

Reopening Plan

Executive Summary Outline

On June 26, 2020, the Governor’s office and the Department of Education released “The Road Back: Restart and Recovery for Education.” This document mandates that New Jersey schools reopen for in-person instruction in September and provides guidance for districts to follow when developing reopening plans. The document presents guidance in four key subject areas:

1. Conditions for Learning
2. Leadership and Planning
3. Policy and Funding
4. Continuity of Learning

Each of the four subject areas include anticipated minimum standards that district should include in reopening plans. The document allows for great flexibility in determining reopening plans.

The full text can be found at the following link:

<https://www.nj.gov/education/reopening/NJDOETheRoadBack.pdf>

The New Hanover Township School District Reopening Plan Executive Summary Outline addresses the four subject areas and their corresponding anticipated minimum standards. It is a tool to aid in decision making and will serve as the foundation for the district’s final reopening plan.

As of July 15, 2020, the total student population of New Hanover Township School was 167 students with the following grade breakdown:

- PK-7
- K-13
- 1-20
- 2-14
- 3-20
- 4-25
- 5-18
- 6-17
- 7-20

8-13

School administration is recommending a full reopening of school in September for all students. The proposed summary outline addresses all recommendations from the Department of Education. In order to fully operationalize our reopening plan in a sustainable manner, we must first prioritize the health and safety of our students and staff. To do so, we must consistently focus on the following local priorities:

1. Establish and maintain student cohorts of 12-15 students
2. Create physical spaces that allow for social distancing (SD) of 6 feet
3. Utilize face coverings
4. Actively and consistently screen students and staff COVID-19 symptoms
5. Enhance disinfecting procedures
6. Receive community cooperation

All parts of the reopening plan are connected and require success.

Conditions for Learning

This section requires the district to secure physical and social/emotional safety needs.

Health and Safety Guidelines

1. Communicate with local and state health organizations. The point of contact for New Hanover Township School will be James Ingling, Emergency Management Coordinator for the Borough Of Wrightstown. Mr. Ingling will assist district officials in determining current, community mitigation levels.
2. Provide reasonable accommodations so that specifically at-risk students and staff can participate in teaching and learning.
3. Follow current CDC guidelines for schools and childcare programs. This will require that students maintain SD or wear face coverings when they are unable to do so. By cohorting students into groups of 12-15, the district can isolate students and limit the number of people they contact during an instructional day. Student cohorts will remain in one area and have staff move to them. This will include all specials and meals. Staff must be mindful of how this system will impact students' social/emotional well-being and plan to use outdoor spaces for instruction when possible.

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4. Promote behaviors that reduce viral spread. To accomplish this task, the district must train families and staff regarding the symptoms of COVID-19 and communicate the importance of staying home when appropriate. We will also strictly enforce student and staff compliance with regulations regarding face coverings and SD.

Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms

1. The district will create spaces for SD by grouping students into static cohorts of 12-15. Students will remain in one area and staff will move to them. Students will eat meals and have specials inside of their designate area. Community spaces such as the gym, cafeteria, media center, and unused class spaces will be utilized to reduce cohort size.
2. When students cannot maintain SD, they must utilize face coverings. They may remove them when they are appropriately distanced from other students.
3. Students will not use any shared items including but not limited to supplies, texts, and seating.
4. Each classroom will be supplied with alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Sanitizing stations will also be located at strategic locations throughout the building to match high trafficked areas,
5. The district's HVAC system was recently inspected by CM3.
6. Students will be permitted and encouraged to use restroom facilities frequently to wash hands. Staff will enforce proper respiratory etiquette.
7. To expand usable classroom space, district maintenance staff will remove all unnecessary furniture. Desks will be positioned facing the same direction to reduce the chance of airborne spread.
8. Classroom teachers will increase air circulation of air by opening windows when possible.
9. Students will store personal items in separate, personal spaces.

Transportation

1. Students will social distance to the greatest extent possible on busses. Regardless of conditions, students will be required to wear face covering while on busses.

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2. To reduce variance in regulations, the district will seek to limit the number of vendors it uses to fulfill transportation requirements.
3. To reduce the number of bus runs, the district will postpone all after school activities requiring bussing.
4. The district will communicate with transportation vendors regarding internal health requirements.

Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas

1. District staff will plan to utilize multiple entrance ways in the morning and multiple exit points in the afternoon. Students will be assigned entrance/exit based on method of transportation and/or cohort designation.
2. Visitors will be required to wear face coverings and remain in the office waiting area or outside the building. Visitors wishing to drop items for students will do so without entering the building.
3. Signs will be located throughout the building reminding students to wash hands, social distance, wear face coverings, and maintain one-way movement in hallways.
4. Spacers will be placed on outdoor surfaces where students will wait to enter the building.
5. Staff will dismiss students on a staggered schedule to prevent bottlenecks at exit points.
6. The district will employ additional staff to clean high highly trafficked surfaces such as keyboards, door knobs, desk tops, and light switches.
7. Maintenance staff will develop a checklist as protocol for cleaning and disinfecting.
8. Maintenance staff schedules will be adjusted to create increased coverage during afternoon periods.
9. All non-essential personnel will be required to exit the building by 4:00 pm daily.
10. The building will not be available to outside organizations until further notice.

Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms

1. All staff and students will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms daily. Screening will consist of visual and temperature checks.
2. Any student showing viral symptoms will be isolated in the back room of the nurse's office. The school nurse will remain in her designated area and will not be part of the screening team. She will provide guidance and support screeners during the daily process.
3. The district will notify local health officials, families, and staff of any confirmed cases.
4. The district will develop specific protocols for responding to confirmed cases. Protocols will be updated consistently and reflect most recent CDC guidance.
5. The district will provide students and staff with adequate PPE. This includes face coverings for all and optional face shields for staff.
6. Communicate with local health officials to provide necessary information for efficient contact tracing.
7. District personnel will provide families with assistance in identifying symptoms of COVID-19 and encourage them to keep students home when they are sick.
8. Staff and visitors will be required to wear face coverings unless doing so will compromise an individual's health. Students will be required to wear face coverings in circumstances where SD is not possible.
9. The district will provide additional professional development to staff prior to the start of the school year addressing applicable regulations and protocols.
10. District personnel will make screening accommodations for medically fragile students and staff.

Contact Tracing

1. Prior to the opening of school, district officials will communicate with local health officials to clarify its role in the contact tracing process.
2. Dr. Larkin will serve as the liaison to local health departments.
3. The district will train staff on the procedures for self-reporting and other responsibilities needed to participate in effective contact tracing.

Facilities Cleaning Practices

1. Maintenance staff will increase cleaning and disinfecting schedules. To aid in this process, the district will seek additional personnel to complete enhanced cleaning after students and staff have left the building.
2. Maintenance staff will flex schedules to overlap in the afternoon.
3. Maintenance staff will develop a daily checklist for cleaning to include classroom desks and chairs, lunchroom tables and chairs, door handles, handrails, kitchen, bathrooms, light switches, physical education equipment, telephones, keyboards, mice, and drinking fountains.
4. Maintenance staff will sanitize bathrooms throughout the day using products specified in EPA guidelines.
5. The district will purchase adequate cleaning supplies for consistent completion of daily checklist.
6. District administration will create a schedule for restroom facilities to prevent overcrowding. The district will also assign staff to supervise restrooms to enforce limited capacity.
7. The district will install clear plastic barriers in high trafficked areas such as the general office, child study team office, and therapy areas.
8. Students will remain in cohorts to reduce potential contamination.
9. Teachers will keep doors open to reduce touching knobs.
10. Paraprofessionals will monitor hallways and common areas to enforce social distancing and reducing crowding.
11. The district will communicate with transportation vendors to align local procedures.
12. The district will provide training to district staff, maintenance and teaching, on methods of preventative sanitizing.

Meals

1. Students will eat all meals, breakfast and lunch, inside classrooms.
2. Maintenance staff schedules will be flexed to allow for sanitizing of desk tops following meal periods.
3. Students will remain SD during meal periods.

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4. Food service staff will deliver meals to classrooms.
5. Food service staff will follow proper hygiene protocol.
6. When possible, students can eat meals outside, remaining with their cohort.
7. Staff will monitor students to ensure they do not share food.
8. Food service staff will serve meals on disposable trays.
9. District administration will schedule meal times to limit traffic in hallways and bathrooms.
10. The district will purchase additional trash cans to place inside classrooms during meal periods.

Recess and Physical Education

1. Recess times will be staggered limit number of students outside at one time. When multiple cohorts are outside together, they will use different areas of the playground.
2. District officials will designate segregated areas using cones or flags.
3. The current physical plan does not require use of the of the gymnasium for classroom space. All efforts will be made to create a physical education schedule that allows for the use of the gym while maintaining cohorts. When possible, physical education classes will be held outdoors.
4. All equipment used during physical education and recess will cleaned and sanitized after each use.

Field Trips, Extra-curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

1. Currently, the district will postpone all athletics and after school activities excluding aftercare. Administration will reevaluate this decision for the winter athletic season.
2. The district will postpone all use of facility requests until the winter season.
3. No field trips will be approved by district administration. Staff are encouraged to seek virtual field trip experiences.
4. All non-essential personnel will be required to exit the building prior to 4 pm daily.

Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports

1. The district recognizes that importance of supporting student and staff non-instructional needs. To identify and meet these needs, district personnel will utilize Multi-tiered Systems of Support, universal screening, collaborative problem solving, family engagement, data-driven decision making, wraparound supports, mental health supports, academic enrichment, medical and dental care, mentoring, and food service distribution.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Culture and Climate

1. The district recognizes the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on students and staff.
2. The district will provide staff with time and space to reconnect with peers, share support that promotes healing, and begin to reenter the building physically and emotionally.
3. The district will prioritize self-care and wellness throughout SY 20/21 regardless of learning environment.
4. The district will support staff access to mental and behavioral health resources.
5. The district will create opportunities for staff to reflect on personal social and emotional competencies.
6. Staff will assist students in re-establishing school routines and maintaining clear communication.
7. All staff will prioritize relationships and well-being over assignment completion and behavioral compliance.
8. School community members will support students and staff in feeling safe, connected, and hopeful.

Leadership and Planning

This section will address guidance for school leaders in preparing school-wide logistical operations.

Pandemic Response Team

1. The district currently has a September Reopening Task Force. This group consists personnel responsible health and safety, maintenance, logistics, scheduling and instruction, association representation, communication, and administration.

2. This group will be responsible for producing and editing the reopening plan, adjusting health protocols, training staff, reviewing data, implementing procedures for maintaining safe environments for students, families, and staff, serving as a conduit for community information.

Scheduling

1. District administration will create cohorts of students consisting of no greater than 16 students. Doing so will allow for SD within every classroom in the building.
2. Student cohorts will remain in one area throughout the day with teachers rotating classes when needed. Staff are encouraged to use outdoor spaces for instruction or break times as needed.
3. The district will communicate final learning plans to families 30 days prior to the beginning of instruction.
4. The district will review and revise, where applicable, attendance policies allowing for potential closures and parent opt-out.
5. The district will ensure that each student has access to a digital device for use in-school and outside of school.
6. The district will explore revising the 20/21 school calendar to provide four (4) days of professional development in the beginning of the school year to prepare for evolving learning environments.
7. Along with the overarching framework of this document, the district will prepare to pivot to additional learning plans, including full virtual and hybrid models. To do so, staff will develop lessons incorporating remote strategies utilized during initial closure.
8. The district will recognize the potential for increased staff absenteeism and prepare multiple contingency plans.
9. The district will identify staff members eligible for applicable leaves and develop appropriate accommodations.
10. Staff will utilize technology-based learning platforms to allow for ease of transitions. Platforms will mimic used during remote learning periods. In the event

of a long-term closure, district administration will enumerate specific minimum learning times and activities.

Staffing

1. Eligible staff will participate in mentoring programs. Teachers and mentors will conduct virtual sessions to reduce physical contact times.
2. District administration will conduct teacher evaluation in accordance with the requirements of applicable state law. Staff will be trained on critical elements of remote instruction in the event that evaluations will be conducted virtually.
3. Instructional staff will:
 - a. Reinforce SD guidelines
 - b. Limit group interactions between and within cohorts
 - c. Support school safety logistics
 - d. Develop lessons utilizing online platforms
 - e. Plan standards-based lessons that meet student needs within their specific cohort
 - f. Develop and enforce predictable classroom routines
 - g. Communicate frequently with families
 - h. Establish clear expectations for learning
 - i. Assess student learning using methods that mimic instructional model
 - j. Support colleagues by sharing best practices
 - k. Provide materials that support in-person instruction
4. District mentors will:
 - a. Provide on-going support to mentees
 - b. Maintain mentor logs
 - c. Plan for alternative methods of meeting and observing
5. District administration will:
 - a. Create alternate plans for staff designated as high-risk for infection
 - b. Allot time for staff collaboration and planning
 - c. Ensure that services are appropriately delivered to at-risk students
 - d. Provide staff with materials needed to conduct instruction in in-person and potentially virtual environments

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- e. Evaluate teacher practice in multiple learning environments
 - f. Communicate information in a timely manner to multiple stakeholders
 - g. Plan for adjustment periods for students and staff
 - h. Create schedules that achieve mandated regulations and local expectations
 - i. Support families by directing them to available community resources
 - j. Develop specialized plan Preschool instruction
6. Educational Service providers will:
- a. Lead small groups where appropriate
 - b. Assist teachers and administrator with family communication
 - c. Support SEL components of instruction
 - d. Provide one-to-one instruction possible and necessary
7. Educational Support Staff will:
- a. Lead small groups to assist in maintain intracohort SD
 - b. Participate in SEL activities
 - c. Provide support in the event of a transition to virtual learning
 - d. Monitor non instructional transitions to help maintain SD
8. Technology staff will:
- a. Provide and maintain digit devices for students
 - b. Ensure network health and fluency
 - c. Support staff in developing digit teaching platforms

Athletics

1. The district will cancel fall athletics. District leaders will reassess any decision regarding winter athletics prior to December 1.

Policy and Funding

This section will district plans for leveraging various fiscal resources to meet increased demands created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. The district will leverage all funding options including CARES funding, FEMA grants, federal funding, and school state aid.

2. The district will purchase items not needed in past fiscal years including masks, additional sanitizers, thermometers, signage, supplemental cleaning supplies, and face shields.
3. With Commissioner approval, the district will utilize reserve accounts to meet unaccounted fiscal demands.
4. The district will seek purchasing options through cooperatives and state contracting entities.

Continuity of Learning

This section will detail district contingency plans for evolving needs based on potential state/federal mandates and local health data.

Ensuring Delivery of Special Education and Related Service to Students with Disabilities

1. Child Study Team (CST) members will provide additional support for eligible students in preparation for returning to physical learning environments.
2. CST members will review student progress data from the SY 19/20 yearend reports to determine focus skills moving forward.
3. CST members will account for and deliver services missed during SY 19/20 period of closure.
4. CST members and the Director of Special Services will communicate with families updated evaluation and identification meeting schedules.

Technology and Connectivity

1. The district will conduct a needs assessment to determine the amount of devices needed to achieve one-to-one for all students and to determine connectivity for families in the event of a transition to remote learning. Emphasis will be given to students with special needs and language-based obstacles.
2. District personnel will develop training modules for families in the event of transition to remote learning.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

1. The district will ensure that all students have equitable access to high-quality instruction.

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2. District personnel will creatively plan to meet individualized student needs. These plan may include cross-grade cohort development.
3. All district staff will recognize and respect the importance and benefit of idea sharing, regardless of role.
4. The district will seek to allay student, family, and staff anxiety by allowing for flexibility and creativity in developing learning environments.
5. District leaders will maintain a feedback loop to help plan for professional development.

Virtual and Hybrid Instruction (if needed)

1. District administration will develop minimum standards for contact time and instruction in the event of a transition to virtual learning. These standards will account for variance in need based on age and grade band. New plans will build on the current, approved remote learning plan.
2. Any remote learning plans will account for SEL needs, individual meta-cognitive development, student work product, and age-appropriate resource selection.
3. Remote learning plans will build on updated student progress informed by multiple data collections.

Virtual and Hybrid Assessment (if needed)

1. Regardless of environment, district staff will conduct pre-assessments early in September. This data will drive instruction in person and assist in developing remote lessons is necessary.
2. Regardless of environment, staff will conduct on-going formative assessment and while preparing summative assessments.
3. The district will communicate to families the importance of assessment during this time. Leadership recognizes the potential pitfalls of over-assessment, but needs to reassure families of the vital role assessment will play in helping our students successfully return to school.
4. Regardless of environment, staff will identify appropriate assessment tools, develop learning hypotheses, create assessment calendars, and analyze results.

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District administration will facilitate this process by providing adequate professional development and planning time.

Professional Learning

1. District leadership will identify learning technology needed to execute the details of this learning plan. Staff will be trained on digit learning platforms to be used during SY 20/21. Priority will be given to platforms that allow students to “learn anywhere” and staff to “teach anywhere.”
2. Staff will learn methods for accommodating students with disabilities, English language learners, and homeless students.
3. District administration will communicate with families to inform them of professional learning progress and solicit feedback regarding future professional development needs.
4. District administration will work with professional staff to develop current and flexible professional development plans (PDP’s). PDP’s for SY 20/21 will reflect the unique needs of staff created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mentoring and Induction

1. Induction and mentoring will be provided to all eligible staff.
2. District administration will provide appropriate supports to teacher mentors.
3. Mentoring will continue if the district needs to transition to a virtual environment.
4. District mentors will utilize collaborative tools to communicate with novice teachers regardless of environment.

Evaluation

1. The district will develop an evaluation schedule based upon a physical environment with the ability to transition to virtual evaluations.
2. District DEAC and SCIP’s will meet to plan for multiple learning scenarios impacting teacher evaluation, specifically for novice teacher, nontenured teachers, and those on Corrective Action Plans (CAP’s).

Career and Technical Education (N/A)

Remote Learning Option Addendum

On July 24, 2020, the Governor's office clarified the minimum standards for an all remote option for district students. The district's all remote option will meet the minimum standards in the below guidance.

Eligibility

1. All students will be eligible for the all remote option.
2. Specifically, the district will not create any criteria including, but not listed to, risk of illness, disability, or other selective criteria.

Procedure for Requests

1. Families must identify the district of their intent to participate in an all remote option by August 10. Requests made after August 10 will be reviewed by Dr. Larkin.
2. Families will be instructed to contact Ms. Joanne Wilkins at 609 723 2139 to express intent to participate in an all remote option.
3. Families need only to inform the district of their intent to participate. No additional documentation will be required. Students will remain on role as active district students while participating in an all remote learning environment.
4. District CST will create addenda to IEP's for eligible students who choose an all remote option.
5. The district will confirm all requests and approve those that meet the above listed minimum standards.

Scope and Expectation of All Remote Learning Option

1. The district will provide equal quality and scope of instruction to students participating the all remote learning option.
2. The district will make all reasonable efforts to provide families with technology devices needed to participate in an all remote learning environment.
3. Remote learning will occur daily from 9:00 until 3:30.
4. The district will take student attendance daily in accordance with existing district attendance policies.

5. The district will provide on-going guidance and support to families choosing an all remote option. Supports will include health updates, social/emotional supports, and academic materials as needed.

Transitioning from All Remote to In-Person Learning

1. Families choosing the all remote option must notify the district by December 1, 2020 if they intend to have their student transition to in-person learning on January 4, 2021.
2. Prior to returning, families must produce a doctor's note or negative COVID-19 test dated no more than one week prior to January 4, 2021.
3. After a family has declared intent to transition to in-person learning, district officials will meet with students virtually to assess current academic levels, update families on class procedures, and provide social/emotional learning supports.
4. The district Superintendent will review all requests and confirm families.

Reporting

1. The district will report all relevant data to the Department of Education.
2. Data will include the number of students participating in an all remote option and be disaggregated by the following subgroups: economically disadvantaged, major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and English learners.

Procedures for Communicating with Families

1. The district will maintain clear and frequent communication with families choosing an all remote learning environment.
2. The minimum standard for acceptable communication will include summaries of district policies related to remote learning, procedures for submitting requests, scope and expectations for all remote learning, transition between learning environments, an procedure for gathering and responding to concerns.