

**Ballston Spa CSD
DRAFT
Reopening Plan
Framework**

Revised January 19, 2022

Summary of Changes Since November 21

- *Quarantining times have been reduced* by the CDC from 10 days to 5 days where individuals are no longer symptomatic and are fever free.
- [Universal Masking requirement](#) as ordered by the NYS Department of Health remains in place until at least February 1, 2022 and will be evaluated by the Governor at that time.
- *Symptomatic students* may use OTC tests to return to school (two tests, 36 hours apart, parent attestation)
- *The CDC has approved booster shots* for students ages 12 – 17 years old.
- *NYS will no longer require contact tracing*, but Saratoga County and the District will take a modified approach to this in specific, high-risk instances.
- *Test-to-Stay* is an option for unvaccinated, asymptomatic students identified in our limited contact tracing.
- *COVID screening tests are now available to parents* through your child's school and to staff.
- *Staffing shortages* in Bus Drivers, Teaching Assistants and Teacher Aides continues to be a challenge.
- *Cases* increased dramatically in late December and *are beginning to decrease* in the district and in the region.

Reopening Planning Measures

Many of the *Key Elements* of our *Framework* will depend on the status of the virus in our schools, in the community, and in the Saratoga County region. As the status of the virus may change during the year, any changes to our plans will be informed by the following **requirements and** measures:

1. Requirements from NYS and Saratoga County – Regarding masking, quarantining, social distancing, and virus management strategies in general.
2. County transmission rates (*Low, Moderate, Substantial, or High*) as determined by the CDC.
3. Daily averages of positive cases in Saratoga County as determined by the NYS Department of Health.
4. Vaccination rates for students, staff, and the community as determined by the District reporting portal and the NYS Department of Health Vaccination database.
5. Assessment of School Environment
 - Number of positive cases in classrooms and individual schools as determined by the BSCSD COVID Coordinator and Saratoga County Public Health Services.
 - Screening test results of students and staff if necessary/required (*parent permission required to test students*).
 - Student and staff absences due to quarantining/illness.

Reopening Goal

In-person learning for all students 5 days per week with minimal disruption.

- The District will take proactive steps to meet this goal including:
 - *Encourage vaccination for those eligible and maximizing vaccination* availability for students and staff.
 - *Minimizing quarantining* for students and staff by:
 - *Requiring masks* to be worn indoors at all times per NYSDOH requirement issued on August 27, 2021 except during designated mask breaks and while eating and drinking.
 - *Monitoring daily cases* in classrooms and buildings through staff and parent reporting.
 - *Conducting contact tracing* of positive cases as quickly as possible.
 - *Encouraging students and staff who are not feeling well to stay home.*
 - *Monitoring the overall wellness* of students and staff.
 - *Encouraging handwashing* and/or hand sanitizing, and good sneezing/coughing etiquette.
 - *Maximizing ventilation* in school buildings and on buses.
 - *Frequently reevaluating* our plan based on new information and changes to our reopening planning measures.
 - *Continuously updating staff, parents, and the community* and requesting feedback on proposed changes to our plans.

Quarantining/Closure Rules

- Student, staff, and class quarantining determinations are made according to the rules of the Saratoga County Public Health Services (SCPHS).
- If quarantining of students, staff, or a classroom or closure of a school is required by SCPHS, the District will utilize a combination of the following to maintain our quality of instruction:
 - Utilizing lessons on Schoology.
 - Utilizing a hybrid learning model (students in class and a student or students on Google Meet) and/or teacher teaching remotely (with class supervised by another staff member).
 - Providing additional tutoring for individual and small groups of students.
 - Shifting to a fully remote model *only* during the limited period of required classroom quarantine or closure.
- Specific details vary by grade level and duration of quarantine and will be communicated by teachers and/or building principals.

Current Vaccination Status⁽¹⁾

Group	First Dose	Completed Vaccine Series
BSCSD Faculty and Staff ⁽²⁾	87%	88%
BSCSD Students 12+yoa	62%	63% (43% due for booster)
BSCSD Students 5-11yoa	24%	32%
Ballston Spa Zip Code 12020 ⁽³⁾	88.1%	78.8%
Ballston Lake Zip Code 12019	100%	89.3%
Saratoga Springs Zip Code 12866	81.5%	80.1%
Mechanicville Zip Code 12118	79.8%	73.8%
Middle Grove Zip Code 12850	74.2%	67.1%
Rock City Falls Zip Code 12863	75.0%	65.4%
Saratoga County (5 years old and older) ⁽⁴⁾	90.6%	81.3% (53.3% have received the booster shot)

(1) As of January 19, 2022.

(2) BSCSD Faculty and Staff rate is based on self-reported data. Due to incomplete data, it is possible that this rate is higher.

(3) Information retrieved from <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/vaccination-rates-zip-code>

(4) Information retrieved from <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/e56ae5bf0064452fb7b6aa2933f79f8e> and <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations-county-view>

Masking for Students, Staff, Visitors, and Spectators

- ***Always required***⁽¹⁾
 - On our buses for students and staff per CDC order. (See *Resources* section.)
 - In school buildings including for indoor sports (student athletes and spectators) except when eating or drinking per [NYSDOH requirement](#) re-issued on January 13, 2022.
- ***Recommended but not required:***
 - For students, staff, and spectators/visitors when outdoors and in close proximity to others.
- ***No requirement:***
 - While students are outdoors (e.g., recess) so long as distancing can be maintained.

(1) Any changes to this requirement must be made by the NYS Department of Health.

Key Elements based on NYS, CDC, and AAP Guidance⁽¹⁾

- **Transportation** – In our current plan,
 - *Masks* are required on buses by federal order for students and staff.⁽²⁾
 - *Social distancing* is not required, but will be done where possible. **Students will have assigned seats.**
 - *Bus Schedule* will be the same as in pre-pandemic years with similar number of buses and runs.
 - *Student drop-off and pick up* by parents/caregivers are encouraged to lessen the number of students on our buses. **Instructional schedules will not change to accommodate transportation choices at each building.**
 - *Ventilation* will be maximized as weather allows (windows and vents open).
 - *School will remain in session* when transportation runs cannot be provided due to driver absences.
- **Entering School** – In our current plan,
 - *Masks* are to be worn at all times except during designated mask breaks or when eating or drinking per [NYSDOH requirement](#) re-issued on January 13, 2022..
 - *Social Distancing* of at least 3 feet will be maintained between students and 6 feet between staff and students wherever possible.

(1) See *Resources* section on slide 16. As research continues to emerge, we will adjust our plans as necessary in consultation with medical professionals.

(2) See <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/masks/mask-travel-guidance.html>

Key Elements based on NYS, CDC, and AAP Guidance⁽¹⁾

- **In School** – In our current plan,
 - *Masks* are required in school buildings except when eating or drinking per [NYSDOH requirement](#) re-issued on January 13, 2022.
 - Students and staff will be encouraged to *wash hands or sanitize often during the school day*.
 - *Staff in classrooms* will maintain at least 6 feet of distance between themselves and students.
 - *Full-time Remote Learning* will not be an option. Program options for students who are homebound due to quarantining for **COVID-19** (as directed by Saratoga County Public Health) and other documented medical issues will be provided. (See Quarantine Slide.)
 - *Classroom setups* will look very similar to pre-pandemic rooms.⁽²⁾ Additional details on science labs, group work, etc. will be addressed.

(1) Please see *Resources* section on slide 16. As research continues to emerge and/or additional requirements are issued by the New York State Department of Health, we will adjust our plans as necessary.

(2) Additional teachers have been hired to reduce class sizes at certain grades in K-5.

Key Elements based on NYS, CDC, and AAP Guidance⁽¹⁾

- **In School** – In our current plan,
 - *Schedules* will be the same/very similar to those in pre-pandemic years (e.g., 60 minute periods at high school).
 - *Hallway Locker Use* details for middle and high schools will be shared by building principals.
 - *Cafeteria/Lunch time* details will vary by building as NYS will follow the CDC rule for flexibility.⁽²⁾ Locations for breakfast and lunch will vary so as to maintain as much physical distancing as possible while students are eating.
 - *Band, Chorus, and Physical Education* will require masking or distancing per [NYSDOH requirement](#) re-issued on January 13, 2022..
 - *Symptomatic students and staff* will be sent home and must be tested for the virus before returning. School nurses will contact parents to discuss necessary steps.

(1) Please see *Resources* section on slide 16. As research continues to emerge and/or additional requirements are issued by the DC, the New York State Department of Health, and/or Saratoga County Public Health Services we will adjust our plans as necessary.

(2) As clarified by the Governor’s Office on August 28, 2021 *referencing the CDC Guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html#physical-distancing>* which states, in part, that “*Because of the importance of in-person learning, schools should implement physical distancing to the extent possible within their structures but should not exclude students from in-person learning to keep a minimum distance requirement.*”

Key Elements based on NYS, CDC, and AAP Guidance⁽¹⁾

- **After school Clubs and Athletics** – In our current plan,
 - *Meetings/games* will be the same/very similar to schedules in prior years.
 - *Masking* is required for all indoor clubs and athletics except when eating or **drinking** per [NYSDOH requirement](#) re-issued on January 13. 2022.
 - *Masking* will not be required for outdoor athletics (pending changes from the New York State Department of Health, the New York State Education Department, Saratoga County Public Health, Section II, or the Suburban Council Athletic League).
 - *Screening Testing* for the COVID virus *may* be required (with parent permission) for student athletes in high-risk sports⁽¹⁾ who are not vaccinated as warranted by our reopening planning measures.
- **Visiting the Schools/Attending Events** – In our current plan,
 - *School Visitors* must wear masks at all times while in our buildings per [NYSDOH requirement](#) re-issued on January 13. 2022 and *may* be limited based on our Reopening Planning Measures.
 - *Spectators* at indoor athletic events and student performances must wear masks per [NYSDOH requirement](#) re-issued on January 13. 2022.

(1) Winter season high-risk sports as defined by NYS are hockey, wrestling, basketball, and competitive cheer.

Monitoring the Overall Wellness of Students and Staff

- **Utilizing additional federal funds, the District has added:**
 - A 2nd school counselor at our Title I school (Wood Road Elementary).
 - The *Primary Project* school readiness program at Milton Terrace Elementary (currently in place at Wood Road Elementary).
 - Staffing including a social worker to support students and families enrolled in the Spa Academy program for certain students in grades 9-12.
 - Expanded counseling capacity at the high school.
 - A school-family liaison to support our homeless students and families (as defined by federal law).
 - Behavioral support coaches at the elementary and districtwide levels.
 - Additional support for K-12 students and families through *Parsons Family Services*.
- **The Office of Personnel Management and Development will continue to work to ensure staff have access to various employee assistance resources.**

Next Steps:

- Continue to *refine planning* with BSCSD Administrative Council, BSCSD teacher/Administrator Planning Workgroup, Saratoga County Public Health Office, the School District Physician, and Saratoga County School Districts. (*Ongoing*)
- *Monitor positive cases* and make needed adjustments to instructional planning and delivery based on our reopening metrics.
- *Revise Contact Tracing Protocols* to align with changes at state and county levels.
- Continue implementation of a [Test to Stay](#) model for unvaccinated, asymptomatic students who are identified in our limited contact tracing protocols.
- Continue to *distribute rapid antigen tests* to students and staff (students tested only with parent permission).
- *Monitor winter sports* for an indication of virus spread and impact of spectator attendance.
- *Provide ongoing updates* to the Board of Education at regular meetings.
- Provide *updates to staff and parents* each time that this *Framework* is updated.

Resources:

- BSCSD Coping with COVID Resources <https://www.bscsd.org/Page/13113>
- CDC Types of Masks and Respirators <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>
- NYS DOH Health Commissioner Determination on Indoor Masking https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/01/2.60_Determination_011322.pdf#:~:text=After%20careful%20review%20and%20consideration%20of%20the%20increasing%20number%20of,covering%2Fmask%2C%20regardless%20of%20vaccination
- CDC Order for Masks on Buses <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/masks/mask-travel-guidance.html>
- Saratoga County Quarantining and Isolation forms and procedures <https://www.saratogacountyny.gov/departments/publichealth/covid19/isoquar/>
- CDC COVID Symptoms <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- NYS Test to Stay Program https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/12/testtostay-memo_12-23-21.pdf
- NYS Department of Health Commissioner's Determination on Testing <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/12/updated-2.62-determination-12.8.21.pdf>
- Centers for Disease Control Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>
- Centers for Disease Control Up to Date Vaccination Definitions and Procedures <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>
- Centers for Disease Control Appendices <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact>
- American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>
- NYS Education Department Health and Safety Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year <http://www.nysed.gov/back-school/health-and-safety-guide-2021-2022-school-year>
- NYS Department of Health Vaccination Tracker by Zip Code <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/vaccination-rates-zip-code>
- NYS Department of Health Percent Positive Tracker <https://forward.ny.gov/percentage-positive-results-county-dashboard>
- NYS Department of Health Progress on Combating COVID-19 <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-updates-new-yorkers-states-progress-combating-covid-19-1>
- Centers for Disease Control Community Transmission Rate <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>
- Saratoga County Public Health Positive Case Tracker <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/e56ae5bf0064452fb7b6aa2933f79f8e>