

Restart and Recovery Plan to Reopen Schools

Rutherford Board of Education

Rutherford Public Schools
County 03/District 4600

Phase Five
April 8, 2021 -
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Introduction

On June 26, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) published “The Road Back – Restart and Recovery Plan for Education” (NJDOE Guidance), a Guidance document to assist New Jersey school districts to develop, in collaboration with community stakeholders, a Restart and Recovery Plan (Plan) to reopen schools in September 2020 that best fits the school district's local needs. The NJDOE Guidance presents information for New Jersey public school districts related to four key subject areas: Conditions for Learning; Leadership and Planning; Policy and Funding; and Continuity of Learning.

The Rutherford Public Schools Restart and Recovery Plan (Plan) has been developed to be consistent with the requirements in the NJDOE Guidance with consideration to the school district's local needs in order to ensure school(s) in the district reopen safely and are prepared to accommodate students' unique needs during this unprecedented time.

To ensure consistency with respect to the health and safety of school communities across the State, the NJDOE Guidance speaks specifically to health and safety measures identified as “anticipated minimum standards.” These “anticipated minimum standards” are items the NJDOE Guidance recommends a school district incorporate into the Plan as definite components related to health, safety, and operations. Through this established set of Statewide standards, the NJDOE can ensure the State's educational health does not come at the expense of public health. The “anticipated minimum standards” in the NJDOE Guidance are listed and have been incorporated into the school district's locally developed Plan.

The NJDOE Guidance also provides “considerations” that may help school officials in strategizing ways to adhere to the “anticipated minimum standards”, but do not represent necessary components of the Plan. These “considerations” are not listed in the school district Plan, but school officials have reviewed and incorporated the “considerations” included in the NJDOE Guidance when developing the Plan.

The NJDOE Guidance uses the term “should” throughout the document when referencing “anticipated minimum standards ... that school districts should incorporate into their reopening plans as definitive components related to health, safety, and operations.” Therefore, those provisions in the NJDOE Guidance listed as “anticipated minimum standards” have been interpreted to be required components in the Plan.

The NJDOE Guidance uses the term “school districts” or “schools” or “districts” when referring to the completion of tasks. For example, “districts must develop a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfection.” This Plan assigns the responsibility for completing tasks to “school officials” which would be the Superintendent of Schools or a designee of the Superintendent of Schools.

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The NJDOE Guidance requires a Board Policy to address several elements outlined in the NJDOE Guidance. The Board of Education adopted Board Policy 1648 – Restart and Recovery Plan that includes the policies required in the NJDOE Guidance on September 14, 2020.

This Plan is aligned with the requirements outlined in the NJDOE Guidance. The Appendices section of this Plan include the school district's unique and locally developed protocols to ensure school(s) in the district reopen safely and are prepared to accommodate staff and students' unique needs during this unprecedented time. Also included in the Appendices section is a chart that includes all websites and outside guidance information that are listed in the NJDOE Guidance.

The requirements outlined in the NJDOE Guidance and incorporated into this Plan are controlled by Executive Order of the Governor of New Jersey and are subject to change. The district has followed the “phase approach” when crafting this plan. The district will continually evaluate and reevaluate the plan once it is put into action in order to provide the most consistent educational approach possible.

Phase One - September 1, 2020 - October 16, 2020

Phase Two - October 19, 2020 - November 25, 2020

Phase Three - November 30, 2020 - February 5, 2021

Phase Four - February 8, 2021 - April 7, 2021

Phase Five - April 8, 2021 - Final Day of School

The district's core goal is to bring all students to school as much as possible while preserving the safety of all students and staff in the school environment. After a thorough evaluation of all health and safety guidelines, input from various stakeholders, and an evaluation of the needs of our students and families, it has been determined that all district schools will continue with the instruction that resumed in September. Parents wishing to enroll their child into a fully remote model still have the option to do so.

Scheduling and social distancing remains of paramount concern to the Rutherford Public Schools. Therefore, in order to best maximize our use of space and teaching staff, students remaining in fully remote instruction for a specific phase will not be permitted to change to in-person instruction until the end of that specific phase.

It is the hope of the district that all stakeholders understand that this plan is fluid and may change as circumstances dictate. It is additionally hoped that all stakeholders understand the personal responsibility necessary to maintain the high quality instruction that the district is known for, even in these challenging times.

For more information, please see our website: www.RutherfordReopening.com

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THE RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS' RESTART AND RECOVERY PLAN

The Rutherford Public Schools' Restart and Recovery Plan addresses four key subject areas:

- A. Conditions for Learning;
- B. Leadership and Planning;
- C. Policy and Funding; and
- D. Continuity of Learning.

A. Conditions for Learning

Conditions for learning involve the social, emotional, and environmental factors that can impact educator capacity to teach and student capacity to learn, including standards for maintaining healthy and safe school conditions. As schools reopen, the impact of social isolation on both educators and students is a key area of concern.

Conditions for Learning include: Health and Safety – Standards for Establishing Safe and Healthy Conditions for Learning; and Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports

1. Health and Safety – Standards for Establishing Safe and Healthy Conditions for Learning; and Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports

The Health and Safety Section of the District's Plan identifies Ten Critical Areas of Operation which the District has addressed in the Plan: General Health and Safety Guidelines; Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms; Transportation; Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas; Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms; Contact Tracing; Facilities Cleaning Practices; Meals; Recess/Physical Education; and Field Trips, Extra-Curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside School Hours.

Throughout this Health and Safety Section, the provisions marked "anticipated minimum standards" as outlined in the NJDOE Guidance have been incorporated into the District's Plan and related protocols, as applicable.

The Health and Safety section of the NJDOE Guidance also provided "additional considerations" to assist school officials in considering ways to adhere to the anticipated minimum standards. These provisions are also consistent with the District's general obligation to ensure the health and safety of its students and staff pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:40-6 and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.1. District officials

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should abide by the advice of local health officials to determine the safest course of action based on local circumstances, which will change as the public health landscape evolves. The health and safety of students and staff is the number one priority and has guided all decisions of the District's Plan.

Ten Critical Areas of Operation

a. Critical Area of Operation #1 - General Health and Safety Guidelines – Anticipated Minimum Standards Incorporated into the Plan

- (1) In all stages and phases of pandemic response and recovery, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following actions:
 - (a) School officials will establish and maintain communication with local and State authorities to determine current mitigation levels in the community.
 - (b) School officials will ensure staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness are protected and supported, such as providing options for remote learning.
 - (c) The CDC's Guidance for Schools and Childcare Programs, if applicable, will be followed.
 - (d) The District promotes behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19 such as encouraging staff and students to stay home when appropriate; encouraging the practice of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette; requiring the use of face coverings; and signs and messages in and around school buildings.
 - (e) Reasonable accommodations will be provided for individuals that the CDC identifies as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including older adults (aged 65 years and older) and individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions, which may include:
 - (i) Chronic lung disease or asthma (moderate to severe);

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- (ii) Serious heart conditions;
- (iii) Immunocompromised;
- (iv) Severe obesity (body mass index, or BMI, of 40 or higher);
- (v) Diabetes;
- (vi) Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis;
- (vii) Liver disease;
- (viii) Medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs);
- (ix) Students with complex disabilities with IEPs; or
- (x) Students who require accommodations under a Plan in accordance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan).

[See Appendix A – Critical Area of Operation #1 – General Health and Safety Guidelines]

b. Critical Area of Operation #2 – Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms – Anticipated Minimum Standards Incorporated into the Plan

- (1) Schools in the district will allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable. This will be achieved by ensuring students are seated at least six feet apart. If a school in the district is not able to maintain this physical distance, additional modifications should be considered including using physical barriers between desks, turning desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other), and/or having students sit on only one side of the table, spaced apart.
- (2) When social distancing is difficult or impossible, face coverings will be required for students, and face coverings are always required for visitors and staff unless it will inhibit the individual's health.

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- (a) Enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities.
- (3) In a classroom setting where social distancing can take place (e.g., desks are 6 feet apart) or physical barriers are in place, face coverings can be removed while students are seated at desks, but should be worn when moving about the classroom.
- (4) All instructional and non-instructional rooms in schools and district facilities must comply with social distancing standards to the maximum extent practicable.
- (5) Use of shared objects should be limited when possible or cleaned between use.
- (6) All indoor facilities will have adequate ventilation, including operational heating and ventilation systems where appropriate. Recirculated air must have a fresh air component, windows will be opened, if practical, if air conditioning is not provided, and filter(s) for A/C units must be maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations.
- (7) School districts will prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol). Such stations should be:
 - (a) In each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
 - (b) At entrances and exits of buildings.
 - (c) Near lunchrooms and toilets.
 - (d) Children ages five and younger should be supervised when using hand sanitizer.
 - (e) For classrooms that have existing handwashing stations, stations should be prepared with soap, water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol).
- (8) School officials should develop a school-wide plan where students are required to wash hands for at least twenty seconds at regular

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intervals during the school day and always before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing, and/or sneezing.

- (a) If washing with soap and water is not possible, washing with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) should be used.

[See Appendix B – Critical Area of Operation #2 – Classroom, Test, and Therapy Rooms]

c. Critical Area of Operation #3 – Transportation – Anticipated Minimum Standards Incorporated into the Plan

- (1) If the school district is providing transportation services on a school bus and is unable to maintain social distancing, a face covering must be worn by all students who are able to do so upon entering the bus.
- (2) Accommodations for students who are unable to wear a face covering should be addressed according to that student's particular need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- (3) Every school bus, either district-owned or contracted, should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each bus route.

[See Appendix C – Critical Area of Operation #3 – Transportation]

d. Critical Area of Operation #4 – Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas – Anticipated Minimum Standards Incorporated into the Plan

- (1) The District's Plan should establish the process and location for student and staff health screenings.
- (2) If physical distancing (six feet apart) cannot be maintained for individuals in line waiting to enter or exit a building, face coverings shall be worn while in the line.
- (3) Each school in the district will provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to help ensure that

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staff and students remain at least six feet apart in lines and at other times (e.g. guides for creating "one-way routes" in hallways).

[See Appendix D – Critical Area of Operation #4 – Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas]

e. Critical Area of Operation #5 – Screening, Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms – Anticipated Minimum Standards Incorporated into the Plan

- (1) The school district will adopt Board Policy 1648 regarding the screening procedures for students and employees upon arrival at school or work location for symptoms and history of exposure. These screening procedures must include the following:
 - (a) Staff must visually check students for symptoms upon arrival (which may include temperature checks) and/or confirm with families that students are free of COVID-19 symptoms.
 - (b) Health checks must be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.
 - (c) Results must be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed.
 - (d) Any screening policy/protocol must take into account students with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students.
- (2) The Board must adopt procedures for symptomatic staff and students, which shall include the following:
 - (a) Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. School officials will follow current Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting.
 - (b) If the school district becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for

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COVID-19, officials must immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.

- (c) The procedures the district will use when someone tests positive for COVID-19 will include written procedures detailing the district's COVID-19 related response for symptomatic students and staff. The procedures must be consistent with the district's contact tracing procedures (see "Critical Area of Operation #6 – Contact Tracing") to the maximum extent practicable. The procedure includes:
 - (i) Establishment of an isolation space. Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. Students should remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
 - (ii) Following current Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting.
 - (iii) An adequate amount of PPE shall be available, accessible, and provided for use.
 - (iv) Methods to assist in contact tracing including records of groups/cohorts, assigned staff, and daily attendance.
 - (v) Continuous monitoring of symptoms.
 - (vi) Re-admittance policies consistent with Department of Health guidance and information for schools and Department of Health/Communicable Disease Service's Quick Reference Guidance on Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Home Isolation for Persons Diagnosed with COVID-19.
 - (vii) Written protocols to address a positive case.

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- (3) School officials will encourage parents to be on alert for signs of the illness in their children and to keep their child home when they are sick.
- (4) School staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under two years of age.
- (5) Students are required to wear a face covering when social distancing cannot be maintained, unless doing so would inhibit the student's health. It is also necessary to acknowledge that enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities.
 - (a) Accommodation for students who are unable to wear a face covering should be addressed according to that student's need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- (6) Exceptions to requirements for face coverings shall be as follows:
 - (a) Doing so would inhibit the individual's health.
 - (b) The individual is in extreme heat outdoors.
 - (c) The individual is in water.
 - (d) A student's documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an IEP, precludes the use of face covering.
 - (e) The student is under the age of two and could risk suffocation.
- (7) If a visitor refuses to wear a face covering for non-medical reasons and if such covering cannot be provided to the individual at the point of entry, the visitor's entry to the school/district facility may be denied.

[See Appendix E – Critical Area of Operation #5 – Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms]

f. Critical Area of Operation #6 – Contact Tracing

- (1) The NJDOE Guidance does not include any “anticipated minimum standards” for contact tracing. However, all school and district administrators, school safety specialists, counselors, and any other staff deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee should be provided information regarding the role of contact tracing conducted by State, county, and local officials.
- (2) School officials should engage the expertise of their school nurses on the importance of contact tracing.
- (3) The NJDOE will credit certified School Safety Specialists with three hours of training upon completion of Johns Hopkins University's COVID-19 Contact Tracing course.

[See Appendix F – Critical Area of Operation #6 – Contact Tracing]

g. Critical Area of Operation #7 – Facilities Cleaning Practices –Anticipated Minimum Standards Incorporated into the Plan

- (1) School officials must continue to adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise.
- (2) The District’s Plan and Policy will establish cleaning/disinfecting schedules, targeted areas to be cleaned, and methods and materials to be used including:
 - (a) A schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfection.
 - (b) Routinely cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. This may include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily (e.g. door knobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops).
 - (c) Use of all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available on the EPA's website.

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- (d) Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g. concentration, application method, and contact time, etc.). Examples of frequently touched areas in schools are:
 - (i) Classroom desks and chairs;
 - (ii) Lunchroom tables and chairs;
 - (iii) Door handles and push plates;
 - (iv) Handrails;
 - (v) Bathrooms;
 - (vi) Light switches;
 - (vii) Handles on equipment (e.g. athletic equipment);
 - (viii) Buttons on vending machines and elevators;
 - (ix) Shared telephones;
 - (x) Shared desktops;
 - (xi) Shared computer keyboards and mice;
 - (xii) Drinking fountains; and
 - (xiii) School bus seats and windows.
- (e) Sanitize bathrooms daily, or between use as much as possible, using protocols outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

[See Appendix G – Critical Area of Operation #7 – Facilities Cleaning Practices]

h. Critical Area of Operation #8 – Meals – Anticipated Minimum Standards Incorporated into the Plan

- (1) If cafeterias or group dining areas are used in the school district, the school district will incorporate the following into the District's Plan, if applicable:
 - (a) Stagger times to allow for social distancing and clean and disinfect between groups.
 - (b) Discontinue family style, self-service, and buffet.
 - (c) Clean and sanitize tables/surfaces between each meal service, pursuant to the protocols outlined by the EPA.
 - (d) Space students at least six feet apart.
 - (e) Require individuals to wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.

[See Appendix H – Critical Area of Operation #8 – Meals]

i. Critical Area of Operation #9 – Recess/Physical Education – Anticipated Minimum Standards Incorporated into the Plan

- (1) The District's Plan regarding recess and physical education should include protocols to address the following:
 - (a) Stagger recess, if necessary.
 - (b) If two or more groups are participating in recess at the same time, there will be at least six feet of open space between the two groups.
 - (c) The use of cones, flags, tape, or other signs to create boundaries between groups.
 - (d) A requirement that all individuals always wash/sanitize hands immediately after outdoor playtime.

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- (e) Stagger the use of playground equipment and establish a frequent disinfecting protocol for all playground equipment used by students.
- (f) Complete an inventory of outdoor spaces (athletic fields, track, green spaces, open space, and local parks) and designate zones, use stations, mark off areas, floor markers, floor tape, poly spots, etc., to ensure separation among students (six feet apart for social distancing).
- (g) Locker rooms may be closed to mitigate risk and prohibit students and staff from confined spaces with limited ventilation and/or areas with large amounts of high contact surfaces.
 - (i) If it is not feasible to close locker rooms the district will stagger the use and clean and disinfect between use.
 - (ii) Students may be encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and safe footwear to school that allows for safe movement and is appropriate for the weather in order to participate in physical education without the use of a locker room.
- (2) The school district will mitigate risk, limit and/or eliminate direct contact with equipment (lessons with no equipment), and will not allow sharing of equipment. If equipment must be shared, the equipment will be cleaned and disinfected between each use.
- (3) The school district will designate specific areas for each class during recess to avoid cohorts mixing.

[See Appendix I – Critical Area of Operation #9 – Recess/Physical Education]

j. Critical Area of Operation #10 – Field Trips, Extra-Curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours – Anticipated Minimum Standards Incorporated into the Plan

- (1) The District's Plan should adhere to all applicable social distancing requirements and hygiene protocols during any extra-curricular activities.

- (2) The Board of Education requires any external community organizations that use school/district facilities to follow district guidance on health and safety protocols.

[See Appendix J – Critical Area of Operation #10 – Field Trips, Extra-Curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours]

2. Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports

In addition to taking the steps listed in the Health and Safety Guidelines section to protect students’ and educators’ physical health, leaders must also consider the impact of social isolation on both educators and students. School officials are not mandated to develop protocols for these elements as these elements are not “anticipated minimum standards” in the NJDOE Guidance. However, the NJDOE recommends school officials consider the following elements while developing the District’s Plan.

While only a small introduction to these elements is included in this Plan, a more detailed explanation and further considerations in the NJDOE Guidance are under the Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports section to reference as the Plan is being developed. School officials may use the supports listed in the NJDOE Guidance.

[See Appendix K – Supplemental Materials and Explanations for Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports]

a. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Culture and Climate

SEL will be critical in re-engaging students, supporting adults, rebuilding relationships, and creating a foundation for academic learning.

b. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

MTSS is a systematic approach to prevention, intervention, and enrichment in grades Pre-K through twelve for academics and behavior that offers educators and families a mechanism to identify individual students who need extra support.

c. Wraparound Services

Wraparound services differ from traditional school-based services in their comprehensive approach to addressing the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students with interventions both inside and outside of the school environment.

d. Food Service and Distribution

School meals are critical to student health and well-being, especially for low-income students. The NJDOE considers it a moral imperative to ensure the seamless and continuous feeding of students during all phases of school reopening.

e. Quality Child Care

Child care will be needed as schools reopen, particularly in instances where modified school schedules may increase the likelihood that families who otherwise would not utilize child care will now require it.

See Appendix K – Supplemental Materials and Explanations for Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports]

B. Leadership and Planning

The Leadership and Planning Section of the District's Plan references guidance, requirements, and considerations for the school district regarding district and school-wide logistical and operational issues with which administrators will contend in planning to reopen schools.

The provisions marked "anticipated minimum standards" as outlined in the Guidance have been incorporated into the District's Plan and corresponding protocols, as applicable.

The Leadership and Planning section of the Guidance also provided "additional considerations" that assisted school officials in considering ways to adhere to the "anticipated minimum standards".

1. Establishing a Restart Committee

- a. A Restart Committee should be established as collaboration is critical to the development of the District's Plan.

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- b. The Restart Committee should include school district and school-level administrators, members of the local Board of Education or Charter School Board of Trustees, the Presidents of the local education associations or their designees of the local education associations, and a diverse set of content experts, educators, parents, and students.
- c. The Restart Committee should work closely with the School Pandemic Response Teams, Local Health Department, and others in municipal and county government as necessary to develop the district Plan. Restart Committees and Pandemic Response Teams should help address policies and procedures for the District's Plan.
- d. The Restart Committee should reflect the diversity of the school community, including those representing students with disabilities, whose families speak languages other than English at home, and who reflect diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic demographics.
- e. The Restart Committee may consider developing subcommittees to focus on age or grade-level specific needs, school specific needs, or to address issues of importance such as medically fragile students or staff.

[See Appendix L – Restart Committee]

2. Pandemic Response Teams

- a. School-based Pandemic Response Teams should be established in each school in the district to centralize, expedite, and implement COVID-19 related decision-making.
- b. Each school team will have a liaison that reports to district-level administrators to ensure coordinated actions across the district.
- c. Members of the school teams should include a cross section of administrators, teachers, staff, and parents.
- d. Pandemic Response Teams should represent a cross-section of the school and district, including its gender and racial diversity, as decision-making and communication will be more effective if decision-makers reflect the make-up of the community.
- e. If a school has an existing Crisis Response Team, that Team may serve as the Pandemic Response Team.

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- f. Pandemic Response Team should be comprised of, at a minimum, the following members, if applicable:
 - (1) School Principal or Lead Person;
 - (2) Teachers;
 - (3) Child Study Team member;
 - (4) School Counselor or mental health expert;
 - (5) Subject Area Chairperson/Director;
 - (6) School Nurse;
 - (7) Teachers representing each grade band served by the school district and school;
 - (8) School Principal or Lead Person;
- g. The Pandemic Response Team is responsible for:
 - (1) Overseeing each school's implementation of the Plan, particularly health and safety measures, and providing safety and crisis leadership.
 - (2) Adjusting or amending school health and safety protocols as needed.
 - (3) Providing staff with needed support and training.
 - (4) Reviewing school level data regarding health and safety measures and the presence of COVID-19 and reporting that data to the district as required.
 - (5) Developing and implementing procedures to foster and maintain safe and supportive school climates as necessitated by the challenges posed by COVID-19.
 - (6) Providing necessary communications to the school community and to the school district.

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(7) Creating pathways for community, family, and student voices to continuously inform the Team's decision-making.

h. The Pandemic Response Team should meet regularly and provide the community with timely updates and any changes to protocols.

[See Appendix M – Pandemic Response Team]

3. Scheduling

a. The District's Plan must account for resuming in-person instruction. Scheduling decisions should be informed by careful evaluation of the health and safety standards and the most up-to-date guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), as well the input of stakeholders about the needs of all students and the realities unique to this district.

b. Remote learning will continue to be guided by P.L. 2020, c.27 and the school district's updated Emergency Closure School Preparedness Plan if schools are required to deliver instruction through a fully remote environment during limited periods throughout the school year due to a local or Statewide public health emergency.

(1) In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3, a school day shall consist of not less than four hours, except that one continuous session of two and one-half hours may be considered a full day in Kindergarten.

(2) School district policies for attendance and instructional contact time will need to accommodate opportunities for both synchronous and asynchronous instruction, while ensuring the requirements for a 180-day school year are met.

c. The school district will meet the needs of their special populations in alignment with the New Jersey Specific Guidance for Schools and Districts regarding student accommodations.

(1) For special education and ELL students, the Board of Education will provide educators with professional development to best utilize the accessibility features and accommodations tools made available through technology- based formats. The school district will continue to ensure students receive individualized supports that meet the requirements of the IEP and 504 Plans.

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- (2) For medically fragile staff, remote instruction is ideal for staff who are at greater risk for the impacts of COVID-19. Accommodations may need to be made for staff with health issues which are exacerbated by viewing content on screens for an extended period.
- d. The school district should accommodate educators teaching in-person, hybrid, and fully remote, in a way that allows all students to meet their required instructional hours for the day, which may include remote students completing independent work while students in the classroom receive instruction. School officials may:
 - (1) Provide teachers common planning time.
 - (2) Ensure school district policies are reviewed and confirmed to support in-person and remote instruction.
 - (a) remote learning may create privacy challenges which school districts and schools have not yet faced.
 - (b) The NJDOE strongly recommends engaging communities to better understand the landscape of challenges and opportunities when crafting policies.
 - (3) Secure a steady supply of resources necessary to ensure the safety of students and staff.
 - (4) Develop protocols for social distancing on buses and ensure that students understand social distancing best practices while awaiting pickup at bus stops.
 - (5) Scheduling will support a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction which allows for contact time between educators and their students, as well as time for students to engage with their peers. The NJDOE encourages the school district to evaluate instructional activities based on what is developmentally appropriate for each grade band.
- e. School officials will consider implementation strategies provided in the Scheduling Section of the NJDOE Guidance in developing the District's Plan.

[See Appendix N – Scheduling of Students]

4. Staffing

- a. The school district should consider access and equity for all staff to ensure continuity of student learning. The District's Plan and decision-making throughout the school year should consider unique needs of each staff member, such as access to technology, social and emotional health, and child care concerns.
- b. When making staffing scheduling and assignments, the school district must comply with all applicable employment laws including, but not limited to, the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and all applicable State laws. Additionally, prior to finalizing any COVID-19 related changes for the 2020-2021 school year, school districts should also consult with the local bargaining units and legal counsel.
- c. The District's Plan should identify roles and responsibilities of school administrators, teachers, instructional assistants, educational services professionals, and student teachers that will ensure continuity of learning and leverage existing resources and personnel to maximize student success.
- d. As schedules are adjusted, educators must maintain quality instruction for students and abide by the minimum requirements set forth in NJDOE regulations.
- e. In response to COVID-19, the NJDOE has provided flexibilities for implementation of certain regulatory requirements during the public health emergency. While the relevant Executive Orders are in effect, these flexibilities will apply:
 - (1) Mentoring Guidance – Outlines requirements and flexibilities for nontenured teachers with an induction to the teaching profession and to the school district community through differentiated supports based on the teachers' individual needs.
 - (2) Educator Evaluation Guidance – Provides a description of flexibilities and requirements for educator evaluation necessitated by the state mandated school closures caused by COVID-19. This Guidance applies to all Teachers, Principals, Assistant Principals

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(APs), Vice Principals (VPs), and Other Certificated Staff for School Year (SY) 2019-2020, and is differentiated for educators with a provisional certification, in the process of earning tenure, and on a corrective action plan (CAP).

(3) Certification

- (a) Performance Assessment (edTPA) Guidance Provides a description of the NJDOE's waiver of the teacher certification performance assessment (edTPA) requirement as necessitated by the COVID-19 state of emergency and related limitations.
- (b) Additional COVID-19 Certification Guidance – Additional flexibilities are expected to be extended to candidates for certification in response to the logical constraints posed by the COVID-19 state of emergency and related limitations.

[See Appendix O – Staffing]

5. In-Person and Hybrid Learning Environments: Roles and Responsibilities

- a. In a fully in-person or hybrid learning environment districts should leverage staff to monitor student movement, hallway traffic, and maintain safety according to guidelines. Instructional and non-instructional staff schedules can include designated time to support school building logistics required to maintain health and safety requirements.
- b. Instructional staff should:
 - (1) Reinforce social distancing protocol with students and co-teacher or support staff.
 - (2) Limit group interactions to maintain safety.
 - (3) Support school building safety logistics (entering, exiting, restrooms, etc.).
 - (4) Become familiar with district online protocols and platforms.

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- (5) Plan standards-based lessons to meet the needs of students at various levels, ensuring versatility of lessons to apply to both fully in-person and hybrid learning environments.
- (6) Develop predictable routines and structures for students while maintaining student engagement through varied instructional strategies/modalities.
- (7) Provide regular feedback to students and families on expectations and progress.
- (8) Set clear expectations for remote and in-person students.
- (9) Assess student progress early and often and adjust instruction and/or methodology accordingly.
- (10) Develop opportunities for real-time interactions with students (office hours, remote meetings, etc.).
- (11) Instruct and maintain good practice in digital citizenship for all students and staff.
- (12) Instructional staff with additional capacity or limited time spent with students may assist with school building and safety logistics.
- (13) Teacher leaders or instructional coaches should support teachers in making necessary curricular adjustments and continuously improving the quality of instruction in remote and hybrid environments.
- (14) Providing materials, manipulatives, and items for at-home activities at no cost to families (particularly in pre-school).

c. Mentor teachers should:

- (1) Plan for "in-person" contact with the mentee using agreed upon communication methods and schedules that provide confidentiality and sufficient support.
 - (2) Identify the most immediate issues to address with the mentee considering technology needs and how to provide effective remote instruction.
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- (3) Establish observation protocols for remote environments that protect confidentiality, respect student privacy, and provide the mentee with relevant support.
 - (4) Integrate self-care, for mentor and mentee, into mentoring scheduling and practices.
 - (5) Continue to maintain logs of mentoring contact.
 - (6) Mentor teachers should consider all health and safety measures when doing in-person observations.
 - (7) Plan for "in-person" contact with the mentee using agreed upon communication methods and schedules that provide confidentiality and sufficient support.
 - (8) Consider alternative methods for classroom observations and avoiding in-person contact where possible.
- d. Administrators - In addition to administrators' non-instructional responsibilities, to ensure quality of continued learning in-person or remotely, administrators should:
- (1) Consider roles for staff with health concerns, leveraging them to enhance the remote learning environment and inform in-person instruction.
 - (2) Provide time for staff collaboration and planning (See Scheduling section). Prioritize practical science and practical CTE areas for on-site opportunities.
 - (3) Prioritize vulnerable student groups for face-to-face instruction.
 - (4) Identify teachers and teacher leaders that may provide support to staff to continuously improve instruction in a remote environment.
 - (5) Work with staff and faculty to ensure that teaching and learning, and all student services are effectively and efficiently developed, planned, and delivered.

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- (6) Hone collaboration, cooperation, and relationship building skills using alternative methods to remain connected to remote instruction.
- (7) Define and provide examples of high-quality instruction given context and resources available.
- (8) Assess teacher, student, and parent needs regularly.
- (9) Ensure students and parents receive necessary supports to ensure access to instruction.
- (10) Communicate expectations for delivering high-quality instruction, assessing, and monitoring student progress in the remote environment, in accordance with NJDOE's Professional Standards for Teachers and NJ Professional Standards for Leaders (N.J.A.C. 6A:9).
- (11) Plan a process to onboard students and reestablish the classroom environment through emphasizing relationships with students and parents and resetting routines.
- (12) Collaborate on curriculum planning and assessing student academic and social emotional well-being when students return to school.
- (13) Create feedback loops with parents and families about students' academic and social emotional health and well-being, through use of remote learning conferences and/or surveys to parents about their child's experience and learning while out of school.
- (14) Share a comprehensive account of academic interventions and social emotional and mental health support services available through the district.
- (15) Create and communicate realistic student schedules to increase student engagement and accountability for both hybrid and remote learning models.
- (16) Collaborate in determining expectations for differentiated instruction and rigor in hybrid and remote learning models.

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- (17) Support families in connecting with teachers and other services they need to be successful in navigating the remote environment.
 - (18) Ensure the Pre-school Director/Contact Person is involved in the planning in order that development activities and supports are in place for Pre-school and supports transition to Kindergarten.
 - e. Educational services staff members should:
 - (1) Lead small group instruction in a virtual environment.
 - (2) Facilitate the virtual component of synchronous online interactions.
 - (3) Manage an online platform for small groups of in-person students while teacher is remote.
 - (4) Assist with the development and implementation of adjusted schedules.
 - (5) Plan for the completion of course requests and scheduling (secondary school).
 - (6) Assist teachers with providing updates to students and families.
 - (7) Support embedding of SEL into lessons.
 - (8) Lead small group instruction to ensure social distancing.
 - (9) Consider student grouping to maintain single classroom cohorts.
 - (10) Consider alternative methods for one-on-one interactions avoiding in-person contact where possible.
 - f. Support staff/paraprofessionals may:
 - (1) Lead small group instruction to ensure social distancing.
 - (2) Consider student grouping to maintain single classroom cohorts.
 - (3) Consider alternative methods for one-on-one interactions avoiding in-person contact where possible.
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- (4) Pre-record read-alouds and videos around SEL activities and routines (Grades Pre-K through two). Caption pre-recorded instructional videos from general education teachers.
- (5) Provide real-time support during remote sessions.
- (6) Research websites, videos, and links for accessible activities that teachers can incorporate into lessons.
- (7) Support families and students in accessing and participating in remote learning. Paraprofessionals can be added to online classes as co-teacher.
- (8) Lead small group instruction in a remote environment.
- (9) Facilitate the virtual component of synchronous online interactions.
- (10) Family Workers will need to provide support to parents via virtual platforms (Pre-school).

g. Substitutes

- (1) Develop contingency staffing plans in case of sudden long-term absences and/or vacancies.
- (2) Develop roles and responsibilities for substitute teachers in both remote and hybrid settings.
- (3) Designate substitutes to a single school building or grade level to avoid too much movement between schools.
- (4) Identify areas where additional staff may be necessary: school nurses, counselors, school psychologist.

[See Appendix O – Staffing]

6. Educator Roles Related to School Technology Needs

- a. To ensure all staff supporting remote learning are prepared to provide or support instruction on day one, the school officials should:

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- (1) Designate staff members to provide ongoing support with technology to students, teachers, and families. Consider developing a schedule and assigning a technology point person to teachers by grade level or content area.
 - (2) Survey teachers and families to determine technology needs/access (consider those that have access, but may be sharing personal devices with others).
 - (3) To the extent possible, provide district one-to-one instructional devices and connectivity.
 - (4) Prior to the start of the school year, provide district email addresses and access to online platforms (usernames/passwords/organizational credentials).
- b. To ensure student teachers are prepared to start supporting instruction on day one, districts should:
- (1) Train student teachers to use technology platforms.
 - (2) Communicate district expectations/guidelines regarding professional online etiquette/interactions with students.
 - (3) Survey assistant teachers to determine technology needs/access (Pre-school).
 - (4) Remote instruction is ideal for staff who are at greater risk for the impacts of COVID-19. Accommodations may need to be made for staff with health issues which are exacerbated by viewing content on screens for an extended period.
- c. Student teachers should:
- (1) Obtain a substitute credential to gain the ability to support students without supervision as needed.
 - (2) Lead small group instruction (in-person to help with social distancing).
 - (3) Co-teach with cooperating teacher and maintain social distancing.
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- (4) Manage online classroom for asynchronous hybrid sessions while the cooperating teacher teaches in-person.
 - (5) Implement modifications or accommodations for students with special needs.
 - (6) Facilitate one-to-one student support.
 - (7) Lead small group instruction remotely while the classroom teacher teaches in-person.
 - (8) Provide technical assistance and guidance to students and parents.
 - (9) Develop online material or assignments.
 - (10) Pre-record direct-instruction videos.
 - (11) Facilitate student-centered group learning connecting remote and in-person students.
- d. Additional Staff Concerns - Districts should also be prepared to navigate additional staffing concerns and topics and may also consider:
- (1) Best practice and guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics is to limit screen time for students in grades Pre-K through two. Developmentally appropriate practices show that young learners are most successful with hands-on learning, rather than worksheets or computer-based activities. In this grade band, interactive learning activities are the most effective.
 - (2) Develop and communicate a plan of accountability that identifies how teachers will monitor and assess student performance. This includes how they grade students (Grades Pre-K through twelve).
 - (3) Districts may also consider developing a plan to leverage community organizations, community partners, faith-based communities, or volunteers to support families outside of the school building. Utilizing community volunteer support that will interact directly with students may require criminal history background checks.
 - (4) Roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders or instructional coaches in supporting teachers in making necessary curricular

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adjustments and continuously improving quality of instruction through remote and hybrid structures.

- (5) Increase the need for all staff to address student trauma, social emotional learning, and digital citizenship.

[See Appendix O – Staffing]

7. Athletics

Under Executive Order 149, high school sports under the jurisdiction of the NJSIAA may resume only in accordance with reopening protocols issued by NJSIAA and cannot resume earlier than June 30, 2020.

[See Appendix P – Athletics]

C. Policy and Funding

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic presents many fiscal challenges to the school district for delivery of instruction and related services to students in addition to other basic operational needs. Readyng facilities, purchasing supplies, transporting, and feeding students may look drastically different in the 2020-2021 school year. The Policy and Funding section of the District's Plan focuses on existing and pending Federal and State legislation, regulations, and guidance.

1. School Funding

- a. The Board shall explore options to obtain the maximum amount of available revenue to minimize expenditures and for fiscal planning in the face of considerable uncertainty. The options the Board shall explore include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund;
- (2) Federal Emergency Management Agency – Public Assistance; and
- (3) State School Aid.

- b. School District Budgets

Districts have finalized their FY20 budget year and have already finalized their FY21 budgets. Because of the timing of the budget process, many of the activities listed below have not been, and cannot be, factored into

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either budget year without additional revenue outside the amount they anticipated for FY21 in February, and budget transfers that current statute does not authorize at the start of the school year.

c. School Funding

School officials will review the Policy and Funding section of the NJDOE Guidance that includes information on Federal and State funding sources; purchasing practices; use of reserve accounts, transfers, and cash flow; and costs and contracting, including E-Rate funding and cooperative purchasing contracting.

(1) Purchasing

The school district may likely need to purchase items not needed in the past and may experience increased demand for previously purchased goods and services to implement the Plan. The school district shall continue to comply with the provisions of the “Public School Contracts Law”, N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq.

(2) Use of Reserve Accounts, Transfers, and Cashflow

The school district shall apply for the approval from the Commissioner of Education prior to performing certain budget actions, such as withdrawing from the emergency reserve or making transfers that cumulatively exceed ten percent of the amount originally budgeted.

(3) Costs and Contracting

The school district shall follow all New Jersey State laws and regulations applicable to local school districts for purchasing when procuring devices and connectivity or any technology related item.

D. Continuity of Learning

Ensuring the continuity of learning is critically important during this time of great stress for families, educators, and students. The move to a fully remote learning environment happened quickly and created significant challenges for staff and students, particularly students already considered at-risk prior to the pandemic. School officials should work closely with their stakeholders to ensure decisions are made collaboratively and transparently and prioritize safely returning students who are in need of in-person

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instruction. This may include, but is not limited to, students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL), homeless youth, and low-income students.

Curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional learning, and career and technical education (CTE) are all constructs that can be adjusted to serve as levers for equity.

Except where otherwise indicated, the provisions and elements of this section are “additional considerations” that may help districts in considering ways to adhere to the “anticipated minimum standards”.

While only a small introduction to these elements is included in this Plan, school officials can find a more detailed explanation and considerations in the NJDOE Guidance under the Continuity of Learning section to reference while developing their Plan for the reopening of schools.

1. Ensuring the Delivery of Special Education and Related Services to Students with Disabilities
 - a. Consistent with guidance from the United States Department of Education, school districts must continue to meet their obligations under the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the New Jersey State special education regulations for students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible.
 - b. In accordance with the Extended School Year (ESY) Guidance issued by the NJDOE, student IEPs that currently included ESY services should be implemented to the greatest extent possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - c. The NJDOE recommends that schools districts consider the following when addressing the education of students with disabilities for the 2020-2021 school year:
 - (1) Procedures to address the return to school of medically fragile students and students with physical or health impairments who may require accommodations and modifications as part of a 504 Plan.
 - (2) IEP teams should review student data/student progress to determine whether critical skills were lost during the period in which remote instruction was being provided to students and determine the need for additional services to address learning loss.

- (3) IEP teams should consider the impact of missed services on student progress towards meeting IEP goals and objectives, and determine if additional or compensatory services are needed to address regression and recoupment of skills within a reasonable length of time.
- (4) IEP teams should develop procedures to complete overdue and/or incomplete evaluations to determine eligibility for special education services.
- (5) The use of school guidance department staff and Child Study Team personnel to identify students whose postsecondary plans may have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and provide support, resources, and assistance, which may include facilitating connection to community organizations, scholarship programs, county, State, and Federal opportunities to access support.
- (6) Clear communication to the parents of the procedures for student referrals and evaluations to determine the eligibility for special education and related services or a 504 Plan as required by Federal and State law.

2. Technology and Connectivity

- a. School districts should strive to ensure that every student has access to a device and internet connectivity. School districts should prioritize the provisions of technology, or alternatively, in-person instruction, to students that are otherwise without access. Additionally, these school districts should include in their reopening plan the steps taken to address the technology deficit and how it will be resolved as soon as possible.
- b. Districts should:
 - (1) Conduct a needs assessment.
 - (2) Consider the attendant needs associated with deployment of needed technology, including student and parent training and acceptable use policy implementation.

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- (3) Prioritize the purchase and roll-out of devices and/or connectivity that may involve learning based on the results of the needs assessment.
- (4) For students with special needs, accommodations according to their instructional program must be addressed as appropriate for each student.
 - (a) If there is a device or connectivity shortage, the school district should address technology challenges in their Plan. This should include the steps the district has already taken to address the technology divide and how the school district plans to provide devices and/or connectivity to students that need them.

3. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- a. In planning curriculum, instruction, and assessment for reopening, school officials must focus on building staff capacity to deliver highly effective instruction in hybrid environments as well as preparing them to address any learning gaps that might prevent students from meeting grade-level New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).
- b. School officials should develop a Plan that is innovative, cultivates a clear sense of shared purpose and goals, encourages collaboration among educators, and fosters an effective partnership approach with students' family members and caregivers.
- c. Remote and Hybrid Learning Environment
 - (1) Curriculum
 - (a) Educators will be tasked not only with delivering curriculum, but also structuring the curriculum to account for the loss of learning that may have resulted from the extended school building closures.
 - (b) To accelerate students' progress during the upcoming school year, administrators and educators will be tasked with identifying what unfinished learning needs to be addressed.
 - (c) Accelerated learning focuses on providing students with grade-level materials, tasks, and assignments along with the appropriate supports necessary to fill the most critical gaps in

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learning. Accelerated learning seeks to help educators utilize classroom time as efficiently as possible.

(2) Instruction

- (a) As school districts prepare for the upcoming school year, instructional plans that are flexible, promote innovation, and take advantage of the strengths of school leaders, teachers, students, and family and community members will be best suited to adapt to changing learning environments as may be necessary.
- (b) In crafting an instructional plan, the school district should consider the following:
 - (i) Develop a shared understanding among staff, students, and families across grade-levels and schools regarding learning expectations, and anticipated environments (hybrid approaches to instruction, virtual platforms, learning management systems, etc.) and expectations for interactions to ensure all students have access to high-quality instruction.
 - (ii) Design for student engagement and foster student ownership of learning.
 - (iii) Develop students' meta-cognition.
 - (iv) Collaborate with school leaders and educators to determine what types of supports are needed for effective pedagogical approaches during remote or hybrid instruction.
 - (v) Assess the district's data on how ELLs experienced instruction during remote or hybrid learning; particularly for newcomer students and students with lower English language proficiency levels.
 - (vi) Assess ELLs' levels of engagement and access in an in-person, remote, or hybrid learning environment.

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(3) Assessment

- (a) For the purposes of this Plan, the different assessment types are as follows: pre-assessment; formative; interim; and summative.
- (b) Educators should focus on locally developed pre-assessments and formative assessments upon returning to school.
- (c) In the absence of Spring 2020 summative assessment data, the school district should identify alternate sources of prior assessment data which may complement data driven decision-making regarding remediation efforts.
- (d) Online pre-assessments and formative assessments should be leveraged in either a fully remote or hybrid learning environment to support the evaluation of student strengths and the areas for improvement, and to inform next steps, including determining whether remediation is required for an entire group of students or on an individual student basis.
- (e) Pre-assessments administered at the start of instructional units should be limited to informing instruction plans with respect to gaps in the mastery of standards while continuing to move students forward at current grade-level.
 - (i) Such pre-assessments should be incorporated into regular classroom activities and to the greatest extent practicable, should not interfere with student learning opportunities as schools reopen.

4. Professional Learning

- a. It is imperative the school district provides professional learning that will better equip leaders, staff, substitutes, students, and parents to adapt to altered educational environments and experiences.
- b. The school district must focus on professional development to address the learning loss for the most vulnerable populations and preparing and supporting educators in meeting the social, emotional, health, and academic needs of all students.

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- c. Professional learning opportunities should be:
 - (1) Presented prior to the beginning of the year;
 - (2) Presented throughout the school year;
 - (3) Presented in order to grow each educator's professional capacity to deliver developmentally appropriate, standards-based instruction remotely;
 - (4) Presented to include the input and collaboration of stakeholders, including all staff, parents, and community members; and
 - (5) Professional development plans (PDPs) for teaching staff and administrators, as always, should remain flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of the district, school, and individual educator.
- d. Mentoring and Induction
 - (1) Induction must be provided for all novice provisional teachers and teachers new to the district.
 - (2) One-to-one mentoring must be provided by qualified mentors to novice provisional teachers.
 - (3) Ensure that mentors can provide sufficient support and guidance to novice provisional teachers working in a remote environment.
 - (4) Mentoring must be provided in both a hybrid and fully remote learning environment.
 - (5) Use online collaborative tools to remain connected to other mentors, new teachers, and administrators to maintain a sense of communal support.
- e. Evaluation
 - (1) School districts should modify annual evaluation training to highlight procedures and processes which would be impacted due to potential hybrid scheduling.
 - (2) School districts should develop observation schedules with a hybrid model in mind.

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- (3) School districts should consider convening a District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC) meeting to review evaluation policies and procedures.
- (4) School districts should consider the School Improvement Panel's (ScIP) role in informing professional learning, mentoring, and other evaluation-related activities.
- (5) School districts must consider the requirements and best practices involved with provisional status teachers, nontenured educators, and those on Corrective Action Plans.

Appendices

Restart and Recovery Plan to Reopen Schools

Rutherford Board of Education

**Rutherford
Public Schools**

County 03/ District 4600

**Phase Five
April 8, 2021 -
June 24, 2021**

Appendix A

Critical Area of Operation #1 - General Health and Safety Guidelines

Protocol for High Risk Staff Members

- All schools will promote behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19, including: staying home when appropriate, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, face coverings, and display of signs and messages.
- Staff who are considered at higher risk for severe illness should consult with their physician and administrator.
- School officials will establish and maintain communication with local and State authorities to determine current mitigation levels in the community.
- School officials will ensure staff who are at higher risk for severe illness are protected and supported, such as providing options for remote work and remote learning.
- Reasonable accommodations will be provided for individuals that the CDC identifies as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including older adults (aged 65 years and older) and individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions, which may include: Chronic lung disease or asthma (moderate to severe); Serious heart conditions; Immunocompromised; Severe obesity (body mass index, or BMI, of 40 or higher); Diabetes; Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; Liver disease.

Protocol for High Risk Students

Students who are considered at higher risk for severe illness will be provided the opportunity for full-time remote learning. This includes, but is not limited to: medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), students with complex disabilities with IEPs; and/or students who require accommodations under a plan in accordance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. School officials will ensure students who are at higher risk for severe illness are protected and supported, such as providing options for remote work and remote learning.

Appendix B

Critical Area of Operation #2 - Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms

Social Distancing in Instructional and Non-Instructional Rooms

- All instructional and non-instructional rooms in school and district facilities will comply with recommended social distancing standards to the maximum extent practicable.
- All schools will allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable. The district will follow the protocols as designated by state and local authorities. When a classroom or non-instructional room is not able to maintain this physical distance, additional modifications will be implemented when possible, including using physical barriers between desks, turning desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other), and/or having students sit on only one side of a table, spaced apart appropriately.
- Face coverings for students are required at all times when in the school building. However, at teacher discretion, students will be given “mask breaks” when social distancing is possible.
- Face coverings are always required for visitors and staff in the building unless it will inhibit the individual's health.
- Where possible, schools in the district will provide physical markings (i.e. tape on floors/sidewalks, signs on walls) to help ensure that staff and students remain social distanced in lines and at other times
- Where possible, schools may create "one-way routes" in hallways and stairways.
- Students who need to use the bathroom must wear their face covering at all times in the hallway, bathroom, and when returning to the classroom. Students must wash their hands in the bathroom and sanitize their hands upon the return to the classroom. The number of students in bathrooms at any time will be limited.
- When possible, hall monitors will be stationed near restrooms to enforce social distancing in the bathrooms and in the hallways.
- Staff who assist students with toileting will be provided with the appropriate PPE by the district.
- In the event that lunch/snack must be provided indoors, students must maintain social distancing and remain seated. Face coverings will be put on immediately after snack/lunch is consumed.
- Students will remain in class groups (homerooms) during outdoor recess to avoid intermingling with other classes during the school day.

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- Faculty and staff will adhere to social distancing guidelines when using faculty/staff common areas and lunchrooms. Alternately, faculty and staff may leave the building during their lunch hour provided they check out and back in with the building administrator.
- Plexiglass barriers will be used in high traffic areas such as: main offices, high school guidance office and high school attendance office.

Procedures for Hand Sanitizing/Washing

- Handwashing and hand sanitizing will be permitted and encouraged throughout the school day.
- All students and staff will wash their hands with soap and water or disinfect with hand sanitizer (consisting of at least 60% alcohol) before and after eating lunch or snack, using the bathroom and after blowing their nose, coughing, and/or sneezing.
- Each school will prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol). Such stations will be located:
 - in each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer)
 - at entrances and exits of buildings
 - near lunchrooms and bathrooms
- In classrooms that have existing handwashing stations, the stations should be prepared with soap, water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol).
- When washing with soap and water is not possible, washing with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) will be used. Children ages five and younger will be supervised when using hand sanitizer.
- Nurses/Teachers will promote proper hand washing protocol through the use of demonstrations (songs, rhymes, etc...)

Appendix C

Critical Area of Operation #3 – Transportation

Health and Safety

- Drivers and bus aides must wear face coverings and use hand sanitizer when entering the bus for the first time. Drivers and aides should continue to use hand sanitizer as warranted.
- Buses will each be equipped with a UV-C air purifier.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided to students at the entrance of the bus
- Students will maintain social distance and wear face coverings while waiting for the bus and must continue wearing them upon entering the bus (unless a documented disability or medical condition prohibits face covering usage).
- Signs will be posted on the bus reminding students that face coverings must be worn.
- When possible, students will be seated individually in every other row.
- When loading the bus, students will load from back to front.
- When exiting the bus students will exit from front to back.
- When weather conditions permit, bus windows will be opened to allow for fresh air.
- Each bus will be cleaned daily.
- Individual bus seats will be sanitized between each use.
- The district will consult *Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting* from the CDC for the recommended list of acceptable sanitizing solutions and procedures.
 - The district uses Hillyard products from the EPA's list of acceptable products.
- The Rutherford Transportation Department will inform parents/guardians of required social distancing requirements, face covering requirements and other health and safety protocols as related to busing.
- All transportation protocols will be reviewed and updated as new Federal and/or state guidelines are disseminated.
- The district does not provide traditional busing for all students due to the small size of the municipality.
- The Rutherford Transportation Department includes 7 buses.
- The routes are as follows:
 - Paramus Vo-Tech - The district will continue this service.
 - Morning pickup will be at RHS for approximately 10 students.
 - Mid-morning pickup from Votech to RHS for approximately 4 students.
 - Afternoon pickup from RHS to Votech for approximately 1 student.

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- South Bergen Jointure Commission school locations - Primetime, Maywood, Lodi, South Hackensack and Felician Campus - The district will continue these services.
- Transportation for out of district students to locations not mentioned above are *not* coordinated by the Rutherford Transportation Department. The South Bergen Jointure Commission (SBJC) transportation department facilitates hiring busses, setting routes and establishing routines and procedures Their responsibility includes following new measures to ensure these hired companies adhere to COVID-19 related policies.
- The district will eliminate courtesy bussing between Union Middle School and Pierrepont.
- The district will eliminate transportation between Lincoln and Lincoln Annex for LLD students.
- The district will eliminate field trips requiring transportation, except for The Bulldog Academy who may take trips for vocational training.
- Transportation will be provided for NJSIAA events following the guidelines outlined by that governing body.

Appendix D

Critical Area of Operation #4 - Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas

Location of Student and Staff Screening

All parents in the district will receive the CDC screening checklist entitled “[Daily Home Screening Checklist](#).” Parents are required to screen their child every day before sending their child to school.

Each school in the district will have multiple entrances for screening. Locations will be placed to allow for social distancing and ease of access. Specifically:

- Rutherford High School will have multiple entrances for students. One will be located in the front of the building (Elliott Place entrance), one in the back (Fairview Avenue entrance) and another at the side of the building (Mortimer Avenue entrance). The student population is divided into two in-person cohorts. This minimizes the number of students at each location. Additional entrances may be used as necessary.
- Union Middle School will have three entrances for students. The student population is divided into two in-person cohorts. This minimizes the number of students at each location. Additional entrances may be used as necessary.
- Pierrepont will have five entrances for students. The student population is divided into two in-person cohorts. This minimizes the number of students at each location. Additional entrances may be used as necessary.
- Washington School will have three entrances for students. Additional entrances may be used as necessary.
- Lincoln School will have two entrances for students. Additional entrances may be used as necessary.
- The Lincoln Annex (KCenter) will have one entrance for students. It will be located in the front (Sylvan Street entrance). The limited number of students entering due to staggered start times does not necessitate an additional entrance.
- The Bulldog Academy will have one entrance for students. It will be located at the main entrance located in the Park Avenue/Chestnut Street courtyard. The limited number of students enrolled in this program does not necessitate an additional entrance.

Social Distancing in Entrances, Exits, and Common Areas

- Every building will have established entrance and exit points by cohort, grade and/or homeroom to distribute the student body, when necessary.
- Schools will either stagger starting/ending times or have reduced building capacity to decrease numbers gathering in common areas.
- Signs will be posted in common areas (both student and faculty/staff common areas) and entrance/exit doors reminding people to follow social distance protocols and wear a face covering.
- Faculty/staff common areas should be arranged for social distancing.
- Faculty/staff use of common microwaves, coffee pots, and refrigerators are at user discretion; however, faculty/staff should disinfect after use.
- Parents/guardians will receive notification about arrival and dismissal procedures. It will reinforce that they are to leave the school area as quickly as possible during those times and are not permitted to congregate.

Appendix E

Critical Area of Operation #5 - Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms

Screening Procedures for Students and Staff

- All parents in the district will receive the CDC screening checklist entitled “[Daily Home Screening Checklist](#).” Parents are required to screen their child every day before sending their child to school.
- Parents must not send an ill child to school who presents signs of illness.
- Parents will notify the school district if any student travel has taken place within the states/territories/countries registered in the New Jersey or international travel advisory list within the last 14 days and/or any contact with a known case of COVID-19.
- Staff will be responsible for self-assessment prior to entering school building on a daily basis and informing their administrator of exposure to COVID-19 or travel outside of New Jersey.
- Visitors to the building will be screened upon entering any district building. They will have their temperature taken and they will be asked the following questions.
 - Have you or a family member recently been diagnosed with COVID-19?
 - Have you or a family member presented with a cough, fever or have you or a family member been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
 - Have you or a family member traveled outside of New Jersey recently?
- New students entering the district from states or countries considered high risk will be quarantined for 14 days. Students can be placed into full-time remote learning during that quarantine.

Protocols for Symptomatic Students and Staff

- The following protocols will be done in consultation with and/or at the direction of the New Jersey Department of Health, the Bergen County Department of Health, and the Rutherford Board of Health.
- Students who present with symptoms will be referred to the nurse's office for evaluation and isolated from others in a supervised designated space.
- Staff members who present with symptoms during the school day should inform their administrator. They will be sent to the nurse's office for evaluation and will be isolated from others in a designated space.

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- When a student is to be sent home, the parent/guardian will be notified that the student should be picked up or they should arrange to have the student picked up promptly.
- Students who are sent home with a fever at or above 100.4 must remain out of school.
- Students with COVID-19 compatible symptoms or individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 should stay home as directed by the Rutherford Board of Health.
- Students who test positive for COVID-19, but who are asymptomatic should stay home as directed by the Rutherford Board of Health.
- Students who seek medical attention from a physician should return to school with a medical note stating the diagnosis and clearance to return to school.
- Students who are leaving for illness will be escorted out of the building by the school nurse to meet the student's parent/guardian or authorized adult arrives to take the student home.
- Staff who are sent home with signs and symptoms of COVID-19 must remain out of school.
- Staff with COVID-19 compatible symptoms or individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 should stay home as directed by the Rutherford Board of Health.
- Staff who test positive for COVID-19, but who are asymptomatic should stay home as directed by the Rutherford Board of Health.
- The school nurse and administration will follow current Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting.
- The school nurse will ensure continuous monitoring of symptoms.

Protocols for Face Coverings

- Parents will provide face coverings for their children; however, the district will also have face coverings available if a child forgets his/hers.
- Faculty/staff are required to wear face coverings throughout the day.
- Students will be required to wear face coverings throughout the day. Students will be given breaks at teacher discretion during times when social distance is being maintained.
- Students' face coverings will be properly stored when not in use.
- Accommodations for students who are unable to wear a face covering will be addressed according to that student's need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

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- Exceptions to requirements for face coverings shall be as follows:
 - When the individual is in extreme heat outdoors
 - When the individual is in water
 - When a student has a documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an IEP, precludes the use of face covering
 - When the student is under the age of two and could risk suffocation
- School staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under 2 years of age.
- All faculty/staff members will receive a KN-95 surgical mask provided by the school district. Alternatively, faculty/staff members may choose to wear their own washable or disposable face coverings.
- Teachers will be provided with manufacturer's guidelines on the KN-95 surgical mask usage.
- Extra face coverings will be available in the nurse's office.
- When appropriate, specific staff may use a clear mask to allow for seeing a teacher's full face. This may be done in speech classes, MD rooms, LLD rooms. Teachers and nursing staff who are communicating with special needs students may also utilize them where appropriate.
- If a visitor refuses to wear a face covering for non-medical reasons and if such covering cannot be provided to the individual at the point of entry, the visitor's entry to the school/district facility may be denied.

Protocols for Students or Faculty/Staff Testing Positive

When the district becomes aware that a student or staff member who has been in one or more of the school buildings tests positive for COVID-19, the district shall immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of the confirmed case – while maintaining confidentiality.

The school nurse and administrator(s) will assist the local Board of Health with contact tracing by making records of groups/cohorts, assigned staff members, and daily attendance available – adhering to the FERPA and HIPAA guidelines.

Remittance to schools will be consistent with policies developed by the Borough of Rutherford Department of Health in response to positive COVID-19 cases.

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The district will also consult the guidelines for procedures when known cases of COVID-19 have been present in schools (as taken from [CDC Website: Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Child Care Program](#))

Any school in the district might need to implement short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. If this happens, school officials will follow protocols in consultation with and/or at the direction of the New Jersey Department of Health, the Bergen County Department of Health, and the Rutherford Board of Health.

Local health officials' recommendations for the scope (e.g., a single school, multiple schools, the full district) and duration of school dismissals will be made on a case-by-case basis using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the community.

During school dismissals after a positive test, the district may:

- Cancel extracurricular group activities, school-based afterschool programs, and large events (e.g., assemblies, spirit nights, field trips, and sporting events) shall also be canceled.
- Discourage staff, students, and their families from gathering or socializing anywhere. This includes group child care arrangements, as well as gathering at places like a friend's house, a favorite restaurant, or the local shopping mall.
- Communicate with staff, parents, and students. Coordinate with local health officials to communicate dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure.
 - This communication to the school community should align with the communication plan in the school's emergency operations plan.
- Plan to include messages to counter potential stigma and discrimination.
- In such a circumstance, it is critical to maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.
- Clean and disinfect thoroughly.
- Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. If possible, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.

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- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

Appendix F

Critical Area of Operation #6 - Contact Tracing

The Rutherford School District nursing staff and administrative team will communicate and work collaboratively with the Borough of Rutherford Health Department as it relates to contact tracing of positive COVID-19 cases by students and/or staff. Upon learning of a positive diagnosis, the Health Department will be contacted immediately as advised by the guidelines provided by both the Department of Education and the CDC.

When the district becomes aware that a student or staff member who has been in one or more of the school buildings tests positive for COVID-19, the district shall immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of the confirmed case – while maintaining confidentiality.

The school nurse and administrator(s) will assist the local Board of Health with contact tracing by making records of groups/cohorts, assigned staff members, and daily attendance available – adhering to the FERPA and HIPAA guidelines.

Remittance to schools will be consistent with policies developed by the Borough of Rutherford Department of Health in response to positive COVID-19 cases.

Appendix G

Critical Area of Operation #7 - Facilities Cleaning Practices

Disinfecting

The district will adhere to existing Rutherford Maintenance Department cleaning procedures. In addition to those already rigorous procedures, the department will:

- follow the cleaning schedule developed by the district's custodial and maintenance consultant, Edvocate - School Support Solutions.
- A manual for cleaning and disinfecting will be placed on the Districts' reopening website.
- consult *Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting* from the CDC list of acceptable sanitizing solutions and procedures (The district uses Hillyard products which are on the EPA's list of acceptable products.)
- maintain an adequate supply of cleaning supplies, including hand sanitizers, gloves, face coverings, to allow for two month supply.
- disinfect during the school day for touchpoints. This includes but is not limited to:
 - phones
 - door handles
 - light switches
 - physical education equipment
 - classroom entrance ways/transom
 - hallway/stairwell banisters and handrails
 - restroom flushing handles and sink handles
 - desk surfaces
- disinfect classrooms, isolation areas, and the nurse's office frequently during the day.
- wipe down any items that may be shared among students with appropriate sanitizing wipes or disinfecting spray. Proper dwell time as per product guidelines will be maintained.
- schedule additional custodians when possible and as needed.
- provide each classroom with appropriate disinfecting materials so that desks can be sanitized between classes (when one group of students is leaving and another one is entering).
- provide each classroom with appropriate disinfecting materials so that desks can be sanitized after eating.

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- clean all surfaces when the school day has concluded using soap or cleaning solution followed by sanitizer.
- spray a sanitizing disinfectant throughout the building when the school day has concluded. It will be administered using an atomizer and given the proper dwell time as recommended by the manufacturer.
- sanitize outdoor playground equipment.
- limit the hours that each school building can be used once the school day has been concluded. This will allow ample time to clean and disinfect the schools. The hours will be determined by the building principal in conjunction with the Maintenance Department.
- train all custodial maintenance staff on the proper cleaning and sanitizing procedures.
- provide notification to all faculty/staff about cleaning and sanitizing procedures.

HVAC Cleaning Practices

- Classroom windows should be opened as often as possible when weather permits in order to allow for fresh air.
- All outside damper units regularly circulate in outside air at a minimum of 10%. They will be adjusted depending on outside conditions.
- All HVAC systems will be controlled remotely to ensure proper ventilation and air exchange.
- The district has a preventative maintenance plan in place for all equipment. It will be updated to include additional tasks for more frequent cleaning of the interior of HVAC materials.
- The district will follow the manufacturer's recommendations for the replacement of unit air filters.
- High touch areas of HVAC and other building service systems will be disinfected regularly.
- The interior of refrigerated devices (where the virus can potentially survive for longer periods of time) will be disinfected regularly.

Appendix H

Critical Area of Operation #8 – Meals

- Students in school for a full day will eat lunch in their classrooms or outside when weather permits.
- Per CDC guidelines, students will be spaced six feet apart to follow social distance requirements.
- Self service of food will be discontinued.
- Students will bring their own bagged lunch.
 - An option to purchase a bagged lunch will be provided for students.
 - Bagged lunches are provided by Pomptonian.
- The Rutherford School District will continue to provide lunch for students who qualify for Free or Reduced lunches.
- Classroom tables and surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at the end of the lunch period.
- Aides will be reassigned from various buildings to supervise lunch. This will ensure teachers receive a duty free lunch.
- Classroom aides will be provided with gloves to assist students in the younger grades as needed.
- Students in schools that operate on split session days will have the opportunity to purchase a bagged grab-and-go lunch.
- Grab-and-go lunches will be purchased in advance through Pomptonian (as per the district's normal lunch procedure).
- Snack time is at the discretion of the building administrator as per the guidelines listed on Page 44. All protocols regarding social distancing and masks will be followed. Snack time may also take place outdoors.
- The school nurse will notify administration and classroom teachers of any students having food allergies. Desks will be spaced six feet apart, per CDC social distance requirements. Those desks will be cleaned after each use with disinfecting materials appropriate for sanitization for any food allergies. Disinfecting materials will be stored in the classroom and staff on lunch duty will be notified about the cleaning procedures.
- All water fountains will be closed for the health and safety of students. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to send their child with bottled water.

Appendix I

Critical Area of Operation #9 – Recess/Physical Education

Recess - Grades K-5

- Recess will be dispersed by classes to limit the number of students on the playground at any time. Students will remain with their class only.
- If two or more classes are participating in recess at the same time, they will be separated by at least six feet of open space with a marked delineation.
- Students and staff will sanitize their hands immediately following recess.
- All playground equipment will be sanitized each day.
- The following partial list of individualized activities will replace contact sports:
 - exercise such as walking
 - dancing
 - stretching
 - mindfulness and yoga activities
 - hopscotch

Physical Education

- Students will not change for Physical Education (PE) classes. Students should wear comfortable clothes and appropriate footwear to school on the days they participate in physical education.
- Lockers will not be used.
- PE classes will be held outdoors to the extent possible.
- Individualized activities, such as exercise, and yoga and mindfulness activities will be considered in order to maximize social distancing.
- Individualized ball and equipment handling will include post-disinfecting
- Students will follow hand washing/sanitizing procedures between use.
- PE staff will provide curriculum ideas to push into the classroom as needed.
- PE classes may focus on personal health, fitness, and wellness in place of contact sports.
- Supplemental activities will be provided and will be in line with personal health and wellness for students who are injured.
- All windows will be open in the gymnasium for ventilation purposes, where applicable.
- Students and staff will sanitize hands after each PE class.

Appendix J

Critical Area of Operation #10 - Field Trips, Extra-Curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

Field trips are not permitted with one exception: The Bulldog Academy will take field trips for vocational instruction only.

Extra-curricular activities and club meetings will be permitted as long as all social distancing protocols are followed. They will be held at the end of the day or remotely based upon the building administrator's discretion. Clubs may meet in the school building as long as all social distancing and ventilation protocols are followed. Clubs may also meet outside.

Plays and Musicals are educational in nature. They are not about the final product or performance, but about the process to create. Therefore, the educational aspects will be paramount. Rehearsals will begin with smaller casts and will follow social distancing guidelines.

The Rutherford Public Schools will limit the hours that each school building can be used once the school day has been concluded. This will allow ample time to clean and disinfect the schools. The hours will be determined by the building administrator in conjunction with the Maintenance Department.

Appendix K

Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports

Response to Intervention Services

- In appropriate grade levels, building based assessments (i.e. DRA, Linkint, IXL) will be conducted at the principal's discretion as necessary.
- In appropriate grade levels, RTI instructional time will be pushed into classes to support instruction and as remote lessons with small groups.
- In appropriate grade levels, RTI committees will continue to meet as prescribed by the building principal and/or the RTI committee at each building.
- In appropriate grade levels, RTI Tier 3 meetings with parents will take place remotely with goal setting and progress updates.
- In appropriate grade levels, teachers will work together in departmental Professional Learning Committees (PLCs) and grade level teams to determine and identify any possible gaps in curriculum, content and skills.

Remote Instruction

- Students receiving remote instruction will use a mix of synchronous and asynchronous instruction.
- Synchronous instruction may include, but is not limited to:
 - live real time face-to-face instruction through Google Meet
 - live real time face-to-face instruction through Zoom
 - live real time communication through Google Classroom and district email
- Asynchronous instruction may include, but is not limited to:
 - self guided lessons
 - streaming video content
 - pre-recorded teacher-created lectures
 - note taking
 - online diagnostic tools

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Interventions

- ESL teachers will provide small instruction classes when possible and/or remote lessons via Zoom.
- Title One tutoring classes, where applicable, will be offered at the end of the school day (3.00 PM) and will be remote.

Enrichment classes

- When possible, Enrichment classes (in appropriate grade levels) such as Gifted and Talented (G&T) instruction will be pushed into classes and/or held remotely depending on the nature of the building schedule. G&T teachers will also serve as push in RTI support as needed.

Specialists

- Stand alone services (i.e. speech, OT, PT) may be offered remotely or with one-one meeting time with social distance compliance. Stand alone services may also be offered in small groups.

SEL

- Guidance and Student Assistance Counselors (SAC) will provide Social Emotional Learning (SEL) supports for students and parents with frequent check ins. Counselors will conduct meetings, call parents and students, email, and communicate with staff on an ongoing basis to follow up with students who are struggling academically and socially.
 - Guidance/SAC/CST counselors will meet with students in person following social distance protocol and/or via Zoom to assist with academic/social/emotional support and organizational strategies. Emphasis will be placed on anxiety and stress related factors as students re-enter a physical learning environment.
 - Guidance and support will be provided for students' families as they re-enter a physical learning environment. Examples include:
 - virtual parent workshops/webinars and support sessions
 - online resources provided to families
 - frequent communication by teachers and counselors
 - guidance supports with individual or small group sessions
 - Staff will participate in SEL webinars and/or virtual workshops as needed or required.
 - SEL activities will be conducted to re-engage students and staff, and create connections to bridge into a meaningful foundation for academic learning. Activities will be building specific. Examples may include:
 - scheduling time to create a positive classroom community
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- engaging in class discussion
 - sharing thoughts, feelings, and questions
 - reflecting on topics, experiences, situations
 - scheduling brain breaks incorporated throughout the day
- Considerations for SEL Planning include planning activities for daily Community Time, planning ways to incorporate SEL throughout the school day and sharing virtual activities connected to SEL.
- SACs will explore various screening tools to be used to assess the mental well being of students.
- SACs will review procedures and key points for staff to assess students' mental well being as a screening tool.
- Administrators, school nurses, CST, SACs, guidance counselors and teachers will work together to support struggling students. All parties will have increased communication upon return to school.
- Online application resources may be utilized to allow for frequent parent and student communication.
- Tier 2 student social emotional support resources will be provided for students who are identified at risk for mental health issues and/or substance abuse. Supports will include individual counseling and/or small group sessions (either in-person or remote) by SACs and school social workers.
- Tier 3 student social emotional supports will be provided for students identified as needing mental health and/or substance abuse interventions. District supports will continue to be consulted and utilized such as Bergen Promise and Care Plus.
- Staff and administration will attend to social-emotional supports as they transition back to school. Staff typically spend a few days building a classroom community while introducing their courses. For this year, staff will extend and expand community-building experiences for in-person and remote instruction.
- SEL implementation and strategies will be stressed and implemented in each building. Strategies and implications will be specific and appropriate to each buildings' student body. All SEL competencies will be focused on and addressed prior to the start of school and will continue.

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- SEL is the process of developing and using the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that help youth and adults to:
 - Understand and manage emotions
 - Set and achieve positive goals
 - Feel and show empathy for others
 - Make responsible decisions
- Social and emotional competencies help all students:
 - Deeply engage with academic content
 - Recognize and build on their strengths/assets
 - Participate in respectful dialogue
 - Resolve conflict peacefully
 - Advocate for themselves, their families, and their communities
- The SEL Competencies are:
 - **Self-Awareness**: the ability to recognize one's emotions and know one's strengths and limitations
 - **Self-Management**: the ability to regulate and control one's emotions and behaviors, particularly in stressful situations
 - **Social Awareness**: the ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one's actions influence and are influenced by others
 - **Relationship Skills**: the ability to demonstrate prosocial skills and behaviors in order to develop meaningful relationships and resolve interpersonal conflicts
 - **Responsible Decision-Making**: the ability to use multiple pieces of information to make ethical and responsible decisions
- Educator Resources for reinforcing connections through in-person and remote instruction will be readily available for all staff members for SEL planning and incorporation into the classroom/school climate.

Additional Supports

- The Rutherford School District will provide a free and reduced lunch for students who qualify for the service. The lunch will be a grab and go bagged lunch. Students have the option of bringing their own bagged lunch from home. This plan is further discussed in Appendix H.
 - Before-care and after-care child care services are provided in grades K-6.
 - Guidance counselors and teachers will work collaboratively on a plan for students struggling academically. SACs and teachers will work collaboratively on a plan for students struggling emotionally.
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- The CST and teachers will work together for students who require additional supports. CST will monitor students' IEPs, grades and attendance. Additionally, CST will hold meetings with parents remotely as needed.
- Counselors (guidance, CST) will monitor student grades and school attendance. They and appropriate staff (teachers, counselors, administrators, CST or SAC) will contact parents via phone, email or Zoom for discussion and intervention as needed. Counselors will hold meetings with families remotely as needed.
- Speech therapists will hold one-on-one or small group sessions as appropriate maintaining CDC social distance requirements. They may also hold remote instruction. Speech therapists will complete reports, email parents with suggested activities and conduct meetings remotely with families as needed.

Appendix L

Restart Committee

The District formed a restart committee in May consisting of administrators and supervisors. The group worked closely with the administration and the Board of Education. They researched information from other states, other countries, the CDC, local health authorities and borough officials related to reopening schools. As part of the process, parents and students will be surveyed for feedback and responses to developing plans.

Upon the release of the *Road Back* reopening guidelines, the original committee became the Steering Committee and solicited volunteers to join the planning team. A total of 65 volunteers consisted of: administrators, supervisors, Board of Education members, teachers, nurses, counselors, child study team members, speech therapists, secretaries, teacher assistants, bus drivers, and custodians. The composition of the committee allowed for all subgroups of students to be considered and all operations of the school to be included.

The 65 volunteers were placed into five subcommittees:

- Health and Safety
- Facilities and Transportation
- Teaching and Learning
- Social and Emotional Learning
- Athletics and Extra-Curricular
- Community Outreach

Each subcommittee met over a two week period. They submitted a report to the steering committee for their review. The steering committee and the superintendent reviewed the reports, the state guidelines, and information from local, state, and national health and education organizations to draft the reopening plan.

Following the submission of the plan for approval by the Department of Education and the Rutherford Public Schools, the committee will take part in ongoing review and revision of the school schedule and operations.

Appendix M

Pandemic Response Teams

Each school building will have a Pandemic Response Team. The team will consist of:

1. School Principal
2. Assistant Principal (where applicable)
3. Teachers
4. Child Study Team member
5. School Counselor and/or Student Assistance Counselor
6. School Nurse
7. Custodian
8. Parent

The team can be the same members who serve on the Crisis Response Team.

The team will meet as needed with a minimum of twice monthly. The meeting schedule will be revised as needed in each phase of the reopening plan.

Each principal will send minutes of the meetings to the Superintendent. The team will report information to students and parents as needed. The Superintendent will update the Board.

Appendix N

Scheduling of Students

The Rutherford Public Schools consists of the following locations:

- Lincoln School - Grades PK, K, 1, 2, and 3.
 - Grade K students are housed at a separate building (The Lincoln School Annex) referred to as the Kindergarten Center.
- Washington School - Grades PK, 1, 2, and 3
- Pierrepont School - Grades 4, 5, and 6
- Union School - Grades 7 and 8
- Rutherford High School - Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12

The district’s core goal is to bring all students to school as much as possible while preserving the safety of all students and staff in the school environment. After a thorough evaluation of all health and safety guidelines, input from various stakeholders, and an evaluation of the needs of our students and families, it has been determined that all district schools will resume instruction in September. Parents wishing to enroll their child into a fully remote model also have the option to do so.

The following schedules have been developed.

Kindergarten Center

Kindergarten will be a half-day for students with morning (AM) and afternoon (PM) sessions. When regulations allow, the district will return to full-day kindergarten.

AM Drop-Off	8:20 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
AM session	8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Common Planning	11:05 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Lunch	11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
PM Drop-Off	12:20 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.
PM session	12:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Modifications will be made to special classes (art, music, etc...) as needed. Physical education will meet for the required amount of meeting time.

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Lincoln School/Washington School

Pre-K

Students in pre-kindergarten programs will follow the normal daily schedule.

Integrated Pre-K 3

- Maintain regular schedule
- Drop-off at 9:00 a.m.
- Dismissal at 11:30 a.m.

Integrated Pre-K 4

- Maintain regular schedule
- Drop off at 12:30 p.m.
- Dismissal at 3:00 p.m.

Pre-K ABA

- Maintain regular schedule
- Drop off at 9:00 a.m.
- Dismissal at 2:30 p.m.

Grade Kindergarten LLD

- Drop-off 8:50 a.m. - 9:05 a.m.
- Dismissal 2:15 p.m.

Grades 1-3

Students in grades 1-3 will attend school for a full day, five days a week. Each room has been measured to ensure proper social distancing will be maintained.

A staggered schedule will be implemented in order to limit the number of students entering and exiting buildings at the same time, minimize and control vehicular traffic, improve efficiency of the drop-off lane, and provide a best-case scenario for parents who have children attending different buildings. In addition, this will provide grade level teachers with common prep time.

RESTART & RECOVERY PLAN - RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grade 1

- Common Planning 8:20 a.m. - 8:50 a.m.
- Drop-off 8:50 a.m. - 9:05 a.m.
- Dismissal 2:45 p.m.

Grade 2

- Drop-off 8:35 a.m. - 8:50 a.m.
- Dismissal 2:30 p.m.
- Common planning 2:40 p.m. - 3:10 p.m.

Grade 3

- Drop-off 8:20 a.m. - 8:35 a.m.
- Dismissal 2:15 p.m.
- Common planning 2:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Specialists will teach an approximately 30-minute class period and will push into the classroom to ensure minimal movement between rooms, where possible. Changes will be made to the lunch schedule which will allow for proper social distancing. Physical education and recess will be provided.

Fully Remote Model

- Phase Five will run from April 12, 2021 through the last day of school.
 - The length of the fully remote model will be a minimum of four hours.
 - If necessary, the district will determine if an IEP meeting or amendment to the IEP will be needed for any students enrolled in the fully remote model.
 - Students in the fully remote model will receive a mix of asynchronous and synchronous instruction.
 - Synchronous instruction may include, but is not limited to:
 - live real time face-to-face instruction through Google Meet
 - live real time face-to-face instruction through Zoom
 - live real time communication through Google Classroom and district email
 - Asynchronous instruction may include, but is not limited to:
 - self guided lessons
 - streaming video content
 - pre-recorded teacher-created lectures
 - note taking
 - online diagnostic tools
-

RESTART & RECOVERY PLAN - RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Technology

All K-3 teachers are assigned a district-issued laptop for use at home and at school. Each student in grades 1-3 has a district-issued chromebook for use during the school day. Should the district at any point move to all remote learning, students will bring their district-issued chromebook home and kindergarten students will be assigned a chromebook for use at home. The district utilizes an Internet content filter that is in compliance with the federally mandated Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). All Chromebooks have all Internet activity protected and monitored by the District. While the District provides Internet content filtering both on and off campus, parents/guardians should monitor student Internet use when off campus and at home. There are four staff members who provide teacher and family support and are tech liaisons from the school to the district IT Office. Any student who remains on full-day remote instruction will be provided with a district-issued chromebook if requested.

RESTART & RECOVERY PLAN - RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Pierrepont School/Union School/Rutherford High School

Due to enrollment, building size and classroom size, as well as the daily academic schedule, scheduling at Pierrepont School, Union School, and Rutherford High School will be a hybrid model, a combination of in-person and remote instruction.

Students will be divided into 2 cohorts — *Bulldog* and *Blue*. The *Bulldog* cohort will attend in-person instruction on Tuesday and Thursday. The *Blue* cohort will attend in-person instruction on Monday and Wednesday. Fridays will alternate week-to-week and/or be used to balance the number of in-person days for each cohort to ensure equity.

In-person instruction will follow a one-session day schedule.

On days that the cohort is not in the school building, students will log in for lessons via distance learning. All students in grades 4-12 will be issued a district-owned Chromebook for use in school and at home. Teachers are issued district-owned laptops for use at school and at home.

Students in grades 4-12 who are in a self-contained special education program and students in the Bulldog Academy at Rutherford High School (the district's 18-21 year old program) will attend school for a full-day schedule, five days per week. This will allow our most vulnerable students to benefit from in-person, direct instruction and is consistent with the programming needs of these students. Additionally, these class sizes are smaller and can properly social distance.

Students in grades 4-12 who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan will be offered the ability to attend school for five days per week. These students will follow the schedule that all students (except self-contained and Bulldog Academy students) follow.

In grades 4-6, teachers will travel and students will remain in their classrooms. The only exception is Physical Education.

RESTART & RECOVERY PLAN - RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The daily schedule for instruction for students in grade 4-6 will be:

Bell Schedule
All AM students

6th grade			5th grade	
Period	Time	Class	Period	Time
HR	8:10-8:15	homeroom	HR	8:10-8:15
1	8:15-8:49	cycle/special	1	8:15-8:49
2	8:51-9:25	cycle/special	2	8:51-9:25
3	9:27-10:01	ELA/Math	3	9:27-10:01
4	10:03-10:37	ELA/Math	4	10:03-10:37
5	10:39-11:13	Science/SS	5	10:39-11:13
6	11:15-11:49	ELA/Math	6	11:15-11:49
7	11:51-12:25	ELA/Math	7	11:51-12:25
8	12:27-1:01	Science/SS	8	12:27-1:01
	1:01	Student Dismissal		1:01
	1:15-1:57	Staff Lunch		1:15-1:57
	1:57-2:12	Prep/Admin		1:57-2:12
	2:12-3:12	Office Hours		2:12-3:12

Blue- MW
Bulldog-T,Th
Cohort Alternate every Friday

RESTART & RECOVERY PLAN - RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In grades 7-12, students will move through a rotating block schedule with social distance protocols being observed. All teachers will teach their contracted teaching assignments, perform a supervisory duty (if part of their schedule), have a duty-free lunch, and will work in the school building until the end of the contracted school day. During that time, teachers will engage in:

- scheduled remote office hours to connect with students/provide extra help
- co-planning with PLCs
- synchronous instruction
- development of asynchronous instruction

The daily schedule for instruction for students in grades 7-12 will be:

Homeroom	7:55-8:00	Block 5	10:33- 11:20
Block 1	8:03-8:50	Block 6	11:23- 12:10
Block 2	8:53- 9:40	Block 7	12:13- 1:00
Block 3	9:43-10:30		

On days when hybrid students are not in school, their remote instruction will use a mix of synchronous and asynchronous instruction and follow the appropriate schedule above.

- Synchronous instruction may include, but is not limited to:
 - live real time face-to-face instruction through Google Meet
 - live real time face-to-face instruction through Zoom
 - live real time communication through Google Classroom and district email
- Asynchronous instruction may include, but is not limited to:
 - self guided lessons
 - streaming video content
 - pre-recorded teacher-created lectures
 - note taking
 - online diagnostic tools

Fully Remote Model

- Phase Five will run from April 8, 2021 through the last day of school.
 - Students in the fully remote model will receive a mix of asynchronous and synchronous instruction.
 - The length of the fully remote model will be a minimum of four hours.
 - If necessary, the district will determine if an IEP meeting or amendment to the IEP will be needed for any students enrolled in the fully remote model.
 - Students in the fully remote model will receive a mix of asynchronous and synchronous instruction.
-

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- Synchronous instruction may include, but is not limited to:
 - live real time face-to-face instruction through Google Meet
 - live real time face-to-face instruction through Zoom
 - live real time communication through Google Classroom and district email
- Asynchronous instruction may include, but is not limited to:
 - self guided lessons
 - streaming video content
 - pre-recorded teacher-created lectures
 - note taking
 - online diagnostic tools

Technology

All grade 4-12 teachers are assigned a district-issued laptop for use at home and at school. Each student has a district-issued chromebook for use at home and at school. The district utilizes an Internet content filter that is in compliance with the federally mandated Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). All Chromebooks have all Internet activity protected and monitored by the District. While the District provides Internet content filtering both on and off campus, parents/guardians should monitor student Internet use when off campus and at home. There are four staff members (Technology Integration Specialists) who provide teacher and family support and are tech liaisons from the school to the district IT Office. Any student who remains on full-day remote instruction will be provided with a district-issued chromebook.

Physical Education

- All State-mandated Physical Education requirements will be met.
- Students will not change for Physical Education classes as locker rooms will be closed.
- Individualized activities to maximize distancing (i.e. exercise, meditation, yoga) will be stressed.
- Individual ball handling/equipment used must be pre- and post-disinfected and hand washing/sanitizing protocols will be implemented.
- PE will be held outdoors to the extent possible.
- Students can bring their own supplies from home when possible. Supplies can be differentiated to allow a focus on skill building (i.e. hand eye coordination).
- All windows will be open in the gymnasium when feasible.
- Focus can be placed on personal health, fitness, and wellness to eliminate the need for contact sports.

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Band/Music

Students are permitted to sing in music classes as long as students are masked and practicing social distancing protocols.

Students are permitted to play wind/brass instruments in music classes as long as students practice social distancing protocols in well-ventilated classrooms or outside.

Electives

- The eating of food prepared in foods classes will be eliminated.
- Gloves as an extra safety precaution will be used when feasible.
- Flipped classroom experiences for labs and hands-on activities will be used when feasible.

Internet Access

- Families that do not have Internet access will be asked to contact the district.
- The district will work in collaboration with the Rutherford Public Library to provide portable hotspots.
- The following networks are available for families, and families will be provided with the proper username and password:

When they search for Wi-Fi available in their PC/MAC/Laptop/Chromebooks:

If they find: Xfinity - connection credentials will be provided

If they find AT&T Wi-Fi - connection credentials will be provided

Otherwise: They can use their cell phones as hotspots with the following carriers for free or at reduced cost with higher speed for 60 days.

- Verizon:

<https://www.verizonwireless.com/support/covid-19-faqs/#hotspot>

- AT&T : <https://www.att.com/support/article/wireless/KM1009376/>

- T-Mobile:

<https://www.t-mobile.com/support/plans-features/smartphone-mobile-hotspot-wi-fi-sharing--tethering>

They also can qualify for low-cost internet from FCC and get internet from Xfinity, AT&T, Verizon, FIOS at \$9.99/ month

<https://www.fcc.gov/general/lifeline-program-low-income-consumers>

Link to Comcast/Xfinity:

<https://www.xfinity.com/support/articles/comcast-broadband-opportunity-program>

Link to AT&T: <https://www.att.com/home-phone/lifeline/>

Appendix O

Staffing

Teachers and Teacher Assistants

All faculty and staff will be assigned to their normal schedule. There will be adjustments in responsibilities based on the schedule for students. All aspects of the collective bargaining agreement regarding contractual hours, non-student contact time, and instructional time assignments will be in effect.

Grades Pre-K and 1-3

- Teachers will work their regular schedule. Staggered start and dismissal times will provide some additional time to prepare their classroom for the students.
- A duty free lunch will be provided. Lunch aides will be assigned to monitor students in the classroom.
- Co-teaching will continue.
- Some specialists with dual certification may be reassigned as general education teachers and specialized rooms will be converted for additional grade level sections.
- In grades 1-3, art, music, library/media, enrichment, and spanish will be held as a 'push-in' model. Students will only leave the classroom for physical education and recess.
- To address remote learning, a district wide teacher for each grade level, if feasible, will be assigned as the remote instructor. The need and feasibility of this is to be determined as student return numbers are made known.
- Teacher assistants will follow their normal assignments, but may be utilized in various locations as scheduling dictates.
- Teacher assistants may lead small group instruction to ensure social distancing.
- Teacher assistants may assist in developing remote instructional materials.

Kindergarten

- Teachers and teacher assistants will follow the split session schedule that was in effect prior to the 2014 school year.
- Teachers and teacher assistants will prepare any remote lesson that may be required.
- Teachers and teacher assistants will assist with arrival and dismissal to ensure social distancing.

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Grades 4-12

- Student contact time, prep time, and administrative time will follow contract guidelines.
- Teachers and teacher assistants in the self-contained special education classes and the Bulldog Academy will follow their normal schedule for a full day as their students will be in school for a full day, five days a week. Any need for remote learning will take place in consultation among the teacher, teacher assistant, and case manager.
- Teacher assistants may be utilized as needed by classroom teachers and/or building administration.

Club Advisors, Activity Directors, Athletic Coaches

- Will follow the guidelines detailed in Appendix J and Appendix P.

Non-Instructional Certificated and Non-Certificated Staff – PK-12

- All non-instructional certificated staff will perform their normal duties to serve the students. When meeting with students they will follow social distancing guidelines and use proper PPE if social distancing is not feasible. They can also utilize video conferencing, where applicable..
- In addition to their normal daily duties:
 - Nurses
 - will ensure that all screening protocols are properly carried out
 - will ensure that all protocols are followed if a student or staff member becomes ill.
 - Guidance Counselors, CST members, and Student Assistance Counselors
 - will monitor the attendance, progress, and social emotional learning of remote students.
 - Library /Media Specialists
 - will provide resources to assist both in-person and remote learners
 - Therapists and Learning Specialists
 - will develop remote sessions as needed

Non Certificated /Non-Instructional Staff

- All non-certificated and non-instructional certificated staff will perform their normal duties to serve the students, faculty, and staff in their assigned buildings. They will follow social distancing guidelines and use proper PPE.
 - In addition to their normal duties:
 - Secretaries
 - will record attendance for remote cohorts and remote students.
-

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- will conduct normal attendance checks for all students.
- Lunch aides
 - will be reassigned to Washington School or Lincoln School to provide lunch coverage in those buildings.
 - will cover the self contained classes. One lunch aide will be assigned to each Pierrepont, Union, and Rutherford High School.
- Courtesy bus aides will be reassigned to other bus routes or as a lunch aide, if needed.
- Day time custodial coverage will be increased through the use of Aramark employees, if needed.
- Bus drivers will sanitize their bus between trips.
- Maintenance staff will assist in sanitizing as needed.
- The IT department will ensure that remote learning is running smoothly.

Administrators/Supervisors/Directors

- In addition to their normal duties, administrators, supervisors and directors will:
 - provide guidance, training and, when feasible, collaborative time for teachers to develop effective classroom and remote strategies for instruction.
 - develop schedules for students while taking into account the strain a hybrid schedule may place on families and make accommodations when feasible.
 - effectively and fairly monitor plans for high risk students, faculty, and staff.
 - provide frequent communication to students, faculty, staff and parents
 - monitor health trends in district, county and state.
 - assess the efficacy of the schedule and meet with other administrators and the superintendent to revise as needed according to the phase schedule.
 - monitor students progress.
 - meet frequently with the Pandemic Response Team, ScIP Committee, and the PTA/PTSA.

Substitute Teachers

- Substitute teachers will be screened in the same manner as all students and staff.
- Substitute teachers will be provided with any required PPE.
- Substitute teachers will be given guidance (both in writing and verbally) regarding social distancing, PPE requirements, and any other COVID-19 related information.

Mentoring. Professional Development, Student Growth Objectives, Teacher and Staff Evaluation

- All new teachers who need a mentor will be provided with a mentor.
- New Teacher Orientation will take place in August 2021 for the 2021-2023 school year.
- All PDP requirements pursuant to J.A.C. 6A:9C-4 remain in effect.
- All educators must develop a PDP for the 2021-2022 school year no later than October 31, 2021.
- In developing SY 21-22 PDPs, the following requirements will be adhered to:
 - Teachers:
 - One goal can be a goal linked to results from individual performance evaluations.
 - One goal can be linked to an SY 2020-21 district, school, team or individual goal.
 - School Leaders:
 - One goal can be a goal linked to results from individual performance evaluations.
 - One goal can be linked to an SY 2020-21 district, school, team or individual goal.
 - Student Growth Objectives
 - Student Growth Objectives will follow the guidance from the NJDOE.
- Teacher and Staff Evaluation
 - The District will plan to follow the normal teacher and staff evaluation schedule.
 - The District will follow the requirements specified by AchieveNJ for evaluations.

Appendix P

Athletics

Rutherford High School will follow guidelines from the NJSIAA.

NJSIAA COVID-19 Spring Protocols:

<https://www.njsiaa.org/sites/default/files/documents/2021-03/covid-19-spring-guidelines.pdf>

NJSIAA COVID-19 Protocols:

<https://www.njsiaa.org/sites/default/files/document/COVID-19%20Protocols.pdf>

NJSIAA Phase One Guidelines:

<https://www.njsiaa.org/sites/default/files/document/COVID-19%20Phase%201%20Guidelines7-22.pdf>

NJSIAA Phase Two Guidelines:

<https://www.njsiaa.org/sites/default/files/document/COVID-19%20Phase%202%20Guidelines.pdf>

NJSIAA Phase Three Guidelines:

https://www.njsiaa.org/sites/default/files/document/COVID-19%20Phase%203%20Guidelinesw_0.pdf

NJ Strength and Conditioning Coaches Best Practices:

<https://www.njsiaa.org/sites/default/files/document/NJS%26CC%20Guidelines.pdf>

NJSIAA Fall Season Guidelines:

<https://www.njsiaa.org/sites/default/files/document/COVID-19%20Fall%20GuidelinesR9-25.pdf>

Appendix Q

Remote Learning Policy

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Remote Learning Options for Families

July 20

M

[See POLICY ALERT No. 221]

1648.02 REMOTE LEARNING OPTIONS FOR FAMILIES

On July 24, 2020, the New Jersey Governor and the Commissioner of Education published a supplemental guidance document titled “Clarifying Expectations Regarding Fulltime Remote Learning Options for Families 2020-2021” as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This supplemental guidance includes an additional “anticipated minimum standard,” as this phrase is used throughout “The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education” (NJDOE Guidance). This additional “anticipated minimum standard” provides that, in addition to the methods and considerations explicitly referenced in the NJDOE Guidance for scheduling students for in-person, remote, or hybrid learning, families/guardians (hereinafter referred to as “parents”) may submit, and school districts shall accommodate, requests for full-time remote learning.

Requests for full-time remote learning may include any service or combination of services that would otherwise be delivered to students on an in-person schedule, which may be a hybrid schedule, such as instruction, behavioral and support services, special education, and related services. A parent may request some services be delivered entirely remotely, while other services follow the same schedule they otherwise would according to the provisions in the school district’s Restart and Recovery Plan (Plan) and Policy 1648.

A parent may contact the Principal or designee of the building the student would attend with any questions on: a request to transition from in-person services to full-time remote learning; a request to transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services; the procedures of this Policy; and/or any other information regarding the school district’s Plan and Policy 1648.

To ensure clarity and consistency in implementation of full-time remote learning, the Board of Education adopts this Policy that addresses the following:

A. Unconditional Eligibility for Full-time Remote Learning

1. All students are eligible for full-time remote learning.



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- a. Eligibility for full-time remote learning cannot be conditioned on a parent demonstrating a risk of illness or other selective criteria.
- b. Unconditional eligibility for full-time remote learning includes students with disabilities who attend in-district schools or receiving schools (county special services school districts, educational services commissions, jointure commissions, Katzenbach School for the Deaf, regional day schools, college operated programs, and approved private schools for students with disabilities).

B. Procedures for Submitting Full-time Remote Learning Requests

- 1. A parent may request a student receive full-time remote learning from the school district by submitting a written request to the Principal of the school building their child would attend. The written request shall be provided to the Principal at least five calendar days before the student is eligible to commence full-time remote learning in accordance with B.2. below.
- 2. The student may only begin full-time remote learning at the beginning of each phase as indicated in reopening plan or within five days after receiving written approval of the Principal or designee.
- 3. The written request for the student to receive full-time remote learning shall include:
 - a. The student's name, school, and grade;



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- b. The technology the student will be using to receive full-time remote learning, including the student's connectivity capabilities;
 - c. A request for any service or combination of services that would otherwise be delivered to the student on an in-person or hybrid schedule, such as instruction, behavioral and support services, special education, and related services;
 - d. For students with disabilities, the school district staff will determine if an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting or an amendment to a student's IEP is needed for full-time remote learning; and
 - e. Any additional information the Principal or designee requests to ensure the student, when receiving remote learning, will receive the same quality and scope of instruction and other educational services as any other student otherwise participating in school district programs.
 - (1) The documentation required by the school district to be provided in the parent's request for full-time remote learning shall not exclude any students from the school district's full-time remote learning option, but rather be limited to the minimum information needed to ensure proper recordkeeping and implementation of successful remote learning.
4. Upon receiving the written request, the Principal or designee may request additional information from the parent to assist the Principal or designee in providing the student the same quality and scope of instruction and other educational services as any other student otherwise participating in school district programs.
5. The Principal or designee will review the written request and upon satisfaction of the procedures outlined in this Policy, the Principal



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or designee will provide written approval of the parent's request for full-time remote learning.

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- a. In the event the request does not satisfy the procedures outlined in this Policy, the Principal or designee will notify the parent in writing of the issues that need to be addressed by the parent to satisfy the procedures outlined in this Policy.
- 6. The Principal's written approval of the request shall be provided to the parent within five calendar days of receiving the parent's written request.
 - a. The written approval will include the date the remote learning program will commence for the student in accordance with B.2. above.
- C. Scope and Expectations of Full-Time Remote Learning
 - 1. The scope and expectations of the school district's full-time remote learning program will include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. The length of the school day pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3 and compliance with the Board's Attendance Policy and Regulation 5200; the provisions of the district's remote learning program outlined in the school district's Plan; and any other Board policies and regulations that govern the delivery of services to, and district expectations of, students participating in the remote learning program and their families;
 - b. The technology and the connectivity options to be used and/or provided to the student during remote learning; and
 - c. Any additional information the Principal or designee determines is needed to ensure the student, when receiving remote learning, will receive the same quality and scope of instruction and other educational services as any other



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student otherwise participating in school district programs
(i.e. students participating in a hybrid model).

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- (1) This includes, for example, access to standards-based instruction of the same quality and rigor as afforded all other students of the district, the district making its best effort to ensure that every student participating in remote learning has access to the requisite educational technology, and the provision of special education and related services to the greatest extent possible.

- d. The school district will endeavor to provide supports and resources to assist parents, particularly those of younger students, with meeting the expectations of the school district's remote learning option.

D. Procedures to Transition from Full-Time Remote Learning to In-Person Services

1. A parent may request their student transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services, if in-person services are being provided, by submitting a written request to the Principal of the building the student will attend. This request must be submitted at least ten calendar days before the student is eligible for in-person services.
2. A student is only eligible to transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services commencing at the beginning of the school year, at the beginning of each phase as indicated in the reopening plan, or within five school days after receiving written approval of the Principal or designee.



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3. The written request from the parent for the student to transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services shall include:
 - a. The student's name, school, and grade;
 - b. The in-person program may only commence for a student transitioning from full-time remote learning to in-person services in accordance with D.2. above; and
 - c. Any additional information the Principal or designee determines would be important on the student's transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services.
4. A student previously approved for remote learning wanting to transition into the school district's in-person program must spend at least one phase of the school year as indicated in the reopening plan.
 - a. This will allow parents to make the arrangements needed to effectively serve students' home learning needs and will support educators in ensuring continuity of instruction for the student.
5. The Principal or designee will review the request for compliance with this Policy, and upon satisfaction of the procedures in this Policy, will provide the parent of the student a written approval of the student entering the school district's in-person program.



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Remote Learning Options for Families

- a. In the event the request does not satisfy the procedures outlined in this Policy, the Principal or designee will notify the parent in writing of the issues that need to be addressed by the parent to satisfy the procedures outlined in this Policy.
 6. Upon approval of the student's transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services, the school district will provide specific student and academic services to better assist parents anticipate their student's learning needs and help educators maintain continuity of services.
 7. School districts that offer Pre-K will consult their Pre-K curriculum providers regarding appropriate measures to assess a Pre-K student's learning progress during the transition from full-time remote learning to in-person learning.
- E. Reporting
1. To evaluate full-time remote learning, and to continue providing meaningful guidance for school districts, it will be important for the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to understand the extent and nature of demand for full-time remote learning around the State.
 - a. The school district will be expected to report to the NJDOE data regarding participation in full-time remote learning. Data will include the number of students participating in full-time remote learning by each of the following subgroups: economically disadvantaged; major racial and ethnic groups; students with disabilities; and English learners.
- F. Procedures for Communicating District Policy with Families



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1. The school district will have clear and frequent communication with parents, in their home language, to help ensure this important flexibility is as readily accessible as possible. Communication must include, at a minimum, information regarding:

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- a. Summaries of, and opportunities to review, the school district's full-time remote learning Policy/Plan;
- b. Procedures for submitting full-time remote learning requests in accordance with B. above;
- c. Scope and expectations of full-time remote learning in accordance with C. above;
- d. The transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services and vice-versa in accordance with B. and D. above; and
- e. The school district's procedures for ongoing communication with families and for addressing families' questions or concerns.

G. Home or Out-of-School Instruction

1. No provision of this Policy supersedes the district's requirements to provide home or out-of-school instruction for the reasons outlined in N.J.S.A. 18A, N.J.A.C. 6A, or any applicable Board policy unless determined otherwise by the Superintendent or designee.

[See the District's Restart and Recovery Plan – Appendix Q for the protocols/procedures for “Remote Learning Options for Families” which is outlined in the school district's Restart and Recovery Plan.]

New Jersey Department of Education Guidance Document:
“Clarifying Expectations Regarding Fulltime Remote Learning
Options for Families 2020-2021”



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CHART OF USEFUL LINKS

Conditions for Learning		
Section	Title	Link
Critical Area of Operation #1	CDC Activities and Initiatives supporting the COVID-19 Response and the President's Plan for Opening American Up Again	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/CDC-Activities-Initiatives-for-COVID-19-Response.pdf?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschoools-day-camps.html%20-%20page=46
	Childcare, Schools, and Youth Programs	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html
	People Who Are at Increased Risk for Severe Illness	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fpeople-at-higher-risk.html
	Considerations for Schools	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html
	Reopening Schools in the Context of COVID-19: Health and Safety Guidelines from Other Countries	https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/reopening-schools-covid-19-brief
Critical Area of Operation #2	ASHRAE Offers COVID-19 Building Readiness/Reopening Guidance	https://www.ashrae.org/about/news/2020/ashrae-offers-covid-19-building-readiness-reopening-guidance
	When and How to Wash Your Hands	https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html
Critical Area of Operation #3	Bullock announces phased approach to reopen Montana	https://nbcmontana.com/news/coronavirus/bullock-announces-phased-approach-to-reopen-montana
	What Bus Transit Operators Need to Know About COVID-19	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/bus-transit-operator.html
Critical Area of Operation #4	Stop the Spread of Germs (Printable Poster)	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs-11x17-en.pdf
	Handwashing (Printable Posters)	https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html

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Critical Area of Operation #5	Communicable Disease Service	https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/
Section	Title	Link
	COVID-19: Information for Schools	https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/covid2019_schools.shtml
	Quick Reference: Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Home Isolation for Persons Diagnosed with COVID-19	https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID-QuickRef_Discont_Isolation_and_TBP.pdf
	Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html
	General Business Frequently Asked Questions	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html
Critical Area of Operation #7	Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting	https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-04/documents/316485-c_reopeningamerica_guidance_4.19_6pm.pdf
	EPA Approved Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)	https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19
Critical Area of Operation #8	EPA Approved Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)	https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19
Social Emotional Learning and School Climate and Culture	A Trauma-Informed Approach to Teaching Through Coronavirus	https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/a-trauma-informed-approach-to-teaching-through-coronavirus
	CASEL – An Initial Guide to Leveraging the Power of Social and Emotional Learning as You Prepare to Reopen and Renew Your School Community	https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/CASEL_Leveraging-SEL-as-You-Prepare-to-Reopen-and-Renew.pdf
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)	New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS) Implementation Guidelines	https://www.nj.gov/education/njtss/guidelines.pdf
	RTI Action Network	http://www.rtinetwork.org/
	The Pyramid Model: PBS in Early Childhood Programs and its Relation to School-wide PBS	https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Pyramid-Model_PBS-early-childhood-programs_Schoolwide-PBS.pdf
Wraparound Supports	SHAPE	http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/SHAPE/

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	Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies	https://www.childcarenj.gov/Parents/Child-Care-Resource-and-Referral-Agencies.aspx
	Coronavirus Resources for Mentoring	https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/
Section	Title	Link
Food Service and Distribution	Benefits of School Lunch	https://frac.org/programs/national-school-lunch-program/benefits-school-lunch
Quality Child Care	Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies	https://www.childcarenj.gov/Parents/Child-Care-Resource-and-Referral-Agencies.aspx
	Division of Early Childhood Education	https://www.nj.gov/education/ece/hs/agencies.htm
Leadership and Planning		
Section	Title	Link
Scheduling	New Jersey Specific Guidance for Schools and Districts	https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/sped/guidance.shtml
Staffing	Mentoring Guidance for COVID-19 Closures	https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/teacherresources/mentguidance.shtml
	Educator Evaluation During Extended School Closure as a Result of COVID-19	https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/teacherresources/evaluation.shtml
	Performance Assessment Requirement for Certification COVID-19 Guidance	https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/teacherresources/edtpaguidance.shtml
	Educator Preparation Programs and Certification	https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/teacherresources/eppcert.shtml
Athletics	Executive Order No. 149	http://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20200530/7d/e6/d1/5c/09c3dc4d1d17c4391a7ec1cb/EO-149.pdf
	NJSIAA COVID-19 Updates	https://www.njsiaa.org/njsiaa-covid-19-updates
	NJSIAA provides return-to-play guidelines – Phase One	https://www.njsiaa.org/events-news-media/news/njsiaa-provides-return-play-guidelines-phase-1
	Guidance for Opening up High School Athletics and Activities	https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15_2020-final.pdf
Policy and Funding		
Section	Title	Link

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Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund	CARES Act Education Stabilization Fund	https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/boardops/caresact.shtml
	NJDOE EWEG	https://njdoe.mtwgms.org/NJDOEGMSWeb/logon.aspx
FEMA – Public Assistance	Request for Public Assistance (RPA) Process	https://njemgrants.org/site/rpasubmission.cfm
Section	Title	Link
Purchasing	New Jersey School Directory	https://homeroom5.doe.state.nj.us/directory/district.php?districtname=educational+services+commission
	NJSTART	https://www.njstart.gov/bso/
	Division of Local Government Services	https://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dlgs/
	Local Finance Notice – Coronavirus Response: Emergency Procurement and Use of Storm Recovery Reserves	https://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dlgs/lfns/20/2020-06.pdf
	Local Finance Notice – COVID-19 – Supplemental Emergency Procurement Guidance	https://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dlgs/lfns/20/2020-10.pdf
Costs and Contracting	E-rate	https://www.usac.org/e-rate/
	Technology for Education and Career (NJSBA TEC)	https://www.njsba.org/services/school-technology/
Continuity of Learning		
Section	Title	Link
Ensuring the Delivery of Special Education and Related Services to Students with Disabilities	IDEA	https://sites.ed.gov/idea/
	Guidance on the Delivery of Extended School Year (ESY) Services to Students with Disabilities – June 2020	https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/boardops/extendedschoolyear.shtml
Technology and Connectivity	Joint Statement of Education and Civil Rights Organizations Concerning Equitable Education	https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/Joint-Statement-of-National-Education-and-Civil-Rights-Leaders-o

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	during the COVID-19 Pandemic School Closures and Beyond	n-COVID-19-School-Closure-Updated-FINAL-as-of-5.15.2020.pdf
Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	Learning Acceleration Guide	https://tntp.org/assets/set-resources/TNTP_Learning_Acceleration_Guide_Final.pdf
	Mathematics: Focus by Grade Level	https://achievethecore.org/category/774/mathematics-focus-by-grade-level
	Teacher Resources for Remote Instruction	https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/teacherresources/teacherresources.shtml
	NJDOE Virtual Professional Learning	https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/teacherresources/virtualproflearning.shtml
Section	Title	Link
Professional Learning	Distance Learning Resource Center	https://education-reimagined.org/distance-learning-resource-center/
Career and Technical Education (CTE)	Communicable Disease Service	https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/covid2019_schools.shtml
	Considerations for Schools	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html