



## **Reopening Schools Committee Update - June 29, 2020**

On March 12, 2020, Westport Public Schools closed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past couple of months our committee has examined guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the CT Department of Public Health, the CT Department of Education, and other agencies to examine potential strategies for safely reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year.

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# COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for Safely Returning Students and Staff to Schools

Committee Members: Dr. Norman Weinberger, Debra Dunn, Mark Cooper, Janet Zmary, Elena Caggiano, Dr. Louis Donofrio, Adam Rosen, Sandra Resnick, Patti Falvey, Michelle Garrity, Jason Intrieri, Suzanne Levasseur

## 1. Introduction

The health and safety of students and staff are a top priority when deciding to open school to in person learning, The Westport Public School District will work closely with the Westport/ Weston Health Department to monitor current disease levels and establish practices that support student and staff health and limit the transmission of disease while also supporting social/emotional health. These recommendations are based on current guidance from the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) and Governor Ned Lamont’s Plan for operating Summer School during COVID-19.

## 2. Opening School Decision Tree during the Covid -19 Pandemic

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/Schools-Decision-Tree.pdf>

### SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The purpose of this tool is to assist administrators in making (re)opening decisions regarding K-12 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to check with state and local health officials and other partners to determine the most appropriate actions while adjusting to meet the unique needs and circumstances of the local community.

#### Should you consider opening?

- ✓ Will reopening be consistent with applicable state and local orders?
- ✓ Is the school ready to protect children and employees at **higher risk** for severe illness?
- ✓ Are you able to screen students and employees upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure?

ANY NO



#### Are recommended health and safety actions in place?

- ✓ Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing and employees wearing a cloth face covering, as feasible
- ✓ Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation
- ✓ Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups and limited mixing between groups, if feasible
- ✓ Train all employees on health and safety protocols

ANY NO



#### Is ongoing monitoring in place?

- ✓ Develop and implement procedures to check for signs and symptoms of students and employees daily upon arrival, as feasible
- ✓ Encourage anyone who is sick to stay home
- ✓ Plan for if students or employees get sick
- ✓ Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures
- ✓ Monitor student and employee absences and have flexible leave policies and practices
- ✓ Be ready to consult with the local health authorities if there are cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area

ANY NO



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

### **3. Healthy Hygiene Practices**

#### **a. Hand washing**

Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and if not available the use of an alcohol based sanitizer with at least 60 % alcohol is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection. Hand washing with soap and water will be encouraged with the addition of portable sinks at all schools. Handwashing and hand sanitizing will be recommended;

- Prior to entering school
- Before and after recess
- Before and after lunch
- Before and after entering the health office
- After using the bathroom

Additional hand sanitizer stations or bottles will be placed;

- At school entry points
- In every classroom
- Outside the health office

#### **b. Signage in high traffic areas that will educate students and staff and serve as reminders of ways to prevent the spread of COVID -19.**

Signs will be placed throughout schools in highly visible locations such as at school entrance and bathrooms that promote healthy protective measures such as handwashing and social distancing

### **4. Infection Control Measures**

#### **a. Cleaning and disinfection efforts**

High touch surfaces including door handles, handrails, keyboards, desks and tables should be cleaned at least daily utilizing disinfectant products approved by the FDA and effective against COVID-19. If surfaces are dirty they should be cleaned using soap and water prior to disinfection. Bathrooms should be cleaned twice daily. Thorough cleaning should be done when children are not present. A cleaning log with dates and types of cleaning should be maintained.

If an individual is ill with COVID-19 the area should be closed off for up to 24 hours or as long as possible prior to cleaning and disinfection. If possible windows should be opened to increase circulation.

#### **b. Isolation and caring for students and staff who are sick at school**

In order to decrease transmission of illness in the health office and school setting the use of an area for isolation is recommended. The CDC defines the term “isolation” as “separation of sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.”

Room setup

1. A designated room or area that allows for the isolation of an ill person.
2. Signage on the door or curtain of the isolation space stating that the room is in use to maintain strict limitation of entry and exit at all times.
3. A closed door when staff or student is in isolation

4. An isolation cart outside the room should include the following:
  - a. Latex free gloves
  - b. Masks, gowns and face masks, N95 masks (for Health Office Staff)
  - c. Face shields

Procedures for Isolation Room Use:

As feasible, the teacher will call the health office to report when a student is being sent to the health office with a description of the presenting complaint.

If student or staff begins to exhibit symptoms indicative of a potential infectious disease or symptoms specifically related to COVID-19 illness such as:

- Fever of 100 F or greater, chills
- Persistent cough
- Shortness of Breath, chest tightness (not related to asthma)
- Significant rash, malaise, headache, body aches
- New onset loss of smell or taste
- Sore throat
- O2 saturation below 95%

The Following procedures will be put into effect:

1. The student will sanitize/wash hands upon arrival to the health office.
2. The student will be met at the door to be evaluated for symptoms consistent with an infectious process including symptoms consistent with COVID-19;
3. A new mask should be given to the student upon arrival and the old mask if cloth will be placed in a baggie to be taken home.
4. Health Office staff should utilize an N95 mask, gown and gloves and face shield as indicated for close contact and respiratory secretions.
5. The student or staff member should be taken directly to the isolation room for a more comprehensive assessment. A designated staff member should remain with the student at all times.
6. If indicated appropriate disposition will be determined.
7. If indicated, the parent/guardian will be contacted for pick up.
8. If a staff member is ill and in isolation they will be asked to leave school and not return to their classroom. It will be recommended that they call their health care provider.
9. A building administrator will be notified regarding the staff member being sent home
10. Health Office staff will arrange for personal belongings of student or staff to be brought to Health Office
11. Health Office staff should remove PPE outside of the isolation room. New PPE should be utilized to escort the student/staff out of the building.
12. A Health Office staff member will exit the building with the ill student/staff member to ensure that they exited from the proper location and did not have any encounters with others in the building.

Pick up of Student/Staff:

1. The parent/guardian will be instructed to not enter the building and notify the health office when arriving.

2. The parent/guardian will be asked to wear a mask and remain in their car for pick up at a designated exit.

Health Office Staff - Upon Returning From Pick Up:

1. Staff should properly dispose of PPE, sanitize hands with soap and water and replace mask prior to returning to the health office
2. The custodian will be contacted to clean the isolation room
3. If there is a suspicion of symptoms consistent with Covid -19 the Supervisor of Health Services should be notified.

Exit Instructions for Staff/Parents:

1. Parent/guardian will be instructed to contact their health care provider and will not return to school without a return to school note from a health care provider or negative COVID-19 test

**c. Physical distancing and implementing multiple social distancing strategies**

i. Classroom and Hallways

Each classroom will be evaluated to determine maximum capacity to allow for 6 feet physical distancing. Desks should be arranged in a way that maintains the 6 feet separation and minimizes face to face contact. Items in the classroom that are not essential for teaching and learning could be removed from the classroom to allow more space. Other school spaces such as the auditorium and gym could be considered as additional space. Hallways can be marked to direct foot traffic and passing time should be staggered. In addition, the staggering of arrival times and dismissal times or utilizing multiple entrances may allow for physical distancing when arriving or leaving school.

ii. Lunch

Lunch may be served in the school cafeteria, classroom or outdoors where physical distancing of 6 ft could be utilized. The number of students in the lunch room should not exceed state guidelines. Masks should be worn before and after eating. Hands should be washed before and after lunch. Assigned seating should be utilized.

iii. Recess

Recess should be offered daily to children when they are physically present at school. Recess should be offered outdoors if possible and provide different play activities to allow for natural physical distancing. Staff members should be available to monitor students and provide reminders about physical distancing as needed. The number of children at recess at one time should also be limited and students should remain in cohorts. Playground equipment use should be limited unless cleaning between cohorts can be done. The use of equipment that would be shared by students should be eliminated. During active play, when social distancing is possible, specifically outdoors, masks may not be required.

iv. Buses/Transportation

Parents/guardians should provide transportation when possible. Seating arrangements on the bus should allow for 6 ft physical distancing. No more than one student should be in a row unless they are from the same household. Masks should be worn by students and the driver. A monitor should be on each bus to assure the use of masks and physical distancing. A supply of masks and hand sanitizer will be kept on all buses.

**d. Limiting sharing of objects**

Student's belongings should be kept as separate from others as possible utilizing a specific area to store things and students should be encouraged to bring as few items from home as possible. Individual

supplies should be kept in individually labelled containers. Shared toys and equipment should be avoided. Students should each have separate bins for books and supplies.

**e. Consistent Teams**

Smaller and stable student/educator cohorts should be created to the extent possible to minimize the mixing of student groups throughout the day. Students will be allowed to attend specials outside of their classroom and in their cohorts while practicing physical distancing if the area is able to be cleaned between use. In the event this is not feasible, special area teachers will teach cohorts in the classroom.

**f. The use of PPE**

Per CDC recommendations, it is recommended that all staff and students wear face coverings, when feasible, while at school or on the bus. Medical exemptions, which will require a note from the primary care provider, will be made for those students or staff for whom it is not safe to do so due to medical conditions or other considerations. Face coverings are most essential when physical distancing is not possible. Parents/Guardians and staff will be encouraged to bring their own face coverings from home but will be provided a face covering in the event one is needed. In addition, the following PPE will be utilized;

- N95 masks for health office staff which includes fit testing when caring for students and staff who have symptoms c/w symptoms of COVID-19
- Face shields for staff/students who are unable to practice physical distancing, where close contact is highly likely, such as those receiving services like OT/PT and speech
- Gloves (non-latex) when it can be reasonably anticipated that contact with bodily fluids or other potentially infectious material
- Gowns when bodily fluids may become in contact with an employee's clothes

**g. Self screening of students and staff prior to school entry**

Parents/guardians and all staff should self-screen before coming to school or entering the school bus. This self screening will include a temperature check as well as any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 such as a non-productive cough, shortness of breath, headache, sore throat, new loss of smell or taste. Any student or staff member with any of these symptoms or a fever over 100 should remain at home, notify the health office and call their primary care provider. A negative COVID-19 test or a note from the primary care provider will be required prior to return to work or school.

**h. Visitors** will not be allowed in the building unless required by a student's educational plan. Contractors will also be limited unless essential for building operations.

**i. Specialized Health Care Procedures**

Students who may require nebulizer treatments, suctioning or other procedures that create uncontrolled respiratory secretions must provide treatment authorizations. Students should receive medication via MDI with a spacer whenever possible. If nebulizer treatment is medically necessary these treatments should be done in an area separate from the health office and gloves, face shields, masks and gowns should be worn by the school nurse. The area should undergo cleaning after use and before it is used by other staff or students.

**5. Case Protocols and Notification**

In the event that a student, staff member or a member of their household tests positive for COVID-19 or has had an exposure to COVID-19, the Westport/Weston Health District as well as the Medical Advisor will be notified. The District will collaborate with the Health District and Medical Advisor to determine

if school closure is warranted as well as the length of time of the closure. Notification procedures will be established with the Westport/Weston Health District while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with FERPA and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The below CDC guidance will be utilized to help determine exposure and follow-up precautions.

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

## **6. Attendance and Illness Monitoring**

Absenteeism of staff and students will be monitored daily for trends in illness. Increases or trends will be communicated to the Westport/Weston Health Department and Westport School District Medical Advisor.

## **7. Students and Staff in High Risk Groups**

Students who have medical conditions documented by a healthcare provider, that puts them at higher risk for severe symptoms associated with COVID-19 or cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risks will be provided options for virtual learning.

Staff members who have documented healthcare needs that put them at higher risk for severe symptoms associated with COVID-19 should notify the Director of Human Resources and General Administration. The [Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employee Paid Leave Rights](#), currently effective through December 31, 2020, will be used as guidance in addressing employee needs.

[Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employee Paid Leave Rights \(PDF\)](#)

[Ley Familias Primero de Respuesta al Coronavirus: Derechos del Empleado Sobre Licencia Laboral Pagada \(PDF\)](#)

## **8. Training and Education**

All school staff will be trained in healthy behaviors that limit the spread of infection, proper use of protective equipment, self screening practices including COVID-19 specific symptom identification and when to stay home when ill. Students and families will be provided with educational materials through videos and written materials on the District website. In addition, students will receive messaging through the schools TV programming and PA systems.

## **9. Facilities Modification Recommendation**

- a. No touch bathroom fixtures
- b. Removal of hand drying blowers
- c. Elimination of all water fountains
- d. An isolation area for sick students and staff in all schools
- e. Assure optimal ventilation in the health office, bathrooms and other areas

COVID-19 Facilities and Operations Guidelines  
for  
Safely Returning Students and Staff to Schools

Committee Members: Elio Longo (CFO), Candice Savin (BOE), Dr. Adam Rosen (CMS), Ted Hunyadi (Facilities), Craig Schmarr (Facilities), Buffy Barry (Transportation), Natalie Carrigan (Technology), John Horrigan (WEA), David Willick (WEA), Maryann Garcia (WAES), Capt. Ryan Paulsson (WPD), Deb VanCoughnett (Chartwells), Ben Leahy (Chartwells).

Invited Guest(s): Suzanne Levasseur (Health Services; Health & Safety Work Group).

**1. Introduction**

The Facilities and Operations Work Group serves as an operational support team to the Steering Committee, specifically to Health & Safety and Teaching and Learning. This work group is responsible for identifying and recommending to the Steering Committee facility improvements, safety measures and PPE sourcing based on the recommendations of the Health & Safety and Teaching and Learning work groups. Facilities and Operations will eventually develop cost estimates for all recommendations so that a total cost budget can be provided to the Steering Committee, and in turn, to the Board of Education. The Facilities and Operations Work Group is presenting recommendations that are not based on financial considerations, but rather the safety and wellbeing of students and staff, operating within the scope of guidelines provided by the Governor Ned Lamont for the reopening of schools.

**2. CSDE: CT's Plan to Learn and Grow Together, Fall Reopening Model**

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/COVID-19/Reopening\\_Executive\\_Summary.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/COVID-19/Reopening_Executive_Summary.pdf) (Executive Summary)

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox?projector=1> (Slide Presentation)

**3. Healthy Hygiene Practices**

- a. Hand sanitizing
- b. Purchase and supply regularly alcohol based sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to prevent the spread of infection.
  - i. Pump bottles for every classroom, office and bus
  - ii. Free-standing gallon size dispensers in common areas (tbd)
    1. Elementaries: minimum quantity of 6
    2. Middle Schools: minimum quantity of 8
    3. High School: minimum quantity of 12
- c. Hand washing
- d. Rent portable hand washing stations for placement at/within:

1. Cafeterias
2. Playgrounds and recess areas
3. Outside the health office

- e. ***Being addressed by the Health & Safety Work Group:*** Signage in high traffic areas that will educate students and staff and serve as reminders of ways to prevent the spread of COVID -19. Signs will be placed throughout schools in highly visible locations such as at school entrances and bathrooms that promote healthy protective measures such as handwashing and social distancing. (***Facilities will assist with this measure***).

#### 4. Infection Control Measures

##### a. Cleaning and disinfection efforts

***Recommended by Health & Safety Work Group:*** High touch surfaces including door handles, handrails, keyboards, desks and tables should be cleaned at least daily utilizing disinfectant products approved by the FDA and effective against COVID-19. If surfaces are dirty they should be cleaned using soap and water prior to disinfection. Bathrooms should be cleaned twice daily. Thorough cleaning should be done when children are not present. A cleaning log with dates and types of cleaning should be maintained. ***Many of the recommended cleaning are already part of the daily routine. Increased frequency of cleaning will be communicated to all custodial staff.***

#### 5. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

##### a. Face masks (paper and cloth)

1. Primary or secondary supplier?
2. Source kids size and adult size
3. Assume 100% attendance based on Governor Lamont's recent reopening of schools guidelines
4. Immediately order an ample supply equivalent to 3 weeks of primary, daily distribution. This first order will be followed by orders based on known lead times for restocking. ***Note: The BOE has granted the CFO emergency purchase authority to expend up to \$400,000 on PPE and technology equipment for the reopening of schools.***

##### b. Face masks (N95)

For Health Office staff. Initial order of 4 masks per employee.

##### c. Latex free gloves

Primarily for Health Office staff, custodial staff, and security staff.

##### d. Disposable gowns

For Health Office staff (coordinate with S. Levasseur)

##### e. Face shields

Primarily for Health Office staff and certain Special Education staff (coordinate with S. Levasseur and M. Rizzo)

## **6. Physical distancing and implementing multiple social distancing strategies**

### Classroom

While Governor Ned Lamont's latest guidance appears to have removed the 6 feet physical distancing requirement school districts are encouraged to utilize large common areas (ie., gymnasiums) as additional classroom space, and to the extent practical follow health agency recommendations. The Facilities Department will review and recommend temporary reconfiguration of common area plans for each school. Efforts will be made to remove and relocate items that are not essential for teaching and learning from the classrooms in order to maximize the distance between students and staff.

Focus must not shift entirely away from the possibility of a return to a social distancing requirement. Converting common areas to temporary classrooms will not entirely address the extra space requirements especially in the absence of a hybrid instructional model. Facilities planning requires additional information and guidance from the Health & Safety and Teaching and Learning work groups.

### Lunch

1. Assuming a full return to school plan, maximize as much as possible the distance between students by revisiting floor plans and table type (ie., round or rectangular).
2. A mandatory social distancing edict will require additional consideration of alternative dining options, such as in classroom, outdoors, or limited cafeteria access.
3. Regardless of social distancing requirements every cafeteria should be equipped with plexiglass dividers at cashier stands and serving lines (must meet fire code).
4. All self service options will be converted to "served"
5. All salads and sandwiches will be pre-made and individually packaged
6. A pre-order system for sandwiches will be implemented as soon as possible
7. All condiments will be portion control packets
8. Plastic silverware will be dispensed by the cashier
9. Hand held scanners will be purchased in order to ensure "touchless" payments
10. Cash payments will be eliminated with parents utilizing "My School Bucks to fund their students accounts.

### Buses/Transportation

1. Buses may transport full capacity as long as students and drivers wear face masks. A supply of face masks will be provided to all bus drivers for distribution to students, as needed.
2. Mandatory social distancing (ie., one student per bench and diagonal empty rows) will without doubt increase substantially the required number of buses. The actual number of buses required is dependent on the hybrid instructional model. Further information is needed.

3. Monitoring students for wearing masks and social distancing would require the hiring of 47 part-time employees.

## **7. Facilities Modification Recommendation**

- a. No touch bathroom fixtures
- b. Removal of hand drying blowers
- c. Elimination of all water fountains
- d. An isolation area for sick students and staff in all schools
- e. Assure optimal ventilation in the health office, bathrooms and other areas
- f. Social distancing in front offices and cafeteria kitchen
  1. Additional space needs
  2. Wireless phone sets
  3. Plexiglass partitions
  4. Visitors counter

## **8. Next Steps**

- a. Continue conversations and information sharing with Health & Safety and Teaching and Learning
- b. Develop cost estimates for all recommendations
- c. Develop scenarios for supporting other blended learning models

COVID-19 Teaching and Learning Guidelines  
for  
Safely Returning Students and Staff to Schools

**TEACHING AND LEARNING RE-OPENING SUB-COMMITTEE**

Lauren K. Francese and Allison Moran, Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee Chairs

**Work Group Leaders:** Beth Messler, AJ Scheetz, Stacey Delmhorst, Kelly Zatorsky, Colleen Banick, Kris Szabo, Janna Sirowich, Megan Ward, Megan Clarke, Kim Ambrosio, Holly Sulzycki, Chris Breyan, Lou DiBella, Jackie Mellin, Kim Ambrosio, Stefan Porco, Valerie Babich, Janna Sirowich, Chris Wanner, Maria Zachery, Rebecca Marsick, Faith Sweeney, Holly Sulzycki, Natalie Carrignan

**Introduction**

The Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee was formed in order to make recommendations for reopening schools with considerations for both distance and blended learning for the 2020-21 school year. The committee was divided into fourteen work groups, which were defined through Westport's mission statement. 138 educators volunteered to support the work of the committee, which brought a K-12 perspective to every aspect of this work.

Each work group began by identifying resources and research to support the development of recommendations and other considerations for planning. Then, the work groups developed initial recommendations. Those initial recommendations were shared in a two hour session with all of the work group leaders. From there, the work groups combined to discuss the intersection of their goal areas in order to inform final recommendations. On June 25th, final recommendations from each work group were submitted to the sub-committee chairs.

## **A Vision for Hybrid & Remote Learning 2020-2021 School Year**

*Based on the state plan for reopening schools (6/29/2020), the district will need to be prepared to deliver in-person and remote instruction in the event of increased social distancing guidelines or closure of schools during the course of the year. The district will also need to offer online instruction for students who must remain at home due to health concerns. As a result, the committee developed a vision for these scenarios to apply to planning efforts for as various scenarios are being considered.*

### **Mission and Vision**

**Our Mission is to prepare all students to reach their full potential as life-long learners and socially responsible contributors to our global community.**

*To achieve this in a hybrid or remote learning environment the following are essential:*

**Strong learning communities must support social emotional wellbeing and the social endeavor of learning.**

- In a hybrid learning environment, all stakeholders establish meaningful connections with each other to promote **strong social emotional relationships**.
  - We advocate for an approach involving direct instruction designed to establish meaningful social emotional connections between students and staff, between students, and amongst staff members.
- In a hybrid learning environment, a variety of opportunities exist for building **collaborative learning communities**. Collaboration can occur both online and offline and occur synchronously and asynchronously.
  - We advocate that elementary, middle, and high school establish expectations for frequency of live meets and clear guidelines for student attendance during remote learning experiences.
- In a hybrid learning environment, **clear expectations and norms are established for participation and collaboration**. Students, parents, and staff have a collective understanding of these expectations for both online and offline environments.
  - We advocate for development of an online student/parent handbook that establishes norms as they relate to online learning.

**Instruction and learning targets must engage all learners.**

- In a hybrid learning environment, instruction is well planned, efficient and clear, and includes student voice and choice. **Intentional decisions are made regarding online and offline tasks**. Live instruction maximizes personalized feedback and deepens connections. Tasks outside of live meets are meaningful opportunities to further student learning and independent application of that learning, and include more than just skill reinforcement.
  - We advocate for the use of the “**Distance Learning by Design Framework**”, a backwards design approach to planning, where teachers clearly identify which learning experiences are best for online and offline student learning, as well as authentic opportunities for student application of learning.

- In a hybrid learning environment, **units are collaboratively designed and modified** to best meet the needs of a diverse population. **Assessment of learning targets** can go beyond traditional formats and take advantage of the many dynamic online options. **Time for collaboration and reflection** on student progress is designated to plan for differentiated opportunities.
  - We advocate for a set schedule that includes sufficient time for staff collaboration and reflection, development of guidelines for live meetings (individual, small group, and whole group when necessary), as well as additional flexibility for supplemental instructional sessions to meet unique needs.

**Technology must support student learning and provide equitable access.**

- In a hybrid learning environment, technology is a tool for augmenting learning and **does not supplant the role of the teacher**. Individual student needs may require different forms of support in accessing an online environment.
  - We advocate that the district incorporate significant and ongoing professional development for all staff so they can implement best practices and maintain the high quality of instruction in a hybrid learning environment.
- In a hybrid learning environment, a **select group of online platforms and tools are utilized** so that students and families can have streamlined experiences. **Time is dedicated for staff, students, and families to be trained** in the use of these platforms and tools.
  - We advocate for a shared design and expectations for platforms across grade levels. Ongoing training for all stakeholders should take place to maximize learning.

## **School Scheduling and Attendance**

*The Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee recommendations for scheduling have been explored in order to plan for hybrid and fully remote learning scenarios. Based on the current state guidance (6/29/2020), the following models are potential approaches for scheduling. In addition to scheduling scenarios, the work groups emphasized addressing attendance in order to monitor safety, wellbeing, and learning for all students.*



### *Attendance*

- Develop a district-wide attendance policy for remote and hybrid learning environments.
- Establish requirements for students to attend live class sessions on Zoom or other common platform identified by the district and utilize a common “background” for on-camera sessions.

### ***Elementary School Schedules***

Full-In Person with Heightened Protocols: Follow health and safety and facilities guidelines for students’ return to school. Maintain cohorts and eliminate cross-cohort contact between students by implementing modifications to recess and lunch and considering how students receive services and attend band/orchestra lessons. Use remote learning approaches for programs/courses that remain limited due to state guidelines.

Hybrid Model 1: Full schedule four days a week for grades K-2. These classes will be split in two. Teachers will alternate between the two groups as paras, special area teachers, and other faculty provide supervision and instruction with the other group. Grades 3-5 will be in a hybrid learning model attending school in cohorts two days per week (see Hybrid Learning Model 2). A notable drawback is the loss of instructional spaces for specials and service providers (these will be needed for K-2 classrooms).

Hybrid Model 2: Split schedules of full day attendance with Group A on MT and Group B on ThF and W for cleaning/PD/meetings.

Full Remote Learning: Students attend classes on the established school schedule. The schedule will be blocked with specific times identified for subject areas, special area classes, and individualized instruction (intervention services, special education services, and enrichment).

### ***Middle School Schedules***

Full-In Person with Heightened Protocols: Follow health and safety and facilities guidelines for students' return to school. Use remote learning approaches for programs/courses that remain limited due to state guidelines.

Hybrid Model 1: Remote learning for gr. 7 & 8 and a hybrid schedule for Grade 6 only. Upon opening of CMS, switch and have grade 6 students and teachers follow a remote learning model and grade 7 and grade 8 attend school in-person in a 50/50 split.

Hybrid Model 2: Every student attends BMS in-person one day/week every week. Over a 5 day span, one color team per grade level attends school with all grade and team appropriate teachers and encore teachers.

Full Remote Learning: Students attend classes synchronously on the established school schedule. Consider a four day rotation with one day built in for professional learning and 1:1 check ins with groups and individual students.

### ***High School Schedules***

Full-In Person with Heightened Protocols: Follow health and safety and facilities guidelines for students' return to school. Use remote learning approaches for programs/courses that remain limited due to state guidelines.

Hybrid Model: Due to the complexity of the high school schedule, the high school needs to engage a scheduling consultant to plan for a hybrid model in order to maximize students' experience on-site.

Full Remote Learning: Students attend classes synchronously on the established school schedule. Consider a four day rotation with one day built in for professional learning and 1:1 check ins with groups and individual students.

COVID-19 Co-curricular Guidelines  
for  
Safely Returning Students and Staff to Schools

## **Co-Curricular - Athletics**

### **Members:**

- Marty Lisevick - Staples High School
- Geno Heiter - Staples High School
- Lenny Klein - Staples High School
- Dan Woog - Staples High School

### **Overview:**

- The athletics co-curricular sub-committee has relied heavily on the guidance and recommendations of The Connecticut Interscholastic Conference
  - Resocialization of Interscholastic Athletics and Activities Programs
  - Guidelines. <http://www.casciac.org/pdfs/CIACResocializationofAthleticsGuidance.pdf>
  - The athletics subcommittee has also consulted and worked with the Health and Safety Committee, the Westport Parks and Recreation Director, and the Facilities Committee to provide the following findings and recommendations.

### **Findings:**

- CAS-CIAC believes that it is essential to the physical, mental, and social-emotional well-being of Connecticut students/youth to safely re-engage in extracurricular experiences, physical activity, and athletic competition. Returning to play does not mean a return to “normal”. While re-socializing to activity we are still responsible for doing our part in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Any consideration of returning to physical activity and athletic competition must adhere to all requirements set forth under the executive orders of Governor Lamont, account for the health and safety of all participants, and equitably provide opportunities for all Connecticut student/youth-athletes. CAS-CIAC’s guidelines have been vetted by the Connecticut State Medical Society, Sports Medicine Committee; the Connecticut Athletic Trainers’ Association (CATA); the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE); the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS); the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD); and the Connecticut High School Coaches Association (CHSCA).
- July 6, 2020 is the target date to begin small group, in-person, contact while maintaining virtual coaching options. This date is subject to change based on information available as we approach the transition to this stage. July 6th coincides with the soft opening of school facilities for summer school. Consideration of the current phase in Governor Lamont’s Reopen plan, preparedness of facilities to sanitize and maintain social distancing standards, current executive orders, opportunity equity, and continued consultation with the Connecticut State Medical Society, Sports Medicine Committee will factor into CIAC’s guidance of moving to low/moderate risk competition experiences.
- Workouts should be conducted in cohorts of the same 5-10 students working out together weekly to limit exposures. Cohorts should not meet more than 3 times per week. Activities should focus on physical

reconditioning of athletes, acclimation to exertional activity in warmer weather, and individual skill development. Workouts should not exceed 60 minutes. No team practices. There must always be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual. Physical contact such as highfives, fist bumps, and hugs are prohibited. Vulnerable individuals should not supervise or participate in any workouts. All activities are limited to outdoor areas. Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities.

- All staff and students are required to self-screen for any observable illness, including cough or respiratory distress, and to confirm temperature below 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The coach or activity supervisor must confirm self-screening by all activity participants, upon arrival. Records of self-screening for each person should be recorded and stored (see COVID monitoring form ).
  - Any person with positive symptoms reported should not be allowed to participate, should self-isolate, and contact their primary care provider or other health-care professional.

### **Recommendations:**

**Commence small group/cohort, outdoor resocialization and reconditioning workouts for fall sports athletes.**

### **Staples Athletes:**

- Understand that the summer conditioning program starting July 6 is not mandatory for athletes. **Volunteer only.**
- Must have a signed **Out of Season Fitness Form** signed by a parent in order to participate
  - In workouts.
- Understand that each conditioning workout is 1 hour long with a limit of 3 workouts each
  - week.
- Must stay home if sick, if anyone in the family is sick, or has a pending COVID test.
- Must answer 10 self screening questions before each workout. Questions are attached.
- Understand that if they did not pass the self screen assessment, they will be sent home and can not return to any conditioning workout until cleared by a doctor.
- **Must bring their own mask**, and wear the mask covering to and from each workout and during the workout when not involved in a vigorous activity.
- Must maintain social distancing during each workout.
- Must remain in the same group for each workout.
- Understand that physical contact such as high fives, fist bumps and hugs are prohibited.
- Must bring their own water bottle to each conditioning workout.
- Understand that there is no sharing of equipment and water bottles.
- Must wear light covered clothing including socks, shorts, t-shirts and running shoes for each conditioning workout.
- Must notify coach immediately if any symptoms develop while at conditioning.

### **Staples Coaches:**

- Understand that the summer conditioning program starting July 6 **is not** mandatory for coaches or athletes. **Volunteer only.**
- Understand that each conditioning workout is 1 hour long with a limit of 3 workouts each
  - week.
- Understand that a multi-sport Staples Athlete must work with one team only during summer conditioning.
- Must stay home if sick, immediate family member is sick or has a pending COVID test.
- Must answer 10 self screening questions before each workout. Questions are attached.
- Understand that if they did not pass the self screen assessment, they will be sent home and can not return to any conditioning workout until cleared by a doctor.

- Must bring their own mask, and wear the mask covering to and from each workout and during the workout when not involved in a vigorous activity or speaking to another coach or athletic trainer.
- Must adhere to social distancing guidelines as much as possible between athletes and other coaches.
- Must record and maintain the same groups of up to 10 athletes for each conditioning workout.
- Understand that physical contact such as high fives, fist bumps and hugs are prohibited.
- Understand that there is no sharing of equipment.
- Understand that any equipment used must be cleaned after each use.
- Understand that an **Out of Season Fitness Form** signed by a parent was to be collected and on file in order for any athlete to participate in summer conditioning workouts.
- Must maintain attendance for all activities and a record to confirm all participants, including staff, were screened prior to engaging

#### **Staples Athletic Program:**

- Will have portables and outside restrooms by Staples baseball field available for use during summer conditioning workouts.
- Will coordinate and schedule facility usage use and summer conditioning workouts in conjunction with the Westport Parks & Recreation Dept. and school administration.
- Will have regular procedures in place for insurance coverage in the event of player injury.
- Will have extra bottled water available for athletes as needed.
- Will provide hand sanitizer along with disinfectant wipes for any equipment in use.

#### **Staples Athletic Parent:**

- Will keep their child home from summer conditioning workouts in the event they are sick or any family member is sick.
- Will report to coach immediately if their child is diagnosed with or has been exposed to COVID.
- Will sign an **Out of Season Fitness Form** in order for your child to participate in summer conditioning workouts.

#### **Recommendation(s) Continued:**

#### **Live Streaming Broadcasts for Athletic Contests:**

- Provide **LIVE STREAMING** of Athletic Events
  - [LIVE STREAMING NFHS](#)
    - There are well over 150 schools providing LIVE STREAMING from NFHS partnership with Play On Sports
    - DRG - Darien, Wilton, New Canaan, & Weston
  - [Fact related NFHS and Staples - Q & A](#)

#### **Financial:**

- **Athletic Trainer**
  - \$50 per hour to be present at all phase one small group team workouts
  - 4-6 hour time blocks per day
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
  - Unknown cost
- **Live Streaming** - Freshman, JV, Varsity Sporting events on Staples Campus
  - NFHS Cameras / Devices / and 1 time Install Cost - Approx \$15,500.00
  - **Additional Staples**
    - [Utility Camera Poles](#) / Device Storage - Cost to be determined

- IT infrastructure - Related Costs etc
- Other - Live Stream
  - Public Subscription
    - \$10.99 monthly (10% back to district per subscriber)
    - \$69.99 yearly (\$20 back to district per subscriber)
    - Possible Advertising Revenue

### **Next Steps:**

- Continue to follow CDC & CIAC Health and Safety Recommendations
- Continue to survey all stakeholders and schools in our DRG
- Survey BOE recommendations
- Provide parents, athletes, coaches and all stakeholders with continued updates after each CIAC return to play phase
- Finalize costs for live streaming
- Meet with IT to review infrastructure and execution of NFHS Live Stream requirements (VPNs, Ports ...etc)
- IT and Student Data Privacy Agreements

## **Co-Curricular - Theatre and Music**

### **Members:**

- Ben Frimmer - Bedford Middle School
- Geno Heiter - Staples High School
- Stacey Delmhorst -Staples High School
- In consultation with: Luke Rosenberg, David Roth, Steve Anderson, Suzanne Propp,

### **Overview:**

The theatre and music co-curricular sub-committee has reviewed recommendations from the following organizations / groups:

- ACDA, American Choral Directors Association, CMEA, NafME, The Educational Theatre Association, Musical Theatre Educators, iTheatrics
- Instrumental, ensemble, choral and theater teachers from the district and DRG

### **Findings:**

- There is an increased risk of Covid19 spread when singing, blowing into instruments, and vocal projection
- While there is no official safe distance for the above performers, 16 feet has been suggested by multiple sources.
- The longer people sing/project airflow and the more time people spend in a room together doing such activities, the greater the risk of transmission.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Theatre / Music**
  - Virtual live online performances via googlemeet / zoom
  - Recorded performances assembled, edited, and distributed - via live stream or web
  - Live or pre-recorded radio broadcasting
  - In person small group that align with CDC guidelines
  - An audience whose attendance aligns with CDC guidelines possible

- **Theatre Specific**
  - Small format recurring 60 minute workshop (30 students or less)- virtual learning
  - Large format non-recurring 90-minute workshop - virtual learning
  - Provide opportunities for small group and virtual individualized instruction
    - Acting, Improv, MT audition technique, dance, puppetry, rap, playwriting, magic
- **Music Specific**
  - Small group ensembles (strings, percussion) could be rehearsed regularly and performed on stage and captured on video for distribution via live stream or web
  - Winds and Brass concerns / recommendations still being discussed

## Financials

- **Post Production for Distribution**
  - Video Production/Editing (concerts/shows) including technical support & mixing of video
    - 1 hour approximately \$3,000
    - Full length musical approximately \$5,000
    - Streaming Costs
      - No district cost to stream using showtix4u. All costs picked up by audience members.
- **Co-Curricular Theatre / Music Classes**
  - Runs concurrent or instead of an online production:
    - Large format 90-minute workshop
    - Possible classes (dance, playwriting, acting technique)
      - \$45/student (31-99 students)
      - \$40/student (100-150 students)
      - \$35/student (150-400 students)
- **Other options for after school instruction costs led by Broadway / Music teaching artists.**
  - \$5,500 for a five-week module (meet once a week)
  - \$9,000 for a five week module (meet twice a week)

## Next Steps:

- Continue to follow CDC Health and Safety Recommendations
- Continue to survey all stakeholders and schools in our DRG
- Survey BOE recommendations
- Determine what hybrid solution is best for providing music and theatre students the most meaningful experience while aligning with CDC Health and Safety Recommendations

## Resources:

- ACDA Covid19 Response Committee Report
- Music Theatre Educators Alliance Webinar: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=niuQt\\_oR\\_jg&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=niuQt_oR_jg&feature=youtu.be)
- Music Theatre International
  - Has an approved list for shows for streaming
  - Has opening up Broadway Jr. series to all ages
- <https://www.showtix4u.com/#streaming>
  - Allows for streaming of shows & ticket sales
- iTheatrics Zoomsical teaching intensive (June 30/July1)
- Broadway Teaching Group

- Professional Theatre Classes

## Co-Curricular - Clubs and Activities:

### Members:

- Chase Dunlap - Asst. Principal Staples High School
- Pat Micinilio - Asst. Principal Staples High School
- Jacquelyn Mellin - Asst. Principal Bedford Middle School
- Priscilla Jones - Mathematics Instructor Kings Highway Elementary School

### Overview:

**Goal:** Develop a plan for students and teachers to equitably engage in extra curricular clubs and activities under the four potential models for learning next year -Hybrid, Prevalence leads to closure, Distance Learning to Start at the Elementary, Middle and High School Levels.

**Process:** As a sub-committee we reviewed CIAC recommendations for gatherings and the CDC for virus transmission guidance. We established a baseline by collecting data from Clubs and Activities' advisors within Westport Public Schools and outside WPS to identify what they did during distance learning, Spring, 2020. With these baseline surveys, we solicited the advisors of these clubs to find out *what worked, what were the bright spots, what **didn't** work during Distance Learning, and what the clubs' needs will be should we be in a Distance Learning model again.*

### Best Practices:

- Districts consulted include: [New Canaan](#), Stamford, Weston, Trumbull, Bridgeport and [Berlin, CT](#).
- Westport Continuing Education - How were they are planning to offer [summer course offerings](#)

### Findings:

- Consistent Meeting Dates and Time with a variety of communication tools implemented to connect with students is essential to a club/activity's success
- The strength and engagement of a club prior to Distance Learning was a predictor of its success during Distance Learning
- Advisors and Facilitators who were familiar and comfortable with digital learning platforms prior to Distance Learning were able to maintain contact with students and transition to distance meetings sooner
- Google Meets, Schoology Conference and Zoom are digital platforms utilized by clubs to facilitate digital meetings.

### Recommendations:

- **Elementary:** The Elementary School offerings should be consistent from building to building, should be housed in the central location website, but should also be made available via each building's Community Page. A document should be published and sent home to all families with the clubs and activities, with synopsis and the meeting dates and times and a link to a Google Sign up Form. Parents and students will then be provided an access code for that club or activity.

- **Middle:** Develop the infrastructure to host Clubs and Activities remotely. Share bright spots of Distance Learning with clubs and activities, and provide PD to support the shift of clubs to a Distance Learning model. Our belief is that a robust Distance Club and Activities program will be essential to the success of a hybrid model and/or our traditional model.
- **High School:** Develop the infrastructure to host Clubs and Activities remotely. Share bright spots of Distance Learning with clubs and activities, and provide PD to support the shift of clubs to a Distance Learning model. Our belief is that a robust Distance Club and Activities program will be essential to the success of a hybrid model and/or our traditional model.

### **Financial Considerations:**

- **Current Club and Activity Stipends**
- PD to support club/activity advisors on how to set up a digital club environment
- Several Clubs will need additional technical support and additional equipment to run a successful club while in a (Distance Learning model (i.e. additional iMac and interface for the SHS Radio Club, updated Macs that can run the Adobe suite or Adobe Spark for the SHS Literary Magazine Club, etc.)
- Online curriculum for Peer-to Peer Mentor Program at Staples High School
- Finals site is our district website CMS and as such all sites can be hosted within it and distributive rights can be given to the club advisors for their own page. We do that for the PTAs at each school. **The cost is zero. Just training**
- Google sites are what we have built our curriculum website on and the Distance Learning sites. They can be linked to the school webpages in the menu on Finals site and be easier to edit. **The cost is zero. Just training**

### **Next Steps:**

- Collaborate with scheduling committee to align our vision of offering clubs (days, times) aligned with the district Distance Learning vision
- Discuss and develop a club and activity meeting schedule in a hybrid model that would ensure an equitable experience for all members (in person and digitally)
- Develop expectations for club and activity advisors for facilitating and leading a club and or activity in a digital environment and hybrid. This includes stipend and non-stipend advisors.
- Finalize a budget to support the remote club and activity infrastructure
- Look at existing infrastructure to determine what we can build off of and what we need to purchase or develop.
  - BAND - Allows facilitators and participants a platform to communicate and engage with each other, through posts, and messages. BAND is an all encompassing message board. BAND wants to send info which means it has accounts which means it falls under the student data privacy law. BAND does not have an agreement with the state or Staples. There might be other ways that communication can happen (ie. Schoology Group, which is compliant and Schoology has the app).

### **Resources:**

- [Staples High School Clubs and Activities Feedback](#)
- [BMS/CMS/SHS Clubs & Activities Planning for 2020-21](#)
- [Westport Elementary School Clubs and Activities Feedback \(KHS\)](#)
- [Elementary Clubs and Activities by School](#)
- [Saxe Middle School Virtual Club Sign Up \(Middle School Exemplar\)](#)
- [BAND app](#)

Additional Resources

[American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

[CDC Considerations for Schools](#)

[CT SDE Reopening Schools Executive Summary](#)

[CT SDE Reopening Schools Slides](#)