

Amherst Exempted Village School District



2020-2021 Restart Plan

Amherst Exempted Village Schools developed this plan using guidance from: Reset and Restart Education-Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts developed by the Ohio Department of Education; the COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools issued by the Ohio Department of Health; Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry from American Academy of Pediatrics.

We have been working closely with Lorain County Public Health (LCPH) and in conjunction with their recommendations set forth in Lorain County Schools Re-opening Guide.

COVID-19 is constantly evolving and will cause changes to public health alerts, the health of schools, school plans and logistics. As a result, this plan is subject to change based on public health conditions across the district, county, state, and country.

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Plan Summary

Student Safety

Amherst Schools are committed to providing the best learning opportunities for all students with planning that is safe, flexible, and tailored to our community. The safety of our students, staff, and community is our number one priority. All school administration and staff in Amherst are committed to provide the best learning options for students during the pandemic. We must be able to balance personal choices with safety to ensure we keep our doors open for our students to learn and try to avoid further shutdowns. We remain dedicated to providing the high-quality education our families have to come to expect while minimizing and mitigating the risk of Covid-19 to our students and staff.

Social Distancing

The district will encourage, promote, and enforce social distancing throughout school grounds. However, six feet of social distancing is not always possible in every situation within our schools. In those instances, other best practices like face coverings, barriers, washing hands, and sanitizing will be utilized.

Washing Hands

Students will be given time and reminders to wash or sanitize their hands throughout the day, especially before and after:

- The school day
- Eating
- Recess
- Changing classrooms
- Using the bathroom

Screening/Assessing Symptoms

As we go through the school year, all staff and caregivers of students will be required to check symptoms daily before leaving home for school. Parents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the symptoms of COVID-19, according to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention.

For purposes of personal health screenings, Lorain County Health officials recommend asking the following questions:

- Do you have a **Fever** (temperature above 100F)?
- Do you have a **Cough**?
- Do you have **Shortness of Breath**?
- Have you, or anyone you have been in **close contact** with, been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have been placed on quarantine for possible contact with COVID-19?

If the answer is yes to any of the above questions, then students and staff members are not to report to school. This standard also applies to any parent or visitor that is needing to enter the building for a pre-approved situation.

Daily Cleaning/Sanitizing

The district is securing and providing supplies to all buildings and all staff for daily deep cleaning and sanitizing. Our custodial staff will perform daily deep cleaning, which includes sanitizing all high-touch surfaces. In addition, desks, chairs, doors, and other high-touch surfaces in classrooms, will be sanitized on a regular basis.

Students and staff will work together to ensure our classroom surfaces remain clean throughout the day. Information regarding the specific cleaning and sanitizing products used in the district will be available on the district website.

Face Covering

While we understand the concerns with wearing face coverings and challenges they present for students, we need to follow the guidance of the health experts.

Consistent with guidance from health officials, Amherst Schools are requiring that all students have a face covering that is available to be worn in school and on the bus when social distancing is not possible. We reserve the right to require student face coverings be worn in any situation in order to keep our schools open and safe, or if required by local or state officials. Students and staff will be provided breaks from face coverings whenever possible.

We believe our students need to be in school to maximize their learning and growth potential; and for their social-emotional health. Amherst Schools may not be able to continue school in-person if we have a spread of the virus in school. To ensure school continues without a district or building closure, we will all need to work together.

Please, share a positive take on face coverings with your children. Helping them prepare by trying on different styles of face coverings and finding one that is most comfortable for them will help in the effort to make them feel comfortable coming back to school. Consider breathability and comfort around ears/nose/chin. Plan for each of your children to have 3-5 face coverings to wear and launder on a regular basis. Our schools will have disposable face coverings available for emergencies when a student forgets to bring one to school or on the bus.

Amherst Exempted Village School District Restart Student Instruction Options

Option 1: onCampus Instruction

Students electing to physically attend the Amherst Schools will attend school via our onCampus option. Students will attend Monday through Friday with safety precautions in place.



Option 2: Extended Campus Instruction (eCampus)

Students electing the Amherst online program will attend school from home using our Extended Campus or eCampus option.





Option 1: onCampus Instruction

Safety Protocols

Start of School Year

- School will begin for students on August 27th.

Transportation

- Students will be permitted to sit on bus seats with no more than two to a seat.
- Students will have assigned seats on the bus.
- Students must wear face coverings at all times when on a school bus.
- Each bus will have all windows open, to allow for air circulation, weather permitting.
- All students are required to do a full symptoms check, including temperature, before leaving their homes in the morning. If student temperatures are 100 degrees or above, they are required to stay home from school until symptom free for 24 hours, without the use of medication.

Dropoff and Pickup

- All students and staff are required to check their temperature and symptoms each day before arriving at school. If students and staff have any COVID-19 symptoms, they must stay at home.
- The nurse's offices will have thermometers available for students and staff who need checked during the day.
- Student dropoff and pickup locations will be spread throughout the school building.
- Multiple doors will be used to reduce crowding. Specific details for each building will be created by building principals.
- Students will report directly to homeroom (Powers and Nord) or first period (AJH and Steele)
- Students will be released at the end of the day in smaller groups using multiple doors at staggered times.
- PikMyKid will be used. (Powers, Nord). Specific instructions on how to access the PikMyKid application will be sent out by each building principal.
- Parents needing to pick up their child early during the day, should remain in their cars, contact the school by phone and wait in front of the building for your child or a staff member to help you.

Classrooms

- To the extent possible, social distancing will be practiced in all classrooms. In many classrooms, six feet of social distancing will not be possible depending on the number of students and square footage of the classroom. However, we will maintain as much social distancing as possible in our classrooms.
- Each building will have a schedule that will minimize student transitions to limit the amount of movement of students in order to minimize group interaction.
- Staff will rotate to the students to the fullest extent possible.
- Instructional materials will not be shared or will be sanitized between uses.

- All staff members will wear masks and/or face shields while in class with students and in common areas where staff and students are present.
- All classrooms will have all doors open, during class, to allow for better air circulation.
- Students will have assigned seats in each classroom.
- Students and staff will disinfect their desks, chairs, and common-touch surfaces regularly.
- Students/staff will wash or sanitize their hands at the start of each school day, before lunch, and after lunch at minimum.
- Principals will work with the maintenance and cleaning staff to determine a cleaning schedule for special classroom equipment.
- Custodians will be deep cleaning each building every evening for the following school day.

Hallways, Restrooms, Lockers, and other Common Areas

- When possible, all hallways in school will be one-way traffic only.
- For hallways where one-way traffic is not possible, all persons must stay to the right.
- Students are required to wear face coverings in all common areas outside of the classroom (i.e. restrooms, locker rooms, hallways, cafeteria, gym, etc.) if social distance cannot be maintained.
- Lockers will not be utilized at Nord, AJH, or Steele. Use of personal storage cubbies at Powers will be limited and grade-level-specific procedures will be shared in detail.
- Students will need to carry most course materials in their backpacks.
- Hall passes will be significantly limited, as determined by each building principal.
- Passing period times will be adjusted to account for one-way traffic, by building principals prior to the start of the school year.
- Water fountains will not be used.
- Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles. Each building will provide specific information regarding this.
- Staff and students will practice as much social distancing as possible in all common areas.
- Common area access will be limited to ensure student safety.

Recess/Outdoor Activities

- Zoned recess activities (Powers and Nord)
- Playground equipment will be cleaned and sanitized.
- Teachers are encouraged to go outside for classes when appropriate.

Cafeteria/Nutrition Services

- Students will be asked to wear face coverings when in the cafeteria and not in the process of eating if social distance cannot be maintained.
- Students will eat in the cafeteriums, gymnasiums, outside spaces, classrooms, or another designated area to maintain appropriate distancing. Each building will establish their own breakfast and lunch procedures.
- Students will sit in designated, assigned seats to better monitor possible exposure in the event of an infection.
- Distancing guidelines will be followed if going through the cafeteria line. Each building will provide specific information regarding this.

Health Services

- Students and staff should use designated entrances and exits (where applicable) in and out of the clinic.
- Follow six feet social distancing protocols while in the clinic.
- Students and staff are required to wear a face covering while in the clinic.
- Wearing a face covering is required if students and staff are determined to have a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms.
- If a student/staff member experience COVID-19 symptoms while on school grounds, they must follow the following protocol:
 - Notify a teacher, administrator, or staff member immediately.

- Wear a face covering immediately.
- Make plans to leave school and go home/doctor's office as soon as possible.
- While waiting for parent pickup, students must stay isolated in a specific quarantine area, designated in each building. Staff will be present to support students.

Meetings & Conferences

- Parents are encouraged to schedule meetings virtually or by phone, rather than in person.
- Parents should conduct a personal health screening before entering the building.
- Follow six-foot social distancing protocols to the extent possible.
- Parents must wear a face covering at all times while on school grounds.

Office and Visitors

- Visitors will not be permitted, however; there may be exceptions (police, fire department, utility worker, etc.).
- Visitors should complete a personal health screening before entering the office.
- Visitors must wear a face covering at all times while on school grounds.
- Visitors must wear a visitor's badge before entering the building. Badges can be obtained upon entry to the building through the main office.
- Each office will have a plexiglass barrier at the front counter.
- Seating areas will be properly social distanced.
- Each building will determine a maximum safe capacity in the office at any point in time.
- All office spaces will be disinfected on a regular basis.
- Parents needing to drop off items during the day, should remain in their cars, contact the school by phone and wait in front of the building for a staff member to help you.

Technology

- All students in grades 3-12 will be issued a Chromebook for the school year.
- Students will be in charge of ensuring the proper care of their Chromebook.
- All Chromebooks will be used and integrated into daily classroom activities.
- Families will be charged for any lost Chromebook or charger that needs fixed or replaced.
- Students are asked to charge their Chromebooks overnight to ensure a full charge during the school day.
- Students will be instructed on the proper way to clean and sanitize their Chromebooks.
- If required by the teacher, grade level, or school, students will be responsible for taking their Chromebook home and bringing it back to school each day.

Symptoms at School

If a student or staff member begins to show symptoms or has a temperature above 100°F while at school, they should be:

- Immediately separated from other students and staff, wear a face covering, monitored by a staff member or school nurse wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and maintaining physical distance when possible, and then sent home.
- The space where an individual waits before he or she goes home should be separate from the nurse's office and other areas students are likely to visit.
- The individual should contact their physician who will then determine if they need a COVID test, flu test, strep test or any other medical care. Lorain County Public Health (LCPH) will provide a list of local COVID Test Centers.
- If sickness is not COVID-19, the individual may return to school according to normal procedures.
- The LCPH is in the process of developing guidance for when a person has had contact with someone confirmed to have COVID-19 or are probable to have COVID-19.

When a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19:

- The LCPH epidemiology team will communicate with confirmed COVID-19 cases/guardians, school leaders, and any close contacts identified.
 - Close contacts of a COVID-19 case, typically, are persons who spent more than 10 minutes in close proximity (within 6 feet) of the positive case.
 - Close contacts will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- A 14-day quarantine will be required of any student or staff member considered a close contact as determined by LCPH.
- All confirmed COVID-19 cases would be isolated, monitored daily, and released by LCPH if they are a Lorain County resident.
- If the person is not a Lorain County resident, LCPH will communicate with the associated health district.
- The district will provide communication to notify families and staff of the following:
 - Positive case in a classroom
 - Positive case building
 - Public health alert level updates and pandemic facts
 - Local testing options
- While under COVID-19 quarantine, students should continue to participate in school as much as possible, to keep up with their learning in coordination with the classroom teacher.

Marion L. Steele High School (9-12)

- It is possible that an entire classroom, team, grade level, or school would be required to quarantine from school. Due to high school classes being populated by students across grade levels, common areas and clubs/sports teams all having mixed grade level students, MLS High School will be especially at risk of large scale quarantine.

Amherst Junior High School (6-8)

- It is possible that an entire classroom, team, or grade level would be required to quarantine from school. Most classes are by grade level. This should allow us to continue school on site with one grade level, if an entire other grade level needed to be quarantined.

Walter G. Nord School (4-5)

- It is possible that an entire classroom, team, or grade level would be required to quarantine from school. Most elementary classes are by grade level. This should allow us to continue school on site with all other grade levels continuing in school.

Powers Elementary School (PreK-3)

- Due to students spending almost all of their time with students in their individual classrooms, we should be able to just quarantine the individual classroom where the student/staff in direct contact with COVID-19 is in attendance.

Long-Term School Closure/Quarantine

- With the governor's new color-coded, tiered COVID-19 warning system, counties will be rated on a weekly basis. Depending on our level as a county, there could be strong restrictions placed on us by the Lorain County Health Department or the state government that we must adhere to.
- Should a school or the entire district need to close for an extended period, we will transition the school and/or district to the Amherst Extended Campus (eCampus) Plan.
- This transition should be relatively seamless, given that technological devices will already be assigned to students and the platforms will already be in regular use.
- If permitted, we will plan to work closely with small groups of students needing extra support at school once or twice a week.
- If permitted, athletics and after school activities will continue as scheduled.



Option 2: Extended Campus Instruction (eCampus)

Learning Protocols

Commitment

- Students and families will only be permitted to request a change in enrollment back to in-person learning at the end of a semester/trimester. Requests will be approved, provided there is space and class availability.
- Once we have your written commitment via our online form, we will enroll your child. It will be expected that each family honors that commitment for a minimum of one semester/trimester. Written commitment via our online enrollment form will need to be submitted by Monday, August 3rd.
- Students who enroll in Amherst Schools after the first day of school will only be permitted immediate entry into online learning if space is available.
- Families interested in returning to in-person learning at the end of the semester/trimester must communicate their request, in writing, to their child's respective building principal, no later than 14 days prior to the end of the semester/trimester immediately preceding the semester/trimester they want to change placement.
- Students must commit to being actively online, working on coursework, during normal school hours. The schedule for online school hours will closely follow the schedule for in-person school:
 - Powers Hours 8:45 AM - 3:45 PM
 - Nord Hours: 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
 - AJH Hours: 7:25 AM - 2:25 PM
 - Steele Hours: 7:45 AM - 2:45 PM
- Students will be required to meet with all of their teachers, everyday online in some capacity. This could be through a quick class meeting, a small group conversation, one-on-one support, or other ways to connect.
- The schedule will vary by building and grade level.
- Students not logged into school on time will be considered tardy. Students who do not log into school at all during the school day will be considered absent. Absences will be monitored and tracked per HB 410, as outlined in each building's handbook.

After-School Activities

- Online students will be permitted to participate in after school activities, where possible. The only challenge will be with activities that are extensions of classes held during the school day. Contact the advisor of the activity you are interested in to be sure you can participate.
- School sponsored sports will be fully open to online students, provided the student meets all eligibility requirements.
- The online curriculum is NCAA approved.

School Calendar

- The online student school calendar will be the exact same calendar as for students enrolled in-person.
- The school year will begin on August 27th and end on May 27th.

Technology

- All technology use is subject to the district Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).
- Each student will receive a Chromebook issued by his or her school to be used for all coursework.
- Students will be required to take care of their school-issued device while it is in their care, ensuring that it remains in the same condition it was given to them at the end of the school year.
- Students will be required to turn their Chromebook back into their school for inspection and collection at the end of the school year.
- Before selecting the online option as the best option for your family, parents should consider the internet bandwidth they currently have available in their homes and ensure it is enough to support online learning requirements for their students. *Parents who have concerns with their internet capacity at home are encouraged to contact the school counselor within their building or our district social worker. School counselors and the social worker can help families access resources.*
- If students are having technical difficulties with their devices, they should contact the tech department.
- In the event of a tech emergency, students can reach out directly to the Tech Hotline at 440-988-1907.

Curriculum

- Our plan is to use the Ohio standards and curriculum for grades K-12.
- Amherst teachers will facilitate each class.
- The goal is to match current student schedules up with the equivalent courses. In cases where this is not possible, our school counselors will reach out to families to share other options available.

Teachers/Administrators

- Our plan is to use Amherst teachers to teach online students. Depending on the number of students enrolled in different courses, we could have some teachers educating students both online and in-person.
- Counselors and principals will be the same counselors/administrators currently serving you in your home school. They will be fully available to support your needs in the same way they are for students learning in-person.

HB 164 Requirements

HB 164 requires that all schools with a remote learning plan ensure certain measures are taken. These are the six requirements and how Amherst Schools will meet them:

1. *Determining & documenting instructional needs*

In the first few weeks of the 1st quarter, students will be assessed for instructional needs. This information will give students, families, and teachers data on where each student is academically and allow us to plan appropriate interventions and instruction.

2. *Determining competency, granting credit, and promoting students to a higher grade level*

Amherst Exempted Village Schools will use the Ohio Standards for learning to design instruction and assess students regularly to determine their competency. Students will be given traditional grades, credit will be awarded, and grade promotions will be made in accordance with current in-person learning practices and applicable board policies.

3. *Attendance requirements & documentation of participation in learning opportunities*

Students will be required to attend school online on a daily basis, during regular school hours.

4. *How student progress will be monitored*

Amherst teachers will monitor student progress through formative and summative assessments throughout the school year utilizing their own teacher created assessments in accordance with current in-person learning practices and applicable board policies.

5. *Description of how equitable access to quality instruction will be ensured*

Devices will be issued at the beginning of the school year. The district will provide wifi hotspots for students without reliable internet access at home. The district will intervene quickly with students who are having difficulty with online instruction through our Technology Department and technology phone hotline.

6. *Description of professional development activities offered to teachers*

Amherst teachers will have professional development in the area of online instruction, blended learning, and collaboration/communication tools and resources.

Contacts

If you have any questions about this plan, please feel free to reach out to your child's building principal or the following district leaders for support:

General Plan Information

Superintendent, Steve Sayers steve_sayers@amherstk12.org

Information about Online Learning, Curriculum, and Instruction

Assistant Superintendent, Mike Molnar mike_molnar@amherstk12.org

Information about District Finances

Treasurer, Amy Gioffredo amy_gioffredo@amherstk12.org

Information about Custodial, Maintenance, or General Operations

Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, Chuck Grimmet chuck_grimmet@amherstk12.org

Information about Special Education

Director of Student Services, Sarah Walker sarah_walker@amherstk12.org

Information about Technology

Technology Supervisor, Doug Cogdell doug_cogdell@amherstk12.org

Information about Food Service

Nutrition Services Supervisor, Deanne Pastva deanne_pastva@amherstk12.org

Information about Transportation

Transportation Supervisor, Shonteea Ford shonteea_ford@amherstk12.org



#AmherstComets

District Support

Guidance Counselors

Powers - Jill Coleman -- jill_coleman@amherstk12.org

Nord - Debbie Raesler -- deborah_raesler@amherstk12.org

AJH - Mary Scott Williams -- maryscott_williams@amherstk12.org

Steele - Mary Jane Loushin (last names A-G) -- maryjane_loushin@amherstk12.org

Steele - Sarah Rigda (last names H-O) -- sarah_rigda@amherstk12.org

Steele - Bob Harcula (last names P-Z) -- bob_harcula@amherstk12.org

District Social Worker

Jill Maiorca -- jill_maiorca@amherstk12.org

Community Support

Lorain County Public Health: LorainCountyHealth.com/coronavirus, LorainCountyHealth.com/data,
440-322-6367

Lorain County Educational Service Center: LorainCountyESC.org, 440-324-5777

Mental Health, Addiction, and Recovery Services of Lorain County: www.mharslc.org

- Crisis Hotline: **1-800-888-6161**
- Non-Emergency Navigator: **440-240-7025**

Firelands Counseling and Recovery Services: www.firelands.com Main #: 440-984-3882

Second Harvest: www.secondharvestfoodbank.org

Phone: (440) 960-2265 | E-mail: info@secondharvestfoodbank.org

The LCADA Way: www.thelcadaway.org