



HUDSON COUNTY SCHOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY

RESTART PLAN
July 2020

*Updated 04/01/21
policies*



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I. PREPAREDNESS: Restart Plan

A. Introduction

Since the Hudson County Schools of Technology closed its buildings to students in March, we have collaboratively planned with our various departments, Building Principals and Facilities Directors to ensure safety protocols while welcoming back our employees. More recently, our district has been working diligently to develop a comprehensive *return to school* plan that addresses both safety and instructional guidance as outlined in the New Jersey Department of Education’s publication of [The Road Back](#) issued on June 27, 2020.

The committee has developed a HCST Restart Plan which will be posted to our website www.hcstonline.org. The requirements outlined in the NJDOE Guidance and incorporated into this Plan are controlled by Executive Order of the Governor of New Jersey and are subject to change.

In an effort to cover all perspectives, we have assembled a Restart Committee that includes parents, teachers, school nurse, administrators, support staff, students and board members to ensure a seamless transition with facilities, transportation services, academic curriculum and educational programming.

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	Daniel Greco/Vincent Nardiello	Union President / Union Designee



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The district level Emergency Management Task Force was enhanced and renamed the Pandemic Response Team to further support.

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	School Counselor/Supervisor of 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
	Joseph Giammarella	Principal, HTHS
	Allyson Krone	Principal, EXP MS
Safety/Transportation	John Shinnick	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

The return to in-person instruction is categorized through a transition of 5 Phases to allow a safe and gradual re-entry to in-person instruction in HCST facilities during a Monday - Thursday; Friday is scheduled as a virtual work/learning/disinfecting day. NJDOE-mandated Full-time Virtual Learning Model is offered as an option for all students. Essential employees will be present in all of the facilities.

Adult, ESL and Post-Secondary Programming will adhere to the local building procedures and reopening schedules of each respective Board of Education policy. Grant-based Programs will be reinstated as per administrative scheduling.

Student Re-Entry

Phase	Actionable Objectives for Hybrid Learning Model
Phase 1	25% of student population report for in-person instruction with students assigned by alphabetical breakdown and reporting one full day per week* with 4 days of virtual instruction*. This schedule will be followed for the first marking period, until reassessed. <i>*Subject to change based on parental/guardian Commitment to Learning Consent responses.</i>
Phase 2	50% of students report for in-person instruction with students assigned by alphabetical breakdown and reporting 2 days per week* with 3 days of virtual instruction*. This schedule will be guided by successful implementation of Phase 1 and led by current health data. <i>*Subject to change based on parental/guardian Commitment to Learning Consent responses</i>
Phase 3	75% of students report for in-person instruction with students assigned alphabetically and reporting 3 days per week* with 2 days virtual instruction*. <i>*Subject to change based on parental/guardian Commitment to Learning Consent responses</i>
Phase 4	100% of students report for in-person instruction for 4 days with one day virtual instruction.
Phase 5	Return to normal 5 day in-person instruction.

Important Dates:

September 9-24, 2020 All instruction will be virtual to provide initial student instruction in accordance with NJDOE standards for learning and orientation with ample time for securing PPE equipment, staff professional development and training. Transportation will be further assessed to ensure appropriate social distancing measures. In-person orientation dates and/or device distribution will be scheduled by each school during this week. Hybrid/In-Person Instruction will begin **Monday, September 28, 2020.**



Parents/Guardians are offered the opportunity to choose from one of the following learning models for **THE FIRST FULL MARKING PERIOD (September 9, 2020 through November 13, 2020)**.

Choice 1: HYBRID Learning Model (on-site and virtual)

- Students will receive 5 days of instruction per week:
 - **1 day of on-site** instruction (scheduled Monday - Thursday) *subject to change based on parental/guardian Commitment to Learning Consent responses; 25% of students per day assigned by alphabetical breakdown to be provided*
 - **4 days virtual** through Google Classroom platform
- Lessons will be delivered for in-person instruction as well as through live (synchronous) and online/recorded (asynchronous) instruction.
- Special Education Accommodations will be made as needed; the Child Study Team will continue to review IEPs and 504s to make adjustments pertinent to the current learning environment.
- Parents/Guardians may opt-out to switch to the Virtual Model, at any time, with authorization from the student's school principal.

Choice 2: Full-Time VIRTUAL Learning Model

- Students will receive 5 days of virtual online instruction through Google Classroom platform.
- Lessons will be developed and delivered through live (synchronous) and online/recorded (asynchronous) instruction.
- Special Education Accommodations will be made as needed; the Child Study Team will continue to review IEPs and 504s to make adjustments pertinent to the current learning environment.
- Parents/Guardians may NOT switch to the Hybrid Learning Model within the current marking period. *Commitment to the virtual model is for the **first full marking period**.*
- Prior to our second marking period, parents will be able to opt-in to the Hybrid Learning Model for the second marking period (November 16, 2020 - January 29, 2021), assuming State and Federal guidelines allow in-person education.

Staff Re-Entry

HCST's Emergency Management Team developed a Gradual Re-entry Plan for Attendance, COVID-19 Health-Related Closure in May 2020. Through this plan, 12-month employees and administration have been exercising a gradual return into the HCST facilities.

Those reentering are to complete the standard at-work sign-in procedures for that day. All are required to wear a mask, practice social distancing and fill-out the mandatory health questionnaire upon entrance to the facility. Each building's Facility Director is to be informed of work areas utilized to ensure proper disinfecting of the areas. When not scheduled on-site, staff members are still responsible for virtual attendance check-in as directed by their immediate supervisor.



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.

Areas of Concern	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 on Fridays when all staff and students are virtual. All classrooms will be equipped with sanitizer, masks and disinfectant and all vehicles will be cleaned and fogged daily. ● Face Coverings: As per the latest mandate by Governor Murphy, “Students must wear masks in school buildings unless they have a medical condition or certain disabilities.” <u>Masks will be required by students and staff while on school property and while in school vehicles</u>, with outdoor Physical Education and while eating lunch as the exceptions. We will do what is possible to make necessary accommodations for those with medical conditions. In the interest of the safety and health of our entire community, we ask that those unable or unwilling to wear a mask on school property opt for the Full-Time Virtual Learning choice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School Safety Specialist ● School Restart Committee



<p>Education</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"> ● The district will implement and execute a hybrid school schedule consisting of both in-person and virtual learning in compliance with directives set forth by the State of New Jersey Department of Education. ● All students will be offered to participate in a virtual learning only curriculum. ● The hybrid schedule will allow students to meet the minimum standards set forth by the state of New Jersey in regards to instructional time. ● Student attendance will be monitored and recorded daily to ensure compliance with the 180 day school year requirement. ● Students eligible for support services through an IEP or 504 plan will continue to receive individualized accommodations for which they are eligible. Case managers and counselors will continue to assist staff and students in meeting the educational and emotional needs of the student population by utilizing all available resources. ● The hybrid class schedule will accommodate the planning needs of staff members by giving them common planning time daily. This time can be used to cultivate future lessons, conduct follow-up with individual students, parents and support staff, pursue professional development opportunities, participate in district and school PLC's, prepare virtual lessons or activities within Google Classroom, etc. ● In addition to taking the steps listed to protect students' and educators' physical health, the impact of social isolation on both educators and students is considered in Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports, see Appendix B. ● All field trips, extra-curricular and use of facilities will be suspended until further notice. 	<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 ● Virtual learning ● Hybrid learning (defined as a combination of in-school instruction with social distancing and virtual learning) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administrators ● Certified Instructors ● CST Members ● School Counselors ● School Nurse ● Support Staff



	<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. 	
<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. This will be achieved by ensuring students are seated at least six feet apart. 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 distancing 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Administrators • Instructional Staff • Director of Special Education • Facilities Directors • Maintenance • Janitors • Security • Other Operations Personnel



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 use. ● 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. 	
<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) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilities Directors ● Maintenance ● Janitors ● Security ● Other Operations Personnel



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain Health Survey distributed to any individual entering the building and provide copy for nurse's files ● All Maintenance staff wear masks and gloves 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. ● Room occupancy 25% of max capacity. ● Students are seated at least 6 feet apart in a classroom. 	
<p>Transportation</p>	<p><u>Masks will be required by students and staff while on school property and while in school vehicles</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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transportation Supervisor ● Transportation Management



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	<p>disembark on a staggered schedule to expedite safe entry with clear signage on buses and entrances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All buses will be equipped with sanitizer, masks and disinfectant; all vehicles will be cleaned daily and fogged after each run. Fridays will be virtual for students to allow for deep disinfecting of the transportation fleet. • 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. 	
<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>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 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.</p> <p>*A limited number of persons with severe illness may produce replication-competent virus 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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School Safety Specialist ● School Nurses ● Approved Designee
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	<p>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> <p>If a student is removed from or denied access to the school building based on the screening required under Critical Area of Operation #5 in The Road Back, attendance for that student will be marked in accordance with local attendance policy, which will depend in part on whether the student is able to participate in remote instruction on that day.</p>	
<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 of 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School Safety Specialist ● School Nurses ● School Counselors



	<p>while maintaining confidentiality. Notification procedures will be consistent with the district's contact tracing policy to the maximum extent practicable.</p> <p>HCST will continue to work with the local health department(s) and follow CDC guidelines for illness reporting.</p>	
<p>Technology</p>	<p>A comprehensive survey was conducted in March 2020 that provided the ability to analyze student technology needs.</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 ● Tech Coordinator sent families information and helped to secure companies to provide internet access for students who do not have connectivity. Results: Students and parents have access to some type of internet connectivity from their home. ● All Instructors planning class content in Google platform ● Students have equitable access to Google Classroom and Zoom, as appropriate ● 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 be available on a 5 day or 40 hour work week (according to contract) with in-person assignments determined by their immediate supervisors or as directed within the HCST Gradual Re-entry Attendance. Regular attendance procedures will be followed. ● Virtual attendance will be recorded via HCST Virtual Friday portal ● 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 <p>See Appendix C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Director of Personnel ● Payroll Specialist ● Attendance Coordinator



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. See [Appendix D: NJDOH COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools](#)



Appendix A - Board Policy Updates

File Code	Title	Rationale
6173.1 (NEW)	Remote Learning	For compliance with the NJDOE Guidance: The Road Back: Restart and Recovery. Updated legal references.
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.
4119.27 (NEW)	Code of Conduct Remote Teaching	Details rules for teachers online Classroom Participation conducting online classes and for student participation in online classes.
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.



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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 in 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. so that they can optimally assist their children during virtual learning.

Social stories will be utilized for teaching about mask wearing, hand washing and socially distancing. This will be beneficial to the special education students, English language learners as well as the pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first grade 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 2020-21 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 continues 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.



Appendix C - Staffing

HCST has established itself as a cross-section of diverse teachers and learners, and we have responded to this pandemic as a united educational community to reach the needs of everyone in our school system. In terms of staffing and employee relations, the district's Pandemic Planning Team with the Human Resources Department has initiated a series of protocols designed to support the various needs of staff members as we prepare to reopen in a hybrid environment in the fall. The Human Resources Department will conduct several initiatives to ensure all staff and students who are in need of health accommodations are accounted for and provided opportunities to be successful during this unique timeframe.

- The district will continue to apply to all relevant employment laws, such as the ADA, HIPAA, and all other applicable state laws.
- Students who need accommodations due to health concerns will be provided opportunities to work remotely or have schedules adjusted to ensure they have equal opportunity to all learning provided in-person or online
- Schedules for each student will be consistent with district protocols, unique to grade level bands and accounting for special education students
- Teachers will maintain consistency for instructional materials and leverage technology to ensure students who are working remotely progress satisfactorily
- All mentoring of nontenured teachers will continue throughout the school year and will be differentiated based on the teachers' individual needs
- The district will adhere to the Educator Evaluation Guidance that was provided as flexibility for the requirements for educator evaluation, which was provided in early May 2020 by the NJDOE
- The district will ensure all teachers are certified in the content area they are assigned to teach, and will continue to monitor and track progress toward certification as per the NJDOE guidelines for teachers seeking standard certification in subject areas

The hybrid learning model that the district is employing in this restart plan will be monitored by each school-based administrator, and supervised by Central Office Administration. All applicable health protocols and precautions will already be established, and all school personnel will have roles and responsibilities to ensure all elements of this Restart and Recovery Plan are implemented correctly.

- Principals/School Administrators:
 - Monitor entry screening of all students and staff, review and respond to daily parent questionnaires, and ensure distancing upon student arrival into the school
 - Schedule and monitor the movement of students and staff to ensure contact tracing is possible if/when a student or staff member becomes ill or tests positive
 - Ensure the proper flow of students and staff are visible and adhered to
 - Ensure all personal protective equipment are available, operational, and utilized in each instructional area of the building
 - Ensure the parent communication is consistent, and ensure all student confidentiality laws are adhered to if a student is exhibiting symptoms or receives a positive test result for the virus



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- Ensure the quality of education is the highest priority, during in-school instruction as well as online
- Communicate effectively with staff and students, ensure all security drills are completed in a timely manner, and address health concerns immediately with district administration, the local health department, as well as parents
- **Teachers:**
 - During the first three weeks, instruct students about the new procedures and routines for this new school year
 - Ensure in-person instruction is aligned with state and district academic and social/emotional standards for success
 - Lessons will be delivered for in-person instruction as well as through live (synchronous) and online/recorded (asynchronous) instruction
 - Special Education Accommodations will be made as needed; the Child Study Team will continue to review IEPs and 504s to make adjustments pertinent to the current learning environment
 - Ensure students who are working remotely have adequate classwork to complete in order to continue progressing in the curriculum
 - Monitor the students and report any symptoms of health issues in students
 - Communicate with parents regarding student progress
 - Report any personal virus symptoms to administration and adhere to health directives and/or quarantines
- **Child Study Team Staff Members:**
 - Routinely host virtual meetings with students to discuss progress and challenges
 - Routinely monitor special education services via in-person or hybrid/online to ensure the consistency of progress toward IEP goals and objectives
 - Meet virtually with parents to ensure compliance with special education code for annual meetings and to evaluate/reevaluate
 - Monitor and adjust educational programs/materials/instruction to account for students who struggle emotionally or behaviorally
 - Ensure that communication is consistent with building and district level administration
 - Create alternative online educational methods for specific students whose needs require it by adjusting the in-person or online instructional models
- **Substitutes:**
 - The district regularly employs daily substitutes who will work in the absence of the classroom teacher; this will remain the same as we reopen school in September
 - Teachers who are on a leave of absence will require long term substitutes, and those substitutes will perform all the duties that the regular teacher would
- **Technology Personnel:**
 - Coordinate with building principals and supervisors to ensure distribution and implementation of district Chromebooks and other devices
 - Ensure availability of WiFi in all district buildings
 - Provide repair as needed of district device



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This plan has been developed by the District with input, guidance and feedback from all aspects of our community. HCST with the formation of the Return to Work Committee consists of a broad representation from Administration, Staff, Board Members, and Parents. This plan seeks to address all mandatory mandates and recommendations from the NJDOE, NJDOH, Governor's Office American Academy of Pediatrics and all agencies in charge of Pandemic Response. This plan is subject to change in response to the ever changing events during the upcoming school year.



Appendix D - NJDOH COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools

NJDOH will implement a statewide approach for school reopening with a regional/local focus. The reopening of schools requires a broad community commitment to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. Such commitment involves social distancing, wearing face coverings, cleaning and disinfection and meticulous hygiene practices such as frequent handwashing. Some amount of community mitigation will also be necessary until a vaccine or therapeutic drug becomes widely available.

As schools resume operations, they should consider how best to structure educational services to minimize risk to staff and students in line with the [New Jersey Department of Education \(NJDOE\)'s "The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education"](#) guidelines and [Executive Order 175](#). The CDC's [School and Child Care Programs](#) page provides various resources and recommendations for school operations and is meant to supplement, **not replace**, any state or local health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which schools must comply.

This guidance document outlines NJDOH COVID-19 public health recommendations for school settings and is intended for use by local health departments (LHDs). This guidance is based on what is currently known about the transmission and severity of COVID-19 and is subject to change as additional information is known. Please check the NJDOH, NJDOE and CDC websites frequently for updates.

Communication

Local health departments should maintain close communication with school officials in their community to provide information and share resources on COVID-19 transmission, prevention, and control measures and to establish procedures for LHD notification and response to COVID-19 illness in school settings. LHDs should identify a designated point of contact within each school that will be responsible for coordinating COVID-19 response with local public health authorities.

Regional COVID-19 Risk Levels

Understanding that COVID-19 may impact certain areas of the state differently, NJDOH will be providing information on COVID-19 transmission at the regional level, characterizing risk as low (green), moderate (yellow), high (orange), and very high (red). This information will be posted online every week on the [NJDOH CDS COVID-19](#) website and sent out via New Jersey Local Information Network and Communications System (NJLINCS) to public health and healthcare partners.

The [COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix](#) provides data and public health recommendations for local health departments and schools to consider based on the level of COVID-19 transmission in their region. The matrix is for the LHDs in collaboration with the local school districts and the Communicable Disease Service. Regional risk levels are just one tool that local health departments and schools can use when assessing COVID-19 risk. Local health departments have additional knowledge of COVID-19 in their jurisdictions that can inform local planning and response actions. **Implementation of these public health recommendations should be guided by what is feasible, practical, acceptable, and tailored to the needs of each community.**



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The [COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix](#) provides public health recommendations regarding the type of instruction (in-person, hybrid, remote), response to ill staff or students, exclusion criteria, and activities that involve interaction with multiple cohorts.

Regions:

- Northwest: Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Warren
- Northeast: Bergen, Essex, Hudson
- Central West: Hunterdon, Mercer, Somerset
- Central East: Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Union
- Southwest: Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Salem
- Southeast: Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland

LHDs should use the [COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix](#) when providing guidance for schools on actions they should take based on the level of COVID-19 risk in their region.



COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix

**For use by LHDs when providing guidance to school districts*

Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk	Very High Risk
<p>Evaluate whether there are students or staff who are at increased risk of severe illness and seek alternatives to ensure continuity of work or educational services.</p> <p>In response to COVID-19 positive staff or student, follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts following CDC guidance; refer to guidance on cleaning and disinfection.</p> <p>In response to ill students and staff, follow NJDOH School Exclusion List</p> <p>* If ill person had potential exposure in past 14 days, follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; wait at least 24 hours and clean/disinfect areas where ill person spent time.</p> <p>Permit limited activities involving interaction with multiple cohorts, ensuring adherence to precautions.</p>	<p>Implement remote learning for students and staff at high risk of severe illness; consider hybrid learning approaches, and/or fully remote learning.</p> <p>In response to COVID-19 positive staff or student, follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts following CDC guidance; refer to guidance on cleaning and disinfection.</p> <p>In response to ill students and staff, follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; wait at least 24 hours and clean/disinfect areas where ill person spent time.</p> <p>Minimize activities that involve interaction with multiple cohorts.</p>	<p>Implement fully remote learning unless school can ensure complete adherence to all prevention & control measures.</p> <p>If schools remain open for in-person learning:</p> <p>In response to staff or student who is COVID-19 positive <u>or who has COVID-19 symptoms</u> (not yet tested), follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts according to CDC guidance; refer to guidance on cleaning and disinfection.</p> <p>* Decisions on when ill person's close contacts can return to school are dependent on the ill person's medical evaluation and COVID-19 test results.</p> <p>Restrict activities that involve interaction with multiple cohorts.</p>	<p>Implement fully remote learning</p>
<p>RISK LEVELS GREEN, YELLOW, AND ORANGE (IF OPEN FOR IN-PERSON LEARNING):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require staff and students to stay home when sick or if they have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 within the past 14 days. Parents/guardians, students and staff should notify school administrators of illness. Have a policy for daily symptom screening for students and staff; have plans for students and staff to report symptoms that develop during the day. In conjunction with local health department, identify COVID-19 rapid testing resources (viral testing) for when staff and students develop COVID-19 compatible symptoms. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily. Ensure adequate hand hygiene supplies are readily available. Implement physical distancing measures (e.g., reducing occupancy (staggered schedules, use of alternate spaces), installation of partitions/physical barriers, cancelling large gatherings/events, maintaining defined cohorts). Implement source control through wearing face coverings. 			
<p>ALL RISK LEVELS</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep abreast of NJDOE and NJDOH COVID-19 guidance and surveillance indicators. Exchange after-hours contact information with your local health department. 			



Stay Home When Sick or if Exposed to COVID-19

Educate staff, students, and their families about when they should stay home and when they should return to school. Students and staff should stay home if they have:

- Tested positive (viral test) for COVID-19
- [COVID-19 symptoms](#)
- Potential exposure to COVID-19:
 - Recent close contact (being within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes) with a person with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
 - Travelled to an area with high levels of COVID-19 transmission in the past 14 days:
 - NJ travel advisory list:
<https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/travel-information/which-states-are-on-the-travel-advisory-list-are-there-travel-restrictions-to-or-from-new-jersey>
 - International travel advisory:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html>

Students and staff can consult with local public health authorities and refer to CDC guidance on when it is appropriate to return to work or school:

- [If they have been sick with COVID-19](#)
- [If they have recently had a close contact with a person with COVID-19](#)

Maintain Social & Physical Distancing and Small-Group Cohorting

The more people a student or staff member interacts with, and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread.

The risk of COVID-19 transmission is lower when:

- There are small, in-person classes, activities, and events.
- Students remain at least 6 feet apart and do not share objects (e.g., hybrid virtual and in-person class structures, or staggered/rotated scheduling to accommodate smaller class sizes).
- Groups of students stay together and are with the same teacher throughout the school day and groups do not intermingle.

The risk of COVID-19 transmission is higher when:

- There are full sized, in-person classes, activities, and events.
- Students are not spaced apart, share classroom materials or supplies, and intermingle between classes and activities.

Refer to [New Jersey Department of Education \(NJDOE\)'s "The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education"](#) for guidance / requirements on social and physical distancing and on small-group cohorting.



School Sports:

The more people a child or coach interacts with, the closer the physical interaction, the more sharing of equipment there is by multiple players, and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. Therefore, risk of COVID-19 spread can be different, depending on the type of activity.

Under [Executive Order 149](#), high school sports under the jurisdiction of the NJSIAA may resume only in accordance with reopening protocols issued by [NJSIAA](#). Additional guidance for youth sports can be found at:

- NJDOH [Guidance on Sports Activities](#)
- CDC [Considerations for Youth Sports](#)

Such activities are also currently subject to the limitations outlined in [Executive Order 168](#)

Choir and Music:

Due to potential increased risk of droplet transmission, physical distancing should be prioritized for wind instruments and singing. If it's safe and weather permits, consider moving class outdoors where air circulation is better than indoors and maintain at least 6 feet distance between students.

When students are not playing an instrument that requires the use of their mouths, they should wear a face covering in music class (unless class is outdoors, and distance can be maintained).

Limit Use of Shared Supplies and Equipment

- Ensure adequate supplies (i.e. art supplies, equipment) to minimize sharing of high-touch materials or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of students at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, games or other learning aids. If items must be shared, clean and disinfect between uses.
- Discontinue use of shared items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring of students and staff.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
- Encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue if not wearing a face covering/mask.
 - Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hand hygiene as outlined above should be performed immediately.
 - Have adequate supplies including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, and no-touch trash cans.
- Hand hygiene should take place:
 - Upon arrival at school.
 - Before and after meals and snacks.
 - After going to the bathroom.
 - Before leaving for the day.



- After blowing nose, sneezing or coughing into tissue.
- When hands are visibly soiled.
- Assist/observe young children to ensure proper handwashing.

Face Coverings

Wearing face coverings is an important step to help slow the spread of COVID-19 when combined with everyday preventive actions and social distancing in public settings. CDC suggests that all school reopening plans address adherence to behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19. Information on the use of cloth face coverings in schools is outlined in [Guidance for K-12 School Administrators on the Use of Cloth Face Coverings in Schools](#) and [Additional Considerations for the Use of Cloth Face Coverings Among K12 Students](#). Face coverings must be worn by staff, students, and visitors in all situations except as delineated in [Executive Order 175](#). This includes prior to boarding the school bus, while on the bus and until they are completely off the bus.

The CDC recommends that students and staff wear cloth face coverings in school. While some students or staff may wear disposable masks or other face coverings the following principles apply to all face coverings.

- Schools should teach and reinforce the use of [face coverings](#) and should be worn by staff and students.
- Face coverings are not a substitute for social distancing. Information should be provided to staff and students on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth [face coverings and face masks](#).
 - Cloth face coverings should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled or damp/wet.
 - Disposable face masks should be changed daily or when visibly soiled, damp or damaged.
 - Students and schools should have additional disposable masks or cloth face coverings available for students, teachers, and staff in case a back-up face covering is needed (e.g. face covering is soiled or lost during the day).
- [Appropriate and consistent use](#) of face coverings may be challenging for some students, teachers, and staff, including:
 - Students, teachers, and staff with severe asthma or other breathing difficulties.
 - Students, teachers, and staff with special educational or healthcare needs, including intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, and sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.
- For staff who are unable to wear a face covering for health reasons such as those outlined above, schools may consider assigning other duties or locations to limit interaction or allow teleworking.

For more information on the provision of face coverings in schools, please see [NJDOE's School Reopening Frequently Asked Questions](#) under the Face Coverings section as well as [updated Road Back guidance](#).

Clear face coverings:

Clear face coverings that cover the nose and wrap securely around the face may be considered in certain circumstances, if they do not cause breathing difficulties or overheating for the wearer. Clear face coverings are not face shields. CDC does **not** recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings because of a lack of evidence of their effectiveness for source control.



Teachers and staff who may consider using clear face coverings include:

- Those who interact with students or staff who are deaf or hard of hearing, per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- Teachers of young students learning to read.
- Teachers of students in English as a Second Language classes.
- Teachers of students with disabilities.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Schools should follow standard procedures for routine cleaning and disinfecting with an [EPA-registered product for use against SARS-CoV-2](#). This means **at least daily** sanitizing surfaces and objects that are touched often, such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones and toys. Information on cleaning and disinfecting your facility can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>. Increasing the frequency of cleaning when there is an increase in respiratory or other seasonal illnesses is always a recommended prevention and control measure.

Cleaning and disinfecting after:

- **Notification of a confirmed case of COVID-19:**
 - As long as routine cleaning and disinfecting have been done regularly (at least daily), additional cleaning measures are not necessary unless the COVID-19 positive person is in school on the day school officials are notified of the positive test. Depending on when the person with COVID-19 was last on site, it may be difficult to know what areas they were in and what objects or surfaces they may have touched after they became sick.
 - If routine cleaning and disinfection have not been performed at least daily, or if the COVID-19 positive person is in school the day school officials are notified, close off areas used by the person who tested positive for COVID-19 (e.g. offices, bathrooms, classrooms, and common areas), open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area and wait 24 hours after the COVID-19 positive person was last in school before cleaning and disinfection. If it has been more than 7 days since the person who tested positive for COVID-19 was at school, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
 - Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas used by the ill person such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment (like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
 - Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- **An individual becomes ill with COVID symptoms and meets [COVID-19 exclusion criteria](#) while in school (refer to [COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix](#)):**
 - Immediately close off areas used by the person who is sick with COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. offices, bathrooms, classrooms, and common areas), open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area and wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfection.
 - Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas used by the ill person such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment (like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
 - Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.



Symptom Screening

Although CDC **does not** recommend universal symptom screening ([screening all students grades K-12](#)) be conducted by schools, **NJDOH does recommend that schools have a policy for daily symptom screening for students and staff**. CDC has outlined considerations for schools who plan to implement [on site screenings](#). On site screening upon arrival should include [symptoms](#) listed below. Schools should follow [DOE recommendations](#) on children who are found symptomatic upon screening. See [Appendix 1](#) for a sample parental screening tool. This tool can also be utilized for staff screening.

Parents/caregivers should be strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of illness every day as they are the front line for assessing illness in their children. Students who are sick should not attend school in-person. Schools are encouraged to strictly enforce exclusion criteria for both students and staff.

Schools should consider:

- Providing parent education about the importance of monitoring symptoms and staying home while ill through school or district messaging.
- Having a plan to screen students if not screened by parents prior to arrival.
- Using existing outreach systems to provide reminders to staff and families to check for symptoms before leaving for school.

Schools should provide clear and accessible directions to parents/caregivers and students for reporting symptoms and reasons for absences.

Schools should implement a plan to screen teachers and staff before or upon arrival at school. Schools should follow CDC's [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019](#) for information on symptom screening for teachers and staff.

Preparing for Illness

Schools should ensure that procedures are in place to identify and respond to when a student or staff member becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms.

- Closely monitor daily reports of staff and student attendance/absence and identify when persons are out with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility. If you are calling an ambulance or bringing someone to the hospital, try to call first to alert them that the person may have COVID-19.
- Designate an area or room away from others to isolate individuals who become ill with COVID-19 symptoms while at school.
 - An area separate from the nurse's office would be ideal for the isolation area so the nurse's office can be used for routine visits such as medication administration, injuries and non COVID-19 related visits.
 - Ensure there is enough space for multiple people placed at least 6 feet apart.
 - Ensure that hygiene supplies are available, including additional cloth masks, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - School nurses should use [Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions](#) based on the care and tasks required.



- Staff assigned to supervise students waiting to be picked up do not need to be healthcare personnel and should follow social distancing guidelines.

COVID-19 Symptoms

While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, adults make up most of the known cases to date. [Early research](#) suggests that fewer children than adults with COVID-19 get a fever, cough, or shortness of breath. Few children with COVID-19 have had to be hospitalized. However, severe illness has been reported in children, most often in infants less than a year.

Some children have developed [multisystem inflammatory syndrome \(MIS-C\)](#). Currently, information about this syndrome is limited.

According to the CDC, children do not seem to be at higher risk for getting COVID-19. However, some people, including children with special health care needs, may be at higher risk. Those at increased risk include:

- [Older adults](#)
- People who have serious chronic [medical conditions](#) like:
 - Cancer
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - COPD
 - Immunocompromised state from solid organ transplant
 - Obesity (body mass index of 30 or higher)
 - Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
 - Sickle cell disease
 - Type 2 diabetes

Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 in children may be similar to those of common viral respiratory infections or other childhood illnesses. The overlap between COVID-19 symptoms and other common illnesses means that many people with symptoms of COVID-19 may actually be ill with something else. This is even more likely in young children, who typically have multiple viral illnesses each year. Individuals with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild to severe illness. There is not a single symptom that is uniquely predictive of a COVID-19 diagnosis. A COVID-19 viral test is needed to confirm if someone has a current infection. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and include the following:

- Fever or chills;
- Cough;
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing;
- Fatigue;
- Muscle or body aches;
- Headache;
- New loss of taste or smell;
- Sore throat;
- Congestion or runny nose;
- Nausea or vomiting;
- Diarrhea.



Parents should not send students to school when sick. School staff should have plans to isolate students with overt symptoms of any infectious disease that develop during the school day. For school settings, CDC recommends that students and staff with the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:

- At least **two** of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose; **OR**
- At least **one** of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, new taste disorder.

When Illness Occurs Within the School Setting

Children and staff with COVID-19 symptoms should be placed away from others and asked to wear a face covering/mask until they can be sent home. Per state policy, all students' (age 2 and older) noses and mouths should be covered with a mask or cloth face covering. If a mask is not tolerated by the ill student or staff member due to their illness, other staff should be sure to adhere to the universal face covering policy and follow social distancing guidelines (6 ft. away).

- Ask ill student (or parent) and staff about potential exposure to COVID-19 in the past 14 days:
 - Close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19
 - Travel to an area with a high level of COVID-19 transmission
 - **NJ travel advisory list:**
<https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/travel-information/which-states-are-on-the-travel-advisory-list-are-there-travel-restrictions-to-or-from-new-jersey>
 - **International travel advisory:**
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html>
- Individuals should be sent home and referred to a healthcare provider for evaluation on whether testing is needed. Testing for COVID-19 is recommended for persons with COVID-19 symptoms.
 - If COVID-19 risk is low (or COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix, green), ill individuals without potential exposure to COVID-19 should follow the [NJDOH School Exclusion List](#). No public health notification is needed UNLESS there is an unusual increase in the number of persons who are ill (over normal levels), which might indicate an outbreak.
 - If ill students have potential COVID-19 exposure OR if COVID-19 risk is moderate or high ([COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix](#), yellow or orange), they should be excluded according to the [COVID-19 Exclusion Criteria](#).
- Schools should notify LHDs when students or staff are ill and have potential COVID-19 exposure, are ill when COVID-19 risk level is high (orange), or when they see an increase in the number of persons with compatible symptoms. Schools should be prepared to provide the following information when consulting with the LHD:
 - Contact information for the ill persons;
 - The date the ill person developed symptoms, tested positive for COVID-19 (if known), and was last in the building;
 - Types of interactions (close contacts, length of contact) the person may have had with other persons in the building or in other locations;
 - Names, addresses, and telephone numbers for ill person's close contacts in the school;



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- Any other information to assist with the determination of next steps.
- Immediately close off areas used by the person who is sick, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area and wait 24 hours before you clean or disinfect. Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick as outlined in [cleaning and disinfection section](#), including isolation area. Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
 - If the number of ill students exceeds the number of isolation areas and the areas cannot be closed for 24 hours, clean and disinfect between ill persons.
- Notify the school community as per school protocol.

When Someone Tests Positive for COVID-19

Schools should ensure that parents and staff notify school authorities if they test positive for COVID-19. Schools should notify the LHD and provide the following information, where available:

- Contact information for the person(s) who tested positive for COVID-19;
- The date the COVID-19 positive person developed symptoms (if applicable), tested positive for COVID-19 (if known), and was last in the building;
- Types of interactions (close contacts, length of contact) the person may have had with other persons in the building or in other locations;
- Names, addresses, and telephone numbers for ill person's close contacts in the school;
- Any other information to assist with the determination of next steps. As long as routine cleaning and disinfecting have been done regularly (at least daily), additional cleaning measures are not necessary unless the COVID-19 positive person is in school on the day school officials are notified of the positive test.
- Notify the school community as per school protocol.

COVID-19 Illness and Test Result Scenarios

Standard exclusion criteria: If ill individuals have been given an alternate diagnosis by a healthcare provider, they should follow the [NJDOH School Exclusion List](#).

COVID-19 exclusion criteria: Ill individuals with suspected or known COVID-19 should stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and at least 24 hours have passed after resolution of fever without fever reducing medications and improvement in symptoms. Persons who test positive for COVID-19, but who are asymptomatic should stay home for 10 days from the positive test result.

LHDs should use the [COVID-19 Exclusion Table](#) when providing guidance for schools on exclusion based on the level of COVID-19 risk in their region.



COVID-19 Exclusion Table

Exclusion criteria for staff, students and close contacts

	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk	Very High Risk
COVID-19 positive (viral test), symptomatic or asymptomatic	Exclude according to COVID-19 exclusion criteria Work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts for 14 days from last exposure	Exclude according to COVID-19 exclusion criteria Work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts for 14 days from last exposure	Exclude according to COVID-19 exclusion criteria Work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts for 14 days from last exposure	Not Applicable (remote learning)
COVID-19 symptoms but not tested for COVID-19 and no alternate diagnosis	If no potential exposure to COVID-19 in the last 14 days, individual can follow NJDOH School Exclusion List If person has potential exposure to COVID-19 in the last 14 days, exclude according to COVID-19 exclusion criteria	Exclude according to COVID-19 exclusion criteria	Exclude according to COVID-19 exclusion criteria Work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts for 14 days from last exposure, or until symptomatic individual tests negative for COVID-19 or receives an alternate diagnosis from a medical provider	
COVID-19 symptoms and negative COVID-19 test	Exclude individual through 24 hours after their fever has ended without the use of fever reducing medications and other symptoms improve	Exclude individual through 24 hours after their fever has ended without the use of fever reducing medications and other symptoms improve	Exclude individual through 24 hours after their fever has ended without the use of fever reducing medications and other symptoms improve	
COVID-19 symptoms BUT with alternate diagnosis from a healthcare provider	Exclude individual based on diagnosis, using NJDOH School Exclusion List	Exclude individual based on diagnosis, using NJDOH School Exclusion List	Exclude individual based on diagnosis, using NJDOH School Exclusion List	
Close contact of COVID-19 positive staff or student <i>or to someone with COVID-19 symptoms (high risk level only)</i>	Close contacts of persons who test positive for COVID-19 should be excluded through 14 days from date of last contact.	Close contacts of persons who test positive for COVID-19 should be excluded through 14 days from date of last contact	Close contacts of persons who test positive for COVID-19 should be excluded through 14 days from date of last contact. Close contacts of an individual with COVID-19 symptoms should be excluded through 14 days from date of last contact, or until ill individual receives an alternate diagnosis or tests negative for COVID-19.	



Outbreaks

While schools must report single cases to their local health department, LHDs should work with schools to determine if there is an outbreak. An outbreak in school settings is defined as two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students or staff with onsets within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing.

Contact Tracing and Notification

Contact tracing is a strategy used to determine the source of an infection and how it is spreading. Finding people who are close contacts to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, and therefore at higher risk of becoming infected themselves, can help prevent further spread of the virus.

Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone with suspected or known COVID-19 for at least 10 consecutive minutes. In some school situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed, particularly if people have spent time together indoors.

In conjunction with the LHD, school staff should help identify close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases in the school.

- As with any other communicable disease outbreak, schools will assist in identifying the close contacts within the school and communicating this information back to the LHD.
- With guidance from the LHD, schools will be responsible for notifying parents and staff of the close contact exposure and exclusion requirements while maintaining confidentiality. For sample notification letters see [Appendix 2](#).
- The LHD contact tracing team will notify and interview the close contacts identified by the school and reinforce the exclusion requirements.

A contact tracing team from the local health department or the NJDOH calls anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is identified as a close contact of a case. They ask the person who tested positive for COVID-19 questions about their activities within a certain timeframe to help identify where they may have been exposed, and anyone else they may have had close contact with while infectious. Those contacts might include family members, caregivers, co-workers or healthcare providers. Close contacts of a known COVID-19 case are asked about symptoms, referred to resources for testing, and given recommendations to isolate at home (if symptomatic) or if asymptomatic, to [stay home and monitor their health](#) for 14 days from the last exposure/close contact.



Closure

The [COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix](#) is one tool that can inform the decision-making process for school districts when considering when remote learning might be indicated. Local circumstances should be considered when making decisions impacting specific school districts and schools. Many factors would need to be considered when deciding to close schools such as the distribution of cases within the school. **Closure is a local decision that should be made by school administrators in consultation with local public health. While it is not possible to account for every scenario that schools may encounter over the course of the school year, the following scenarios may help inform the decision for when schools should temporarily close.**

SCENARIO	CLOSURE
1 confirmed case in the school building	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive case are excluded from the school building for 14 days.
2 or more cases in the same classroom (outbreak limited to one cohort)	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive case are excluded from the school building for 14 days. Recommendations for whether the entire classroom would be considered exposed will be based on public health investigation.
2 or more cases within 14 days, but are linked to a clear alternative exposure that is unrelated to the school building setting and unlikely to be a source of exposure for the larger school community (e.g. in same household, exposed at the same event outside of school)	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive cases are excluded from the school building for 14 days.
2 or more cases within 14 days, linked together by some activity in the school building, but who are in different classrooms (outbreak involving multiple cohorts)	Recommendations for whether the school building closure is indicated will be based on investigation by local health department.
A significant community outbreak is occurring or has recently occurred (e.g., large event or large local employer) and is impacting multiple staff, students, and families served by the school community	Consider closing the school building for 14 days, based on investigation by local health department.
2 or more cases are identified within 14 days that occur across multiple classrooms and a clear connection between cases or to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 cannot be easily identified (outbreak involving multiple cohorts)	Close school building for 14 days.
Very high risk of community transmission (refer to COVID-19 Regional Risk Level Matrix)	Close school building until COVID-19 transmission decreases.

* Note: A temporary closure may also be considered for a period of 2-5 days if a student or staff member attended the school building while potentially infectious, before being confirmed as having COVID-19. This short-term dismissal allows time for local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and perform contact tracing.

Period of closure: After switching to remote learning due to high levels of viral transmission in the school



building or local geographic community, districts or schools should wait a minimum of 14 days before bringing any students back for in-person learning. This timeframe is sufficient so that most people in the school community who will develop symptoms as a result of a school exposure could be identified and self-isolate, as appropriate.

Testing

Universal SARS-CoV-2 testing of all students and staff in school settings has not been systematically studied. It is not known if testing in school settings provides any additional reduction in person-to-person transmission of the virus beyond what would be expected with implementation of other preventive measures (e.g., social distancing, wearing cloth face coverings, hand washing, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting). **Therefore, CDC does not recommend universal testing of all asymptomatic students and staff, and NJDOH concurs with this recommendation.**

NJDOH recommends that schools work with their local health departments to identify rapid viral testing options in their community for the testing of symptomatic individuals. Having access to rapid COVID-19 testing for ill students and staff can reduce unnecessary exclusion of ill persons and their contacts and minimize unnecessary disruptions of the educational process.

COVID-19 Resources

- [CDC](#)
- [School and Childcare Programs](#)
- [CDC Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID-19 Response and the President's Plan for Opening America Up Again](#)
- [Preparing K-12 School Administrators for a Safe Return to School in Fall 2020](#)
- [Interim Considerations for K-12 School Administrators for SARS-CoV-2 Testing](#)
- [Screening K-12 Students for Symptoms of COVID-19: Limitations and Considerations](#)
- [Guidance for K-12 School Administrators on the Use of Cloth Face Coverings in Schools](#)
- [Considerations for Youth Sports](#)
- [CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)
- [CDC Information on Cleaning School Buses](#)
- [Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome \(MIS-C\)](#)
- [School Decision-Making Tool for Parents, Caregivers, and Guardians](#)

- [NJDOH](#)
- [NJDOH COVID Information for Schools](#)
- [NJDOH General Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Outbreaks in School Settings](#)
- [New Jersey COVID-19 Information Hub](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

- [COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry AAP](#)
- [Healthy Children.Org COVID-19](#)



Appendix 1: Sample COVID-19 School Screening Tool



COVID-19 Daily Screening for Students/Staff

Name _____

Date _____

Parents/Guardians: Please complete this short check each morning and report your child’s information per your school’s reporting instructions.

Section 1: Symptoms

Any of the symptoms below could indicate a COVID-19 infection in children and may put your child at risk for spreading illness to others. Please note that this list does not include all possible symptoms and children with COVID-19 may experience any, all, or none of these symptoms. Please check your child daily for these symptoms:

Column A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fever (measured or subjective)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chills
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rigors (shivers)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Myalgia (muscle aches)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Headache
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sore Throat
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nausea or Vomiting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Diarrhea
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fatigue
<input type="checkbox"/>	Congestion or runny nose

Column B	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cough
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shortness of Breath
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty Breathing
<input type="checkbox"/>	New loss of smell
<input type="checkbox"/>	New loss of taste

If **TWO OR MORE** of the fields in **Column A** are checked off OR **AT LEAST ONE** field in **column B** is checked off, please keep your child home and notify the school for further instructions.

Section 2: Close Contact/Potential Exposure

Please verify if:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your child has had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19
<input type="checkbox"/>	Someone in your household is diagnosed with COVID-19
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your child has traveled to an area of high community transmission.

If **ANY** of the fields in **Section 2** are checked off, your child should remain home for 14 days from the last date of exposure (if child is a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case) or date of return to New Jersey.

Contact your child’s provider or your local health department for further guidance.



Appendix 2A: Sample COVID-19 School Notification Template, Positive Case in School



Date: _____

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This letter is to inform you that an individual at [school/childcare center] has tested positive for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The District is coordinating closely with public health officials and following CDC, state, and local health department guidance in order to assure the health and safety of our community.

Cleaning and disinfecting of all exposed areas has been completed. The school is also taking precautions to prevent the introduction and spread of viruses and other germs and is cleaning frequently touched surfaces daily. [Insert any details on scheduling changes, if applicable.] The status of this situation is fluid, and we are monitoring it closely.

We understand the level of concern regarding COVID-19. We encourage parents and students to continue following the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#) promoted safeguards, such as:

- Staying home when you are sick;
- Washing hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds;
- Covering coughs and sneezes and properly disposing of tissues;
- Limiting close contact with people who are sick and not sharing food, drinks and utensils;
- Practicing social distancing (staying at least 6 feet apart);
- Wearing a face covering while in school; and
- Continuing to monitor your health for symptoms.

As always, we appreciate our community’s support and cooperation. You can assist us by remaining vigilant but sensible in your approach to dealing with this health concern. Should you have any questions about this situation, please feel free to contact [contact person] at [phone number]. Below are some resources that might be helpful.

RESOURCES

- A. NJDOH COVID-19 Information for Communities and the General Public: https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/covid2019_community.shtml
- B. Get the Facts about Coronavirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- C. Symptoms of COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- D. Testing: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/index.html>; <https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/testing>
- E. How to Protect Yourself: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>
- F. What to Do if You Are Sick: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Sincerely,
 Administrator’s name



Appendix 2B: Sample COVID-19 School Notification Template, Close Contact of Case in School



Date: _____

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This letter is to inform you that your child has been identified as a **close contact** of a laboratory-confirmed case of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) that occurred at [school/childcare center]. A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of a confirmed case of COVID-19 for at least 10 minutes.

Due to this exposure, your child will need to be kept home from school through [14 days from date of last exposure]. We ask that you be on the lookout for the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 in your child through that date. Symptoms can include but are not limited to fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, headache, diarrhea, vomiting and abdominal pain. Not everyone will get all these symptoms. Your local health department will also be in touch with additional information.

If you believe your child may have COVID-19, contact his or her primary care doctor for directions. Most people who are mildly or moderately ill with COVID-19 will be able to safely recover at home.

Cleaning and disinfecting of all exposed areas has been completed. The school is also taking precautions to prevent the introduction and spread of viruses and other germs and is cleaning frequently touched surfaces daily. **[Insert any details on scheduling changes, if applicable.]** The status of this situation is fluid, and we are monitoring it closely.

As always, we appreciate our community’s support and cooperation. You can assist us by remaining vigilant but sensible in your approach to dealing with this health concern. Should you have any questions about this situation, please feel free to contact **[contact person]** at **[phone number]**. Below are some resources that might be helpful.

RESOURCES

- A. NJDOH COVID-19 Information for Communities and the General Public: https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/covid2019_community.shtml
- B. Get the Facts about Coronavirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- C. Symptoms of COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- D. Testing: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/index.html>; <https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/testing>
- E. How to Protect Yourself: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>
- F. What to Do if You Are Sick: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Sincerely,
Administrator’s name