

Reopening Our Schools For 2022-2023

HALF HOLLOW HILLS CSD



Overview

The Half Hollow Hills Central School District's Reopening Plan for the 2022-2023 school year is designed to guide our practices and protocols to ensure a continued safe return to instruction for our students and staff. Our district continues to prioritize the health and well-being of our entire community as we enter the fourth school year operating under special guidelines due to COVID-19.

The 2022-2023 Reopening Plan applies to all of our schools in the district – High School East, High School West, Candlewood Middle School, West Hollow Middle School, Otsego Elementary School, Paumanok Elementary School, Signal Hill Elementary School, Sunquam Elementary School and Vanderbilt Elementary School.

Our plan is informed by the latest updates from New York State regarding their guidance for schools in managing COVID-19 during the upcoming school year. These new guidelines are aligned with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s movement away from strict mitigation measures.

The full information about the updated guidance can be accessed on the [New York State website](#), but the following highlighted points will help you understand the impact on all of us as we open schools.

- **In-person instruction will be provided for all students**, and there will be no BOCES virtual option.
- **COVID-19 vaccinations are not mandated in New York for attending school**, and there has been no change to the other required immunizations for students to attend school.
- **Masks and face coverings are optional**, and we continue to respect the decisions by students and staff on whether they choose to wear a mask or not.
 - Masks are not required on school buses.
 - The NYS Department of Health recommends that individuals should wear a mask during days 5-10 after testing positive for COVID-19.
- **Quarantines are no longer required for close contacts.**
- **Isolation for five days after testing positive for COVID-19 is still in place.**
 - Please continue to report any positive cases using [our online forms](#) so we can help your family navigate the absence and your child continue their learning.

- **School districts are no longer required to conduct contact tracing;** however, potential exposures will still be notified so that families can make informed health decisions.
- **Physical distancing and cohorting is no longer recommended,** so student activities and groupings will return to their pre-pandemic norms.
- **We will have COVID-19 home tests from New York State available at all schools and sites** for our families, and for any student or staff member who was potentially exposed and would like a test.
- **Employee screening testing is no longer required.**
- **Schools are no longer required to report positive COVID-19 test results on a daily basis** to the NYS Department of Health, however we will continue our [district reporting on our website](#) for the beginning of the school year.

Since the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic remains fluid, we will revise the plan when necessary and share those updates with our educational community. For more information and updates, please visit our Reopening webpage at <https://www.hhh.k12.ny.us/reopening>.

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Health & Safety

Key Points

- In most settings physical distancing between students in classrooms will return to pre-pandemic designs to allow for cooperative learning, social interactions and laboratory partners.
- Desk shields will not be used in classrooms.
- Daily health screening submissions will not be required for students and staff.
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of classrooms, buildings and buses will continue.
- Frequent hand-washing and respiratory hygiene will continue to be encouraged among students and staff.

Additional Details

District COVID-19 Coordinators

Dr. Jeff Woodberry, Assistant Superintendent for District-wide Administration, and Ms. Debra Ferry, District Director of Interscholastic Athletics, will serve as the district’s COVID-19 Coordinators. They can be reached at covid@hhh.k12.ny.us.

School Building	COVID-19 Building Administrator	COVID-19 School Nurse	Email Group
HS East	Shaun Hantzschel	Diane Schebece	hsecovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us
HS West	Mary Lippert	Melissa Montgomery	hswcovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us
Candlewood	Matthew Mayo	Evanne Orlean	cacovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us
West Hollow	Eric Seely	Karen Duenas	whcovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us
Hills Academy	Valerie Geiler	Evanne Orlean	cacovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us
Otsego	Stacey Gillespie	Jeanne Berson	otcovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us
Paumanok	Kendra Cooper	Deborah Smith	pacovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us

Signal Hill	Maryann Fasciana	Jody Brower	shcovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us
Sunquam	Moira Haltigan	Kim Conway	sucovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us
Vanderbilt	Martin Boettcher	Kathy Kremer	vacovidalert@hhh.k12.ny.us

Face Coverings / Mask Wearing

NYSDOH recommends students and staff wear masks when:

- They feel more comfortable wearing a mask for personal reasons.
- They are known to have been exposed to COVID-19 in any setting within the previous 10 days. Masking, regardless of vaccination status, is strongly recommended for 10 days after a known exposure.
- They are moderately-to-severely immunocompromised and have discussed the need to mask with their healthcare provider(s).

Travel Advisory

All travelers, [domestic](#) and [international](#), should continue to follow all CDC travel requirements.

Exposed or Potentially Exposed Individuals

The District will notify affected school staff, students, and their parents/guardians whenever an individual was in the same classroom or bus as an infected individual and so was exposed or potentially exposed (i.e., in the same classroom as an infected individual for longer than 15 minutes). Building-wide notifications will be reported through the [7-day chart posted on our website](#). Exposed or potentially exposed individuals, regardless of vaccination status, will not be excluded (quarantined) from school.

Whenever someone in school – student, staff or teacher – is determined to have been exposed or potentially exposed, the individual should be tested for COVID-19 as follows:

- Consider testing immediately upon learning of the exposure or potential exposure,
- At least 5 days after the last date of exposure or potential exposure, regardless of vaccination status,

- If the individual is not fully vaccinated and attending or working at school after an exposure or potential exposure, frequent testing (e.g., daily, every other day, at least twice within 5 days) from the date of the exposure or potential exposure (Day 0) through at least day 5 should be strongly considered and encouraged,
- Exposed school staff and students and/or their parents/guardians are primarily responsible for ensuring that recommended testing occurs. The District will supply testing kits to affected families for testing at home if requested.

Masking, regardless of vaccination status, is strongly recommended by the NYSDOH for 10 days after a known exposure.

Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Protocol for Return

Positive Case - When there is a confirmed positive case – the individual will:

- Go or stay home and inform school staff
- Notify SCDHS
 - Reporting at-home tests: <https://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/Health-Services/Health-Bulletins/Novel-Coronavirus> and click on the banner “Report At-Home COVID-19 Positive Test Result” or call 311
- Isolate for a minimum of 5 days (regardless of vaccination status), where day 0 is the day of symptom onset or if asymptomatic, the test date
- Conditions of Return:
 - At least 5 days have passed since symptoms began or test date if no symptoms; and
 - Fever-free for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication; and
 - Other symptoms have improved; and
 - A letter from the Health Department to end isolation, found here: https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/01/affirmation_of_isolation_011222.pdf; and

- Wear mask for 5 additional days after end of 5 day isolation period. With two sequential negative rapid antigen tests 48 hours apart, mask may be removed sooner than day 10.
- If symptoms persist, further isolation will be required
 - If symptoms develop after testing positive, the 5-day isolation period should start over. Day 0 is the first day of symptoms.
- If fever continues or other symptoms have not improved after 5 days of isolation, continue to isolate until there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved
- Individuals who are moderately-severely immunocompromised, and those unable to wear a well-fitting mask, should continue to follow standard (at least ten days) isolation guidance

(An employee testing positive is eligible for paid sick leave if it is determined that working remotely would not be effective)

Person with Symptoms - When a person is a suspected case or has COVID-19 symptoms – the individual will:

- Go or stay home and inform school staff
- Isolate for at least 5 days following the onset of illness
- Conditions of return:
 - Fever-free for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication
 - Other symptoms have improved
 - Encouraged to wear a well-fitting mask while around others for an additional 5 days
 - A negative COVID-19 test result:
 - If a negative test result is received before the end of the 5-day isolation, then the individual can come back to work/school as long as the conditions above are met.
 - A negative test result is not required if:

- A health care provider does not suspect COVID-19, and a test is not administered, a note from the provider with an alternate diagnosis other than COVID-19 is required. (A diagnosis of unconfirmed acute illnesses, such as viral upper respiratory illness (URI) or viral gastroenteritis, will not suffice for students/staff to return to school.), or
 - The symptoms are attributable to pre-existing medical conditions (e.g., migraines, allergies) and are not new or worsening
- If an individual does not test and does not have a medical note as described above, the individual must follow the isolation guidelines under testing positive
- If fever continues or other symptoms have not improved after 5 days of isolation, continue to isolate until there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved

Person in Contact with a Person with Symptoms - When a person comes in contact with a suspected case (a person exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms) the individual will:

- Self-Monitor and practice safety precautions
 - Await suspected case's COVID-19 results:
 - Suspected Case tests Negative - Contact continues to practice social distancing
 - Suspected Case tests Positive - See "Exposed or Potentially Exposed Individuals" above

Vaccination Status

The district will only inquire about student and staff vaccination status if necessary to comply with NYSDOH regulations. Answers will be kept private and the information will not be used for any other purpose.

Isolation

When staff are required to be in isolation:

- Staff members required to be in isolation must report it to their direct supervisor and the Office of District-wide Administration (DWA) (covid@hhh.k12.ny.us or 631-592-3028).

- Staff will be advised of options for use of sick time and eventual return to work.
- Staff ending isolation must contact DWA via email or phone in order to get clearance to return to work in a building. DWA will contact staff members' direct supervisors.

When students are required to be in isolation:

- Students returning from isolation must report to the Nurse's Office, and submit any required documentation, prior to resuming in-school activities. Information may be emailed to Covid@hhh.k12.ny.us, individual schools' COVID-19 Coordinators or to the schools' nurses.
- Nurse's office staff will email the students' teachers and administrators advising them that students are cleared to return.

Instruction

Key Points

- All students will have in-person instruction.
- Elementary specials (music, art, library and physical education) will take place in traditional settings (where space allows).
- Lockers will return to pre-pandemic availability for secondary students.
- Libraries, Computer Labs and Makerspace activities will be available to students.
- Planetarium and Discovery Center will be reopened.
- Back to School Nights will be in-person.
- Assemblies will return with consideration for capacity limits.
- REACH CYA before and after care will be available.
- Universal Pre-K will be offered as a 5-hour program through REACH CYA, Alternatives for Children, and The Chai Center

Additional Details

Elementary Arrival and Dismissal

Elementary arrival and dismissal will return to pre-pandemic times and procedures. Arrival/drop off will begin at 9:10am each day. Students will report directly to their classrooms at this time.

Elementary dismissal will begin at 3:05pm, ensuring instruction can occur through the last period of the day. In an effort to reduce traffic and the time needed to safely dismiss all students, elementary families are encouraged to utilize district transportation. Staff that had been escorting students to vehicles will now be servicing students inside the school for the last period of instruction.

Instruction During Isolation

Elementary

In the event that NYS mandates continued instruction while elementary students are in isolation, we will utilize the following plan:

- A building administrator will approve the child's placement in a district-wide grade level remote class. District teachers with a specialty on the child's grade level will provide instruction each day of the isolation. These teachers will work collaboratively with their colleagues on the grade level. The program for students receiving special education services will be determined by the school and the student's special education team.
- General education grade level remote classes on each grade, kindergarten through grade 5, will be available each day. Classes will remain fluid so that students can successfully enter and exit throughout the year. For example, if there were two isolated second graders at each of the five elementary schools, they would be combined to create a class of 10. The teachers will create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for the students and will keep them on pace with their grade level peers. At the conclusion of the isolation period, the student will return to his/her regular classroom instruction.
- Upon entry to the district-wide grade level remote class, the student will receive an invitation through Canvas. Once the invitation is accepted, the student/family will have access to the remote class/teacher.

- Students attending the district-wide grade level remote classes will receive 45 minutes of ELA instruction and 45 minutes of math instruction (with a 15 minute screen break) each day. The ELA and math instruction will be provided by the same teacher. Assignments for the subjects will be posted in the student’s district-wide grade level remote course.
- Schedules for the district-wide remote classes are listed below:

GRADE	ELA	MATH
K	9:00am	10:00am
1	11:00am	12:00pm
2	9:00am	10:00am
3	11:00am	12:00pm
4	9:00am	10:00am
5	11:00am	12:00pm

Secondary

1. Students requiring a 5-day isolation are not permitted to attend school or any in-person extra-curricular events, including athletics. This restriction is applicable for the duration of the isolation period should it become necessary to extend beyond 5 days.
2. Students who will be absent for 3 or more days due to isolation will receive 1 hour of remote instruction for each core area subject (ELA, Math, Social Studies, Science & World Language), as well as additional hours for AP or other advanced classes, as determined by the building administration.
3. It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent to communicate with their teachers regarding isolation absences. If a student will be absent for 3 or more days due to isolation, core area teachers should be contacted directly via phone, email or Canvas Messenger to request remote instruction.
4. If the teacher of record is unable to provide the remote instruction, permanent substitute teachers will be assigned to communicate with the teacher of record and provide the necessary remote instruction to the student.

5. Each hour of remote instruction will consist of approximately 40 minutes of synchronous instruction and 20 minutes of asynchronous instruction and can be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time during the day or evening. Homework will be assigned as needed to maintain pacing.
6. Compensation for the teacher providing such services will be at the homebound instruction rate of pay.

Emergency Closure

In the event a school shifts to online/remote learning, students will follow their individual classroom schedules. Teachers will post details on their Canvas pages.

Social Emotional Well-Being

The district remains committed to prioritizing social emotional well-being of our students and staff. To that end, we have added a guidance counselor for our elementary students and are continuing the successful Elementary Connects program.

Transportation

Key Points

- **Bus windows will remain open, weather permitting, to increase fresh air and improve ventilation.**
- **Late buses will be available for events, clubs and activities.**
- **Drivers will be sanitizing buses after the AM, after the PM and after the late bus routes each day.**

Additional Details

Busing for Elementary Students

In an effort to resume more traditional arrival and dismissal times for our elementary schools, we are encouraging families to participate in bus transportation. This will help in creating safe traffic patterns around our buildings which will allow them to return to pre-pandemic schedules for arrival and dismissal.

Food Services

Key Points

- School breakfast and lunch will be available for purchase in cafeterias.
- Beginning September 2022, the state and federal governments are no longer funding free school meals for students nationwide.

Additional Details

Elementary & Secondary Point of Sale

All students will continue using their PINs at the register when checking out, and hand sanitizer will be available at each register for those looking to use it.

Continuity of Food Services

If there is an emergency closing due to COVID-19, the district is prepared to offer grab-and-go meals to ensure the continuity of food services for our students.

After-School Activities

Key Points

- After-school programs and extra-curricular clubs will return to pre-pandemic norms.
- Interscholastic athletics will return to pre-pandemic norms.
- Concerts, plays and ceremonies will return to pre-pandemic norms.

Resources

- [Half Hollow Hills CSD Reopening Website](#)
- [Half Hollow Hills Daily Positive Case Report](#)
- [NYS 2022-2023 Guidance for Schools](#)
- [Suffolk County COVID-19 Vaccination Center](#)
- [New York State Vaccination Site](#)
- [Recommended Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Resources](#)
- [Find a Test Site Near You \(NYS\)](#)
- [CDC - What You Need to Know About Handwashing \(video\)](#)
- [CDC - Considerations for Wearing Cloth Face Coverings](#)
- [CDC - Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives](#)