



RyeNeck Schools
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REOPENING PLAN

Operation and Instruction During the COVID-19 Pandemic

2020-2021

This plan is a “living document” that will be continuously updated as plans are finalized or improved and new guidance is received. This plan was last updated on April 27th, 2021.

Introduction

In July, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that school districts in New York could reopen for in-person schooling in September if COVID-19 infection rates stayed at 5% or lower in a given region. Recently, the NYSDOH provided guidance aligned with the CDC’s operational strategies for schools. Data regarding cases and infection rate in our area continues to be reviewed to determine whether it is safe to keep schools open and at what capacity.

While districts have been instructed to prioritize efforts to return all students to in-person instruction, the district has planned for remote/distance learning, as well as for a hybrid model that combines in-person instruction and remote learning. Full, in-person instruction with all students on a regular daily academic schedule relies on PPE, maximum social distance, limitations on extracurricular activities, disinfection, and enhanced ventilation.

The plan outlined here is for the operation of schools in the Rye Neck Union Free School District for the 2020-21 school year, following the spring, 2020, building closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan includes procedures that will be followed in all four of our schools: Daniel Warren Elementary School, F. E. Bellows Elementary School, Rye Neck Middle School, and Rye Neck High School.

The health and safety of our students, our staff and their families is our top priority. We want students and employees to feel comfortable and safe returning to school campuses. Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#) and the [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\)](#).

It is possible that we may need to alternate between in-person and remote learning throughout the year due to recommendations and guidance from our partnering agencies, stay-at-home orders from the Governor, or loss of staffing due to quarantines. The level of infection, the spread of the virus and the response to the disease in our community will be at the forefront of our decision making as we move to open our schools.

Dr. Eric Lutinski is acting as the district’s COVID-19 Coordinator. As such, he serves as a central contact for schools and stakeholders, families, staff and other school community members and will ensure the district is in compliance with and following the best practices per state and federal guidelines. Dr. Lutinski’s contact information (elutinski@ryeneck.org) is posted on the district webpage under the “Reopening” tab, along with contact information for other district personnel.

Dear Families,

Rye Neck's reopening plan represents the collective effort of our school district. Information gathered from parent surveys, Principals' Advisory Committees (PAC), the Rye Neck Teachers Association (RNTA), district support staff, and the high school student senate guided the development of our plan. Rye Neck's reopening plan is based upon guidance from the CDC/DOH and the NY State Education Department. It was developed with the objective of creating three scenarios that allow for high-quality learning, while providing our children with a return to some degree of normalcy for the 2020-21 school year.

Our planning focuses on four major categories: safety and well-being of students and staff, instruction, mental health, and facilities. Careful thought has been given to a model that would allow students to move easily from one scenario to another. To that end, our plan provides for a seamless transition from any one of the re-entry models implemented (full return to school, hybrid model, all remote learning) to another without an interruption to the instructional program.

While preparing our reopening plan, many considerations and challenges surfaced which informed our work. Most importantly, we were mindful of the impact that any hybrid model would have on our families. To that end, our hybrid model design keeps siblings on the same schedule K-12. The hybrid model offered allows for 50% of the population to attend in-person instruction on alternating days, and provides for e-learning on the days students are not participating in in-person classes.

Most importantly, we recognize the desire that families and students have to return to full day, in-person instruction. We have the same desire; however, we believe that the Rye Neck plan allows us to begin the journey back to school in a safe and equitable way for everyone. Thoughtful planning has allowed us to create the three reopening models required by NYS that effectively support teaching and learning.

In closing, I want to thank you for your continued help and partnership over the past several months. Working together, we will ensure a safe re-entry to school for all students and staff. Sincerely,

Barbara Ferraro, Ed.D
Superintendent of Schools

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Communication/Family and Community Engagement

To help inform our reopening plan, the district has sought feedback and input from stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians of students, local health department officials and health care providers, employee unions and community groups. Engagement efforts included online surveys, virtual forums/meetings and one-on-one conversations.

In addition to our district administrators, members of the following district and community groups and individuals took part in discussions or provided input via surveys that assisted with the formation of our Reopening Plan:

- Rye Neck Teachers Association
- Parent Teacher Student Association
- Principal's Advisory Committees
- District Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Thomas Militana
- High School Student Senate
- District Support Staff
- Parents K-12
- Students Grades 6-12

Completed prior to submission of plan

- 4/28/20: Meeting of K12 Mental Health Subcommittee
- 5/12/20: Meeting of K12 Mental Health Subcommittee
- 5/26/20: Meeting of K12 Mental Health Subcommittee
- 6/2/20: Parent Survey #1 Home Learning Feedback
- 6/11/20: Student Senate Survey (6-12) Distance Learning Questionnaire
- 6/12/20: Family Technology Accessibility Survey
- 6/22-23: Meetings with building-level teacher groups (DW, FEB, MS/HS)
- 6/23/20: Meeting of K12 Mental Health Subcommittee
- 6/25/20: Meeting of Elementary and Secondary 2019-20 PACs (DW/FEB, MS/HS)
- 7/7/20: Parent Survey #2: Reopening
- 7/9/20: Consultation with Dr. Militana
- 7/9/20: Meeting with RNTA Executive Committee
- 7/14-17: Meetings with building-level teacher groups (DW, FEB, MS/HS)
- 7/15/20: Parent Survey #3 Return to school: Mental and Physical Health
- 7/15/20: Meeting with HS Student Senate Representatives
- 7/20/20: Meeting with the RNTA Executive Committee
- 7/20/20: MS/HS Faculty Survey re: MS/HS Bell Schedule
- 7/23/20: [District Reopening Update Presentation](#)
- 7/27-TBD: Brainstorming Sessions/Meetings with MS/HS Faculty Protocol Subcommittees
- 7/29/20: Administrative meeting to review plan
- 7/29/20: Meeting with Dr. Militana, nurses, and administrators

In addition to the above, administrators participated in various meetings with the Westchester County Department of Health, and our local BOCES.

After submission of plan:

- 8/18-19: DW Team Leader meeting for reopening planning
- 8/19/20: Meeting of K12 Mental Health Subcommittee
- 11/13/20: DW & FEB PAC meeting
- 11/16/20: BOE meeting, Instructional Technology presentation, Hybrid & Full Remote instruction presentation
- 11/17/20: Meeting of K12 Mental Health Subcommittee
- 12/2/20: MS/HS Faculty meeting
- 12/8/20: Joint MS & HS PAC meetings; DW & FEB PAC meeting on 12/20/20
- 12/11/20: Parent Survey on asynchronous learning
- 12/15/20: MS/HS Faculty meeting regarding instruction changes for semester two
- 2/10/21: BOE Planning Session, “state of instruction”
- 3/2/21: Meeting of K12 Mental Health Subcommittee
- 3/3/21: BOE Planning Session
- 3/4/21: Parent Survey to return or remain remote
- March: PAC meetings
- 3/17/21: BOE meeting, Re-entry to Full In-Person Learning Presentation
- 3/23/21: Meeting of K12 Mental Health Subcommittee
- Newsletters/Weekly emails to parents in March and April provided details
- 4/20/21: Meeting of K12 Mental Health Subcommittee
- 4/27/21: Parent choice blast regarding shield use

The district remains committed to communicating all elements of this reopening plan to students, parents and guardians, staff and visitors. The plan is available to all stakeholders via the district website at www.ryeneck.org, and will be updated throughout the school year, as necessary, to respond to local circumstances. The link to the plan appears on the website homepage, as well as individual school pages, under the “Reopening” tab at the top of the page. Every effort has been made to ensure that the plan is accessible to all individuals in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level A/AA. The plan can also be translated into other languages, via the G-Translate feature available on the district website.

As part of its planning for the reopening of schools and the new academic year, the district has developed a plan for communicating all necessary information to district staff, students, parents/guardians, visitors and education partners and vendors. The district will use its existing communication channels including the Blackboard Connect system, email, mailings, and the district

website to support the dissemination of consistent messaging regarding new protocols and procedures, expectations, requirements and options related to school operations throughout the pandemic.

The district will rely on our website, Superintendent updates, district social media websites, and building principal updates (newsletters, emails, etc.) to communicate news, requirements and updates related to reopening and in-person instruction, including social distancing requirements, proper wearing of face coverings, and proper hand and respiratory hygiene. The information that we will share will be based on state guidance and input from aforementioned stakeholder groups including administrators, faculty, staff, parents/guardians, and students.

In support of remote learning, the district made computer devices available to students and teachers who needed them. Students in grades 3-12 received a district-issued chromebook for use at home and in school. Families in grades K-2 can communicate their technology needs to the district's technology coordinator. If needed, a computing device will be made available to families. The district will provide students and their families with multiple ways to contact schools and teachers during remote learning, including staff emails, phone directories/voicemails, and Google classroom messages.

The district will use existing internal and external communications channels to notify staff, students and families/caregivers about in-person, remote and hybrid school schedules with as much advance notice as possible. The district will continue to communicate to staff, students, families/caregivers via the district website, email, Blackboard messages, and phone, where applicable.

The district will follow its existing engagement and communication protocols with parents regarding the provision of special education services for their child. A translator will be used when needed and communications via Blackboard will be sent in the family's home language.

In addition, the district will make every effort to ensure that communication to parents/legal guardians is in their preferred language and mode of communication. Additionally, items will be posted so families can use Google translating tools.

The district is committed to ensuring that all of its students and their families are taught and re-taught new expectations related to all public health policies and protocols. As part of this continuous training, the district will assess the best approach to communicating the information for each students' age group and will provide frequent opportunities for students to review these policies and protocols. This targeted education will help ensure that all students and their families know what is expected of them as they successfully return to the school setting. These trainings will cover:

- Hand hygiene: Informational posters have been/were posted in restrooms to reinforce hand hygiene protocols taught by school nurses, faculty and staff. These same instructions were shared with parents/guardians to reinforce these same protocols at home.
- Proper face covering procedures (how to wear and remove): Informational posters reinforce proper face covering procedures taught by school nurses, faculty and staff. These same instructions were shared with parents/guardians to reinforce these same protocols at home.
- Social distancing: Signage has been posted around the school building reminding students to socially distance themselves from others. Where appropriate, signage identifies revised

maximum capacity for spaces (classrooms, offices, dining hall, etc.) based on social distancing guidelines. Signage also directs students and staff where to stand while waiting to enter congregate areas such as the dining hall and restrooms. This information has been shared with parents/guardians.

- Respiratory hygiene: Informational posters reinforce procedures for coughing and sneezing to contain respiratory secretions. This coughing etiquette has been explained and reinforced by lessons from the school nurse and other appropriate school staff. This same information was shared with parents/guardians.
- Identifying symptoms: Employees, older students, and parents/guardians are notified of symptoms associated with COVID-19. These same indicators are part of the health pre-screening attestation that employees, and parent/guardians must complete prior to the temporal scan needed to gain entry to any district facilities. The nurse has provided training to school staff so they might recognize and be familiar with procedures to refer possible symptomatic individuals to the nurse. This same information has been shared with parents/guardians. Informational posters have been posted in buildings as well.

In addition to signage, the district will encourage all students, faculty, staff and visitors through verbal and written communication to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE through additional means such as Blackboard communications, emails, newsletters, and postings on the district website and social media platforms.

The district is committed to creating a learning environment that protects student and staff health, safety and privacy. Our district will operate under a standard procedure for addressing situations in which an individual has tested positive for COVID-19 or appears symptomatic. These procedures are outlined in the *Health & Safety* section of our reopening plan.

In the event that a student or staff member is sick or symptomatic, notification to exposed individuals will occur pursuant to the state's contact tracing protocols as implemented by the local health department. The district will not notify the wider community unless specifically directed to do so by local health officials. The mode of such communications will depend on the scope and privacy considerations associated with each case, but may be by Blackboard Connect, our website, or phone.

School Closures

The district has prepared for situations in which one or more school buildings or grades need to close due to a significant number of students or staff either testing positive for COVID-19 or being forced to quarantine, or a considerable regional increase in COVID-19 cases. All such decisions will be made after either direction from the state government or consultation with local health agencies.

The district may choose to modify operations in one or more schools prior to closing to help mitigate a rise in cases. The district will consult its CMO and the local DOH when making such decisions.

School building administrators communicate with each other regularly, and if needed, will consider closing school if absentee rates impact the ability of the school to operate safely. If a decision is made to close schools, this will be communicated using the Blackboard messaging system.

Health & Safety

The health and safety of our students, our staff and their families is our top priority. We want students and employees to feel comfortable and safe returning to school campuses. Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#) and the [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\)](#).

The following protocols and procedures will be in place in all district schools for the 2020-21 school year should in-person schooling resume. Anyone with questions or concerns should contact our COVID-19 safety coordinator at elutinski@ryeneck.org.

For more information about how health and safety protocols and training will be communicated to students, families and staff members, visit the *Communication/Family and Community Engagement section* of our reopening plan.

Health Checks

The district has developed resources to educate parents/guardians and staff members regarding the careful observation of symptoms of COVID-19 and health screening measures that must be conducted each morning before coming to school. The resources include the requirement for any student or staff member with a fever of 100°F or greater and/or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection to not come to school. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [list of Coronavirus symptoms](#) was used to develop these resources.

The Rye Neck Union Free School District is implementing the following two-step process to conduct mandated health screening.

Step 1: Screening Questionnaire

1. Daily temperature checks and completion of a screening questionnaire for staff, students, contractors, vendors, and visitors prior to arrival/entrance to the school building.
2. The screening data shall be collected via a district-specific questionnaire through [The Northeast Regional Information Center](#) (NERIC).
 1. Any individual self-reporting symptoms associated with COVID-19 will be directed to contact their medical provider prior to entry to school.
 2. Data maintained will indicate only that the individual is cleared or not.
 3. The data will be maintained for as long as the reopening plan is active and required.
 4. Any individual without the technological means to complete the questionnaire will be able to do so in hard copy form upon arrival to any district building in a confidential location or be given a supply of hardcopies for daily use.

3. Upon arrival to a district building, any individual with a temperature of 100°F or greater, or indicating a positive response to the screening questionnaire will be directed to a designated holding area in each building to coordinate/arrange pickup/departure. Their parent/guardian will also be directed to contact their primary health care provider.
4. Staff members, students, and/or parents/guardians of students are required to notify the school if they develop symptoms, or if their answers to the health assessment change during or outside school hours.
 1. If during the school day, the student will be sent to the nurse's office for assessment.
 2. All changes in health outside of school shall be reported through the [The Northeast Regional Information Center](#) screening questionnaire. The individual will be directed to contact their medical provider prior to entry to school.
5. Staff members, wearing appropriate PPE and protected by shields, will be designated to conduct non-contact temporal temperature scans and review the incoming reports of screening by staff and parent/guardian and attesting that they are completed.
6. Staff or students are to inform and report to the building specific Nurse's office if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
7. [The Northeast Regional Information Center](#) screening questionnaire will be available on each school's website, as well as sent out through the district notification system as a reminder to complete prior to entry to a district building.

Step 2: Temperature Screening

- Multiple staff members have been trained to perform non-contact temporal temperature scans and positioned at designated building entrances.
- Staff members assigned to perform non-contact temporal scans have been directed to wear appropriate PPEs and are protected by transparent shields.
- There is signage and assigned staff ensuring compliance with social distancing measures.

Social distancing, face coverings & Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The district has developed a plan with policies and procedures for maintaining social distancing of all students, faculty, and staff when on school facilities and grounds. Proper social distance is considered to be six feet between individuals. Proper face coverings must be worn in common areas such as hallways or bathrooms. Adherence to this rule is especially important when another person unexpectedly cannot socially distance. For those medically unable to wear face coverings, individual plans will be made (any such condition unknown to the district must be brought to our attention immediately). Maximum capacity, face coverings required, practice social distancing, directional arrows and "stand here" signage will be utilized throughout district facilities.

Students, staff and visitors to our schools are expected to wear face coverings indoors and outside when six-foot physical distancing is not possible. Students are allowed to remove face coverings during meals, instruction in special subjects such as physical education and music, and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance. Teachers will instruct students on when masks are required during instruction in the classroom, and when mask breaks are permitted. The timing and duration of mask

breaks will be designated by supervising staff. Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering will not be required to wear one.

Face coverings are provided to students and staff, if needed, at no cost. Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include, but are not limited to, cloth-based coverings and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose.

An employee is allowed to wear their own acceptable face covering if they choose. Employees with healthcare provider documentation stating they are not medically able to tolerate face covering will not be required to do so.

Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school, so there may be periods of time when masks are not worn.

Face coverings should not be placed on:

- Children younger than 2 years old
- Students where such covering would impair their health or mental health, or where such covering would present a challenge, distraction, or obstruction to education services and instruction
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance

The district will instruct students, parents/guardians and staff, contractors and vendors on:

- The proper way to wear face coverings
- Proper way to discard disposable face coverings

Training and instructional materials will be provided by the school nursing staff.

Infection control strategies

At all three buildings, either staggered schedules or separate entrances and exits are used to minimize the flow of foot traffic; staff are available to monitor temporarily opened doors to reduce the need for grasping door handles; plastic barriers and PPE are used at temperature screening stations to protect staff; hand sanitizer is available at all entrances.

During the day, movement and relocation of student groups has been reduced to the minimum necessary for instruction; secondary staff is lenient with class start times to allow students to move from class to class safely rather than hurrying for a bell; secondary students are encouraged to use exterior sidewalk routes rather than interior halls when weather permits; foot grips reduce the need to grasp handles on certain doors (e.g., bathrooms); hand sanitizer stations are dispersed throughout the buildings and hand sanitizer is available in all classrooms.

Students are socially distant in all instructional settings, as well as in congregate areas such as hallways, dining areas, and outdoor settings. Elementary school meal times are conducted in classrooms rather

than cafeterias. Bathrooms are restricted to a maximum of two students at a time. Signage and training were available at the start of the year.

Facility Alterations and Acquisition

Classroom furniture has been reconfigured to provide for social distancing during instruction. This has required the storage or replacement of some furniture to provide adequate space.

Spaces often used for instruction, such as libraries, will be used when needed to maintain adequate social distance.

Some office desks have been provided with clear plastic shields in high-traffic spaces such as office entry and waiting areas. Each teacher desk also has a shield.

The MS/HS Dining Hall has been fitted to accommodate fire-resistant curtains if it is necessary to divide the space into three zones.

Plumbing Facilities and Fixtures

- Drinking Water Facilities: water fountain spouts have been disabled, bottle fillers remain functional.
- Water systems in the building are flushed weekly, if unused.
- Restroom practices:
 - Washroom use will be limited to two persons at any time.
 - Those waiting to access bathroom facilities must socially distance per provided signage.
 - In addition, the district has also modified existing bathroom fixtures and equipment as follows:
 - All toilet seats have been replaced and all seats include lids.
 - Air dryers have been disabled. Bathrooms have contact-free paper towel dispensers (either electronic or self-advancing).
 - Hand sanitizer is available outside of all bathrooms.
 - Bathrooms have been marked with appropriate signage to remind persons to social distance, close lids when flushing toilets and to properly wash hands.
 - To further decrease the number of surfaces that individuals will touch when entering/leaving a bathroom, multi-stall bathroom doors may be propped open during the school day if the bathroom layout provides privacy. Additionally, custodial staff will be monitoring bathroom cleanliness on a more frequent basis. A log of daily cleaning will be maintained.

Ventilation

- The district is maintaining adequate, code required ventilation (natural or mechanical) as designed.
- Staff has increased ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining health and safety protocols.
- HVAC units will remain on daytime settings in order to cycle and purge air more frequently. The HVAC systems utilize MERV #11 filters.

- Air purifiers have been added to spaces that have no windows or independently controlled HVAC systems.

Management of ill persons, contact tracing and monitoring

The district requires students, faculty, or staff members who develop COVID-19 symptoms during the school day to report to the nurse's office. If there are several students waiting to see the school nurse, students must wait at least 6 feet apart. The district has designated areas to separate individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 from others until they can go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on severity of illness. One area will be used to treat injuries, provide medications or nursing treatments, and the other area will be used for assessing and caring for ill students and staff. Both areas will be supervised by an adult and have easy access to a bathroom and sink with hand hygiene supplies.

- High School / Middle School
 - Covid symptoms isolation area - Inner office within the school nurse's office
 - Non-Covid treatment/medication area - School Nurse's office
- Daniel Warren Elementary
 - Covid symptoms isolation area - Room 200 located across the hallway from the school nurse's office
 - Non-Covid treatment/medication area - School Nurse's office
- F.E. Bellows Elementary
 - Covid symptoms isolation area - The staff conference room across from the school nurse's office
 - Non-Covid treatment/medication area - School Nurse's office

PPE requirements for school health office staff caring for sick individuals include both standard and transmission-based precautions. In areas with moderate to substantial community transmission, eye protection (e.g., goggles or face shield) should be added. When caring for a suspected or confirmed individual with COVID-19, gloves, a gown, eye protection, and a fit-tested N-95 respirator will be used, if available. If an N-95 respirator is not available, a surgical face mask and face shield will be used.

School health office cleaning will occur after each use of cots, bathrooms, and health office equipment (e.g., blood pressure cuffs, otoscopes, stethoscopes). Health office equipment will be cleaned following manufacturer's directions.

Disposable items will be used as much as possible (e.g., disposable pillow protectors, disposable thermometers, disposable thermometer sheaths or probes, disposable otoscope specula).

Aerosol Generating Procedures

Respiratory treatments administered by nurses generally result in aerosolization of respiratory secretions. The district requires the following PPE to be worn during AGPs: gloves, N-95 or a surgical mask with face shield, eye protection and a gown. Cleaning of the room will occur after use.

If Students or Staff become Ill with Symptoms of COVID-19 at School

The district requires students or staff with a temperature, signs of illness, and/or a positive response to the questionnaire to be sent directly to a dedicated isolation area where students are supervised, prior

to being picked up or otherwise sent home. Students will be supervised in the isolation area while awaiting transport home and will be separated by at least 6 feet. Students will be escorted from the isolation area to their parent/guardian. Students or staff will be referred to a healthcare provider and provided resources on COVID-19 testing. The district will follow DOH guidance regarding specific steps to be taken following an illness.

Return to School after Illness

The district has established protocols and procedures, in following local, state ([Pre-K to Gr 12 COVID-19 Toolkit](#)) and CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms, or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:

- It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
- It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine);
- It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.
- They have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

The district will refer to the NYSDOH guidance ([Pre-K to Gr 12 COVID-19 Toolkit](#)) regarding protocols and policies for faculty and staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, or after the faculty or staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.

The district requires that individuals who were exposed to the COVID-19 virus complete quarantine, and demonstrate that they have not developed symptoms before returning to in-person learning. The discharge of an individual from quarantine and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.

COVID-19 Testing

The decision of whether or not a test needs to be conducted as a result of a visit to the nurse, illness, or exposure to a positive case will be determined by the individual's healthcare provider or local department of health while adhering to the above-mentioned NYSDOH Toolkit. School nurses will be able to provide referrals and resources for families in need of testing.

School-provided COVID-19 rapid tests are used for “surveillance” of rates of infection in our schools. This testing is one of the mitigation measures we are using to ensure that our students and staff are safe. Tests are not mandatory, but the process becomes more effective with greater numbers of people tested. Participation in this testing is a way of collectively demonstrating our commitment to keep our students and employees safe and in school. Rye Neck uses the Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Rapid Test for both students and staff and is conducted on Monday mornings on a rotating basis at our various campuses.

Contact Tracing

The district will notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual within school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the district.

To assist the local health department with tracing the transmission of COVID-19, the district has developed and maintained a plan to trace all contacts of exposed individuals in accordance with protocols, training, and tools provided through the [New York State Contact Tracing Program](#).

If/when COVID-19 cases are discovered in the school, in consultation with the local health department, the district will assist with contact tracing by:

1. Keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members.
2. Ensuring student schedules are up to date.
3. Keeping a log of any visitor which includes date and time, and where in the school they visited.
4. Assisting the local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program.

Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. School staff should not try to determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the local health department.

For more information about how COVID-19 containment efforts will be communicated to students, families and staff members, visit the *Communication/Family and Community Engagement* section of our reopening plan.

School Closures

A closure refers to contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale or scope of in-person education and/or closing the school. The district will collaborate with the local health department to determine the parameters, conditions, or metrics (e.g., increased absenteeism or increased illness in the school community) that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level. The CDC [Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools](#), cited into the latest NYSDOH guidance, will be incorporated into any decision to close schools.

For more information about how school closure information will be communicated to students, families and staff members, visit the *Communication/Family and Community Engagement* section of our reopening plan.

Case Management

- When the district learns of an individual testing positive for Covid-19, the following information is ascertained:
 - When was the test administered
 - Was the individual symptomatic and if so when did symptoms begin
 - When was the last day in school
- If the individual was present in school during the exposure period contact tracing will begin
 - Questions may be asked of the individual to obtain more information such as meetings attended, lunch off campus, etc.
- School will contact DOH and may be asked to share details
 - types of classrooms i.e., gymnasium, libraries, etc.
 - indoor/outdoor
 - length of time
 - share photographs and room dimensions
 - if necessary, school will check cameras for clarification and to gain/share more detailed information
 - vaccination or past infection status
- After DOH determines which classes will need to quarantine, class lists will be run and checked against attendance
- Call team assembled
- Families/staff of those deemed to be contacts by the DOH will be contacted by phone by the school and then a follow up letter will be sent
- All contacts will be shared with the DOH
 - Contact tracers from the DOH will also follow up with families

Health Hygiene

The district will emphasize healthy hygiene practices for students and staff by providing initial and refresher education in hand and respiratory hygiene, along with providing adequate supplies and time for frequent hand hygiene. This will be supported by lessons from our school nurses.

Signs will be posted throughout the school (e.g., entrances, restrooms, cafeteria, classrooms, administrative offices, auditorium, custodial staff areas) and regular messaging will be shared with the school community. Signage will be used to remind individuals to:

1. Stay home if they feel sick.
2. Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others, or in accordance with any stricter policy implemented by the school.
3. Properly store, and when necessary, discard PPE.
4. Adhere to social distancing instructions.
5. Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19.
6. Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
7. Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

Hand Hygiene

Students and staff must carry out the following hand hygiene practices.

- Wash hands routinely with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Dry hands completely after washing.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol. Hand sanitizer should be rubbed on the hands until it is completely absorbed. DO NOT dry hands if sanitizer is used.

Hand washing should occur:

- Before and after eating (e.g. snacks and lunch).
- After going to the restroom, or after assisting a student with toileting.
- After using a tissue.
- Before and after using shared materials.
- After coming in from the outdoors.
- Anytime hands are visibly soiled.

Respiratory Hygiene

The COVID-19 virus spreads from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes. Therefore, the district will emphasize the importance of respiratory hygiene.

Students and staff must carry out the following respiratory hygiene practices.

- Cover a cough or sneeze using a tissue. If a tissue is used, it should be thrown away immediately.
- If you don't have a tissue when sneezing or coughing, sneeze into your elbow.
- Wash your hands after sneezing or coughing.
- Face coverings are protective. Wearing a face covering will keep the respiratory droplets and aerosols from being widely dispersed into the air.

For more information about how hygiene information will be communicated to students, families and staff members, visit the *Communication/Family and Community Engagement* section of our reopening plan.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

The district will ensure adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including "Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19," and the "STOP THE SPREAD" poster, as applicable. Cleaning and disinfection logs will be maintained that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.

Examples of facility types where cleaning and disinfection frequency will be distinguished include

- Bathrooms
- Athletic training rooms, locker rooms
- Health offices, isolation rooms
- Administrative offices (main office, reception area)
- Frequently touched surfaces in common areas (door handles, elevator buttons, copy machine keypads, etc.)

- Breakrooms
- Cafeterias/Kitchens
- Computer labs
- Science labs
- Classrooms
- Maintenance offices and work areas
- Buses, school vehicles
- Libraries
- Large meeting areas (auditoriums, gymnasiums, music rooms)
- Playgrounds (cleaning only)
- Outdoor seating areas (plastic or metal)

Students, faculty, and staff will be trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, and such information will be provided to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home.

The district will provide and maintain hand hygiene stations around the school, as follows:

- For handwashing: soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.
- For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.
- Accommodations for students who cannot use hand sanitizer will be made.

Regular cleaning and disinfection of the facilities will occur, including more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high-risk and frequently touched surfaces. This will include desks and cafeteria tables, which should be cleaned and disinfected between each individual's use. Cleaning and disinfection will be rigorous and ongoing and will occur at least daily, or more frequently as needed.

The district will ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms should be cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use.

For more information about how cleaning and disinfection information will be communicated to students, families and staff members, visit the *Communication/Family and Community Engagement* section of our reopening plan.

Vulnerable Populations/Accommodations

We recognize that some students and staff members are at an increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness, live with a person who is at an increased risk, or simply do not feel comfortable returning to an in-person educational environment. It is our goal that these individuals are able to safely participate in educational activities. The following individuals, based on guidance from the CDC, are considered a part of the vulnerable population:

- Adults over the age of 65 years
- Pregnant individuals
- Individuals who are immunocompromised
- Individuals suffering from
 - Chronic Lung Disease

- Moderate to Severe Asthma
- Serious Heart Conditions
- Severe Obesity
- Diabetes
- Chronic Kidney Disease Undergoing Dialysis
- Liver Disease
- Other medically fragile students or staff

As stated in the NYSED guidance, arrangements for remote instruction will be provided for medically vulnerable students who can not come to school. This may include a combination of synchronous and asynchronous lessons appropriate to the student's grade level and course requirements.

Visitors on Campus

No outside visitors or volunteers will be allowed on school campuses or in our buildings.

Parents/guardians will report to the front door of the school and will not be allowed entry unless it is for the safety or well-being of their child.

Essential visitors to facilities will be required to wear face coverings and will be restricted in their access to the interior of our school buildings and each respective campus. Visitors will only be allowed entry after undergoing a temperature check and answering the health screening questionnaire (see the *Health Checks* section).

Parents/guardians who need only to drop off items for students should ring the doorbell, inform the office, and use the following locations for the drop off:

- Daniel Warren: labeled drop box at the inside entrance near the Lobby Guard kiosk.
- F. E. Bellows: labeled drop box at the inside entrance near the Lobby Guard kiosk.
- Middle School: desk in front of the third window to the left of the MS main entrance (Room 23b).
- High School: fifth window to the left of the senior lounge entrance (Room E4) is designated for "Registration and/or Drop-off"

School Safety Drills

The district will conduct fire (evacuation) drills and lockdown drills as required by education law and regulation and the fire code, without exceptions. Drills will be conducted in a manner that maintains social distancing at exits and gathering points outside the building, while still preparing students to respond in emergencies.

The following modifications to drill procedures will be in effect:

- Drills will be conducted with all groups. If the district is on a hybrid schedule, the drills will be conducted twice to provide training for students in both cohorts.
- Evacuation drills (bomb scare, gas leak, early dismissal, fire) will include social distancing during exit and in assembly areas.

- Lockdown drills will feature verbal instruction and physical demonstration by the teacher to identify interior hiding areas to students rather than clustering by the group; staff will instruct students on routes of emergency egress when outdoor lessons are conducted.
- Sheltering drills will feature staggered timing to allow students to enter sheltering locations in smaller groups to maintain social distance.
- Lockout procedures will stress use of upper windows or windows inaccessible from the outside for ventilation when exterior doors must be secured.
- **All of the above modifications are made with the understanding that in case of a real emergency, speed and safety take priority over social distancing.**

Facilities

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection in the district, facilities operations will be geared toward meeting social distancing requirements and cleaning frequently touched spaces regularly. In carrying out projects or tasks supporting infection control, requirements will be met for changes associated with building spaces. Plans for changes or additions to facilities that require review by the Office of Facilities Planning (OFP), will be submitted to comply with the requirements of the 2020 New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (BC) and the State Energy Conservation Code.

The function, position and operation of stairs and corridor doors, which have closers with automatic hold opens (and are automatically released by the fire alarm system), will remain unchanged.

The district has met the deadline for submission of Building Condition Survey or Visual Inspections on time. In addition, lead in water sampling was carried out upon the reopening of school under conditions consistent with when the building is “normally occupied.”

Upon reopening, the district has increased ventilation, to the greatest extent possible. Water systems were flushed in buildings that have been unoccupied.

In addition, the following activities have occurred :

- Drinking Water Facilities: Water fountain spouts were disabled, bottle fillers remain functional. For additional plumbing facilities and fixtures activities, please see the section above.
- Have maintained adequate, code required ventilation (natural or mechanical) as designed.
- Staff has increased ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining health and safety protocols.
- HVAC units remain on daytime settings in order to cycle and purge air more frequently. The HVAC systems utilize MERV #11 filters.
- Air purifiers are being used in spaces that have no windows or independently controlled HVAC systems.
- Daily cleaning logs are being maintained on all premises. These logs include what is being cleaned, how it is being cleaned and when or how frequently it is being cleaned.
 - Emist electrostatic disinfectants are being used to clean and sanitize where possible.
 - High touch surfaces and other points are disinfected throughout the school day.
- The procurement of cleaning products and PPE is centralized throughout the district

Child Nutrition

School meals will continue to be available to all students, including those attending school in-person and those learning remotely.

Even with the changes in meal service, all requirements of the National School Lunch Program will be met.

For information about how meal information will be communicated, visit the Food Services tab on our individual school webpages. Information was also emailed to parents before the start of the school year.

Meals Onsite

For students onsite, meals are provided while maintaining appropriate social distancing between students. Students do not need to wear face coverings when seated and eating so long as they are appropriately socially distanced.

The district ensures social distancing between individuals while eating in the school cafeteria. Meals may be served in alternate areas (e.g., classrooms), outdoors, or in staggered meal periods to ensure social distancing and proper cleaning and disinfection between students.

- K-5 students eat in their cafeterias.
- Grades 6-12 eat lunch in the Dining Hall or other designated spaces (Library) to accommodate students.
- There is increased table/seating spacing in all schools.
- Outdoor space is used for eating, when feasible.
- The sharing of food and beverages (e.g., buffet style meals, snacks) is prohibited, unless individuals are members of the same household.
- Adequate space has been reserved for students, faculty and staff to observe social distancing while eating meals.
- The daily meal menu is posted on the district's website. The menu is interactive and parents are able to click on the items on the menu to check for ingredients, nutritional information and allergy information.

Meal Checkout Process

- For students purchasing breakfast (MS/HS only) or lunch in the cafeterias/lunchrooms:
 - Cashless transactions are strongly encouraged (use of prepaid accounts via MySchoolBucks)
 - Checkout process, when using a prepaid account, is touchless. Students are no longer permitted to touch the pinpad
 - The ticket system is used for K-2 students (students are given a ticket to check out when purchasing lunch or milk).
 - Students grade 3-5 tell the employee at the register their ID number.

- Touchless scanning of ID cards to checkout is used in grades 6-12. If a child does not have their ID card, they can tell the employee at the register their ID number.
- All meals at all schools will be prepackaged. Social distancing protocols will be followed in all food service areas
- Decals on the floor indicate where students should stand to encourage social distancing

Sanitation and Disinfection in the Lunchroom

- Hand sanitizing stations are available in all cafeterias.
- High touch surfaces (desks, tables, chairs) are disinfected between lunch periods.

Meals Offsite for Students Remote Learning (medically vulnerable population)

- Students are able to preorder breakfast and lunch to take home when the next day is a remote learning day. Meal pickup is in the cafeteria (MS/HS) or in the lunchroom areas (elementary schools) at each school. On Fridays, meals can be taken home for Monday. The District is exploring the use of an app to allow parents pre-order meals through the District's food service management company.

Transportation

The district does not provide any in-district bussing to the general population, only certain special education and interscholastic athletic student populations are transported through contracted vendors. These contracted vendors will conduct transportation activities that are consistent with state-issued public transit guidance and NYSED School Reopening guidelines. Students and school staff must wear acceptable face coverings at all times on school buses (e.g., entering, exiting, and seated) and should maintain appropriate social distancing to the extent practicable. Masks will be provided for those that do not have their own.

Students who are able will be required to wear masks and social distance on the bus to the extent practicable; however, students whose physical or mental health would be impaired are not required to wear a face covering, but must be appropriately socially distanced. Members of the same household may be seated within 6 feet of each other.

School bus drivers, monitors and attendants must not carry personal bottles of hand sanitizer with them on school buses.

Wheelchair school buses will configure wheelchair placement to ensure social distancing of 6 feet.

Whether school is in session remotely or otherwise, pupil transportation will be provided to nonpublic, parochial, private, charter schools or students whose Individualized Education Plans have placed them out-of-district whose schools are meeting in in-person sessions.

All students are entitled to transportation by the district to the extent required by law. Transportation departments do not have the ability or the right to deny transportation for children who are in foster care, homeless, or attend private or charter schools. Parents who may have missed the due date to

request out of district transportation due to a reasonable excuse may file a 310 appeal with the Commissioner of Education.

School Bus Staff

School bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics are required to perform a self-health assessment for symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving at work. If personnel are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19, they will notify their employer as per the reporting policies and seek medical attention.

School bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics must wear a face covering along with an optional face shield.

Transportation staff (drivers, monitors, attendants, mechanics and cleaners) will be trained and provided periodic refreshers on the proper use of Personal Protective Equipment and the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Transportation departments/carriers will need to provide Personal Protective Equipment such as masks and gloves for drivers, monitors and attendants in buses as well as hand sanitizer for all staff in their transportation locations such as dispatch offices, employee lunch/break rooms and/or bus garages.

Drivers, monitors and attendants who must have direct physical contact with a child must wear gloves.

Social Emotional Well-Being

We continue to be vigilant as we recognize that the social emotional well-being of our students and staff during these challenging times is critically important. At the start of school closure in March 2020, the K12 School Counseling Department convened the K12 School Counseling Mental and Physical Wellness Committee. Led by Dr. Feit, the committee provides opportunities for administrators, psychologists, school counselors, nurses, and building representatives from the PTSA Health and Wellness Subcommittee, to join together by Google Meets to share district-wide qualitative and quantitative data, observations, and resources related to the social and emotional adjustments that students have made in the last ten months. The K12 School Counseling Mental and Physical Health Subcommittee will continue to meet throughout the academic year. The committee last met on November 17th, 2020 to review the academic year to date. Although there were no increases in mental health issues reported by the members, in view of the accelerating pandemic, it was agreed that we must continue to provide updated, timely resources and referrals to address mental health, behavioral, and emotional needs of students, faculty, and staff in addition to offering regular mental health programming to students with the collaborative support of the PTSA Health and Wellness representatives. This programming includes:

The Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling plan posted on the School Counseling Department's homepage outlines the full range of programs, services, and courses offered. We anticipate all programs will proceed during the 2020-21 academic year both at school and online. Students, staff and families will have access to adults who are responsive and kind. The district will continue to provide a continuum of services to support social-emotional adjustment to transitions between remote and hybrid learning, the possibility of another school closure, and the practices of mental and physical health including but

not limited to suicide prevention, depression, and the importance of stress reduction practices and physical exercise. The RULER program has been particularly effective in classrooms and across grades to foster conversations that encourage a positive, calm, school climate. Programming also includes opportunities for students to build community pride, gain resilience and develop civic participation. The district practices proactive sustained communication with students, families, and staff online, through emails and with phone calls. The district will continue to support students and teachers in classrooms, group meetings, and individual consultations either remotely or in-person.

This program plan has been reviewed and updated to meet current needs. School counselors, psychologists, teachers, administrators and staff will continue to closely monitor the mental health status of our students. Support staff will collaborate with teachers, parents and administrators to identify those who are having difficulty and will work with those students and families to ensure that all students feel safe. The district will also provide resources to students and families which can be found on the district website.

The district will assist faculty and staff on how to speak with and support students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, as well as provide support for developing coping and resilience skills for students, faculty, and staff. This is addressed by:

- Working in collaboration with the PTSA to present Mental Health speakers in interactive and live-streamed formats with opportunities for students to ask questions.
- Direct guidance from counselors and psychologists.
- Communication with teachers.
- Staff days before the start of school.
- Various training offered throughout the school year.
- Mental health resources and information.
- Collaborative with PTSA to present Mental Health speakers in interactive and live-streamed formats with opportunities for students to ask questions.

In addition to enhancing our ability to recognize and speak with students in need across the district, specific means of student support include:

- MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports)/RTI (response to Intervention)
- RULER (emotional intelligence approach)
- CSE (committee on special education)

School Schedules

The district Hybrid and Full Remote plans were designed to be similar in the event we are required to shift from one to the other. This includes common scheduling and timing across the district.

Under a hybrid scenario, students in grades K-12, are split into two cohorts to satisfy social distancing guidelines. Cohort One will meet in-person on Monday and Wednesdays, while Cohort Two learns from home. Cohort Two will meet in-person on Tuesday and Thursdays, while Cohort One learns from home. Fridays will alternate between Cohorts One and Two with the exception of the weeks that are

abbreviated due to a holiday. On abbreviated weeks, whichever cohort missed a day due to the holiday will come to school on Friday. The letter day calendars for the [elementary](#) and [secondary](#) schools can be accessed on the district website under the *Reopening* tab.

Middle and High School

Middle and high school teachers have built upon their work from the end of the 2019-20 school year and summer to identify gaps in learning from the previous school year due to the sudden closure of schools and identify topics best taught in-person and those topics students have historically had an easier time understanding. The additional planning time at the start of each day will ensure big ideas from curricula are covered. This bell schedule will be used regardless of whether we are hybrid, remote, or full in-person for the 2020-21 school year.

The hybrid and remote learning bell schedule for the middle and high school is as follows.

Period	Regular Hybrid/Remote Learning Schedule	2 hr delay due to inclement weather *for hybrid only
Teacher Planning	7:50-8:28 a.m.	n/a
Period 1	8:31-9:09 a.m.	9:50 -10:30 a.m.
Period 2	9:12-9:50 a.m.	10:33-11:00 a.m.
Homeroom	9:53-10:01 a.m.	11:03-11:13 a.m.
Period 3	10:04-10:42 a.m.	11:16-11:43 a.m.
Period 4	10:45-11:23 a.m.	11:46-12:13 p.m.
Period 5	11:26 a.m.-12:04 p.m.	12:16-12:43 p.m.
Period 6	12:07-12:45 p.m.	12:46-1:13 p.m.
Period 7	12:48-1:26 p.m.	1:16-1:43 p.m.
Period 8	1:29-2:07 p.m.	1:46-2:13 p.m.
Period 9	2:10-2:48 p.m.	2:16-2:45 p.m.

Note:

- Daily start times for 1st or 2nd period classes are later than our standard schedule.
- HS students do not need to report until their first scheduled class or homeroom, whichever comes first. They will also be permitted to leave after their last class is over.
- To avoid clustering, students will not be allowed into the MS/HS building until 5 minutes before the start time of class, with the exception of breakfast service.

Daniel Warren and F. E. Bellows

The start and end times for both elementary schools have Pick up and drop off locations and routines may be grade-specific and will be communicated to families prior to the start of the school year.

For information about how school schedule information will be communicated to students, families and staff members, visit the *Communication/Family and Community Engagement* section of our reopening plan.

School Activities/Extracurriculars

Most after-school programs, extracurricular and enrichment activities, and assemblies are suspended or on a limited schedule. As the school year progresses the ability to organize and begin such activities will be examined on a case-by-case basis. All CDC, DOH, and NYSED regulations and guidelines will be adhered to.

We will be operating a full interscholastic athletic program in the 2021-22 school year. This includes modified, junior varsity and varsity level play. All activities will comply with all COVID-19 guidelines and protocols set for by New York State Public High School Athletics Association (NYSPHSAA), Section 1 Athletics, and Westchester County Department of Health (WCDOH).

Extracurricular music programs will be offered on a modified basis. NYSED guidance dictates that singing and the playing of wind instruments may occur with 6 ft. of social distance. Remote participation will be available when feasible.

Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism

In a hybrid learning schedule, student engagement and attendance will be collected when students are engaged in remote learning via Google classroom and then recorded in the district's student management system. If students are participating in live instruction, attendance will be collected by staff using the district's student management system.

During a remote schedule setting, student engagement and attendance will be collected via Google classroom and then recorded in the district's student management system, eSchool.

Chronic absenteeism will be monitored by the nurses at the elementary schools and the Registrar at the middle/high school. Designated individuals such as counselors and psychologists will conduct outreach for those students who have not engaged in distance learning.

Technology and Connectivity

A technology needs survey was conducted to assess at-home access to devices and high-speed internet. Based on that data, and in consideration of reducing shared supplies, all students in grades 3-12 received a school-issued device to use in the classroom and/or on home-learning days in the event of a hybrid or remote opening. This will give students in those grades the opportunity to participate in all learning activities, regardless of their location. Additional devices have been ordered to support students in

grades K-2 while they are in the school building. However, students in those grades who need access to an at-home device can request one by contacting the district's technology coordinator.

To support remote or hybrid instruction further, all district teachers have received/received a school-issued device with additional supplies, such as a mouse and stylus, to support their effort to teach from a variety of locations. This purchase ensures all teachers have access to a device and can teach from a classroom or additional learning environment while in the building, as well as their home in a remote model.

Data collected from the needs assessment suggested a very limited number of families lack access to high-speed internet at home. The district has procured mobile hotspots to meet their needs. Families in need of at-home high-speed internet access can request a hotspot by contacting the district's technology coordinator.

Several cloud-based instructional software subscriptions were purchased to support learning and instruction across the district. Students will be able to access these programs from their school-issued device whether they are home or in the classroom. Teachers and students will use Google Classroom as a primary method to post and access daily learning activities. Through Google Meet, teachers can hold synchronous learning opportunities for students in a hybrid or remote environment. Additionally, students can use this platform to work in collaborative groups remotely, which offers more opportunities for flexible learning activities.

Updates and replacements made to smartboard software allows teachers to stream class sessions live so students at home can follow along in real time, regardless of their location. Class notes can be posted to Google Classroom for students to review after the class has ended. The program untethers teachers from their boards so material and curriculum can be presented and accessed from a variety of locations.

Additional instructional programs were purchased to support and enhance learning across the district, as well. Interactive, cloud-based instructional software purchases allow teachers to create and post lessons that reduce the need for printing and provide students with instructional videos they can watch to support their learning needs. Students can use these same tools to annotate documents and present information virtually from their school-issued device. Online math and English language arts programs purchased for our K-5 students provide supplemental activities to support instruction in the classroom, as well as at home. The use of these programs across our elementary schools provides continuity, consistency and familiarity for our students and teachers. These cloud-based tools offer a variety of methods for student participation and engagement in the learning activities. Through these differentiated methods, teachers will have access to a variety of assessment tools to ensure student mastery of the learning standards.

Teaching and Learning

The school calendar included two staff-only days before the school year began for students. Acknowledging the challenges that our teachers and staff have faced last spring delivering remote instruction under stressful circumstances, the district focused these in-service days on providing support to staff in the areas of social-emotional health and technology integration.

Additionally, the bell schedule in the middle and high schools has been modified to allow for a morning common planning period for MS and HS faculty and staff. Elementary schedules already account for common teacher planning time.

This time will be utilized by staff to assess learning gaps. Formative assessment before a unit of instruction to assess student understanding of pre-requisite skills will be common practice. Curricula will be reviewed to ensure that students receive instruction for the prioritized learning standards, key understandings, and skills necessary for students' future success.

Grade-specific orientations were also planned for the middle and high school students during the first two days of school. This time allowed small groups of students to obtain their computing device, meet their new homeroom teacher and create the foundation for a successful school year.

Teachers have been encouraged to spend time building relationships, supporting students with the transition back to school, and teaching social distancing etiquette at developmentally appropriate levels.

Synchronous & Asynchronous Instruction

In-person instruction will look the same, just in smaller groups. On days when students are learning at home, students will participate in asynchronous learning activities. "*Asynchronous*" is described as not on a particular time schedule, or worked on at the student's pace. "*Synchronous*" work is done according to the school bell schedule and may include "live" instruction via Google Meet. Students may be asked to apply concepts and skills from in-person days to complete tasks such as writing activities, laboratory analyses, practice math problems. Students may also be introduced to new concepts using a flipped classroom model employing Screencastify-type videos.

When a remote or hybrid learning model is necessary, certain groups of students will be prioritized for in-person learning to the greatest extent possible. This includes, but is not limited to, special education students and English language learners. Under a remote scenario, all students will be asked to participate in some live instruction daily. At the secondary level, each content area will be assigned specific days for live instruction on an alternating schedule. When the content area is designated for synchronous instruction, they will receive "live" instruction via Google Meet. Students will be assigned asynchronous activities on opposite days. This will ensure students have regular substantive interaction with their teachers through a balance of "live" lessons and asynchronous activities each day. Increased student-teacher activity and regular, predictable scheduling were common requests by parents following our Spring 2020 closure.

In-person Instruction

Upon reopening, the number of students in each of our classrooms was reduced to adhere to CDC guidance regarding proper social distancing. Class size reflected the need to ensure that students' desks/seats are positioned no less than six feet apart. Accommodating a six-foot radius around students necessitated the identification of additional rooms and common-area spaces that may be used as classrooms.

Decreased infection rates and the use of polycarbonate desk barriers (“shields”) allowed a reduction of social distance to three feet in classrooms only in the early spring. Subsequent guidance from the NYSDOH removed the need for shields. However, the guidance continued to allow the three-foot distance in classrooms for elementary grades, for secondary grades in areas of low infection rate, or for secondary grades that could be cohorted.

Our schools will minimize the movement of students. To the extent possible, elementary school students will remain in small cohorts if/when leaving the classroom, such as for recess or any necessary transition, so as to reduce their exposure to additional students. Special-area subjects (e.g., art, music, physical education) may be pushed into the elementary classrooms where practicable.

Assemblies, field trips and other large-group activities not able to be conducted virtually will be suspended until further notice. Whenever possible students will utilize outside space for physical education and will adhere to 6 feet between students when engaging in aerobic activities with heavy breathing, such as PE or music instruction.

In-Person Instruction, Spring 2021

All students, except for those who chose to remain on the Optional Remote Plan, returned to full in-person instruction in late March/early April (March 22 for FEB, April 6 for DW and MS, April 12th for HS). This was facilitated by decreased infection rates and the use of polycarbonate desk shields, which allowed a reduction of social distance to three feet in classrooms, and the CDC's [Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools](#). Subsequent guidance from the NYSDOH removed the need for shields. However, the guidance continued to allow the three-foot distance in classrooms for elementary grades, for secondary grades in areas of low infection rate, or for secondary grades that could be cohorted.

Remote/Hybrid Instruction

Given the possibility that communities may experience spikes in COVID-19 cases at any point during the school year, which may prompt short or long-term school closures, our district has developed a schedule that can be utilized whether in a hybrid or fully remote environment.

Instruction will focus on “core” subject areas, while preserving electives and specials. Hands-on and virtual lab-based activities will be utilized. All instruction will continue to be aligned to the New York State Learning Standards.

As noted previously, student schedules will remain the same whether instruction is in-person or remote. Remote learning opportunities for secondary students will include a greater emphasis on synchronous instruction, with teachers providing consistent live instruction to students. Teachers will ensure that their

students are directly engaged with them and their class peers in experiential learning on a regular basis. This will be supplemented by asynchronous activities that will focus on application of previously taught concepts, or activities or videos to introduce new material using a flipped classroom model.

To ensure high-quality remote learning experiences, we use a single online learning platform, Google Classroom, and a common, coordinated set of guidelines for teachers to follow when using the platform with students. Additional technology has been acquired to assist teachers to provide meaningful learning experiences. Grading practices will continue as they did before March 2020, with minor adaptations based on our experience with remote learning.

Following our original Hybrid plan,

- Teachers will be teaching their full-time schedule, live in the classroom, to half of their students at a time, every day. Based on the Cohort groupings, the other half of the class will be at home either participating synchronously working on asynchronous assignments. Instruction will follow the letter day calendar.
- IEP students in special class placements will have the opportunity for full, daily, in-person instruction. Parents or guardians of special education students should contact their designated contact person if they have specific questions regarding their child's program or services:
 - Michelle Bowman, school psychologist for grades K-1
 - Dr. Laura Finkelson, school psychologist for grade 2
 - Vanessa Dioguardi, school psychologist for grades 3-5
 - Kristina Schlote, Department Chairperson, grades 6-12
- As of the start of the second semester (February 1st, 2021), the MS/HS adjusted it's Hybrid plan to allow teachers to instruct both the in-person and at-home groups simultaneously. Following our original Full Remote plan,
- MS and HS teachers will provide direct, synchronous instruction via Google Meet every other day, by department. On alternate days those teachers will have assigned asynchronous activities for their students. Students will therefore have regular interaction with their teacher without being tied to their screen every period of every day.
- As of the start of the second semester (February 1st, 2021), the MS/HS adjusted it's Full Remote plan to allow teachers to instruct every day without alternating. DW and FEB teachers worked within their cohort groups and provided synchronous instruction in ELA and math, and a mix of synchronous and asynchronous instruction in other subjects.

Special Education

- Students with disabilities will be ensured equal access to the same opportunities as the general education student population and further, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability is provided the special education services identified in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Personal connections and facetime between our special education providers and students/ families has been strongly encouraged. In order to foster student engagement during remote learning, a focus on students' strengths, "voice and choice" of their assignments and ongoing teacher feedback to help students anticipate and be successful on their next steps, have

been emphasized. Differentiation of instruction through small groups, increased check-ins and office hours, project based learning addressing real world issues, and professional development through G & R Associates will help improve student ownership of their learning during remote instruction.

- Personal connections with families, along with their active involvement, has long been one of our mission/vision statements in Rye Neck UFSD. Parents and special education providers at each building level have worked collaboratively to agree on the special education services as consistent as possible with the IEP recommendations. Documentation of what each student is being provided, dated parent communication, whether specific services have been declined, and a record of attendance, participation and samples of their work are all in evidence. The District will utilize the program review meeting or amendment process where circumstances require substantive changes to the student's education placement or accommodations. If a parent has concerns or questions regarding their child's IEP or 504 plan/service, they should contact their child's supervisory teacher/case coordinator to address their concerns and questions.
- All Annual Reviews for preschool and school age students have been completed through Zoom or Google Meet. IEP's which contain present levels, students' needs and specific goals based on these needs have been developed. While the COVID impact has decreased our ability to conduct assessments we traditionally utilize, teachers have qualitative and quantitative documentation of student's attendance, participation, work production and samples of assignments completed. Our progress monitoring tool, IREADY, will be completed. Therefore IEP goals will still be used to monitor progress. Our CSE's determined that students requiring specialized daily instruction through special class placements can come in daily for their special class instruction. Related services of speech and language, occupational therapy and physical therapy will occur during this time in person also.
- The District will continue to use best efforts to ensure that special education evaluations (i.e. initial and re-evaluations) are conducted consistently with state and federal guidance and within required timelines. These evaluations will be done in person. The District will follow protocols for expediting evaluations that were delayed due to COVID-19 related closures, including increased evaluation planning and parent/caregiver participation and agreement.
- Academic rigor and meeting student learning needs is essential. Particularly during remote instruction, meaningful, live contact is strongly encouraged throughout the week with virtual office hours, class meetings, check-ins to assist students not only in the social-emotional realm, but also with executive functioning weakness (time management and organization). All students with disabilities, based on their current IEP, have documentation on their IEP or 504 plan, the accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services and technology necessary and these will all be followed to the greatest extent possible.

For information about meaningful parent engagement regarding the provision of services to a child to meet the requirements of the IDEA, visit the *Communication/Family and Community Engagement* section of our reopening plan.

English as a New Language

- In a hybrid reopening, our ENL staff will complete the ELL identification process within 30 school days of the start of the school year for all students who enrolled during COVID-19 school closures in 2019-20, as well as all students who enroll during summer of 2020 and during the first 20 school days of the 2020-21 school year. After this 20-day flexibility period, identification of ELLs will resume for all students within required 10 school days of initial enrollment.
- Required instructional units of study to all ELLs will be provided based on their most recently measured English language proficiency level during in-person or hybrid instruction.
- Staff will communicate with parents/guardians of English-language learners during the reopening process and provide communication in their preferred language and mode.

Staff

Teacher and Principal Evaluation System

All teachers and principals will continue to be evaluated pursuant to the district's approved APPR plan.

Certification, Incidental Teaching and Substitute Teaching


All teachers will hold valid and appropriate certificates for teaching assignment, except where otherwise allowable under the Commissioner's regulations (e.g., incidental teaching) or education law.

Appendices

Appendix A, CDC Travel Guidance Chart


CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Domestic Travel RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
	Get tested 1-3 days before travel	✓
Get tested 3-5 days after travel and self-quarantine for 7 days. Self-quarantine for 10 days if you don't get tested.	✓	
Self-monitor for symptoms	✓	✓
Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel	✓	✓

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

International Travel RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
	Get tested 1-3 days before traveling out of the US	✓
Mandatory test required before flying to US	✓	✓
Get tested 3-5 days after travel	✓	✓
Self-quarantine after travel for 7 days with a negative test or 10 days without test	✓	
Self-monitor for symptoms	✓	✓
Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel	✓	✓

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Key References

- [State Education Department Issues Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 16, 2020).
- [State Education Department Presents Framework of Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 13, 2020).
- [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, NYS Department of Health](#) (July 13, 2020) .

Additional References

- [Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) (June 26, 2020).
- [Interim Guidance for Food Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) (June 26, 2020).
- [Interim Guidance for Office-Based Work during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) (June 26, 2020).
- [Interim Guidance for Public Transportation Activities during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) (June 26, 2020).
- [New York State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).
- [New York State Education Department Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19 Website](#).