Return to Learn
Health & Safety Plan
SY 2021-2022

Submitted by Superintendent
Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez

Return
To Learn

Health & Safety Plan
for School Year
2021-22

HARTFORD
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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*The contents of this plan may change based on future guidance from the State of Connecticut, local health agencies, and the CDC.
Developing the *Return to Learn & Accelerate* Plan for HPS

As the COVID-19 pandemic, guidance from health experts, and related policies continue to evolve, we must be flexible and adapt to the evolving circumstances as quickly as possible so that we are able to support our students and offer uninterrupted learning. We know this plan may change before and after we begin the school year. We will maintain our partnerships with health experts and will continuously monitor and analyze data and feedback to make informed decisions and provide updates to our community.

**Guiding Principles for Planning**

**People first:** School design models for reentry 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 reentry school design models, leaders should:

1. **Start with students.** Organize people, time and technology to include the increased support related to COVID in the areas of learning recovery, relationships and social, emotional support.
2. **Design for equity.** Address the learning needs of those students most disadvantaged by the COVID crisis including students with disabilities, English learners and students who have experienced economic, social, physical or psychological stressors.
3. **Solve for the needs of educators.** Think through how new school designs meet the expanded set of logistical, collaborative, technology, professional learning, and social-emotional needs of educators.
4. **Assess employment, logistical and educational needs of families.** Keep in mind that the childcare function of school enables return to work, and design predictable routines for all students that fit with family work schedules, making it easier for families to manage and support their children.

**Design for “do-ability” and coherence:** Reentry and recovery are massive challenges without trying to “reinvent the wheel” or add unnecessary complexity. Therefore, in developing reentry school design models, leaders should:

5. **Start with students.** Organize people, time and technology to include the increased support related to COVID in the areas of learning recovery, relationships, and social-emotional support.
6. **Design for equity.** Address the learning needs of those students most disadvantaged by the COVID crisis including students with disabilities, English learners and students who have experienced economic, social, physical or psychological stressors.
7. **Solve for the needs of educators.** Think through how new school designs meet the expanded set of logistical, collaborative, technology, professional learning, and social-emotional needs of educators.
8. **Assess employment, logistical and educational needs of families.** Keep in mind that the childcare function of school enables return to work, and design predictable routines for all students that fit with family work schedules, making it easier for families to manage and support their children.

**Plan for change and system learning:** If we have learned anything in the first few months of the pandemic, it’s 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:

9. **Be budget-aware.** Ensure that models work with limited and likely declining resources by testing ideas against realistic school budgets and specifying the resources it takes to implement each model.
10. **Assume customization and evolution.** Set up models as foundations that will require tailoring based on local context, feedback from students, staff and families, and an evolving understanding of what works.
11. **Design for adaptability.** Expect that all or some students will need to move between remote, hybrid and in-person models fluidly based on individual needs or community circumstances. Design models to enable continuity for students, families and teachers.
12. **Embed an innovation and learning agenda.** Ensure that models and the work to implement them explore innovative approaches that enable cycles of rapid iteration and improvement.

*Source: Education Resource Strategies designed for HPS. Thank you to our partners at TNTP for your review and feedback.*
Approach and Organization

Our planning efforts are being led by our Return to Learn & Accelerate (RTLA) Task Force, which includes a Steering Committee, and four working groups comprised of district and school leaders, instructional coaches, teachers, representatives from the Hartford Federation of Teachers, paraeducators, parents, family support staff, health experts, and community partners.

**Return to Learn & Accelerate Steering Committee**

Develops the overall vision for re-entry while supporting and organizing cross-functional work planning.

- **School Design & Academics Working Group**
  
  Utilizes research-based best practices to develop a strategy for accelerated core academics and social-emotional supports, utilizing school staffing and scheduling models that meet social distancing constraints.

- **School Logistics & Operations Working Group**
  
  Plans for addressing constraints related to operations, budget reallocation, talent, and technology access.

- **Family & Community Engagement Working Group**
  
  Maintains ongoing communication with families and community members about re-entry decisions as they develop, evolve, and are implemented.

- **Health & Safety Working Group**
  
  Ensures the health, safety, and well-being of all students, families, and staff are protected through careful monitoring and implementation of all necessary health and safety precautions.

Source: National Labor Management Partnership
This HPS SOP is based on the guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), as well as local health authorities, and indicates how best to maintain health and safety in the school environment to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**Questions?** Contact Staff Attorney Edward Wilson, Jr. at 860-695-8461 or Health Service Coordinator Deb Chameides at 860-695-8760.

#### Key Dates/Initiatives

**District Health & Safety Team:**
- Monitor DPH and CDC updates pertaining to Health and Safety and update the School community.
- Provide education/opportunities for staff and student COVID-19 vaccinations.
- Provide training/educational materials on district COVID-19 health and safety protocols (District).
- Educate staff, students and their families about when they should stay home if they have COVID-19 symptoms, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for test results, or have been exposed to someone with symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case, and when they can return to school.
- Communicate face mask policy with families (District).
- Communicate face mask policy with staff (District).
- Maintain your building-level response team and continue to work closely with the District Health and Safety team in responding to COVID-19 concerns.
- Communicate and continue to ensure compliance with health screening tool prior to their report to in person instruction/work for unvaccinated staff who are close contacts and all staff who are symptomatic.
- Maintain an isolation/containment area for sick students with appropriate PPE.
- Avoid an accumulation of “sick” children in the nurse’s office.
- Determine the hall pass system for health room visits and communicate the system to all staff.
- Teachers should demonstrate proper hand washing daily and schedule frequent hand washing with students, especially before meals.
- Ensure that your building has the necessary PPE in coordination with the District operations team and your PPE Captain.
- In-person staff meetings are permitted, however, all attendees must maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance.
- School administration to review visitor policy with school staff.
- School administration to review the importance of staying home when ill and completing the health screener when necessary.
- Grades PreK-8 must continue to maintain student cohorting, including during lunch and recess.
- Mixing cohorts may be permitted in certain limited circumstances, subject to approval by the District Health & Safety Team in consultation with the school’s Executive Director of School Leadership.
- Schools must continue to maintain physical distancing to the extent possible among all individuals.
This SOP describes how best to communicate with our community

Contact: communications@hartfordschools.org

(D)= responsibility of the district; (S)= responsibility of the school

● **Policies and Procedures:** In consultation with district leadership, the Communications Director will lead communications about changes to district policies and procedures as they relate to COVID-19. New policies and procedures will be shared with our primary audiences (students, parents/guardians, and staff) in advance of reopening and updated upon re-entry as soon as they are confirmed. HPS Communications will employ all appropriate methods (ParentSquare communications, email, robocalls, text messaging, website posts, social media, newsletter, town halls, local media) to inform students, parents/guardians, and staff of policy changes in a timely manner. (D)

● **Frequency:** Communications will develop the cadence and protocols. The frequency of district communications will be driven by guidance and health data. Weekly updates might be appropriate, especially at the beginning of the school term. School leaders will be prepared to amplify or support district updates. (D/S)

● **Partnership:** The district Communications team will notify Principals and staff of relevant emails to families about COVID-19 updates. Principals will ensure that all families have updated contact information in Powerschool, including at least one email address per student. (D/S)

● **Preventive Health Guidance:** Communications will work with Health Services to provide schools with universal preventive health guidance information (ex. hand washing, face coverings). This includes flyers, posters, decals, digital signage and more (in multiple languages) that can be posted prominently in school buildings and distributed from main offices. (D/S)

● **Announcements:** Schools leaders will use the ParentSquare communication platform, broadcast systems and regularly scheduled announcements to describe and reinforce district policies and procedures, preventive health guidance, such as washing hands, wearing face coverings, and maintaining physical distance. (S)

● **Case Letters:** COVID-19 cases among students will be communicated to the classroom in Grades PreK-8 and to the entire school in Grades 9-12. Staff COVID-19 cases will be communicated to the entire school community. Letters approved by the district health and safety team will be distributed by school leaders to families and staff via the ParentSquare communications platform (email, text, and app). (D/S)

● **School Websites:** The district will continue to provide updates about reopening and COVID-19 on the district website. School leaders will add a COVID-19 page to their websites or link to the district page. Schools that don’t have an existing website should contact Communications for support. (S)

● **Language Accessibility:** School leaders will communicate in relevant languages of families in their school community and make all communications accessible to those with visual and/or hearing impairments. (S)

● **Media:** Per established protocol outlined in [Communications 101](#), school leaders and staff will notify the Communications Director if they are contacted by the media for interviews regarding a COVID-related topic. Schools must not reach out to reporters on their own. (D)
LEARNING MODELS:
Standard Operating Procedure for Learning Model:
FULLY IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

This HPS SOP is based on the CT Reopening Schools and CSDE guidelines and describes how best to return students to learning.

Questions? Dr. Madeline Negrón, Chief Academic Officer at madeline.negron@hartfordschools.org

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Student Cohorts (PK-8 only):

- (S) Determine cohorts while balancing gender.
- (S) Student homeroom groups are to remain intact all day at the elementary and middle school levels to limit transitions.
- (S) Small group cohorts for pull out services are to remain intact.
- (S/D) Mixing cohorts may be permitted in certain limited circumstances, subject to approval by the District Health & Safety Team in consultation with the school's Executive Director of School Leadership.

Staffing:

- (S) Leverage all staff in building to increase capacity.
- (S) If possible, make changes to increase physical distancing in the cafeteria such as having more staggered lunch sections with additional coverage provided by support staff or teachers (with coverage during other periods).

Student Supports:

- (S) Implement IEP and language acquisition support plans as written.
- (S) Cluster MLS and SWDs by grade level for strategic staffing to maximize push-in support services (i.e. 1 to 2 classrooms vs 4).
- (S) Organize for collaboration of support staff and classroom teachers to differentiate Tier I content lessons and provide accommodations.
Student Cohorts (PK-8 only):
- Student groups can be pulled from cohorts, for groups no larger than 8 as long as students are 3 feet apart to the extent possible and wearing masks.
- On a case-by-case basis, special education students may be mainstreamed into classrooms/cohorts when required by their IEP, provided mitigation strategies can continue to be followed.

Staffing:
- Special education teachers can push into multiple classrooms to provide IEP services.
- Special education and related service staff will follow the contracted duty schedule.
- PPTs may be held virtually or in-person, provided physical distancing is maintained during in-person meetings.

Student Supports:
- (S) Implement IEPs as written, unless doing so would pose a health risk to the student or to other students or staff, as determined by the Medical Exemption Planning Team.
- (S) Cluster MLs and SWDs by grade level for strategic staffing to maximize push-in support services (i.e. 1 to 2 classrooms vs 4).
- In situations where masking is required, if a student has difficulty with consistent mask wearing, the school will work to practice consistent mask wearing through a variety of methods.
- (S) Organize for collaboration of support staff and classroom teachers to differentiate Tier I content lessons and provide accommodations.
This HPS SOP is based on the guidance from the CDC, CT DPH, HPS, and the CIAC.

Questions? Contact Heidi Schmidt, Assistant Director of Athletics at 860-695-8709.

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Sanitation and Safety Procedures - Athletic Environment/Equipment

- Hand sanitizer, masks must be readily available at the entry to the facility and at all workout stations
- At the end of each day, all indoor facilities will be cleaned
- All students must provide their own/personal labeled water bottles/containers.
- Students will need to be monitored in their designated areas when not participating in the activity and continue to practice physical distancing
- All equipment must be sanitized following normal procedures.
- The spectator protocol will be evaluated by the Athletics Department in consultation with the district Health & Safety Team. Contact the Athletics Department for specific spectator policies by sport and season.
- Signage will be displayed on COVID-19 Safety practices at the entry/exit locations of indoor facilities

Forms needed for Participation - Athletic Environment

- All Hartford Public Schools Athletic participation forms must be completed online using FinalForms
- Participation Consent forms must be signed by parents
- Students must have a current Physical on file to participate in Hartford Public Schools Sports.
Programming: Family & Community engagement, before/after care, and extended day programs and offerings will be in person.

Cohorts/Scheduling: Apply the same cohort requirements for the academic program, when feasible. Consider utilization of classrooms for on-site summer programming that minimizes students’ exposure to other students and common areas. For example: use the same classroom that students are in during the academic program.

Physical Distancing: Physical distancing will be adhered to by all providers and students participating in the program. Limit exposure to other students during classroom instruction, activities, meals, bathroom usage and transportation.

Health Monitoring: Enrichment Programming employees will go through the health check process at the beginning of their shift. The health check screening for enrichment staff will be conducted through the Raptor system.

Cleaning: Spaces used for programming will be cleaned following the stated schedule of the school.
Maintain tape demonstrating 6-foot social distance spacing where possible in areas where students may form lines in hallways and common areas.

Close water fountains.

Review infection control guidelines for health office visits with the custodial staff.

Identify isolation space for students who become ill with COVID-19-related symptoms and must wait for parent pick-up. Assign a staff member(s) to monitor symptoms and wait with the student. A staff member must be present.

Identify and clearly label designated doors for student morning entry into the building.

All schools will follow regular cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

Restrooms to be cleaned and disinfected daily.

Hand sanitizer to be placed at all entrances, lobbies, main offices, and classrooms.

Locker use is permitted, but schools should ensure students are not congregating at lockers.
This HPS SOP is based on the guidelines from CSDE and CDC.

Questions? Contact the Department of School Leadership at 860-695-8000.

- Arrange student furniture within the classroom to accommodate the maximum distance, at least 3 feet to the extent possible.
- Each student station (either desks or tables) must maintain the maximum distance possible.
- Arrange furniture keeping in mind the space required for teaching walls, circulation to student restrooms and storage, etc.
- Measure and mark off new furniture arrangement to assure correct furniture placement throughout the day.
- Remove all unnecessary items and furniture and store in a different location, where possible.

- Pre-School Design
  - Set station rotations to allow for greater distancing
  - Limit number of students at each of the station rotations
Standard Operating Procedure for In-School Transitions

Contact: Evette Avila, Chief of Schools, evette.avila@hartfordschools.org.

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Arrival and dismissal (parent drop off/pickup vs. busing):
● Establish curbside drop-off and pick-up to limit direct contact between parents and staff members, maintaining physical distancing. (S)

Entries and exits:
● Identify and clearly label designated doors for student morning entry into the building. (S)

Hallways and stairwells:
● Maintain tape demonstrating 6-foot physical distance spacing in areas where students may form lines in hallways and common areas. (S)
● Consider staggered passing in the hall by changing schedules around periods to ensure students change rooms, if necessary, at different times. Keep traffic moving in stairways and halls. (S)

Main office:
● Limit the number of visitors and staff in this area. (S)
● While in the office ensure physical distancing, 6 feet apart by label areas for standing. (S)

Staff common areas:
● Maintain tape markings demonstrating 6-foot physical distancing in staff common areas, such as break rooms, copier/workrooms, meeting rooms. (S)
● Remove unnecessary chairs or seating areas to discourage the gathering of students or staff. (S)

Recess:
● Develop recess activities that have no physical contact. (S)
● Consider staggering recess times for each class/cohort. Cohorts must be maintained during recess. (S)
Elementary (PreK-8) Food Service

This HPS SOP is based on the guidelines from CDSE and the CDC.

Questions? Contact Lonnie Burt, Senior Director at 860-695-8491.

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- Schools with PK-8 grade configurations will follow this SOP.
- Schools with Pre-K-12 grade configuration will follow this SOP for the elementary grades and the secondary SOP for the secondary grades.
- Breakfast at all grade levels will be “Grab and Go” breakfast carts for classroom consumption. Carts will be placed in key entrance areas.

MEAL DELIVERY OPTIONS:

Cafeteria Service
- Students will eat in the cafeteria or designated spaces following physical distancing guidelines.
- (S) Arrange meal service spaces to maintain 6 feet of physical distancing to the extent possible.
- (S) Consider alternate eating locations including the gymnasium, auditorium, and outside areas (weather permitting).
- (S) Stagger meal times to decrease students in serving lines and seating areas. Consider additional or shortened lunch waves if needed.
- (S) Provide time for students to wash hands before and after meals.
- (S) Provide enough time between meal times to allow for sanitizing protocols to be completed.

Classroom Meals
- If eating in classroom, students will come to cafeteria to pick up meals and return to classroom or designated spaces.
  - Trash removal including liquids removed after breakfast and lunch.
  - Provide time for students to wash hands before and after meals.
Secondary Food Service

This HPS SOP is based on the guidelines from CSDE and the CDC.
Questions? Contact Lonnie Burt, Senior Director at 860-695-8491.

- Schools with 6-8 or 6-12 grade configurations will follow this SOP.
- Schools with K-12 grade configuration will follow this SOP for the secondary grades and the K-8 SOP.
- Breakfast at all grade levels will be “Grab and Go” breakfast carts for classroom consumption. Carts will be placed in key entrance areas.

MEAL DELIVERY OPTIONS:

Cafeteria Service
- Students will eat in the cafeteria or designated spaces following social distancing guidelines.
- (S) Designate seating that faces the same direction or is only on one side of the table, to maintain 6 ft. of physical distancing.
- Consider alternate eating locations including the gymnasium, auditorium, and outside areas (weather permitting).
- (S) Mealtimes should be staggered to decrease students in serving lines and seating area. Consider additional or shortened lunch waves if needed.
- (S) Provide time for students to wash hands before and after meals.
- (S) Provide enough time between meal times to allow for sanitizing protocols to be completed.

Classroom Meals
- If eating in the classroom, students will come to the cafeteria to pick up meals and return to classroom or designated spaces.
  - Trash removal including liquids removed after breakfast and lunch.
  - Provide time for students to wash hands before and after meals.
Transportation

This HPS SOP is based on the guidelines from Centers for Disease Control (CDC), local, state and federal transportation safety guidelines and describes how best to transport our students.

Questions? Contact Bill Mason at 860-695-8899.

- **Capacity**: Maximum capacity on each General Education bus will be 78 students. (Full busing as normal). Special Education buses can hold up to 11 students depending on the number of wheelchair students. This will continue to be the same. Due to the capacity challenge, only eligible students per policy will be able to ride their assigned buses. Siblings of Special Education students will ride their assigned bus until further notice.

- **Physical distancing**: Signs will be displayed on the bus. Students must practice physical distancing at the bus stops. Windows to remain open on buses if possible and weather permitting.

- **Health monitoring**: Students that are sick must stay home. All transportation employees will go through the health check process every morning.

- **Cleaning**: Each bus will be cleaned at the end of the day.

- **Schedules**: Elementary schools are to receive the general education bus riders at the regular scheduled time per their school tier (10 minutes before bell time). This will help us to unload and continue to pick up our next tier students.

- **Additional Safety Recommendations**: We recommend all students in PK - Grade 3 be accompanied by their caregivers to and from the bus stop and school. Report any unusual safety concerns to their parents and school officials immediately.
This HPS SOP includes key operational steps required to sustain a 1:1 device model for students and school-based reopening responsibilities. It is based on state guidelines, national research and the Return to School Roadmap.

Questions? Contact Dave Draxyl – Technology Coordinator – ddraxyl@hartfordschools.org

- (D) = responsibility of the district; (S) = responsibility of the school

- (S) Continue to monitor student device needs (new students, replacements for damaged or lost devices) and report needs to Dave Draxyl.
- (S) Designate a single point of contact in each school to plan and communicate with district technology teams.
- (D/S) Survey families to check in and collect information about the numbers, types, and condition of 1:1 devices provided to students.
- (S) Identify general technology support lead for each school. Consider elevating that position to a more formal role.
- (S) Where practical, consider identifying family technology liaisons to support communication regarding the use of technology and serve as a “help desk.”
- (D) Follow district-wide procedures for return and inventory of district-owned devices as part of a return to school technology plan. The procedures should include: Ordering accessories that may be needed over the summer.
- (S) Stage device processing areas as needed to run procedures. Staging areas should be organized and prepared for technicians to perform repair work on-site.
- (S) Organize returned devices by their condition (ie: Broken Screens, Missing Keys, Not Charging, etc.)
- (D) Process device warranty claims, repairs and refurbishment
- (D) Update Device Inventory
- (D/S) Place orders for replacement devices based on results of school technology reports. Submit this data via the Device Request Form.
- (S) Continue to monitor device usage and support needs - direct students/families to utilize the HPS Zendesk Help Center platform (hartfordschools.zendesk.com)
- (D/S) Ensure every student has access to the appropriate technology and connectivity needed to continue learning
- (D/S) Compile technology-related “lessons learned” for inclusion in the district’s updated plans.
  - What worked well?
  - What opportunities for improvement do you see?
- (D/S) Identify chronic technology issues that arose during the 2020-2021 School Year status and use them to begin the development of a long-term technology maintenance plan.
  - What are the most common technical issues being experienced?
  - Are there certain devices that seem to have the most problems?
  - Report this data to Dave Draxyl monthly
Visitors

These protocols are established to best maintain the health and safety of the school environment to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Questions? Contact Chief of Schools Evette Avila at 860-695-8000 or Staff Attorney Edward Wilson, Jr. at 860-695-8461.

- All visitors must follow health and safety protocols while in the building. Administrators must ensure that visitors do not come into close contact with any students.
- During school hours, visitors may be permitted to attend in-school events, provided that events are planned in accordance with all applicable SOPs and relevant guidance from the Health & Safety Team.
- Visitors to HPS buildings must complete a health screening questionnaire upon arrival at the main entrance before proceeding into the building.
- The District “visitor acknowledgement form” is required to be signed by our student interns and community partners that report to our buildings. This form is to be completed and provided to Jill Rippington in Risk Management.
- Each student intern or community partner must complete Raptor upon first visit to the building, but not thereafter, provided their “visitor acknowledgement form” has been completed.
- Raptor screening questions:
  1. Have you had known contact with someone diagnosed or suspected to be diagnosed with COVID-19 during the last 14 days?
  2. Are you experiencing any of the below that are different from your baseline health?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling feverish</th>
<th>Shortness of breath</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temp of 100.00 or greater</td>
<td>Difficulty breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chills</td>
<td>Loss of taste or smell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncontrolled new cough</td>
<td>Vomiting and/or Diarrhea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Any individual who answers the health related questions in the affirmative will be denied access to the building.
These protocols are established to best maintain the health and safety of the school environment to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Questions? Contact Director of Arts and Wellness Tracy Avicolli at 860-695-8818.

Guidance below was informed by Addendum 7: COVID-19 Considerations for Connecticut PreK–12 Arts Programs and the HPS District Health and Safety Team

- **Sanitation and Safety Procedures - Arts Event/ Performance Spaces**
  - Hand sanitizer, masks must be readily available at the entry to the event space.
  - Students must be supervised in their designated areas (green rooms, backstage, etc.) when not participating in the event and continue to practice physical distancing.
  - Bell covers will be used on all wind instruments.
  - All performers will remain at least 3 feet apart from each other.

- **Audience Seating and Entry/Exit Procedures - Arts Event/Performance Spaces**
  - Arts event staff at each school will identify the capacity of the event space, ensuring 6 feet of distance between each family ‘pod.’ (Families can sit together without being 6 feet apart, however, there needs to be at least 6 feet between each family).
  - Arts event staff at each school will provide each student performer/artist with a specific number of tickets/seats for guests (dependent on the capacity of their event space).
  - *Please note: for in school assemblies, students can sit 3 feet apart, or every-other seat.
  - For an Art exhibition or show, student artwork should be well-spaced, ensuring the guests are socially distanced while viewing.
  - At least one adult will be designated to monitor entry/exit procedures to the event.
  - Signage will be displayed on COVID-19 Safety practices at the entry/exit locations of indoor facilities

- **Small Group Rehearsals or Sectionals**
  - Music teachers can pull small groups of students from mixed cohorts for instrumental or vocal sectional rehearsals only if they are able to rehearse in a large enough space to ensure at least 3 feet of distance between non-wind instrumentalists and at least 6 feet between wind instruments. Bell covers must also be utilized.
RTLA Standard Operating Procedures for Welcome Center

This HPS SOP is based on the guidelines from Centers for Disease Control (CDC), local, state and federal for Family Engagement and Enrollment safety guidelines and describes how best to implement family engagement.

Questions? Contact the Welcome Center at 860-695-8400

- Limit the number of visitors and staff in this area. (D)
- While in the office ensure physical distancing, 6 feet apart by label areas for standing. (D)
- Limit seating by installing physical distancing straps. (D)
- **Screening questions:**
  1. Have you had known contact with someone diagnosed or suspected to be diagnosed with COVID-19 during the last 14 days?
  2. Are you experiencing any of the below that are different from your baseline health?
      1. Feeling feverish
      2. Temp of 100.00 or greater
      3. Chills
      4. Uncontrolled new cough
      5. Shortness of breath
      6. Difficulty breathing
      7. Loss of taste or smell

Any individual who answers the health related questions in the affirmative will be denied access to the building and services/questions will be responded to virtually.
RTLA Standard Operating Procedures for Recess

This HPS SOP is based on the guidelines from CSDE and the CDC.

Questions? Contact Director of Nursing & Clinical Services, Deb Chameides at 860-695-8760.

- Maintain tape or markings demonstrating 6-foot physical distance spacing in areas where students may form lines outside.
- Hand sanitizer and masks must be available at the entrance to the building.
- Staff and students will sanitize hands upon entering the building.
- Maintain cohorting by determining separate areas for each cohort to use.
- Students will need to be monitored in their designated areas and continue to practice physical distancing.
- Identify and clearly label designated doors for student entry into the building.
- Playscapes are permitted, however the number of students on the playscape should not exceed a number that does not allow for physical distancing.
To keep everyone safe and control the transmission of the virus, all staff are required to follow all Health and Safety protocols.

Unvaccinated staff are required to complete the daily wellness screener if they have a known exposure to someone with COVID-19.

All staff are required to complete the daily wellness if:
- They have tested positive for COVID-19; or
- They are experiencing one or more of the following symptoms:
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fever of 100.0°F or above, or feeling feverish
  - New uncontrolled cough
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Chills
  - Other significant symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, congestion that are different from your baseline health

Staff exhibiting symptoms, or feeling ill, should also call their medical provider to report their symptoms and ask about testing prior to seeking in-person care at a clinic, physician’s office, or hospital. They should also contact the District Health and Safety Liaison Jennifer Miller at millj001@hartfordschools.org and their supervisor/principal by phone and email. Staff who have exhibited systems or felt ill must receive clearance from the district Health and Safety Liaison before reporting to work.

To the extent possible, avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.

Wash your hands frequently, but especially after using the restroom and before preparing or consuming food. Using soap and hot water, wash for at least 20 seconds. When soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer. Avoid coughing or sneezing into your hands or in the air. Always try to cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue away. If you don’t have a tissue, cough/sneeze inside the elbow of your arm.

Staff meetings are permitted, however, all attendees must maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance.

Maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet between yourself and other adults at all times.

If it’s necessary to eat around another staff member, physical distancing (at least 6 feet) between yourself and others must be maintained.

Questions? Contact Chief Evette Avila at 860-695-8664 or Staff Attorney Edward Wilson, Jr. 860 695 8461
Effective March 28, 2022, Hartford Public Schools will shift to a mask-optional status for all students, staff, and visitors. Masks will continue to be available in each school for students and staff who choose to continue to wear them.

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 will still need to isolate for at least 5 days, must be symptom-free before returning to school or work (to be verified by the school nurse for students or District Health & Safety Liaison for staff), and will be required to wear a mask from days 6-10.

In the event that the Superintendent or the State of Connecticut reinstates a district-wide mask mandate, this Board policy (Policy Number 5141.8, p. 139) and the following protocol shall apply:

Hartford Public School Face Mask Protocol

All Hartford Public Schools students in grades Pre-K through 12th, staff, parents, and visitors will be required to wear a face mask while inside any Hartford Public Schools school building. Face masks are being required based upon guidance from the CDC, State of Connecticut public health and education officials, local health authorities, and stakeholders including administrators, teachers and parents.

According to the CDC, face masks are an effective tool in stopping the spread of COVID-19, along with social distancing, frequent handwashing, and regular cleaning and disinfecting. Each school site will have a school-based COVID-19 Response Team to address COVID-19 related issues with guidance from the District Health and Safety Team.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who will be required to wear face masks?

All students in grades Pre-K -12th, staff, visitors, and vendors will be required to wear face masks unless an approved exemption applies.

Will people have to wear face masks all day?

1. Fully vaccinated teachers may remove cloth/disposable masks while wearing a face shield when they are engaged in active instruction at the front of the classroom in which students are seated and masked. This should not occur in cases where a fully vaccinated teacher is a close contact of a known case and, in lieu of quarantine, is instructed to wear a mask until they receive a negative test.
2. Teachers and students can also remove masks and face shields while eating, drinking, or when outside provided they are able to physically distance.
3. Staff members who need to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired and need to see the person’s mouth to communicate while maintaining physical distance and wearing a face shield.

Will there be exemptions?

1 For the purposes of this communication, a “face mask” is considered to be a cloth or disposable face mask. Bandanas, neck gaiters, and masks with valves are not permitted.
Yes. Persons for whom a face mask would cause an impairment due to an existing health condition (Medical documentation required, please inform Human Resources and the District Health and Safety Team if a staff member is in this category as an ADA meeting may be required).

**Will there be mask breaks for our students?**

Yes. Across all grades and age groups, teachers shall utilize a minimum of a five-minute mask break every hour. The five minutes do not have to be done all at once and the teacher can utilize more than five minutes to the extent circumstances require or dictate the need for more time. If appropriate physical distancing can be maintained during a mask break while in the classroom, instruction can continue.

Prior to the mask break, the teacher should ensure all students are appropriately physically distanced (6 feet). While this can be done in the classroom if class size and spacing permit the maintaining of the required distance, we encourage the use of larger spaces in the buildings such as the gym or outside areas when and where appropriate. Regardless of where it takes place, 6 feet of physical distancing is always required during the mask break.

**Will students be required to wear a face covering when participating in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities?**

Yes. Students will be required to wear a face mask when physical distancing cannot be maintained unless the function cannot be performed with a face mask. Certain exemptions apply. See recess and athletics SOPs.

**Can students and staff bring their own face masks?**

Yes. The Health & Safety team also recommends that everyone follow the CDC’s recommendations on masking. Face masks must comply with the dress code found in the Code of Student Conduct so that they do not disrupt school activities, are not obscene or otherwise inflammatory, and do not endanger anyone’s health or safety.

**What happens if a student forgets, loses, or damages their face covering?**

If a student forgets, loses or damages their face mask, the District/school will provide a disposable or cloth face mask. All schools will be provided with an ample supply of PPE and assigned a PPE captain to address these concerns.

**What happens if a student refuses to wear a face mask? Will student refusal to wear a mask constitute a disciplinary violation?**

Face masks will be required for all students, staff, parents and visitors. Every attempt, including re-educating and supporting the students, will be made to ensure that the student and the student’s parents understand the importance of wearing a face mask. If these attempts are unsuccessful, the school/District will work with families to identify more appropriate learning arrangements.

School administrators, in consultation with their School Level Response Team, should use their best judgment in determining if a student’s refusal to wear a mask is a situation requiring re-educating or discipline.

**What happens when a visitor or vendor refuses to wear a face mask?**

Face masks will be required to be worn by visitors and vendors. Individuals without face masks will not be allowed to remain on HPS property.

**Will face masks be required everywhere on a school campus?**

Face masks are required inside all HPS buildings. Masks are only required outdoors when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

**Will face masks be required on buses?**
Yes. Masks are required while on district transportation. Disposable face masks will be available for students who forget their face mask.

**Will SSO’s be enforcing the face mask requirement?**

The School Level COVID-19 Response Team (which includes an SSO) at each school will work with students and staff to encourage and ensure compliance.

**How will the face mask requirement apply to students with special needs?**

Appropriate accommodations will be made based on the individualized needs of the students. Staff working with students requiring accommodations will have additional PPE.

**Will staff refusal to wear a mask constitute a disciplinary violation?**

Yes. If no exemption applies and a staff member refuses to wear a mask, this may constitute a disciplinary violation.

**Will replacement masks be only for students?**

No. While the District encourages staff and students to bring their own mask, provided it complies with safety requirements and does not interfere with educational programming and/or violate any District rules, replacement masks will be available for staff and students.

The District will also be providing face shields for all staff that prefer to wear a face shield in addition to their mask.

The health and safety of our students and staff is our highest priority and is at the forefront of our planning. State guidance and policies related to school reopening safety plans apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for individual education programs under the IDEA and accommodation plans for eligible students under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Under the guidelines, masks, physical distancing, and hand washing protocols are required for all students.

Certain exceptions are allowed under the state regulations. As exceptions, any modification to the mitigating processes (mask wearing, physical distancing, and handwashing) will be carefully considered on a case by case basis using documentation and data. Exceptions for students include accommodations for anyone who has a medical reason (supported by a doctor’s note) making it unsafe to wear a face mask, students with special health care needs or disabilities whose learning (e.g., direct instruction) or other needs (e.g., assisting with toileting or ambulation) may require closer proximity and/or direct contact.

Special consideration will be given to students who may have difficulty acclimating to the standard protocols (students with significant communication and/or executive functioning deficits, students with impaired vision, hearing, and/or other physical disabilities). Developmentally appropriate instructional strategies will be implemented. Examples include but are not limited to the use of social stories, visual cues, video modeling, and other appropriate developmental strategies used to reinforce new concepts and protocols.

Staff supporting students with special healthcare needs (students not able to wear masks and who may need assistance with activities of daily living, such as toileting and eating), conducting certain assessments, language acquisition activities, and staff working with students who may exhibit significant behaviors that require de-escalation strategies and emergency safety protocols will be afforded increased protective equipment (including but not limited to face shields, disposable gowns and gloves).
Arrival/Dismissal:
- Preschool students must be signed in and out daily. STAFF will sign the parent’s name and time.
- Weekly fees will be collected by preschool staff at all School Readiness programs and placed in an envelope attached to sign in clipboard.

Student Cohorts/Class size:
- Preschool students will remain in their classroom cohorts to minimize interaction with other cohorts throughout the school day.
- Cohorts are a primary prevention strategy for preschoolers due to the unrealistic nature of asking preschoolers and preschool teachers to maintain social distancing. As a result, public school preschool classrooms should maintain a class size that is consistent with current OEC guidance. This requirement currently limits group size to no more than 20 children.
- Consider reserving an area in the room where therapists/specialists can work with children and limit interaction and exposure to other children or staff.

Interactions:
- Teachers and paraprofessionals should continue to interact with and support young children. This may involve, in limited capacity, physical contact as preschool students need physical assistance and emotional support.
- It is suggested to post pictures of all teaching staff with and without masks to provide comfort and familiarity.

Classroom layout:
- Space classroom tables and seating around the classroom to promote distancing. If able, limit 3 children per table.
- Space children, ideally 6 feet apart, at meal or snack times.
- At nap time ensure children’s cots are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Place children head to toe to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Prepare floor markings by bathroom and sinks to remind children of proper spacing when waiting.
- Prepare floor markings for lining up for dismissal to encourage proper spacing.
- Prepare marked spaces that create distance on carpet for circle time. Classroom carpets do NOT need to be removed.

Student Center Time:
- Center time will be a planned station rotation. Students will move to a new center after a set amount of time.
- Planning for centers should account for both numbers of children allowed in each center and distance between centers.
- If possible, limit the number of students per center to 2-3.
- Remove extra classroom seating at centers to accommodate desired students’ numbers and to promote distancing.
- Distance centers as much as possible. Consider combining two centers (writing/library) to provide for larger space.
- Center time will be provided twice a day and allow for cleaning during rest time.

Outdoor/Gross Motor Play:
- See Recess SOP.
- Staff will engage students in gross motor activities that limit physical contact with other children.

Meals:
- Sanitize all tables before breakfast, lunch and/or snack is served.
- If able, limit 3 children per table.
- All meals will be individually packed and served in the preschool classroom.
- No sharing of food among children and staff.
Handwashing:
- All preschool students and staff will wash hands upon entry into the classrooms, before meals, after using the restroom, sneezing or coughing.
- All preschool students must wash hands before and after using sensory materials such as play dough, sand and water. If staff cannot maintain a strict handwashing protocol for the use of these materials it is recommended that they not be used.
- If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60%+ alcohol.

Bathroom Protocol:
- Preschool classrooms that have a bathroom in their classroom will only use those bathrooms.
- For preschool classrooms that do not have a bathroom in their classroom you will follow your school designed classroom cohort policies for shared bathroom use.
- For young children who require diapering or have toileting accidents requiring a change of clothing, classroom staff should assess current protocols and consider any enhanced cleaning and sanitizing requirements that may be necessary.

Sanitizing Materials/Toys:
- “To Be Sanitized” bucket will be placed next to the classroom sink for any and all items that need to be disinfected and sanitized due to contamination (NAEYC).
- Materials are not to be shared with other classrooms unless they are thoroughly cleaned, sanitized and disinfected.
- Surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and manipulatives, are a part of a routine of cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection.
- Classroom center areas will be cleaned daily during rest time.
- Consider assigning packets of materials to individual students to reduce items that need to be regularly disinfected.
  (e.g., crayons, markers, glue sticks, scissors)
The contents of this plan may change based on future guidance from the State of Connecticut, local health agencies, and the CDC.

Questions? Email Support@hartfordschools.zendesk.com

www.hartfordschools.org