

# **BEECHER ROAD SCHOOL**

## **Recent and General Reopening FAQ's as of August 6, 2020**

### **RECENT REOPENING FAQ's**

Families are looking to plan for the start of the year. Which plan are we starting the school year with? Will it change?

At the current time (as of August 6, 2020) we are planning for a full In Person opening with the Remote Option. This is based on the most recent metrics that show CT with low transmission rates. State guidance requires schools and parents to be ready to switch to a Hybrid or Full Remote Learning Model at any time based on changes in the health data, consultation with our local DPH and consideration of other information and appropriate factors.

What flexibility does the District have in reopening school?

Currently, the state is providing districts with the flexibility to open school with either the full In Person Model or the Hybrid Model. We are currently (as of August 6) planning on reopening with the full In Person Model. The district has to petition the state and be granted a waiver if the district wants to start with Full Remote Learning. Any change in reopening decisions will be made in consultation with the local DPH including other relevant information and other appropriate factors. Information on DPH Metrics include:

- a. Leading and Secondary Indicators will be updated by DPH on a weekly basis.
- b. Experts from the State Department of Education and Public Health and local health departments will review the data on a weekly basis and make any recommended changes between the "Low," "Moderate," and "High" categories by county each week.
- c. The "low" and "moderate" categories indicate conditions in the area are appropriate for schools to provide a full or partial in-school option to students.

Why are we considering 100% capacity at Beecher Road School when nothing else in the state is allowed to have that many people?

We are following State guidance provided by the Governor and Commissioner of Education, and we continue to follow CDC guidelines and have developed protocols for the safe return of students and staff.

How can you really ensure that 850 plus students wear their masks all day and properly?

All students are required to wear a mask to school, unless they have been provided a medical note indicating that they are unable to do so. If a student forgets their mask, we will have extra masks available. We will continue to provide communication to families on the proper way to wear a mask; this could include videos or diagrams. All teachers will be trained at the start of the year on proper mask use and storage.

Some teachers have expressed concern about returning in person and would rather go to Remote Learning.

We are taking the teachers' concerns into account to the greatest extent possible and are making safety our number one priority. We are looking into the social emotional needs of the teachers as a part of our school reopening plan for professional development and support.

For those who choose to stay home, what is the Remote Learning plan? Who teaches each grade level? How will it compare to the in person model? Have the teachers prepared lesson plans for each?

Please see the powerpoint presentation from the August 6 Board of Education meeting that provides information on our Remote Learning Plan. The plan is currently being finalized by a committee of teachers, teacher assistants and administrators. Staffing is currently being determined based on needs. The Remote Learning Plan includes a blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning. Teachers spent some time this summer looking closely at curriculum for the core content areas and planning for instruction.

Is the outdoor classroom going to happen?

Outdoor spaces will be utilized at teacher discretion for various activities and differing lengths of time. In addition to Officer Lynch routinely walking the grounds, there will be frequent check-ins with the teacher via walk throughs or use of radio calls. Safety protocols would be followed in case of emergency.

What will drop off and pick up look like?

All buses will drop off/pick up at the north entrance to the school, all parents will drop off/pick up at the south entrance to the school. More information will be provided to parents prior to the first day of school.

Will there be staggered drop off/pick up times?

Yes, buses and parents will have staggered drop off and pick up times to ensure traffic flow on Beecher Road. We anticipate that these drop off/pick up procedures will take longer than usual. We will have faculty/staff assigned logistically to ensure the safe

entrance/exit of all students in the most efficient ways possible. All buses will drop off/pick up north and all parents will drop off/pick up south.

What will be the policy for parents and visitors coming to the school? Will this be allowed?

Visitors will not be allowed in the school at this time. Currently the only exception is for parents who will be attending PPT or 504 meetings. Parents can request an in person or virtual meeting for PPTs or 504s.

What is happening to MAG and how will they cohort?

The MAG teachers are currently working with administration to complete details for the reopening. Our goal will be to do base group cohorting unless they are outside and socially distanced. If a MAG parent chooses the remote learning option for their child, the remote teacher will not be a MAG teacher and will follow a traditional curriculum.

Is lunch definitely happening in the classroom?

Yes, lunch will happen in classrooms although students with severe allergies may eat in the cafeteria remaining socially distant from peers.

How much of the school day will be spent outside? How will outdoor learning change in cold and/or rainy weather?

Factors of time and weather will all be at the teacher's discretion.

In regards to air flow, will classroom windows and doors be open to improve air flow? We have brought in our HVAC team which includes our designers, engineers and controls consultants. We are maximizing air flow in rooms through our HVAC Building Management System controls. We are also addressing humidity through the deployment of dehumidifiers. Throughout the year, our team will monitor and adjust controls and make recommendations accordingly. Interior classroom doors will be permitted to be propped open to help limit touch points and create added airflow. We will be working with classroom teachers on a case by case basis and will continue to follow CDC guidance.

Will students be allowed on the playgrounds?

Students will have outdoor recess daily although the playground equipment will be closed/off limited for students at the start of the school year. We will revisit this as the year goes on based on guidelines.

What is the mask protocol for students and how will it be enforced? How will staff and students be kept safe if there are students not wearing masks?

According to our School Medical Advisor, all students should be able to wear masks. The only exceptions may be with some students who receive special services support due to sensory or other needs and those students who have written notification from their medical provider. The wearing of masks will be enforced for all students. If a student does not wear a mask, we will provide them with one. If a student refuses to wear a mask and does not have a medical exemption the child will be isolated and their parents will be called to pick them up from school. Students will be provided mask breaks throughout the day with their class or individually as needed. Finally, all students will have desk shields. Teachers will also have desk shields and face shields if requested.

Will teachers (specials teachers, speech language pathologists, etc) rotate classrooms/students?

Students will remain in their classroom as much as possible to minimize hallway travel. Special area teachers will go to grade level classrooms to deliver their instruction. Related service staff will have small groups of students in their rooms. Social distancing will be enforced and students will bring their own desk shield.

Will students wear masks for PE and how far apart will students be?

When PE takes place outside, students will not wear masks and will maintain social distance of 6 feet or more from one another. Socially distancing guidelines will remain in place and activities will be adjusted by the PE teacher as appropriate for the setting.

How will substitute teachers be utilized?

Substitute teachers will be utilized in the same manner as in the past. When a teacher is absent, the substitute will instruct from the classroom in which they have been assigned. If the teacher is absent more than one day in a row, the same substitute will be assigned.

How will remote learning classrooms be staffed and how will they work?

Students will have an assigned remote learning teacher. The remote learning teacher will be sharing plans for the week, if the remote teacher is absent then students should be able to continue working on the assignments at their own pace. There will be assigned times when they need to log in for instruction or small group meetings. Student to teacher ratio will be determined based on staffing and the results of the parent survey. Currently, we are planning on single grade for the remote classes. If a MAG family chooses remote learning, the teacher will not be a MAG teacher. The student would be in a traditional curriculum with the remote learning teacher.

Are parents able to change the choice of learning for their child (In Person to Remote or remote to In Person)?

Yes, but parents need to provide at least one week's notice if they are going to change.

What are the guidelines for keeping kids home?

We will be sending home a COVID-19 Symptom Self Screening Form that parents will use daily to decide if their child is well enough to come to school. We ask parents not to medicate their children with fever reducing medication before coming to school this year. If a household member/close contact is TESTED, we will want a call in that scenario. Testing at this moment has a good turnaround time in CT but that could change when school has started. Students will have to quarantine for a positive COVID household member and a close contact. A close contact is defined as a positive COVID-19 person who you were exposed to within 6 ft for 15 minutes. Parents will receive information from the Nurse's Office before the first day of school. Periodic reminders will be sent home.

How is the health of children going to be monitored at school?

Daily absentee rates and illness in the building will be monitored by the nursing staff. We are making protocols that are following the CDC guidelines and CT DPH guidance. If a child has any symptoms on the COVID symptom self screening form before school, we ask that they be kept home from school. If they become ill during the day, they will be referred to their health care professional. The health care professional will decide if a COVID test is necessary. Per CDC guidelines, the student will remain out of school depending on diagnosis. Parents will receive the protocols before school starts.

When should a child be kept home from school?

Children should be kept home for any symptoms on the COVID-19 Self Screening Form including: positive COVID-19 diagnosis, positive COVID-19 in the household, positive COVID-19 contact or any symptoms consistent with COVID-19. If the parent has any concerns with how their child is feeling in the morning, it is best to keep them home for a day and see how they feel 24 hr later. Always consult your health care professional or give us a call. If a student tests positive, we will follow DPH guidance as to whether the classroom or the whole school will need to quarantine for 14 days. The student will be immediately quarantined for 14 days and monitored for illness.

Does the classroom & bus cohort of that child who tests positive stay home?

The DPH will advise the district and it will depend on the specific case and contact tracing. The closing of school will depend on the community infection rate and what is going on in our school. We also will be getting guidance from CT DPH as well as QVHD.

Why does the Board of Education continue to meet via webex?

The Town of Woodbridge buildings continue to remain closed to the public (town hall, library, senior center) and the school is following this same procedure. Additionally,

WebEx meetings also allow for a greater number of participants to engage in the conversation and hear the information directly.

Why do some Board meetings have no Public Comment and how do parents get to share their perspective on reopening? Also, how do I access the Board meeting dates, agendas and information?

Several Board meetings have had public comment. Special Board meetings typically do not have public comment. Parents will have the opportunity to participate in a survey regarding their plans for their child. We also have parents on our school reopening committee.

Here is a link to information on the BOE meeting schedule and access to past meetings:  
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<https://www.woodbridge.k12.ct.us/district-information/board-of-education>

## **GENERAL REOPENING FAQ'S**

### **Educational Format Questions**

**What educational options do I have for my child for the 2020-2021 school year?**

At the current time (August 6, 2020) we are planning for a full In Person reopening (5 full days a week) with a remote learning option. Parents can elect to have their child attend school on site or engage with remote learning or they may choose to homeschool their child.

**At what point do I need to make a decision for my child?**

A survey will go out to parents on or around August 7. We are asking for a commitment from parents at this time.

**Will I be able to change my decision during the year?**

Yes, you will be able to change your decision. We ask for at least a one week's notice for any changes.

### **Cohorting Questions**

**What is cohorting and who is in my child's cohort?**

Cohorting is the concept of isolating students to small groups. This enables more effective contact tracing in the event a student or someone in his or her family should become ill. This will

also permit cohorts to quarantine, as needed, rather than having to close an entire school or district. Your child's cohort consists of the students in his or her homeroom class.

**How will cohorting be maintained when students are on the bus?**

Parents are strongly encouraged, if able, to drive students to and from school. This will allow for social distancing of students on the bus who cannot rely on someone from home to drive them to school.

## **Face Mask Questions**

**Is it a requirement for my child to wear a mask at school?**

Yes, per Governor Lamont's reopening plan, it is a requirement for students and staff to wear masks at school. Except for certain unique situations.

**What if my child has a medical condition that does not permit him/her to wear a mask?**

If a child is unable to wear a mask at school, we would require a note from a medical provider. A parent would contact the school nurse to discuss the specifics further.

**Can my child wear a mask from home?**

It is recommended that parents provide cloth masks to their children. These masks will also allow for easy washing and drying to sanitize.

**Should I start having my child get used to wearing a mask for periods of time?**

Yes, we encourage parents to begin to help their child become comfortable wearing a mask, by gradually building up their comfort level. Practicing the proper removal of masks and encouraging children not to touch their masks will also help them become comfortable with these new routines. The link included here are some suggestions for [building mask tolerance](#).

**Will my child get breaks during the day when he/she doesn't have to wear the mask?**

Yes, under controlled conditions your child will be provided safe breaks while in school including during snack/lunch. In addition, increased distancing will allow for masks to be removed during physical education class and recess. These procedures will be reviewed with students. This will also include a student's ability to advocate for themselves when a break is needed. Additionally, the classroom teacher will periodically schedule mask breaks throughout the day to provide opportunities for students to take mask breaks as needed.

**What if my child forgets their mask or it breaks?**

The school will have extra adult and child sized surgical masks available if a student does not have one or if his/her mask breaks. Extra masks will also be on all buses in the event a student does not have one. We encourage all children to have an extra mask sent to school each day, if possible, to ensure that each child has a replacement, if needed.

**Where will my child store their mask when they are not wearing it?**

Masks will be stored in paper bags clearly marked with the child's name.

## **Transition Questions**

**How will my child learn the new procedures for school so that they are not encountering it on the first day for the first time?**

We are working on creating guidance and videos specific to students to familiarize them with these new routines and procedures so that they are prepared for the first day of school. Teachers will instruct students throughout the first several days of school on the new protocols and procedures they will encounter.

**What are the arrival and dismissal procedures for my child's school?**

All buses will be unloaded/loaded at the north entrance to Beecher, while all parent drop offs/pickups will be at the south entrance to the school. We will communicate these routines with families prior to school opening.

## **Instructional Day Questions**

**Will my child stay in their homeroom class all day?**

Students will stay with their cohort of students in their homeroom class for all instructional subjects (math, reading, writing, science, social studies.)

**Where will they eat lunch?**

Students will eat lunch in their classrooms with their classroom cohort.

**Can we still buy lunch from the cafeteria?**

Yes, the cafeteria staff will package lunches (cold lunches only to start the school year).



**How will recess work?**

Students will still have recess every day, the only change is that it will be with their classroom cohort only, not the entire grade. The playground equipment is going to be off limits at the start of the year. The recess protocol is being developed at the committee level and will be sent home to parents before the first day of school.

**Will my child still have specials (art, music, etc)?**

Specials will still be provided to all students. Special Area teachers will go to each cohort classroom to deliver special area subjects to minimize students traveling in the hallways.

**Will my child still get small group instruction/ differentiation?**

Yes, our teachers will continue to differentiate instruction and utilize 1:1 instruction.

**Will my child still be able to attend Band?**

We are waiting for more state information and guidance regarding band.

**If my child receives tiered instructional support in math or reading, will he/she still get this small group instruction?**

Yes, students will still attend small group instruction with our reading/math coordinators. There will be designated meeting spaces that abide by social distancing guidelines with reduced group sizes.

**How far apart will my child's desk be from another student?**

In working closely with our Facilities Manager and custodial staff, the administration has worked to determine the best layout for each classroom. As a guideline, children will be 4-6 feet apart depending upon the size of the room.

**Will my child have his/her own Ipad to use in class?**

Each student in grades 2-6 will have his/her own Ipad designated for him/her to use if he/she attends in person or if parents select the remote learning option for their child.

**Will Open House still occur?**

Yes, we will still have Open House. it will be held via a video recording or virtual format this year. More information to follow.

## **Health and Wellness Questions**

**How will I know if I should keep my child home from school because they are ill?**

A Covid-19 Symptom Self Check Form will be sent home to parents before the first day of school. Parents are to refer to it daily to determine if their child is well enough to go to school each day.

**Will my child's temperature be taken at school?**

We ask that parents take temperatures at home before sending a child to school each day. When needed on an individual basis, the school nurse will take temperatures.

## **Positive Covid-19 Case Questions**

**Is the district consulting with a medical professional for guidance as the reopening plan is being developed?** Yes. The school has a Medical Advisor.

**If a child or their teacher is diagnosed with COVID-19 will the entire school be on remote learning or just that classroom?** We are waiting for guidance on this from CT DPH.

**How will families be informed if a child or teacher is diagnosed with COVID-19?**

The families of the students in the classroom cohort where a positive case of Covid-19 has been diagnosed will be informed through a Swift K12 message and hard copy letter home. Please keep in mind that the privacy of staff and students will be honored and names of anyone who has contracted the virus will not be shared.

**What would happen if a student in the class travels to a hotspot?**

Per Governor Lamont's guidance, the student would need to quarantine at home for 14 days. This protocol will take effect if the trip took place within 14 days of the school opening or during the school year.

**We have received many questions that address specific scenarios that we could encounter this year. Some of these scenarios are:**

- **What if a child's parent tests positive - how can the school ensure that the child doesn't come to school?** Our hope is that parents are working in collaboration with us in keeping our entire community safe during these extraordinary times.
- **If a cohort has to quarantine because a member of it tests positive for COVID-19, do the siblings of any of the students in that cohort have to stay home/**

**quarantine as well?** We are awaiting DPH recommendations on this. A contact is when someone is within 6 ft for 15 minutes with a positive COVID-19 person.

- **If a parent of a student tests positive for COVID-19 does that mean that the entire classroom cohort has to quarantine?** It would depend on if the student was positive or not.
- **What if a parent works in a hot zone or hospital?** Parents need to be following the CT travel advisory issued by Governor Lamont. There are no restrictions for students with parents as hospital employees.
- **If a family has more than one child attending school will all of them have to stay home if one of them exhibits Covid like symptoms?** This needs further evaluation before it can be answered. The symptomatic person needs an evaluation for a determination of a COVID diagnosis.
- **What if the teacher has been exposed, but does not have symptoms or positive test results?** It depends on the exposure. We will work with our local DPH and our Medical Advisor on different scenarios.

**My child has an individualized education plan (IEP), what will his/her support services look like?**

The support services are determined by the IEP. It is our full intention to implement the IEP while we are in-person using mitigating measures. Should remote learning be necessary, we will implement the IEP to the greatest extent possible under remote instruction and/or in-person if feasible.

The district has offered learning flexibility. Parents may express their preferences for in-person learning or the remote learning option while the district is in the full opening model.

Students with IEPs will receive FAPE regardless of whether their learning takes place in a school building or from home. If the PPT determines a student requires remote learning due to health reasons, the team will develop a remote learning plan to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities given the circumstances.

The school based team will communicate with families. The school nurse and or case manager will have individual conversations with families of students with medical challenges to talk about the available learning options, their preferences, and needs, and any of the family members' concerns or questions. We encourage parents to reach out to their child's health care provider for precautions to follow for attending classes in school buildings and to share any concerns with the school-based team.

The PPT will consider the least restrictive environment placement for medically fragile students on an individual basis, but we have flexibility if students' health and safety are threatened

(additional mitigation strategies will be discussed and agreed upon :e.g. lunch provided separately to students who are medically at risk).

**Will parent meetings, such as 504 or IEP meetings, be in person?**

These meetings will still occur. Following [guidance provided by IDEA](#) regarding alternative means for holding meetings, we encourage families to participate via a virtual format, but in person meetings can be held with social distancing and with everyone wearing masks.

## **Facilities Questions**

**What are the ventilation requirements?**

Beecher Road School is addressing all school ventilation and air filtering systems in accordance with guidance from the CT Reopening School Adapt, Advance, Achieve document sent to all school districts for school reopening planning purposes.

**How will the building and my child's class be cleaned each day?**

Following guidance from the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, we are currently conducting deep cleaning of our school during the summer months. We are also developing cleaning protocols for identifying which areas will require routine daily cleaning and which will require cleaning, followed by disinfection.

Building plans for cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces will include:

- Door handles
- Handrails
- Sinks, toilets, drinking fountains and fixtures
- Light switches and cover plates

**All efforts will be made to minimize contact with common surfaces.**

- All building restrooms will be sanitized multiple times daily. Soap and/or sanitizer will be available in the bathroom and throughout the school building.

- Frequently touched surfaces and other equipment will be cleaned throughout the day
- Hand sanitizing stations will be installed at school entrances and throughout the building
- Continue the training and Implementation of cleaning and disinfecting procedures recommended by the CDC and Department of Public Health
- Areas requiring routine daily cleaning, followed by disinfection include:

“High-touch areas”, which refers to hard surfaces indoors that are routinely touched by different individuals. Examples may include (but not limited to) desks and chairs, doorknobs, countertops, bathroom surfaces, copiers/scanners/fax machines, computer equipment, shared laptops, iPads, physical education equipment, locker rooms (benches, showers, and toileting areas), shared break room appliances, handrails, door knobs, and light switches. Schedules will be developed to complete this cleaning during and after school hours daily.

### **Substitute Questions**

**How are substitutes trained and vetted in the reopening procedures and protocols?**

Beecher utilizes Interns from several area Universities as our substitutes. Each Intern works alongside an assigned mentor/classroom teacher. They participate in an orientation process in late August prior to the opening of school.

### **Parent Volunteer Questions**

**Will parents still be allowed to come into the building to volunteer for activities?**

At this time, only staff and students will be allowed in the building. Parents will be allowed in only if they are attending a PPT or 504 meeting. These meetings can also be held virtually.

