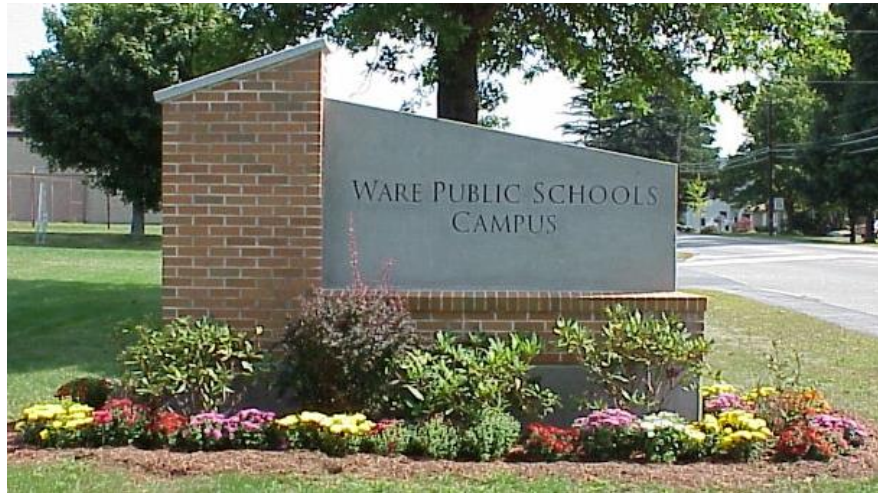


DRAFT RETURN-TO-SCHOOL PLAN



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INTRODUCTION

Since the closure of schools on March 17, 2020, there has been great anticipation for when students could return. On June 25, 2020, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provided to districts the Initial Fall School Reopening Guidance. Since that plan has come out, Ware Public Schools have been busy working on our reopening plan that reflects DESE's, along with the Department of Public Health, Center for Disease Control (CDC), and Pediatric Association guidance. The Reopening Plan addresses any possible crisis contingencies that our school system may encounter this year.

To transform how we do academic business during this time, to say the least, has been a herculean task. However, Ware Public Schools have put together a team of people that include the Senior Leadership Team (Principals & Directors) along with educators (some who are also parents), the Ware Teachers Association, Paraprofessional Association, and our Lead Nurse, who have all been working diligently to develop a plan that allows for students safe return to school.

The guiding principles of the plan include the following:

- Safety and emotional wellbeing for all students and staff
- Flexibility and fluidity
- Equity
- Address the educational and social needs of ALL students
- Provide appropriate professional development and training where applicable (technology, safety, cleaning, and hygiene)

Knowing that students need to be in school for academic, social, and emotional growth, it is essential that students return to school. This plan will address three models on the continuum for reopening of schools provided by the state: a full return model, a hybrid model (some remote learning, some in-person learning), and a full remote model. The steps outlined in this plan are to ensure we create a safe and healthy environment for each model. Regular updates will be made to this plan based on information provided by DESE, the CDC, and applicable federal, state, and local agencies.

WHEN DOES SCHOOL START?

Our 2020-2021 school year calendar that was approved by the School Committee on June 24, 2020 can be viewed [HERE](#).

PHASES AND TIMELINES

Information and direction about the phases and timeline will be sent to all employees, students, and parents before implementation. Please see below for a summary of the phases and timelines.

Phase	Timing	Items
Planning	JUNE TO AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplies, equipment Prepare a detailed work schedule for phases Prepare building and transportation for reopening with a thorough cleaning
Phase 1	July/August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement social distancing protocol and open facilities with limited access/use
Phase 2	July/August TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand use of school-based on recommendations and data from CDC, and local health officials
Phase 3	AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open school Operate based on recommendations and data from the CDC, local health officials, Governor Baker, and Commissioner Riley. Determine what restrictions/guidelines stay in place

SOCIAL DISTANCING-PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distancing: Physical distancing is another essential practice that helps mitigate the transmission of the virus. While the U.S. federal CDC has recommended maintaining a physical distance of six feet between individuals, the World Health Organization's guidance states approximately one meter. There is no precise threshold for safety; indeed, studies suggest that physical distancing of three feet or more leads to reduced transmission, with additional distance providing additional protection. For instance, in a study of household transmission in China, keeping at least three feet of distance was associated with one-fourth the number of transmissions.¹ It is important to note that six feet distancing is emphasized in public health advisories, especially when no mask/face covering is worn.

DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS

As reviewed and advised by the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center Medical Advisory Group, schools should aim for a physical distance of six feet when feasible, and three feet is the minimum distance allowed. Schools should seek to maximize physical distance among individuals within their physical and operational constraints.

VISITOR RESTRICTIONS

Ware Public Schools will not allow visitation to our campus until (reopening date to be determined). Only Ware Public School staff will be permitted on campus during preparation for reopening. These visitor restrictions apply to student drop off and pick up at all schools. If a parent needs to release a student early, parents will remain outside and communicate through the intercom. Once I.D. is verified, the child will be brought to the parent outside.

TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

All employees of the Ware Public School district will discontinue travel to conferences and workshops until further notice unless pre-approved by the Superintendent.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOL

- Training for staff and students that promote behaviors that reduce the spread of the virus.
- Promotion of mitigation practices such as staying home when sick.
- Practicing hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (including handwashing with soap and water regularly)
- All staff will be required to affirm; they are not experiencing Covid-19 symptoms before entering a building.
- Required face coverings
- Staff whose role may require additional personal protective equipment (e.g., face shields and gloves) based on their job duties will have those items provided to them by the nurse.
- Proper ventilation and increased air circulation (opening windows and doors when possible)
- Limiting the sharing of object and supplies.
- Rearranging seating in classrooms and offices to allow for a minimum of 3 feet of space and 6 feet where possible.
- Food consumption in smaller, controlled settings (classrooms) or on staggered meal schedules to eliminate large groups.
- Outdoor physical education, whenever possible.
- An "isolation area" will be designated in all school buildings for anyone who experiences Covid-19 symptoms or feels unwell.

NURSE (NON-COVID SITUATIONS)

- There will be no more than two students allowed inside of the nurse's office at a time in order to maintain social distancing.
- Medication administration will be staggered to comply with social distancing
- Per the Department of Public Health, nebulizers may not be used in the school setting at this time.
- Guidance for parents will be provided as to when they should keep their child home.
- Visits to the nurse's office should be kept to scheduled visits, emergencies, injuries, and suspected illness.

- Students should not have another student accompany them to the office. If a teacher feels the student needs assistance, they may call the office and ask that the nurse escort the student to the office.

Ware Public Schools will ensure that if students and staff who become sick at school or who arrive at school, sick are sent home as soon as possible. Keep anyone sick separate from well students and staff until the sick person can be sent home.

If you have been diagnosed with COVID19

Immediately notify local health officials. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action for our schools. Ware Public Schools will likely dismiss students and most staff for 2-5 days. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and for custodial staff to clean and disinfect the affected facilities. Administrators will work with the local health officials to determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19.

GUIDANCE IF EXPOSED

Current guidance based on community exposure, for asymptomatic persons exposed to persons with known or suspected COVID-19 or possible COVID-19

Person	Exposure to	Recommended Precautions for the Public
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An individual who has had close contact (<6 feet)** for ≥15 minutes*** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A person with COVID-19 who has symptoms (in the period from 2 days before symptom onset until they meet criteria for discontinuing home isolation; can be laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) A person who has tested positive for COVID-19 (laboratory-confirmed) but has not had any symptoms (in the two days before the date of specimen collection until they meet criteria for discontinuing home isolation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home until 14 days after last exposure and maintain social distance (at least 6 feet) from others at all times Self-monitor for symptoms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check temperature twice a day Watch for fever*, cough, or shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19 Avoid contact with people at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop
All U.S. residents, other than those with a known risk exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible unrecognized COVID-19 exposures in U.S. communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice social distancing and other personal prevention strategies Be alert for symptoms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch for fever*, cough, or shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19 Check temperature if symptoms develop Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop

COVID-19 RELATED ISOLATION SPACE

In order to minimize transmission of COVID-19, schools must ensure they have an isolated space available for students displaying COVID-19 symptoms. Our initial requirements and related guidance are as follows:

- Schools are required to designate a COVID-19 related isolation space that is separate from the nurse's office or another area where routine medical care is provided. A student

who shows COVID-19 symptoms during the school day should be moved to the specific room pre-designated for medical-related isolation until they can be picked up by a family member. More information about steps to safely discharge students will be provided in future guidance.

COVID-19 ILLNESS WHILE AT SCHOOL

If an employee or student becomes ill on-campus/district, he/she will immediately report to the district **nurse's isolation room**. Once the employee or student arrives at the isolation room, immediately provide them with a mask and gloves. Explain that this is to help protect other employees and students and prevent the spread of the potential virus.

- The nurse must call the local health authority and report the suspected case was sent home.
- The nurse and others attending the suspected infected person should also wear a protective mask and gloves while working with the suspected infected person.
- The nurse will direct the ill employee to leave work or call the parent of the student to be picked up and go home.
- The nurse and campus/district supervisor must identify persons who may have come in contact with the suspected infected person. *Unless required by the local health authority, the name of the employee should not be provided.*
- Advise employees that they may have been in contact with a suspected employee and to carry out self-screening every morning, and based on the results, contact the building principal and nurse.
- The isolation area and suspected employee's or student's work area/classroom must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, in addition to all other common surfaces recently touched by the employee or student.

WHEN CAN I RETURN TO WORK OR SCHOOL?

If you have tested positive with COVID19, you may return to work when all criteria have been met.

1. At least three days (72 hours) since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and resolution of respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
2. At least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Per the initial supply guidance issued by DESE, schools should have an inventory of standard healthcare supplies (e.g., masks and gloves). Use of additional supplies may be optional based on the type of tasks performed (e.g., teachers do not need to wear gloves while teaching but may need to during necessary contact with students, such as

when providing physical support to students with disabilities). All districts are eligible for federal CARES Act funds to support these purchases.

Masks: At this time, our initial requirements and related guidance are as follows:

- **Students in grades two and above are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers their nose and mouth.** Students in kindergarten and grade one should be encouraged to wear a mask/face covering. Face shields may be an option for those students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings. Transparent masks may be the best option for both teachers and students in classes for deaf and hard of hearing students. They may also be useful for teachers and younger students who rely on visual/facial cues.
- **Adults, including educators and staff, are required to wear masks/face coverings.**
- **Exceptions to mask/face covering requirements** must be made for those for whom it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors.
- **Mask breaks** should occur throughout the day. The breaks should happen when students can be six feet apart and ideally outside or at least with the windows open. Further guidance on mask breaks, including duration and frequency, will be forthcoming, as well as more information about properly removing and putting on masks.
- **Masks/face coverings should be provided by the student/family**, but extra disposable face masks should be made available by the school for students who need them. Reusable masks/face coverings provided by families should be washed by families daily. Districts and schools with families experiencing financial hardship and unable to afford masks/face coverings should endeavor to provide masks for students through grant funds described earlier in this document.
- Masks/face coverings are required to be worn by everyone on the bus during school bus transportation.
- Transparent face coverings provide the opportunity for more visual cues. They should be especially considered as an alternative for younger students, students who are deaf and hard of hearing, and their teachers.

Gloves: Touching your face with contaminated hands, whether gloved or not, poses a significant risk of infection. Wearing gloves does not diminish the need to wash your hands. Please remember to wash your hands properly as it is the number-one defense against any virus. Additionally, the proper removal of gloves reduces the risk of being exposed to contamination.

Please note that social distancing should still be practiced even with the use of gloves and masks.

In addition to using PPE, please remember:

Hand hygiene: Handwashing and hand sanitizing: Handwashing removes pathogens from the surface of the hands. While handwashing with soap and water is the best option, alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60 percent ethanol or at least 70 percent isopropanol) may be utilized when handwashing is not available. As has always been the case, handwashing should be used whenever hands are visibly soiled and after using the bathroom. Our initial requirements and related guidance are as follows:

- Students and staff are required to exercise hand hygiene (handwashing or sanitizing) upon arrival to school, before eating, before putting on and taking off masks, and before dismissal.

- **Handwashing:** When handwashing, individuals should use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with an individual disposable towel.
- **Hand sanitizing:** If handwashing is not feasible, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent ethanol or at least 70 percent isopropanol content can be used. Hand sanitizer should be applied to all surfaces of the hands and in sufficient quantity that it takes 20 seconds of rubbing hands together for the sanitizer to dry. Hand sanitizer should be placed at key locations (e.g., building entrances, cafeteria, and classrooms).

Guidance will be provided to staff regarding the specific PPE that is expected for them based on their role and responsibilities.

SHARED WORKSPACE/CLASSROOM SPACE

Employees are encouraged to disinfect their workspace multiple times throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces. Each school has alcohol-based hand sanitizers throughout the workplace and in common areas. Cleaning sprays and wipes are also available to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as telephones and keyboards. The Custodial Team will clean all workspaces at their designated cleaning time.

Please note that proper equipment such as acceptable disinfectant and PPE should be used when cleaning individual workspaces.

- Discourage the sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.
- Keep each child's belongings separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize the sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each student their own art supplies, equipment) or limit the use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.

There will be limited access to certain workspaces to reduce exposure to risks and ensure employee safety. Workspace usage is as follows:

Capacity– Each school will be monitoring the number of employees in the offices while the risk of infection exists and begins to diminish.

Conference Rooms– Certain conference rooms will be closed until further notice. All meetings are required to use M.S. Teams as a virtual option, even for employees in the office or school.

Breakrooms or Teacher Lounge/Multipurpose Room–These spaces will be reserved for classrooms if necessary. Otherwise, they will be monitored to comply with the social distancing policy above. This includes the use of shared appliances such as coffee machines, refrigerators, and microwaves.

FACILITIES CLEANING

The safety of our employees and students are our first priority. Upon reopening, our schools will have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. In addition to the deep clean off the office and school before employees and students return, the cleaning steps outlined below are to be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc. to protect employees and reduce the risk of spread of infection. We will require employees to maintain this safety standard by continuously cleaning and disinfecting based on the frequency stated below.

CLEAN

- Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect.
- Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use disinfectant.
- Cleaning with soap and water reduces the number of germs, dirt, and impurities on the surface. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces.
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.
- High touch surfaces include:

Tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.

BUILDING SANITATION:

Our site-level custodial and maintenance teams will clean our facilities daily using industry-standard COVID-19 cleaning procedures. In addition to this, each school will receive a deep sanitization process every Friday (or another day TBD) during the school year during face-to-face operations (100% in-person or hybrid model).

Specialized Cleaning Routines: Each school and district facility will have all touchpoints (*listed below) disinfected at least once each day in addition to daily cleaning of door handles, push bars, etc. The special weekly disinfecting process will continue throughout the school year. All custodians have been trained on the use of the "electro-static sprayers which are deployed to provide supplemental support for schools and facilities.

Daily Cleaning Routines: In addition to the special work outlined above, custodians are performing their regular daily cleaning, including wiping down tables, chairs, and other surfaces, emptying trash, cleaning restrooms, vacuuming, and cleaning floors.

Specialized Cleaning Products: A very powerful cleaner concentrate, specially mixed at a level designed to mitigate germ transfer, is being applied by trained staff to disinfect all touchpoints* and surfaces in our schools. For the safety of students and staff, this chemical is being applied when classrooms and other spaces are not occupied. The specialized strength disinfectant requires special handling and cannot be applied by anyone other than trained staff.

Approved School Cleaning Products: A pre-mixed; disinfectant can be used by custodians and other staff as necessary to clean up common school issues.

HAND SANITIZER:

Wall-mounted and free-standing hand sanitizing stations are being installed in all schools at various locations. Adults should always supervise the use of hand sanitizers by children.

*Touchpoints:

- Door handles & push bars & push plates everywhere
- Light switches
- Classroom door windows
- Classroom sinks and faucet handles, counters
- Classroom tables/chairs
- Elevator push buttons
- Water fountains/bottle filling stations
- Restroom doors, handles and push plates
- ADA Bars
- Toilet and urinal handles
- Sink and faucet handles
- Computer keyboards and touch screens
- Toilet paper, soap, and paper towel dispensers and handles

DISINFECT

- Recommend use of EPA-registered disinfectant.
Follow the instructions on the label to ensure the safe and effective use of the product.
Many products recommend:
 - Keeping surface wet for a period of time (see product label).
 - Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during the use of the product.

Always read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use.

- Wear skin protection and consider eye protection for potential splash hazards
- Ensure adequate ventilation
- Use no more than the amount recommended on the label
- Use water at room temperature for dilution (unless stated otherwise on the label)
- Avoid mixing chemical products
- Label diluted cleaning solutions
- Store and use chemicals out of the reach of children and pets
- Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used if appropriate for the surface.
 - Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection and has a sodium hypochlorite concentration of 5%–6%. Ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening, may not be suitable for disinfection.

- Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
Leave the solution on the surface for at least 1 minute.

SOFT SURFACES

For soft surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and curtains

- Clean the surface using soap and water or with cleaners appropriate for use on these surfaces.
- Launder items (if possible) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.

OR

- Disinfect with an EPA-registered household disinfectant that meets EPA's criteria for use against COVID-19.
- Vacuum as usual.

ELECTRONICS

For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls,

- Consider putting a wipeable cover on electronics.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfecting.
- If no guidance, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

The goal is to establish a sanitary baseline before the site opens. The site should be 100% disinfected prior to anyone returning to work.

DEEP CLEANING AND DISINFECTION PROTOCOL

Deep cleaning is triggered when an active employee or student is identified as positive for COVID 19 based on testing.

Close off areas visited by the ill person. Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area. Wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection.

Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment (like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

Once the area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use. Staff without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.

SIGNAGE

- Post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face covering).
- Toileting and diapering protocols, including extra COVID-19 steps, must be posted in the bathroom changing area.
- Broadcast regular announcements on reducing the spread of COVID-19 on P.A. systems.
- Include messages (for example, videos) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families (such as on school websites, in emails, and on school social media accounts).
- Find free CDC print and digital resources on CDC's communications resources main page.

FOOD/LUNCH

Prepare to hold breakfast and lunch in classrooms instead of the cafeteria, as it is assumed that masks/face coverings will not be worn during meals. To achieve six feet of physical distance between individuals, consider ways to conduct breakfast and lunch (e.g., stagger time, build in other breaks, etc.). If serving food in the cafeteria, develop staggering schedules that minimize the mixing of cohorts, and enforce physical distancing protocols. Adjust food preparation and service procedures to minimize shared items (i.e., serving utensils), maintain physical distance, and support compliance with health and safety. For students continuing with remote learning, provide school meals as needed for days they are not in the school building.

Bringing or sharing refreshments is prohibited to limit the risk of contamination. Snack items, candy, and drinks will not be provided until further notice (vending machines). We ask that there be no food delivered and that food be kept at your assigned workspace. Personal deliveries, such as packages, should not be delivered to your school's office.

FOOD SERVICE OPERATIONS:

During school closure operations, our food service department's professionals prepared and distributed 39,054 individual meals to hungry students at three meal distribution sites. This same nutrition team will be able to adapt to any scenario for reopening and will continue to serve a beacon of excellence in food service. We will be prepared to serve breakfast and lunch five days per week, regardless of whether we are remote or in-person. Our team is ready to provide a combination of grab & go or any configuration needed to ensure our students are well feed. Of course, some modifications will be required from an operational standpoint to ensure safety, but we are confident we can accomplish this.

EDUCATOR LUNCHTIME/PREP TIME

To be determined by Building Principal as outlined in each building's Return to School Plan. Educators will be provided a duty free lunch period and prep period in accordance with the current Ware Teachers Association contract.

VENTILATION

Consider ways to increase facility ventilation (e.g., open windows through fall, perform an HVAC inspection)² Ensure that proper maintenance protocols are followed in terms of changing filters, etc.

HVAC AIR QUALITY SYSTEMS:

The school buildings of the Ware Public Schools have a variety of commercial HVAC systems. These systems, as you can imagine differ depending on age and school construction/design. The most important component of the HVAC mechanicals is the air filters, which are changed three times per year at each change of the heating and cooling cycles per our preventative maintenance plan. We also clean the cooling and heating coil surfaces, disinfecting them with approved chemicals and methodology. In the HVAC systems that include wall-mounted, or console type induction units, the cabinets and fan compartments are vacuumed and sanitized as specified by the manufacturer. We work to ensure that our HVAC systems have been properly and officially commissioned and are operating correctly. Commercial HVAC systems are typically designed to produce internal conditions with a relative humidity of 40-60%. Both the manufacturers and the commissioning agents require these standards to be met during installation and are checked every year per our preventative maintenance plan.

In modulating outside air systems, or systems that allow for adjustments to be made in outside air, we will be increasing the % rates of outside air into our controls. This requires increasing the system's exhaust air rate, which, in turn, dilutes the % of contaminants in the circulating air.

**Note: increasing the outside air rate or ventilation rate will likely result in increased energy usage and may result in mechanical difficulties to maintain the desired temperature and humidity within a building.* In summary, WPS has taken prudent and practical preventative measures to improve air quality in our buildings. We will continue these practices to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 to include the following:

1. HVAC preventative maintenance will be conducted as prescribed by the recognized industry standards and preventative maintenance procedures we have established.
2. Building maintenance staff will confer with service providers to ensure timely service is delivered to our buildings.

3. Ensure we are ever vigilant in checking and increasing outside air rates.
4. Maintain and review with regularity all preventative maintenance and inspection records to ensure and confirm that duty of care has been provided.
5. Upgrade and replace air filters with greater regularity to reduce COVID-19 transmission potential.
6. In buildings with windows that open, we will open windows for regular airflow during the day and in the evening when possible.

Across our district, we have over 246 individual filters within our HVAC systems. Changed 3 per year, we will use 738 separate individual filters in any given year.

Our HVAC systems are an integral systems component in our safety planning to reduce potential COVID-19 transmission rates as part of our broad-based multi-modal district-wide infection control strategy.

PREVENTIVE MATERIAL INVENTORY

WARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS HAS CONFIRMED IT HAS THE FOLLOWING AVAILABLE:

1. An adequate supply of soap, disinfection, hand sanitizer, paper towels, and tissues
2. A supply of gloves and other protective gear
3. Touchless thermometers on-site for employee and student screening

BUS DRIVERS/BUS PROTOCOLS/SEATING ON THE BUS

TRANSPORTATION HEALTH & SAFETY PRACTICE

- Mask/Face Coverings – All staff and students are **required to wear masks/face coverings** on the bus. Exemptions for students due to medical and or behavioral reasons.
- Physical Distancing – **Seat one student per bench.** Alternating sides for each row, to allow for approximately three feet of physical distance between students.
- **Children from the same household may sit together.**
- Ventilation – **Keep windows open at all times during operation**, unless it is not possible due to extreme weather conditions.
- Seat Assignments – Assign students to a **single bus** and a **particular seat.**
- Bus Monitors – Consider **adding bus monitor** for every bus to ensure strict adherence to health & safety guidelines.

FIRST STUDENT BUS COMPANY

Please click [HERE](#) to view Frist Student Bus Company Start Safe Bus Protocol

TRANSPORTATION GUIDANCE

Transportation: Operationalizing the guidance

Example Configuration

● Driver ● Student ● Monitor (optional)

Adjusted Capacity

Bus model	Maximum occupancy*	Percentage of full bus capacity
83-passenger	27	33%
77-passenger	25	32%
71-passenger	23	32%
47-passenger	15	32%
29-passenger	9	31%
26-passenger	8	31%
22-passenger	7	32%
14-passenger	6	43%

*Excluding students who could sit together from same household

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Strategies for Managing Capacity Constraints

- 1 Add additional routes to existing bus schedules
- 2 Stagger school day start and end times by cohort
- 3 Encourage parents/caregivers to transport their children
- 4 Encourage or facilitate carpooling within fixed cohorts
- 5 Promote walking and biking to school

5

CLASSROOM CONFIGURATION

To the extent possible, desks should be spaced six feet apart (but no fewer than three feet apart) and facing the same direction. Again, schools should seek to maximize the physical distance between desks within their physical and operational constraints. Alternative spaces in the school (e.g., cafeteria, library, and auditorium) should be repurposed to increase the amount of available space to accommodate the maximum distance possible. In these larger spaces, establishing consistent cohorts/classes with separation between the cohorts/classes provides another option to maximize these spaces safely.

STUDENT GROUPS

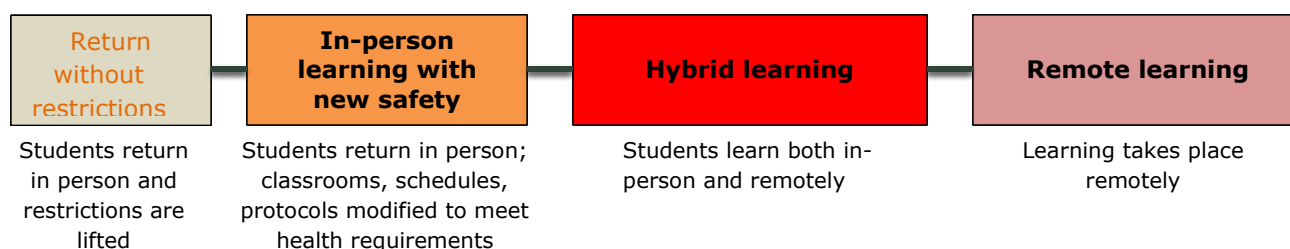
To minimize the number of students who would potentially be exposed in the event of a COVID-19 event, to the extent feasible, elementary schools should aim to keep students in the same group throughout the day. Middle and high schools are encouraged to minimize mixing student groups to the extent feasible. Our initial requirements and related guidance are as follows:

- **Cohorts:** Schools should divide students into small groups that remain with each other throughout the day, with smaller cohort sizes preferred. Schools should look for ways to isolate cohorts of students and prevent inter-group contact to the extent feasible.

- **Capacity:** There are no required maximums on cohort or group sizes, so long as schools adhere to the physical distancing requirements above. (This guidance for the fall will replace previous summer guidance at the start of the school year, assuming positive health metrics hold.)

FALL REOPENING PLANS

Each district and school will need to plan for three possibilities on the continuum of reopening: 1) in-person learning with new safety requirements; 2) a hybrid of in-person and remote learning; and 3) remote learning. In addition, all districts/schools will also need a focused plan for serving special student populations across each of these models.



1. In-person learning with new safety requirements: For the fall, the orange box represents our goal to get as many students as possible back into schools for in-person learning—safely. In this model, all students return in person to school settings that are appropriately modified to accommodate the health and safety requirements outlined above. Examples of modifications could include altered classroom configurations, setting up additional learning spaces, and schedule changes.

2. Hybrid learning: In addition, all districts/schools must create a plan for a hybrid model in the event they are unable to bring all students back to school under the health and safety requirements despite their best efforts, or in case of COVID-19 related circumstances. A hybrid model means that students would alternate between in-person and remote learning. For instance, students could switch between in-person and remote learning on alternating weeks or days of the week. Preschool-aged students with disabilities and students with significant and complex needs should be considered for continuous in-person learning to the greatest extent possible even if the rest of the school has entered a hybrid learning model (see ***Guidance on Fall 2020 Special Education Services and English Learner Education Services***).

3. Remote learning: All districts and schools are required to have a plan for operating a remote learning program. This model must be available for individual students who cannot yet return in-person, and for all students in the event of future classroom or school closures due to COVID-19. Remote learning models shall include the following requirements: Procedures for all students to participate in remote learning, including a system for tracking attendance and participation; Remote academic work aligned to state standards; and

A policy for issuing grades for students' remote academic work. Teachers and administrators shall regularly communicate with students' parents and guardians, including providing interpretation and translation services to limited English proficient parents and guardians.

Preschool-aged students with disabilities and students with significant and complex needs should be considered for continuous in-person learning to the greatest extent possible even if the rest of the school has entered a remote learning model (see ***Guidance on Fall 2020 Special Education Services and English Learner Education Services***).

HYBRID LEARNING MODELS When planning for a hybrid learning model, we recommend that districts and schools use an A/B cohort model that isolates two distinct cohorts of students who attend school in person on either different weeks, different days of the week, or half days each day. Students who do not have internet and or computer access at home should come into the school and or to a local partner or community organization, with appropriate supervision, to complete their remote learning school days. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education urges schools and districts to prioritize continuous in-person instruction for two particular groups of students with disabilities: preschool-aged students, and students with significant and complex needs in a hybrid, and remote, model.

Additional guidance on statewide support and resources for remote learning will be provided in the coming weeks.

HYBRID MODEL

THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE DETERMINED DURING THEIR July 22, 2020 MEETING THAT HYBRID LEARNING MODEL FIVE WOULD WORK BEST IF WARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT A HYBRID MODEL.

HYBRID MODEL FIVE		
Cohort A	MONDAY & TUESDAY THURSDAY & FRIDAY	IN-PERSON REMOTE
Cohort B	THURSDAY & FRIDAY MONDAY & TUESDAY	IN-PERSON REMOTE
Cohort A & B	WEDNESDAYS –	REMOTE LEARNING

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Districts and schools will be required to submit their comprehensive fall reopening plans (all three models) to DESE in August. In creating their plans, districts and schools should first prioritize developing an in-person learning model with new safety requirements

Learning time: Districts and schools should plan for an in-person return to school five days per week if feasible.

Utilizing alternative school spaces: Districts and schools should consider using their libraries, cafeterias, auditoriums, and other appropriate available areas to set up additional classrooms to accommodate more students, reduce class size, and or enable additional distancing while adhering to the health and safety guidelines. Teachers may also hold classes outdoors when feasible.

Utilizing external facility spaces: Schools should consider engaging community partners to find areas outside the school (e.g., libraries, community centers) to set up additional classrooms to accommodate more students, reduce class size, and or enable additional distancing while adhering to the health and safety guidelines.

Staffing alternatives to consider for reducing class sizes: Specialist teachers and other educators such as instructional coaches, reading specialists, and others who have appropriate certifications may be enlisted to serve as additional core teachers to reduce class sizes in schools.

Reducing the mixing of student groups: When in classrooms, all students should have assigned seating. At the elementary school level, students should be restricted to their grade level class to the greatest extent possible. At the middle school level, students should remain with their cohort throughout the day to the extent feasible.

INITIAL FALL REOPENING PLAN

The district COVID-19 point person will be Dr. Marlene A. DiLeo. Each building principal is the COVID-19 response leader for their building: Eugene Rich (J/S High School), Katie DeMars (Ware Middle School), Pam Iwasinski (SMK Elementary School).

Reopening Committee:

- Bill Alderman, Custodian Coordinator

- Jessica Bolduc, Director of Special Education, Civil Rights/Title IX Compliance Officer, & Parent
- Michael Brown, Director of Technology
- Jessica Bucknell, 4th Grade Teacher
- Katie Anne DeMars, Principal Ware Middle School
- William Deschamps, Director of Buildings & Grounds
- Dr. Marlene A. DiLeo, Superintendent of Schools
- Melissa Glanville, 2nd Grade Teacher & Parent
- Pam Iwasinski, Principal SMK Elementary School
- Jennifer Knight, Lead Nurse & Parent
- Elizabeth Musnicki, President Ware Teachers' Association, 3rd Grade Teacher, & Parent
- Dan Orszulak, Math Department Chair & Parent
- Eugene Rich, Principal WJSHS
- Nancy Slator, High School Special Education Teacher
- Shaunda Webber, President Paraprofessional Association
- Heather Weirbrick, Kindergarten Teacher

FAMILY SURVEY

Develop a family survey to support school reopening planning and scheduling.

Districts should consider surveying families multiple times throughout the summer and potentially into the school year. Districts and schools can use the survey to help determine:

- Children who will return to school in the fall in-person
- Children who will continue remote learning and for what reasons
- Children who need internet/technology access, and or other technical support or one-on-one guidance
- Children who will need bus transportation
- Families who are planning to use alternate transportation (e.g., drop off and pick up their children, have their children walk or bike)
- Families who will need food assistance and other essential services

PLAN FOR TRAINING

Build-in time in the fall calendar for training sessions for staff, students, and families.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

See ***Guidance on Fall 2020 Special Education Services and English Learner Education Services***

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

TBD

Schools and districts should continue to create safe and supportive learning environments and provide proactive support to prevent unwanted behaviors in each of the three learning models planned for the 2020-2021 school year. Proactive direct instruction for school- and class-wide routines, social skills instruction, individualized social stories, and other preventative measures will be necessary, particularly following the disruption to normal school routines. Schools and districts should engage in conversations with parents about how their child is doing emotionally and behaviorally, and partner with parents in planning for the transition to in-person learning. Schools and districts may also need to provide additional supports for promoting positive behavior and reducing challenging behavior as schools reopen. Students will reacclimate to learning and school life at different rates. Additional considerations regarding how anxiety and or trauma may impact the reintegration into normal school life should be considered, including providing Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 supports available to students under a multi-tiered system of support.

Under the present circumstances, schools and districts should utilize disciplinary action as a last resort for students with disabilities exhibiting behavioral challenges. Wearing of masks, maintaining social distance, adapting to new routines and protocols, and other nuances related to changes in the learning and the school environment may be challenging or frightening for students with disabilities. Retraining and development of strategies that directly address student concerns regarding the pandemic itself and or other current events should be integrated into lessons and or classroom routines.

Before administering discipline, it is critical that special educators and school administrators determine if behaviors deemed inappropriate are a result of situations brought about by the pandemic, or if such behaviors are caused by time away from in-person learning. Appropriate planning for newly-identified concerns should be part of reentry planning. In addition, restorative practices and other diversionary strategies should be utilized in place of punitive measures to help focus on correcting the concerning behavior. Additional de-escalation training and or training on trauma-sensitive practices for staff including school resource officers may be needed to support the transition back to full-time in-person learning in an environment altered by public health and safety needs, and the potential of increased behavioral concerns.

COMMUNICATION METHODS

To stay updated on the most up-to-date information:

1. Teachers, students, and parents need to check their email often.
2. Visit our district website

3. Follow our social media platforms
4. Ware Public School App

RESTROOM USAGE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Establish maximum capacity (and monitor) student's restrooms that allow for social distancing. Post the maximum capacity sign on the door. Provide supplies for teachers and staff to clean up after themselves in staff only restrooms.

LOCKER ROOMS

To be determined by Building Principal.

FACILITY MANAGEMENT

Prepare a “medical isolation room” for students/staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the school day. Consider removing large furniture (e.g., refrigerator, couches) from classrooms to maximize space available for student desks, and ensure desks are spaced according to the physical distancing guidance and facing in the same direction, to reduce the transmission of droplets. Where physical distancing is difficult to implement (e.g., office space, reception desks), consider installing barriers or changing the configuration to support student/staff health and safety. Repurpose communal areas (e.g., cafeteria, library) to provide additional classroom spaces. If feasible, redesign hallways to be one-way to avoid crowding or restrict usage where distancing is not possible. Establish procedures for student entry and dismissal from the building.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS ON WHICH DESE INTENDS TO ISSUE GUIDANCE:

- **Fall reopening checklist**, including operations, teaching and learning, student supports, training, and communications needs.
- **Process for handling a COVID-19 positive case** in the school community, including when a school or classroom would need to shut down.
- **Remote learning resources**. We are actively exploring how best to support districts and schools with improving remote learning.
- **Facilities and operations**, including entry and exit procedures, cleaning and ventilation, procurement, food distribution, and signage.
- **Transportation**, including bus scheduling options, addressing bus capacity, and alternative modes of transportation, and operational considerations.

- **Guidance for special programs and student supports**, including special education, English learner education, and other programs and supports.
- **Athletics, extracurriculars, and electives.**
- **Key policies**, including academic calendar considerations

SMK/WMS RE-OPENING PLAN

GETTING STARTED—HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

When Does School Start?

For those interested, a copy of the planned 2020-2021 WPS School Calendar can be found [HERE](#). Our return-to-school date for students is Wednesday, August 26th. *However, we may need to modify the 2020-2021 school calendar if the State reduces the school day requirement from 180 to 177 days to allow Massachusetts educators to participate in additional back-to-school planning and safety preparations. Staff members would then participate in three additional days of professional learning and back-to-school preparations.*

Your Return-to-School Options

Until we are able to return to school as we once knew it, we are providing three options for teaching and learning for the 2020-2021 school year: (1) In-person Learning with new safety requirements; (2) Hybrid Learning Model; or (3) Remote Learning Model. We anticipate that students and staff who are immunocompromised and can provide medical documentation will be able to participate in the Remote Learning Model that is offered online. Note that in any of the scenarios, students on IEPs and 504s will receive their required services. These services will take place either remotely or in-person, depending on individual circumstances.

Model 1—In-Person Learning w/ new safety requirements

- Students in grades two and above are required to wear masks/face coverings that cover their nose and mouth.
- Adults, including educators and staff, are required to wear masks/face coverings.
- Exceptions to mask/face covering requirements must be made for those for whom it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors.
- Mask breaks should occur throughout the day. Breaks should occur when students can be 6 feet apart and ideally outside or at least with windows open.

- Masks/face coverings should be provided by the student/family. Extra disposable face masks should be made available by the school for students who need them. Reusable masks/face coverings provided by families should be washed by families daily.
- Masks/face coverings are required to be worn by everyone on the bus during school bus transportation.
- Transparent face coverings provide the opportunity for more visual cues. They should be especially considered as an alternative for younger students, students who are deaf, hard of hearing, and their teachers.
- Districts are encouraged to aim for six feet of distance between individuals where feasible. At the same time, a physical distance of three feet has been established when combined with other measures outlined in the list of safety requirements.
- Student groups: to minimize the number of students who would potentially be exposed in the events of a COVID-19 event, to the extent feasible, elementary schools should aim to keep students in the same group throughout the day. Middle school is encouraged to minimize mixing student groups to the extent feasible.
- Screening procedures are not required at the point of entry to the school.
- Students and staff are required to exercise hand hygiene (handwashing or sanitizing) upon arrival to school, before eating, before putting on and taking off masks, and before dismissal.
 - When handwashing, individuals should use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with an individual disposable towel.
 - If handwashing is not feasible, hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or at least 70% isopropanol content can be used. Hand sanitizer should be applied to all surfaces of the hands and in sufficient quantity that it takes 20 seconds of rubbing hands together for the sanitizer to dry.
 - Hand sanitizer will be placed at key locations.

Model 2—Hybrid Learning Model

- The K-6 student population will be divided into two cohorts: Cohort A and Cohort B.
- Cohorts will be diverse, inclusive, and heterogeneous (mixed ability groups). The learning students do during the in-person learning days will be the same for both cohorts. The learning students do during the remote learning days will be the same for both cohorts.
- Students are divided into two (2) cohorts (see Table 1). One half attends remote learning days, while the other half attends in-person learning days, and then cohorts switch. Week 1: remote learning includes activities, such as: engaging in structured activities to preview content and practice skills, academic support from math and literacy coaches, special education, and English Language Learner (ELL) support, all as appropriate. Week 2: in-person activities include core and other subject areas at school, and all formal assessment happens during in-person weeks. Counseling support will be determined based on individual and group needs across both remote and in-person learning environments.

Table 1. Hybrid Learning Model

<i>Starting the Day</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students attend synchronous sessions, starting with a “Daily Morning Meeting” 	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>REMOTE</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students participate in asynchronous and synchronous activities at a pace that works for students and families. Teachers suggest completion times for all activities to help guide families. The bulk of remote work is designed to allow students to work independently, but with support as needed. Students will be challenged but not frustrated. As appropriate, students may also be supported and taught by various educators (e.g. special educators, teachers of English Language Learners, librarians, specialists, counselors, math coaches, and literacy specialists). 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>IN-Person</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are in school for the regular school day (9:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.). Students follow their regular schedule for both academic and specialist classes. Recess and lunch times remain the same; however, we anticipate that lunch will be served in classrooms.
<i>Ending the Day</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students attend a synchronous session for “Daily Closing Activities” for 15-20 minutes at the end of each day scheduled by individual teachers (e.g. read aloud, preview for tomorrow.) 	

Students at all grade levels on Remote Learning will be working independently at home and participating in synchronous activities with their teachers and fellow classmates. These activities will consistently include “Morning Meetings” and “Closing Activities.” **These synchronous learning activities will not be optional.** All grades K-6 students on Remote Learning/Green Weeks will be expected to attend these two daily activities and others assigned by their teachers, along with their peers. The regular teacher contact with students helps to build and maintain relationships and provide support as needed. These synchronous learning opportunities promote social-emotional well-being and develop the intercultural competencies we need to cultivate in the world today—the cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills that lead to effective and appropriate communication with other cultures.

Model 3—Remote Learning Model

The Remote Learning Model is designed specifically to respond to the needs of those students, families, and staff who are immunocompromised and can provide medical documentation, in addition to those students and parents who do not feel comfortable returning to school in-person at this time.

- Elementary and Middle School (K-6) students will be placed in fully remote classes, with a curriculum that aligns to that provided to students in the Hybrid Learning Model. They will begin their day with a synchronous learning experience that starts at 9:00 am. Asynchronous activities will be made available to early risers.
- Students in the Remote Learning Model will demonstrate their understanding of the standards taught through online assessments and projects. Students will be graded using our current grading policy.
- Attendance will be taken each day during the 9 am class block. The day will run from 9:00 am- 3:00 pm.

- **Table 2. Remote Learning Model**

REMOTE LEARNING Model
<p><i>Starting the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students attend synchronous sessions, starting with a “Daily Morning Meeting”
<p><i>During the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students participate in asynchronous and synchronous activities at a pace that works for students and families. • Teachers suggest completion times for all activities to help guide families. • The bulk of remote work is designed to allow students to work independently, but with support as needed. Students will be challenged but not frustrated. • As appropriate, students may also be supported and taught by various educators (e.g., special educators, teachers of English Language Learners, librarians, specialists, counselors, math coaches, and literacy specialists).
<p><i>Ending the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students attend a synchronous session for “Daily Closing Activities” for 15-20 minutes at the end of each day scheduled by individual teachers (e.g., read aloud, preview for tomorrow.)

Both Models 2 and 3 will require a parent/guardian to complete a Remote Learning Commitment Letter. This letter is an agreement between the parent and school that the student will participate 100% in the remote learning assignments and activities as described in the plan. It also commits the student to the remote learning plan (either hybrid or full) for a required amount of time, as specified in the commitment letter. Only the Superintendent can make changes to the Commitment letter date.

Student Orientations to New Learning Models

Students' return to school in August—regardless of the model—will include a robust orientation to the coming school year. Staff recognizes the need to spend time reconnecting with students and helping them reflect on their identity as learners following the emergency school closure and a summer hiatus. This need to build strong relationships with students will be true in the fall of 2020, more than ever. To prepare our community to engage with the levels of challenge and rigor appropriate to each individual student within these new learning models, staff will work collaboratively with each other and with families and students to provide the solid social-emotional foundation and conditions for thriving during the coming school year, including attending to students' basic psychological needs prior to diving into more traditional academic content. Specific time will be set aside at the start of school to reflect and reconnect.

We will all be learning how to function within this new educational landscape, and to that end, staff will orient themselves and their students to the social norms of the physical and digital environments in which we will operate. This orientation will include explicit instruction in health and safety protocols and extensive review of acceptable and responsible-use policies for synchronous and asynchronous virtual learning activities. As has become the expectation for all WPS staff, we will strive to make this instruction inclusive for the various identities all our students and families hold, and we welcome feedback and partnership in that endeavor from and with our community at large.

A Process for Identifying Learning Gaps

During the period of an emergency closure. Families and staff expressed concern that their students are “falling behind,” as were families across the Commonwealth and nationwide. We are in the midst of a pandemic, we share these concerns, and we are working proactively to address them.

In the spring, all educators worked to identify “bridge standards”—those standards that they felt were essential for students to focus on at the end of the year, helping to smooth their entry to the next grade this fall.

During August PD, curriculum leaders and educators will begin to modify their lessons and activities to account for these significant variables. They will be engaged in professional learning to support their choices in instructional methods that are best-suited to remote learning. This process will continue throughout the year, with the expectation that regular educators work collaboratively with their special education and English Language Learner (ELL) counterparts to co-plan lessons that support learning for all students.

The goal in all of this is to develop a curriculum that is flexible and sustainable under learning conditions that are unusual and challenging for all involved. One significant difference from the learning that happened in the spring is that expectations will be very different for student learning. Assignments will not be optional, and the focus will be on both the social-emotional well-being of the students (a major focus of our work in the spring) and their traditional academic growth. To the extent possible, we will be returning to the norms we all recognize—teachers teaching students directly, students working on assignments and passing them in for grades, and students engaged in a wider range of classes and activities. Additionally, the various screening tools and diagnostic assessments typically used will continue to be used to identify areas of need for all students.

Feedback, Grading, and Assessments

Continued guidance from the Commissioner is expected under this section.

WJSHS RE-OPENING PLAN

GETTING STARTED—HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

When does school start?

For those interested, a copy of the planned 2020-2021 WPS School Calendar can be found [HERE](#). Our return-to-school date for students is Wednesday, August 26th. *However, we may need to modify the 2020-2021 school calendar if the State reduces the school day requirement from 180 to 177 days to allow Massachusetts educators to participate in additional back-to-school planning and safety preparations. Staff members would then participate in three additional days of professional learning and back-to-school preparations.*

Your Return-to-School Options

Until we are able to return to school as we once knew it, we are proposing three options for teaching and learning for the 2020-2021 school year: (1) In-person Learning with new safety requirements; (2) Hybrid Learning Model; or (3) Remote Learning Model. We anticipate that students and staff who are immunocompromised and can provide medical documentation will be able to participate in the Remote Learning Model that is offered online. Note that in any of the scenarios, students on IEPs and 504s will receive their required services. These services will take place either remotely or in-person, depending on individual circumstances.

Model 1—In-Person Learning w/ new safety requirements

- Students in grades 7-12 are required to wear masks/face covering that covers their nose and mouth.
- Adults, including educators and staff, are required to wear masks/face coverings.
- Exceptions to mask/face covering requirements must be made for those for whom it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors.
- Mask breaks should occur throughout the day. Breaks should occur when students can be 6 feet apart and ideally outside or at least with windows open.
- Masks/face coverings should be provided by the student/family. Extra disposable face masks will be made available by the school for students who need them. Reusable masks/face coverings provided by families should be washed by families daily.
- Masks/face coverings are required to be worn by everyone on the school bus or van during transportation.

- Transparent face coverings provide the opportunity for more visual cues. They should be especially considered as an alternative for younger students, students who are deaf and hard of hearing and, their teachers.
 - Districts are encouraged to aim for six feet of distance between individuals where feasible. At the same time, a physical distance of three feet has been established when combined with other measures outlined in the list of safety requirements.
-
- Student groups: to minimize the number of students who would potentially be exposed in the events of a COVID-19 event, WJSHS should aim to keep students in the same group throughout the day to the extent feasible.
 - Screening procedures are not required at the point of entry to the school.
 - Students and staff are required to exercise hand hygiene (handwashing or sanitizing) upon arrival to school, before eating, before putting on and taking off masks, and before dismissal.
 - When handwashing, individuals should use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with an individual disposable towel.
 - If handwashing is not feasible, hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or at least 70% isopropanol content can be used. Hand sanitizer should be applied to all surfaces of the hands and in sufficient quantity that it takes 20 seconds of rubbing hands together for the sanitizer to dry.
 - Hand sanitizer will be placed at key locations.
 - Students will enter and exit the building on a staggered schedule.

Model 2—Hybrid Learning Model

- Grades 7-12 will be divided into two cohorts: Cohort A and Cohort B.
- Cohorts will be diverse, inclusive, and heterogeneous (mixed ability groups). The learning students do during the in-person portion will be the same for both cohorts. The learning students do during the remote portion will be the same for both cohorts.
- Learning is organized into two (2) segments, and students are divided into two (2) cohorts (see Table 1). One half engages in remote learning, while the other half attends an in-person, and then the cohorts switch. Remote learning includes activities, such as: engaging in structured activities to preview content, review content, and practice skills. In-person activities include direct instruction and all formal assessments. Counseling support will be determined based on individual and group needs across both remote and in-person learning environments.

Table 1. Hybrid Learning Model

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Starting the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will report to their assigned teachers to take daily attendance and record. 	
Green: REMOTE LEARNING	White: IN-PERSON LEARNING
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>During the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students participate in asynchronous and synchronous activities at a pace that works for students and families. Attendance and participation will be tracked and counted. Teachers define completion times for all activities to help guide families. The bulk of remote work is designed to allow students to work independently, but with support as needed. Students will be challenged but not frustrated. As appropriate, students may also be supported and or taught by various educators (e.g., special educators, teachers of English Language Learners, librarians, specialists, counselors, and paraprofessionals). 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>During the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are in school for the regular school day (8:00 am - 2:25 pm). Every effort will be made to allow students to follow their regular schedule for both academic and elective courses. Some of the lunchtimes will remain the same; however, we anticipate that lunch will likely be served in classrooms. As appropriate, students may also be supported and or taught by various educators (e.g., special educators, teachers of English Language Learners, librarians, specialists, counselors, and paraprofessionals).
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Ending the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote Learners – Administrative Team will provide a weekly, end of the day, video conference to check in with Students. 	

Model 3—Remote Learning Model

The Remote Learning Model is designed specifically to respond to the needs of those students, families, and staff who are immunocompromised and can provide medical documentation, in addition to those students and parents who do not feel comfortable returning to school in-person at this time.

- WJSHS students will be placed in fully remote classes with a curriculum that aligns with the school curriculum.
- Students in the Remote Learning Model will demonstrate their understanding of the standards taught through online assessments and projects. Students will be graded using our current grading policy.
- Attendance will be taken each day. The day will run from 8:00 am- 2:25 pm.

Table 2. Remote Learning Model

REMOTE LEARNING Model	
<i>Starting the Day</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will report to their assigned teachers to take daily attendance and record. 	
<i>During the Day</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students participate in asynchronous and synchronous activities at a pace that works for students and families. Teachers define completion times for all activities to help guide families. The bulk of remote work is designed to allow students to work independently, but with support as needed. Students will be challenged but not frustrated. As appropriate, students may also be supported and or taught by various educators (e.g., special educators, teachers of English Language Learners, librarians, specialists, counselors, and paraprofessionals). 	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote Learners – Administrative Team will provide a weekly, end of the day, video conference to check in with Students. 	

Student Orientations to New Learning Models

Students' return to school in August—regardless of the model—will include a robust orientation to the coming school year. Staff recognizes the need to spend time reconnecting with students and helping them reflect on their identity as learners following the emergency school closure. This need to build strong relationships with students will be true in the fall of 2020, more than ever. In order to prepare our community to engage with the levels of challenge and rigor appropriate to each individual student within these new learning models, staff will work collaboratively with each other and with families and students to provide the solid social-emotional foundation and conditions for thriving during the coming school year, including attending to students' basic psychological needs prior to diving into more traditional academic content.

We will all be learning how to function within this new educational landscape, and to that end, staff will orient themselves and their students to the social norms of the physical and digital environments in which we will operate. This orientation will include explicit instruction in health and safety protocols and extensive review of acceptable- and responsible-use policies for synchronous and asynchronous virtual learning activities. As has become the expectation for all WPS staff, we will strive to make this instruction inclusive for the various identities all our students and families hold, and we welcome feedback and partnership in that endeavor from and with our community at large.

A Process for Identifying Learning Gaps

During the period of emergency closure. Families and staff expressed concern that their students are “falling behind,” as were families across the Commonwealth and nationwide. We are in the midst of a pandemic, we share these concerns, and we are working proactively to address them.

In the spring, all educators worked to identify “bridge standards”—those standards that they felt were essential for students to focus on at the end of the year, helping to smooth their entry to the next grade this fall.

Department Chairs are currently working on assessments that will be delivered in the fall in order to identify learning gaps.

During August PD, curriculum leaders and educators will begin to modify their lessons and activities to account for these significant variables. They will be engaged in professional learning to support their choices in instructional methods that are best-suited to remote learning. This process will continue throughout the year, with the expectation that regular educators work collaboratively with their special education and English Language Learner (ELL) counterparts to co-plan lessons that support learning for all students.

The goal in all of this is to develop a curriculum that is flexible and sustainable under learning conditions that are unusual and challenging for all involved. One significant difference from the learning that happened in the spring is that expectations will be very different for student learning. Assignments will not be optional, and the focus will be on both the social-emotional well-being of the students (a major focus of our work in the spring) and their traditional academic growth. To the extent possible, we will be returning to the norms we all recognize—teachers teaching students directly, students working on assignments and passing them in for grades, and students engaged in a wider range of classes and activities. Additionally, the various screening tools and diagnostic assessments typically used will continue to be used to identify areas of need for all students.

Feedback, Grading, and Assessments

Continued guidance from the Commissioner is expected under this section.

Appendix A: Protocols for responding to COVID-19 scenarios in school, on the bus, or in community settings

July 17, 2020

Introduction and overview

As a supplement to DESE’s Initial Fall School Reopening Guidance, we are providing districts and schools with additional information on protocols for responding to specific COVID-19 scenarios this fall. Protocols from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) related to this topic may be released in the coming weeks and this guidance may be updated accordingly. We will also be providing additional clarifying information through our FAQ process.

This guidance provides more information and protocols to answer the following questions:

- What should a district do if there is a symptomatic individual – at home, on the bus, or at school?
- What should a district do if someone in the school community tests positive for COVID-19 – be it a student, teacher, staff, or bus driver, or one of their household members or close contacts?
- Who should get tested for COVID-19 and when?
- In what circumstances would someone need to quarantine (when they have been exposed but are not sick) or isolate (when they are sick)?
- What should school districts do to monitor COVID-19 spread in their communities?

In our Initial Fall School Reopening Guidance, we put forth the goal of the safe return of as many students as possible to in-person learning. At the same time, we asked districts to plan for all contingencies by asking for three reopening models.

A safe return to in-person school environments will require a culture of health and safety every step of the way. Specifically:

- **It is not one mitigation strategy but a combination of all these strategies taken together that will substantially reduce the risk of transmission.** No single strategy can ever be perfect, but all strategies together will reduce risk. In addition, although we are currently in Phase 3 of Reopening Massachusetts, it will take collective continued vigilance towards health and safety measures to continue to contain COVID-19.
- **Staff must monitor themselves for symptoms daily and students, with the assistance of families, must also be monitored daily for symptoms. Staff and students must stay home if feeling unwell.** Everyone must do their part to protect others and not come to school if they are exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms or are feeling sick.
- **Masks are among the most important single measures to contain the spread of COVID-19.** We require students second grade and above and all staff to wear masks that adequately cover both their nose and mouth. Younger children are strongly encouraged to wear masks. Exceptions must be made for students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings.

- **Hand hygiene is critical.** Students and staff are required to exercise hand hygiene (handwashing or sanitizing) upon arrival to school, before eating, before putting on and taking off masks, and before dismissal.
- **Physical distance greatly reduces the risk of transmission.** As COVID-19 is transmitted through respiratory droplets, putting distance between yourself and others reduces risk. In classroom settings, when all parties are wearing masks, a minimum of 3 feet of separation is needed; if one or both parties are not wearing masks, 6 feet is needed. (Kindergarten and first grade students without masks may be 3 feet apart, but no less, which is permissible given the lower susceptibility of the age group).
- **Cohorts/assigned seating.** Students organized in groups/classrooms and other cohorts help mitigate transmission of the virus. Assigned seating is important because it effectively creates even smaller groups within cohorts which minimize transmission. Assigned seats can also assist with contact tracing. Wherever possible, seats should be assigned (including classroom, bus, meals).

To support a culture of health and safety, **schools must have robust and reliable ways to communicate with all families, students, teachers, and staff** in order to send and receive key messages related to COVID-19.

Preparing to respond to COVID-19 scenarios

Even as we remain vigilant, and public health metrics in Massachusetts remain positive, the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in school will not be zero. As we prepare to reopen schools, we must also prepare to respond to potential COVID-19 scenarios, whether in school, on the bus, or in our communities. Depending on the circumstances, a positive COVID-19 test, a potentially symptomatic student, or exposure to someone in the outside community who has COVID-19 can each have health, safety, and operational implications.

Be prepared to provide remote learning

When students must stay home for quarantine or isolation, teaching and learning should not stop. It is the school's duty to provide remote learning for students who cannot be in school for any extended period of time.

Testing, tracing, and isolation

It is important to note that testing, combined with contact tracing and isolation, helps control the spread of COVID-19 in Massachusetts. All test results, both positive and negative, are reported to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH). When a person has a positive COVID-19 test, it is the local board of health or the Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative that will reach out to provide support so that these individuals can remain safely in medical isolation. They will also ask for help to identify close contacts. These organizations will then reach out to the individual's close contacts to provide important information that is aimed to stop the spread of the virus, including how to safely isolate/quarantine. While these organizations will provide support, to further assist with contact tracing the student/family and staff are asked to reach out to their personal contacts and notify the school.

Self-isolation for COVID-19 positive cases is a minimum of 10 days

Most people who test positive and have a relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days. People who test positive can resume public activities after 10 days and once they have:

- a. gone for 3 days without a fever (and without taking fever-reducing medications like Tylenol); and
- b. experienced improvement in other symptoms (for example, their cough has gotten much better); and
- c. received clearance from public health authority contact tracers (the local board of health or Community Tracing Collaborative).

Repeat testing prior to return is not recommended. Return to school should be based on time and symptom resolution.

Close contacts of a positive COVID-19 case should be tested. For general guidance, DPH defines close contact as:¹

- Being within less than 6 feet of COVID-19 case for at least 10-15 minutes. Close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case while the case was symptomatic or within the 48 hours before symptom onset, OR
- Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on) while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment.

In school settings, close contacts include other students and staff who were within 6 feet of the student or staff for at least 10-15 minutes in a classroom, in other school spaces, on the bus, or at an extracurricular activity. In elementary and other school situations where the students are in self-contained classrooms for an extended period, all students/staff within this “cohort” are considered close contacts as they may have been within 6 feet of the person with a positive test result. Possible close contacts should not come back to school until they have been tested (or elected instead to self-quarantine for 14 days). If an individual test positive for COVID-19, then self-isolation is for a minimum of 10 days **and** until at least three days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms as noted. If the test is negative, the student/staff can return to school if asymptomatic and wearing a mask.

Most common symptoms of COVID-19 and testing requirements

The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to **STAY HOME**. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; please do not assume it is another condition. When in doubt, stay home.

Please STAY HOME if you have any of the symptoms listed.

¹ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-testing-guidance/download>

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves:^{2 3}

- ☐ Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- ☐ Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- ☐ Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- ☐ New loss of taste or smell
- ☐ Sore throat
- ☐ Headache *when in combination with other symptoms*
- ☐ Muscle aches or body aches
- ☐ Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- ☐ Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- ☐ Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

If staff or students have any of these symptoms, they must get a test for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to school.

Every school should have a list of available test sites.⁴ A [list of test sites is available here](#), and Massachusetts also has an [interactive testing map](#). Staff and students who have symptoms should also contact their primary care physician for further instructions. More information related to the availability of testing will be provided later this summer.

Please turn to the next page for information on protocols for possible COVID-19 scenarios.

² Massachusetts DPH, [Testing of Persons with Suspect COVID-19](#). (2020, May 13).

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

⁴ A [list of test sites is available here](#); this is Massachusetts's [interactive testing map](#)

Protocols for possible COVID-19 scenarios

While specific protocols vary, there are some common elements for each possible COVID-19 scenario:

- ✓ Evaluate symptoms
- ✓ Separate from others
- ✓ Clean and disinfect spaces visited by the person
- ✓ Test for COVID-19 and stay at home while awaiting results
- ✓ If test is positive:
 - Remain at home at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms
 - Monitor symptoms
 - Notify the school and personal close contacts
 - Answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative to help identify close contacts to help them prevent transmission
 - Secure release from contact tracers (local board of health or Community Tracing Collaborative) for return to school

The following pages outline protocols for the scenarios below.

Section 1: Protocols for individual exposure or individual positive test

Protocol: Student or staff tests positive for COVID-19

- Protocol: Close contact of student or staff tests positive for COVID-19
- Protocol: Student is symptomatic on the bus
- Protocol: Student is symptomatic at school
- Protocol: Staff is symptomatic at home
- Protocol: Staff is symptomatic at school

Section 2: Protocols for potential school closure (partial or full) or district closure

- Protocol: Presence of multiple cases in the school or district
- Protocol: Presence of significant number of new cases in a municipality
- Protocol: Statewide regression to a previous reopening phase

Quick reference sheet: Key actions for individual COVID-19 events

Event	Location of Event	Testing Result	Quarantine
Individual is symptomatic	If an individual is symptomatic <u>at home</u> , they should stay home and get tested. If an individual student is symptomatic <u>on the bus or at school</u> , they should remain masked and adhere to strict physical distancing. Students will then be met by the nurse and stay in the medical waiting room until they can go home. They should not be sent home on the bus. If an individual staff member is symptomatic at school, they should find coverage for their duties and then go home and get tested.	Individual tests <u>negative</u>	Return to school once asymptomatic for 24 hours
		Individual tests <u>positive</u>	Remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or MA Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days <u>and</u> until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.
		Individual <u>is not tested</u>	Remain home in self-isolation for 14 days from symptom onset
Individual is exposed to COVID-19 positive individual	If an individual is <u>at home</u> when they learn they were in close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19, they should stay at home and be tested 4 or 5 days after their last exposure. If an individual is <u>at school</u> when they learn they were in close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19, they should be masked for the remainder of the day (including K-1 students) and adhere to strict physical distancing. At the end of the day, they should go home and should not take the bus home. They should stay at home and be tested 4 or 5 days after their last exposure.	Individual tests <u>negative</u>	Return to school, if asymptomatic or once asymptomatic for 24 hours
		Individual tests <u>positive</u>	Remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or MA Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days <u>and</u> until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.
		Individual <u>is not tested</u>	Remain home in self-quarantine for 14 days from exposure

Section 1: Protocols for individual exposure or individual positive test

Protocol: Student or staff tests positive for COVID-19

1. The student or staff member must remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. For most people who have relatively mild illness, they will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.
2. The student's parent/caregiver or the staff member informs the proper school official (e.g. a designated person that is the COVID-19 school lead) that the individual has tested positive for COVID-19. The designated COVID-19 school lead in turn notifies others as pre-determined by the school (e.g., school leadership, school nurse or school medical point of contact, building management, maintenance).
3. Determine whether the student or staff member was on the premises during the time frame that started two days prior to symptom onset (or testing positive if not symptomatic) until the time of isolation.
 - a. If so, promptly close off areas visited by the COVID-19 positive individual until such areas can be cleaned and disinfected, if they have not been cleaned and disinfected already.
 - b. Promptly clean and disinfect the student's or staff member's classroom and any other facilities (e.g., extracurricular facilities) visited by the individual, if that has not been done already.
 - c. Promptly clean and disinfect the bus(es) the student or staff member was on, if any, and if not already done.
4. **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (e.g., student has self-contained classroom throughout the day):**
 - a. Send a communication to the other families in the student's class (e.g., cohort) that there has been a positive test without naming the individual student or staff member who tested positive.
 - b. Communications sent to families/staff should:
 - i. Inform them there was a positive test (not the specific individual) in the self-contained classroom.
 - ii. Explain that since they were within this cohort and may have been within 6 feet of the person with a positive test, they are considered a "close contact" and therefore should be tested. (In cases where the student may have been in close contact with others outside their cohort, having assigned seating and keeping up-to-date seating charts will help identify who should be instructed to be tested: specifically, those who were sitting next to the student, plus any others who also had close contact with the student.)

- iii. Instruct those designated as close contacts to isolate prior to their test and while waiting for the results. In general, as the highest yield test will be a few days after the exposure, ideally, the test should occur no sooner than day 4 or 5 after the last exposure. (In other words, if an exposure lasted several days, the best time to test is 4 or 5 days after the end of the exposure period.)
- iv. Explain that if close contacts choose not to be tested, the student or staff member should remain home in self-quarantine for 14 days.⁵
- v. Remind families and/or staff of the importance of not having contact with higher-risk individuals (e.g., grandparents and those with underlying medical conditions).
- vi. Remind families and/or staff of the list of COVID-19 symptoms for which to monitor.
- c. If the school finds out about the original COVID-19 positive test in the middle of a school day when the rest of the cohort is in class:
 - i. Make sure these students are wearing masks, including in kindergarten and first grade. Extra masks as may be needed should be provided by the school. Enforce strict physical distancing. Require students to wash their hands.
 - ii. The school should quickly identify the individuals who may be “close contacts” of the student and notify students and their families.
 - iii. Caregivers of students in the class or other close contacts may pick students up prior to the end of the day. Caregivers must wear a mask/face covering when picking up their student. Students who are close contacts and students with any symptoms should not ride the school bus to get home. Caregivers and students, as well as staff, should wash their hands upon arriving at home and change their clothes as a precaution.
 - iv. Close contacts should not come back to school until they have received the results of testing (or elected to instead quarantine for 14 days⁶) and are asked to communicate their test results to the school.
- d. As feasible, to assist with contact tracing, make a list including phone number and email of any other close contacts the student or staff member had, beginning two days before the onset of symptoms (or positive test if asymptomatic) until individual was isolated. Instruct those students and/or staff members to get tested according to the same protocol as the student’s cohort above.

5. MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL (e.g., no single self-contained classroom):

- a. The school should identify the student’s or staff member’s possible “close contacts” based on the assigned seating charts. The lookback period should begin two days before symptoms appeared (or two days prior to the date of the positive test if there were no symptoms) and include up until the time the student was isolated. Consider students and staff members who were within 6 feet of the

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

individual for 10-15 minutes in class, on the school bus, or at extracurricular activities.

- b. Follow the communication and other relevant Elementary School protocols above.
- c. Close contacts should be tested for COVID-19 at one of Massachusetts's test sites.⁷ Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.
- d. Instruct the student or staff member to isolate while waiting for the results of their test.
- e. An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead quarantine for 14 days⁸ and until asymptomatic.

6. IF OTHERS IN THE SCHOOL TEST POSITIVE: Perform all steps under this protocol for that person. **ALSO FOLLOW:** "Protocol: Presence of multiple cases in the school."

7. IF NO OTHERS IN THE SCHOOL TEST POSITIVE: Close contacts can return to school immediately if they test negative and do not have symptoms; however, strict mask wearing covering the nose and mouth must be maintained at all times. The wearing of masks includes K-1 students for this 14-day period. If they have symptoms but test negative regardless, they should wait until they are asymptomatic for 24 hours before returning to school.

Any area of the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual must be closed off and/or cleaned and disinfected. The area can be used 12 hours after cleaning/disinfecting has occurred.

⁷ [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?-](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?)

⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

Protocol: Close contact of student or staff tests positive for COVID-19

1. Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 should be tested.⁹
2. The student or staff member who was in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 should be tested at one of Massachusetts's test sites.¹⁰ Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment. An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead quarantine for 14 days¹¹ and until asymptomatic.
3. Close contacts should isolate at home prior to testing and while awaiting test results. Ability to mask is critical, so if the close contact cannot mask or is in K-1 and not masking they should not return for 14 days.
4. In order to return to school, close contacts need to have one negative test result and not be showing any COVID-19 symptoms, or if they do not wish to be tested, quarantine at home for 14 days. Because tests performed too early can be falsely negative, ideally the test should be performed no sooner than 4 or 5 days after the last contact with the person who tested positive.
5. **IF POSITIVE TEST:** The student or staff member should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms. **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** "Protocol: Student / staff tests positive for COVID-19."

⁹ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-testing-guidance/download>

¹⁰ [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?-](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?)

¹¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

Protocol: Student is symptomatic at home

1. Family should monitor students at home each morning for the most common symptoms of COVID-19 (see list above).
 - a. **IF NO SYMPTOMS:**
 - i. Send student to school.
 - b. **IF ANY SYMPTOM:**
 - i. Do not send the student to school.
 - ii. Call the school's COVID-19 point of contact and inform them student is staying home due to symptoms.
 - iii. Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested.¹² An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days¹³ and until asymptomatic.
 - iv. The student should get tested at one of Massachusetts's test sites.¹⁴ Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.
 - v. Isolate at home until test results are returned.
 - vi. Proceed as follows according to test results:
 1. **IF NEGATIVE:** Student stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
 2. **IF POSITIVE:** Student should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.¹⁵ **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** "Protocol: Student / staff tests positive for COVID-19."

¹² <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-testing-guidance/download>

¹³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

¹⁴ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?>

¹⁵ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/information-sheet-how-to-self-quarantine-and-self-isolate/download>

Protocol: Student is symptomatic on the bus

1. Although families are the most important first line of defense for monitoring symptoms, bus drivers and bus monitors also play an important role in flagging possible symptomatic students. Note: This will require training for bus drivers (and bus monitors, if applicable).
2. If symptoms are noticed as the student is getting on the bus and if there is a caregiver present, do not allow student to board the bus. Caregiver should then **FOLLOW:** “Protocol: Student is symptomatic at home.”
3. If student is already on the bus, ensure student is masked and keeps mask on. Ensure other students keep their masks on. Ensure student keeps required physical distance from other students.
4. Bus driver/monitor should call ahead to the bus service dispatch. The bus service dispatch should be equipped with appropriate cell phone numbers for school and district personnel (nurse or other medical personnel). The dispatch should contact the school to inform the school nurse (or school medical point of contact) of a possible symptomatic child.
5. School nurse (or school medical point of contact) should meet the bus as it arrives, wearing a mask. As practical, student with possible symptoms should exit the bus first.
6. Bus should be cleaned / disinfected.
7. Nurse (or school medical point of contact) should evaluate the student for symptoms (see list above: “Most common symptoms of COVID-19”).
 - a. **IF ANY SYMPTOM:**
 - i. Place the student in the designated medical waiting room. There is no specific capacity limit for the medical waiting room, but all students in the medical waiting room must be as far apart as possible, and no less than 6 feet. Strict mask wearing covering the nose and mouth at all times for every person in the room must be enforced. Students can work on individual schoolwork or other activities while in the medical waiting room.
 - ii. Contact caregiver for pick-up.
 1. **IF CAREGIVER CAN PICK UP DURING THE DAY:** Student waits to be picked up in the medical waiting room. Caregivers must wear a mask/face covering when picking up their student. Students should not ride the school bus to get home. Caregivers and students should wash their hands upon arriving at home and change their clothes, as a precaution.
 2. **IF CAREGIVER CANNOT PICK UP DURING THE DAY:** The student should wait in the medical waiting room until the end of the day to be picked up by caregiver. The student should not go home on a school bus with other students.

- iii. Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested.¹⁶ An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days¹⁷ and until asymptomatic.
- iv. Student should get tested at one of Massachusetts's test sites.¹⁸ Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.
- v. Isolate at home until test results are returned.
- vi. Proceed as follows according to test results:
 - 1. **IF NEGATIVE:** If the student does not have COVID-19, the student may return to school based upon guidance from their clinician and necessary management of another diagnosis. Student stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
 - 2. **IF POSITIVE:** Student should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.¹⁹ **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** "Protocol: Student/staff tests positive for COVID-19."
- b. **IF NO SYMPTOMS:**
 - i. If the evaluation shows the student does not have symptoms, send the student to class.

¹⁶ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-testing-guidance/download>

¹⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

¹⁸ [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?-](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?)

¹⁹ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/information-sheet-how-to-self-quarantine-and-self-isolate/download>

Protocol: Student is symptomatic at school

1. Although families are the most important first line of defense for monitoring symptoms, teachers will play an important role in referring possible symptomatic students to the school nurse or other medical point of contact. (Note: This will require training for teachers.)
2. Teacher ensures the student is wearing a mask that fully covers nose and mouth at all times.
3. Teacher calls the nurse or school medical point of contact to inform them that they have a possible case. Nurse or school medical point of contact comes to get the student from class.
4. Nurse (or school medical point of contact) should evaluate the student for symptoms (see list above: “Most common symptoms of COVID-19”).
 - a. **IF ANY SYMPTOM:**
 - i. Place the student in the designated medical waiting room. There is no specific capacity limit for the medical waiting room, but all students in the COVID-19 waiting room must be as far apart as possible, and no less than 6 feet. Strict mask wearing covering the nose and mouth at all times for every person in the room must be enforced. Students can work on individual schoolwork or other activities while in the medical waiting room
 - ii. Contact caregiver for pick-up.
 1. **IF CAREGIVER CAN PICK UP DURING THE DAY:** Student waits to be picked up in the medical waiting room. Caregivers must wear a mask/face covering when picking up their student. Students should not ride the school bus to get home. Caregivers and students should wash their hands upon arriving at home and change their clothes as a precaution.
 2. **IF CAREGIVER CANNOT PICK UP DURING THE DAY:** The student should wait in the medical waiting room until the end of the day to be picked up by caregiver. The student should not go home on a school bus with other students.
 - iii. Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested.²⁰ An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days²¹ and until asymptomatic.
 - iv. Student should get tested at one of Massachusetts’s test sites.²² Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or appointment.
 - v. Isolate at home until test results are returned.
 - vi. Proceed as follows according to test results:

²⁰ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-testing-guidance/download>

²¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

²² <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?>

1. **IF NEGATIVE:** If the student does not have COVID-19, the student may return to school based upon guidance from their clinician and necessary management of another diagnosis. Student stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
 2. **IF POSITIVE:** Student remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days and until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.²³ **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** “Protocol: Student or staff tests positive for COVID-19.”
- b. **IF NO SYMPTOMS:**
- i. If the evaluation shows the student does not have symptoms, send the student back to class.

²³ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/information-sheet-how-to-self-quarantine-and-self-isolate/download>

Protocol: Staff is symptomatic at home

1. Staff should monitor themselves at home each morning for the most common symptoms of COVID-19 (see list above: “Most common symptoms of COVID-19”).
 - a. **IF NO SYMPTOMS:**
 - i. Come to work.
 - b. **IF ANY SYMPTOM:**
 - i. Do not come to work.
 - ii. Contact the COVID-19 point of contact and/or other absence reporting mechanism established by the school.
 - iii. Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested.²⁴ An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days²⁵ and until asymptomatic.
 - iv. The staff member should get tested at one of Massachusetts’ test sites.²⁶ Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.
 - v. Isolate at home until test results are returned.
 - vi. Proceed as follows according to test results:
 1. **IF NEGATIVE:** If the staff member does not have COVID-19, they may return to school based upon guidance from their clinician and necessary management of another diagnosis. Staff member stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
 2. **IF POSITIVE:** Staff member should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.²⁷ **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** “Protocol: Student/staff tests positive for COVID-19”.

²⁴ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-testing-guidance/download>

²⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

²⁶ [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?-](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?)

²⁷ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/information-sheet-how-to-self-quarantine-and-self-isolate/download>

Protocol: Staff is symptomatic at school

1. As noted above, staff should be encouraged not to come to school if they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.
2. If a staff member suspects any symptoms during the day, they should follow the school's protocols for getting another adult to cover their class mid-day, if needed, and see the school nurse (or school medical point of contact) to be evaluated for symptoms.
 - a. **IF NO SYMPTOMS:** The staff member should follow the school's standard protocols for being excused due to illness.
 - b. **IF ANY SYMPTOM:**
 - i. Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested.²⁸ An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days²⁹ and until asymptomatic.
 - ii. The staff member should get tested at one of Massachusetts's test sites.³⁰ Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or appointment.
 - iii. Isolate at home until test results are returned.
 - iv. Proceed as follows according to test results:
 1. **IF NEGATIVE:** Staff member stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
 2. **IF POSITIVE:** Staff member should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.³¹ **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** "Protocol: Student/staff tests positive for COVID-19".

²⁸ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-testing-guidance/download>

²⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

³⁰ [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?-](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?)

³¹ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/information-sheet-how-to-self-quarantine-and-self-isolate/download>

Section 2: Protocols for potential school closure (partial or full) or district closure

Protocol: Presence of multiple cases in the school or district

1. If there is more than one confirmed COVID-19 case (students or staff) in the school at one time, or if there is a series of single cases in a short time span, school leaders and the superintendent should work with the local board of health to determine if it is likely that there is transmission happening in school.
2. For each individual case, **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** “Protocol: Student or staff tests positive for COVID-19.” Note that when there is one isolated case, the student’s close contacts will need to stay home and be tested, not the whole school.
3. When there is suspected in-school transmission *beyond one cohort or a small number of cohorts*, school and district leaders must consult with the local board of health as to proposed next steps. These steps could include, *for example*, making a decision to a) close part of the school or the entire school for a short time (e.g. 1-3 days) for an extensive cleaning or other facility mitigation, or b) close the school partially or fully for the longer duration of a 14-day quarantine period.
4. Should there be circumstances where there are multiple cases in multiple schools, school and district leaders must consult with the local board of health as to proposed next steps. These steps could include, *for example*, making a decision to a) shut down the district for a short time (e.g. 1-3 days) for an extensive cleaning or other facility mitigation, or b) shut down the district for the longer duration of a 14-day quarantine period.
5. **Before a final decision is made on a school or district closure, the superintendent must consult with DESE for further guidance.**

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6. If the decision is made to close for some number of days, the school and/or district should send clear information and instructions to families and staff:
 - a. Informing them that it is possible COVID-19 is being transmitted in the school and/or district
 - b. Noting that there may be more potential cases that are not yet symptomatic
 - c. Recommending students quarantine and not have contact with others
 - d. Reminding families of the importance of not having contact with higher-risk individuals (e.g., grandparents)
 - e. Reminding families of the list of COVID-19 symptoms for which to monitor
 - f. Ensuring that remote learning is immediately provided to all students

7. Before bringing students back to school:
 - a. Check inventory levels of needed supplies (e.g., disposable masks, soap, hand sanitizer, cleaning products); re-order replacement inventory
 - b. Consider a school-wide refresher training on the importance of correct hygiene procedures (masks, physical distance, handwashing)
 - c. Reiterate the critical nature of masks, physical distancing, and hand hygiene when students return to school

Protocol: Presence of significant number of new cases in a municipality

1. In the case of significant municipal outbreak, as determined by the local board of health or DPH, the superintendent and school leaders must consult with the local board of health to determine whether it is appropriate to close a specific school, schools, or an entire district.
2. **Before a final decision is made on a school or district closure, the superintendent must consult with DESE for further guidance.**

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Protocol: State-wide regression to a previous reopening phase

1. Massachusetts is tracking its overall statewide reopening in phases according to the [Reopening Massachusetts](#) plan. Currently, Massachusetts is in Phase 3 of reopening, where even more businesses can resume operations with specific guidance.
2. If Massachusetts moves back into a prior phase, DESE (in consultation with the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center) will communicate with school districts and schools to determine whether in-person school should continue.

¹Wang, Y., Tian, H., Zhang, L., Zhang, M., Guo, D., Wu, W., & Liu, B. (2020). Reduction of secondary transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in households by face mask use, disinfection, and social distancing: a cohort study in Beijing, China. *BMJ Global Health*, 5(5), e002794. Available at <https://gh.bmj.com/content/bmjgh/5/5/e002794.full.pdf>

²Morawska, Lidia, et al. "How can airborne transmission of COVID-19 indoors be minimized?" *Environment International* (2020): 105832.
