

Return to Learn Town Hall for Families

Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez
July 23, 2020



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Have Questions?

If you would like to post a question for Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez during our Town Hall:

1. Click on the livestream's title in the upper left corner of the livestream video, or on the YouTube logo at bottom-right
2. That will take you to the live video on YouTube
3. You can ask your question by typing in the "chat area" on the right side of the screen

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Analysis of HPS Surveys

Total Responses: 9,882

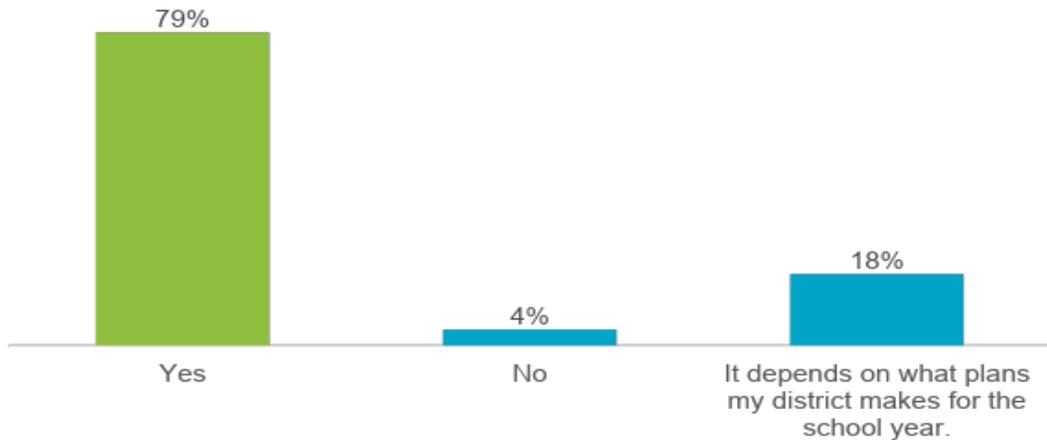
- Students: 1,141
- Parent/Guardian: 6,294
- Teacher: 1,452
- School Leaders & Staff: 995

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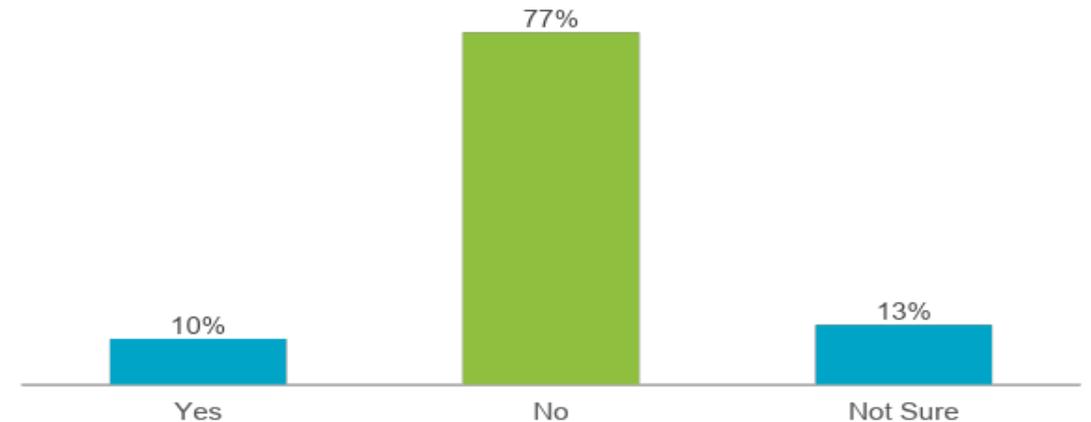


A considerable majority of parents and teachers are committed to returning to Hartford Public Schools, at least in some capacity, in the fall.

Teachers: Are you planning to return to your school for 2020-21?



Parents: I am considering sending my child to a different school for the 2020-21 school year.



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Finally, parents were candid in sharing their thoughts about the challenges they faced and far more often than not advocated for practical solutions.

On additional resources their child's school or district can provide...

- *Counseling for students, allow students to have a voice, and support students with a career plan to follow for success.*
- *Advocate for student and staff to have better and more adequate tools to improve remote learning. Provide devices with an independent internet connection.*

On what was challenging about distance learning...

- *A lot. I am a single parent with a demanding job. During this time I did not have time to fully commit to my child's learning because I had to work during the day. In fact my job performance and engagement suffered during this time and I wasn't able to provide my child with the amount of time necessary for their academics. I am not a teacher and I am not capable of teaching my child and do not have the time to facilitate learning because I work.*

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Meanwhile, teachers advocated for clear restart plans, comprehensive safety protocols, and owned up about the challenges distance learning brings.

On additional resources their school or the district can provide...

- *A guarantee that it will be safe to return to school in the fall. Meaning actually providing cleaning materials in classrooms and soap in the bathrooms.*
- *A plan that considers all stakeholders.*
- *A specific plan that will address how our school intends to keep our students and staff safe this fall. How will the busing work? Transitions to and from class? How do you physically space out 25+ kids in a small classroom?*

On what was challenging about distance learning...

- *A big challenge was giving feedback to students. I found that the feedback I had to give the majority of the time was not about the quality of their work but instead solely about their engagement.*
- *I had to text students and families every day as a reminder to make sure they were completing the work correctly even though I posted videos and written documents for reminders.*



Return to Learn and Accelerate (RTLA) Principles



Planning Frames	Rationale	Principles
People first	RTLA plans must organize resources to address the needs and challenges of the people who are directly affected—students, families, and educators—with input and guidance directly from members of these groups. In developing, refining, and implementing RTLA plans, leaders should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start with students 2. Design for accelerated equity 3. Solve for the needs of educators 4. Assess employment, logistical and educational needs of families
Design for “do-ability” and coherence	Re-entry and recovery are massive challenges without trying to “re-invent the wheel” or add unnecessary complexity. Therefore, in developing RTLA models, leaders should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Leverage what works 6. Keep it simple 7. Build for long-term, sustainable change in how we “do school.” 8. Take a holistic view to set a coherent strategy
Plan for change and system learning	During the first few months of the pandemic we learned that healthcare guidance and community needs change. We also know that the economic impact of the pandemic will include reduced K-12 budgets. Therefore, leaders should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Be budget-aware 10. Assume customization and evolution 11. Design for adaptability 12. Embed an innovation and learning agenda

Operational Decision Meter



We developed the Operational Decision Meter to help guide our process for determining when to make adjustments in our learning environments. Any movement between colors will be informed by public health conditions as established by our local, state and federal experts, as well as state guidance and/or mandates. It's possible that not all the campuses will be operating at the same colors at the same time because the virus might be more prevalent in one area than another. Again, we will rely on our health experts to help us make these distinctions. Below are explanations for each color:

	External Conditions	If these conditions are present:
RED	A severe and uncontrolled level of COVID-19 in our community, meaning outbreaks are present and worsening. Authorities are advising residents to take action to minimize contacts with others wherever possible and avoid leaving home except for the most essential needs.	The majority of students move to remote learning until COVID-19 threat level improves. Some small-group instruction may be allowed with strict social distancing protocols in place.
ORANGE	A significant and uncontrolled level of COVID-19 in our community as determined by local health officials, meaning that there is ongoing transmission of the virus. Authorities are advising residents to minimize contact with others and avoid medium or large gatherings.	We will move to our Hybrid schedule with remote learning for all grade levels on Wednesdays so campuses can be deep cleaned. Social distancing protocols will be closely monitored and "high risk" activities may be restricted or prohibited.
YELLOW	A moderate, but controlled level of COVID-19 in our community as determined by local health officials, meaning there is demonstrated reduction in transmission and local healthcare systems are within capacity. Authorities are advising residents to remain vigilant, but to resume activities using recommended social distancing where possible.	We will move to our Hybrid schedule enabling six feet of separation for students who are attending in person on a given day. Wednesdays will be remote learning for all grade levels so campuses can be deep cleaned. Social distancing protocols will continue to be monitored and large group and/or "high risk" activities may be restricted.
GREEN	A minimal and controlled level of COVID-19 in our community as determined by local health officials, meaning new chains of transmission are limited. Authorities are advising residents to resume normal contact with others unless they've been exposed to the virus or are sick with the virus.	We would use a M,T,TH,F schedule for all students. This will mean in many classrooms students will be less than 6 feet apart. Wednesdays will be maintained as remote learning for all grade levels so campuses can be deep cleaned. Large group and/or "high risk" activities will continue to be restricted as needed.

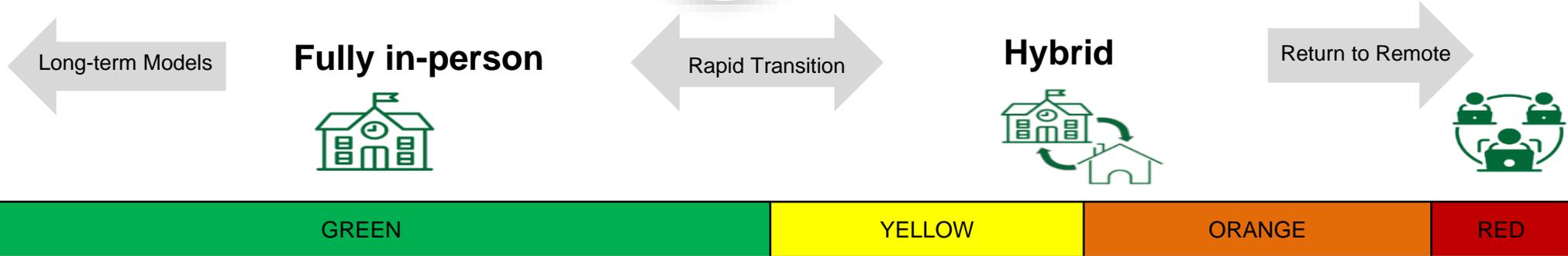


Instructional Models

HPS is planning to offer several options for families with different instructional models. *Note that these plans may change depending on family responses, state guidance, and public health conditions.*

		
<p><i>Option A: In-person instruction as possible</i>, with transitions to hybrid or fully remote depending on the Operational Decision Meter</p>	<p><i>Option B: Distance Learning</i> as part of a school-based remote model</p>	<p><i>Option C: HPS Virtual Academy</i> as part of a centralized remote model</p>

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Scenario: CT proceeds with current state guidance and reopens to all students who are ready to return

- Traditional, at school learning experience with additional safety measures implemented based on guidelines from governing entities.
- Wednesdays will be early release days for students so teachers can participate in professional learning.
- **6 feet of distance will be maintained where possible. In classrooms, students will likely be less than 6 feet apart but will be wearing masks and following other precautions.**

	All Students
Monday	In person
Tuesday	In person
Wednesday	In person - early release
Thursday	In person
Friday	In person

Scenario: CT experiences a resurgence of COVID 19 or new information changes current guidance from the state

- Grades PK-12 half of students attend school in-person Mon/Tues and half attend Thurs/Fri. Students participate in remote learning on days when they are not in-person
- On Wednesdays, all students learn remotely to enable time for teacher professional learning and deep cleaning of facilities
- **6 feet of distance will always be strictly maintained.**

	Student Group A	Student Group B
Monday	In person	Distance
Tuesday	In person	Distance
Wednesday	All distance	All distance
Thursday	Distance	In person
Friday	Distance	In person

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Option A: In-person instruction as possible



Families opting into this option will start the school year **fully in-person**. If necessary, based on public health conditions, schools will transition to a hybrid or fully remote model.

- All students and staff will wear masks in school. HPS will provide masks.
- In classrooms, physical distancing will be practiced to the extent possible. PK-8 students will be grouped in cohorts by grade level.
- Regular hand-washing/sanitizing will be required for all students and staff.
- School buildings will be cleaned and sanitized daily.
- School buses will serve all students eligible for transportation, and buses will be cleaned after each trip.
- Meals: Grades PK-1 will start the year receiving their meals in the classroom. Grades 2-12 will receive their meals in the cafeteria, with additional overflow spaces (if needed), with physical distancing.



Option B: Distance Learning



Families opting into this option will participate in **school-based distance learning**. Families should choose this option if they may later want to transition to in-person instruction (Option A).

- Students attend classes from home on a regular school schedule, allowing for easier transition to in-person instruction when conditions are deemed safe by individual families.
- Instruction delivered by certified staff but potentially not certified in the specific content area.

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Option C: HPS Virtual Academy



Families opting in on this option will participate in centralized, **district-based distance learning**. Families should choose this option if they are confident they want to remain in remote instruction.

- Students and families that are confident they will want to remain in virtual instruction for at least a full a marking period (quarter – 2 to 3 months) will be enrolled in the fully virtual academy.
- Transitions back to in-person instruction will be considered on a quarter basis to allow for continuity of curriculum and will most likely involve a change in the students' primary instructional staff.
- Certified content teachers delivering instruction.

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Questions?