of COVID-19. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation Supervisor • Dispatchers • Mechanics • Security • Other Operations Personnel
<p>Technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCST is 100% one-to-one learning environment, providing students with Chromebooks and staff with laptops appropriate to their field • All Instructors planning class content in Google platform • Students have equitable access to Google Classroom and Zoom, as determined by each instructor • Continue to coordinate with partners and share community information through email, SMS messaging, robocalls, website, community social media networks • Weekly reminders to community of Tech Department updates, newsletters and links for professional development • Technology Services available to assist students and staff through Tech Help Desk: http://www.hcstonline.org/technology-services/ Student technology needs will be monitored for the entire school year through HCST Tech Request system. • Initiate student attendance procedures as planned through PowerSchool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Coordinators • Technology Leads • Other Support Staff in collaboration with Educational Administration • Attendance Officers
<p>Human Resources - Attendance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees will work a 5 day or 40 hour work week (according to contract) with in-person assignments determined by their immediate supervisors. Regular attendance procedures will be followed • Collect, manage, maintain and transmit Payroll as necessary • Maintain faculty and staff attendance in collaboration with school and department administrators • Provide professional development resources to the community • Redirect any inquiries to trained healthcare professionals from the Communicable Disease Service toll-free 1-800-222-1222 • Assign essential employee roles as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Personnel • Payroll Specialist • Attendance Coordinator



HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY
SAFE RETURN PLAN
JUNE 2021 (LAST UPDATED 06/28/21)

<p>Screening and Testing</p>	<p>Anyone who is sick should stay home from school. Anyone who suspects they are ill and received a COVID-19 test should not attend or visit school while awaiting test results. Should the test result be negative, they should follow normal illness exclusion rules (typically 24 hours without fever before they can return to school). If a clinician has a suspicion that the illness may be COVID-19 despite a negative test, they should follow general guidance related to COVID-19 – ie, unless they were immunocompromised, they would wait at least 10 days from symptom onset and at least one day from resolution of symptoms prior to returning. If the individual should be quarantined based upon a known exposure, then they would need to wait 14 days from the last possible exposure prior to returning.</p> <p>A negative test is not necessary to return to school. CDS follows CDC guidelines, which provide that persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 10 days* have passed since symptom onset, and• At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, and• Other symptoms have improved. <p>See https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html. *A limited number of persons with severe illness may produce replication-competent viruses beyond 10 days, that may warrant extending duration of isolation for up to 20 days after symptom onset. Consider consultation with infection control experts.</p> <p>Persons infected with SARS-CoV-2 who never develop COVID-19 symptoms may discontinue isolation and other precautions 10 days after the date of their first positive RT-PCR test for SARS-CoV-2 RNA.</p> <p>CDC has recommended an isolation space for any individual who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms. A designated space within each school has been identified where persons with COVID-19 symptoms can be separated from other students and staff while they wait to be picked up from school. School nurses and other healthcare providers should use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for sick people.</p> <p>As provided in CDS guidance, if individuals have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, meaning they are within 6 feet of someone for at least ten minutes, they should self-quarantine for 14 days from the date of last exposure before returning to school. In the case of a positive COVID test, local health departments, working in coordination with school districts, will conduct contact tracing to determine whether or not an individual has been in close contact with a student and advise any affected individuals, via trained contact tracers, to self-quarantine for 14 days. The local health department in coordination with the school will assess the specific circumstances of the individual with the positive test to determine those individuals that have been in close contact and need to self-quarantine – this may or may not include all students in the class.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Safety Specialist• School Nurses• Approved Designee
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<p>Contact Tracing</p>	<p>The NJDOE Guidance does not include any “anticipated minimum standards” for contact tracing. However, all school and district administrators, school safety specialists, counselors, and any other staff deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee will be provided information regarding the role of contact tracing conducted by State, county, and local officials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School officials will engage in the expertise of their school nurses on the importance of contact tracing. • HCST will work in collaboration with the local Boards of Health in order to perform the needed tasks involved in contact tracing. • District administrators and school nurses will provide information to the local Board(s) of Health during contact tracing. School nurses in each school will serve as the primary contact with the Board(s) of Health. • School Nurses will, at minimum, complete or have completed, in coordination with the Board of Health, Contact Tracing instruction including a certification course by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), a training course for The New Jersey Department of Health Communicable Disease Reporting and Surveillance System (CDRSS), and a training course for the CommCare digital data collection platform (training provided by Rutgers University). • As outlined in <i>The Road Back</i>, if the school district becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for COVID-19, district officials will immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality. Notification procedures will be consistent with the district’s contact tracing policy to the maximum extent practicable. <p>HCST will continue to work with the local health department(s) and follow CDC guidelines for illness reporting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Safety Specialist • School Nurses • School Counselors
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D. Conditions for Closure



D. Conditions for Closure

As guided by the New Jersey Department of Health, closure is a local decision that should be made by school administrators in consultation with HCST's local public health. While it is not possible to account for every scenario that we may encounter over the course of the school year, the NJDOH has provided scenarios that may help inform the decision for when schools should temporarily close.



Appendix A - Board Policy Updates

File Code	Title	Rationale
1250 (AMENDED)	Visitors	Amended to prohibit most visitors during the pandemic recovery. Visitors may be admitted only upon the approval of the building administrator and must observe social distancing rules and wear face masks while in school.
3510 (AMENDED)	Operation and Maintenance of Plant	Amended to include cleaning and disinfecting measures outlined in the guidance for facilities and school buses.
3541.33 (AMENDED)	Transportation Safety	Amended to include an overview of cleaning, disinfecting and social distancing measures outlined in the guidance for school buses.
5125.1 (NEW)	Electronic Student Data and Records	Rules and regulations under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) pertaining to Electronic Student Data and Records.
5113 (AMENDED)	Attendance, Absences and Excuses	Under section titled: "Attendance" added the list (A-E) of excused absences. Also, added the definition of "chronic absenteeism". Under section titled "Unexcused Absences for Students in Special Education" added the requirement that the day and academic year be the same for general and special education students. Also added a paragraph at the end of the section pertaining to attendance and the IEP.
5141	Health	Added a section titled: Students with Epilepsy or a Seizure Disorder. Updated legal references.
5141.2 (AMENDED)	Illness	Amended to cover Contact Tracing.



HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY
SAFE RETURN PLAN
JUNE 2021 (LAST UPDATED 06/28/21)

5141.3 (AMENDED)	Health Examinations and Immunizations	Amended to cover screenings, personal protective equipment and social distancing.
3512 (AMENDED)	Use of Communication and Information Technology Equipment	Added appropriate measures and precautions to prevent the loss, theft, damage, and/or unauthorized use of equipment. Also, amended to include: staff members legal and financial responsibility for the replacement, loss, or damage of equipment.
5114 (AMENDED)	Suspension/Expulsion	Added section titled "Last Chance Agreement". Also, included "Cyber-Harassment" as a disruptive behavior.
4151.3 (AMENDED)	Personal Illness and Injury/ Health and Hardship (Instructional)	Removed language under section titled "COVID-19 Travel" and added "Return (to NJ) from Vacation/Travel Protocol" based on current CDC guidelines.
4251.3 (AMENDED)	Personal Illness and Injury/ Health and Hardship (Non-Instructional)	Removed language under section titled "COVID-19 Travel" and added "Return (to NJ) from Vacation/Travel Protocol" based on current CDC guidelines.
5141.5 (NEW)	Mental Health and Well-Being	Policy explains the district's commitment to its students' mental health. It outlines how the district will support its students, its ongoing commitment to staff training, and how it will work with the wider community to promote student wellbeing.



Appendix B - Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports

A. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Culture and Climate

In addition to the programs and activities already in place, training will be provided to all School Counselors, Nurses, and all Child Study Team members in areas of SEL in collaboration with the Hudson County Consortium for Social Emotional Learning.

The district remains committed to fostering positive social-emotional development and incorporating those elements into the instructional day for the benefit of both staff and students. District staff are encouraged to participate in the suggested SafeSchools Training modules. The training sessions are ongoing.

Training videos are being developed for students and parents to inform parents on technology topics such as Google Classroom, Streaming, Chromebook Use, etc.

Social stories will be utilized for teaching about mask wearing, hand washing and socially distancing. This will be beneficial to the special education students.

Several parent and staff surveys have been administered in order to solicit feedback and promote general well-being and a sense of community.

District staff will continue to have the opportunity to participate in professional development sessions related to wellness and self-care during in-service days throughout the 2021-22 school year.

HCST's website and social media platforms are used regularly to communicate with families and stress the importance of SEL. Families and staff have the opportunity to engage in activities that promote wellness and self-care.

HCST maximizes the efficient use of resources to improve support for all classroom teachers and targets interventions to students based on their needs. Through regular monitoring of student progress, along with data-based decision making by problem-solving teams and providing a continuum of supports and interventions based on student performance, the district offers a variety of evidence-based practices designed to improve achievement and promote positive student outcomes. The tiered system involves the systematic development of nine essential components in schools for the effective implementation of the framework with fidelity and sustainability. Those components include:

1. Effective district and school leadership;
2. Family and community engagement;
3. Positive school culture and climate;
4. High-quality learning environments, curricula, and instructional practices;
5. Universal screening;
6. Data-based decision making;
7. Collaborative problem-solving teams;
8. Progress monitoring; and
9. Staff professional development



B. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Each school building has its own I&RS (Intervention and Referral Services) Team that assists staff in coordinating interventions for students and their families in the areas of academic, behavioral, and social emotions support.

The district utilizes LinkIt! platform (which houses assessments from various programs) in order to benchmark student progress and engage in data analytics to monitor student progress and identify areas of need. Staff regularly engage in collaborative sessions in order to determine the focus of instruction.

The district Child Study Teams continue to reach out to students who may be at risk, and will provide in-person, by appointment, contact upon school reopening.

C. Wraparound Supports

Wraparound programs such as Remediation, serve to differentiate instruction to struggling/at-risk students as a preventative measure which supports the general education program. Instruction is provided during the school day and after-school, when feasible.

School climate surveys will be administered by each individual building during the course of the school year. The results of the survey will be reviewed by each school's School Climate Committee as well as the district's SEL committee and goals will be determined moving forward.