



**Fort Ann Central School District**

**1 Catherine Street**

**Fort Ann, New York 12827**

### **FACSD Re-opening School Education Plan**

*The following document outlines the district's reopening plans for the 2020-2021 school year. Please keep in mind that this plan is subject to change throughout the pandemic. Should you have any questions or concerns, please visit the "COVID-19 Updates" page on our district website, or please contact the district directly.*

Dear parents, guardians, and Fort Ann community members,

On Monday, July 13, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that school districts in New York can follow plans to reopen for in-person schooling in September if COVID-19 infection rates stay at 5% or lower in a given region.

Determinations will be made by region about opening and closing schools as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. If a region is in Phase 4 and has a daily infection rate of 5% or lower over a 14-day average, schools in that region could hold in-person instruction. If daily infection rates exceed 9% over a seven-day average, however, schools in that region would not reopen. Similarly, should a region see such an average after reopening, schools in that region would also be directed to close.

While districts have been instructed to prioritize efforts to return all students to in-person instruction, the district is also planning for remote/distance learning as well as for a hybrid model that combines in-person instruction and remote learning. Parents will have the choice to have their child participate in the remote learning model for the first marking period, trimester, or longer if needed, we are currently considering different methods of virtual instruction. In support of remote learning, the district will make computer devices available to students and teachers who need them.

Our planning is designed to bring the most students back to face-to-face education as possible while providing additional opportunities and improving upon the distance learning systems that we adopted and implemented last March.

To allow our school district to safely reopen, there are a number of features, contingencies, and safety protocols that we must plan for, and we have attempted to outline this throughout our plan. We understand that the situation around COVID-19 is ever-evolving, and as a result, our plan will be forced to evolve with it. This plan has been developed over months through the input of a vast number of stakeholders, including building and district administrators, teachers, nurses, buildings and grounds staff, district safety specialist, WSWHE BOCES partners, students, parents, our local department of health. Their time, efforts, and dedication have been inspiring and have provided the backbone for our return this fall.

The health and safety of our students, our staff and our families remain our top priority. We want students and employees to feel comfortable and safe returning to school. Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#), and the [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\)](#).

We may need to alternate between in-person and remote learning throughout the year due to recommendations and guidance from our partnering agencies, and stay-at-home orders from the Governor. The level of infection, the spread of the virus, and response to the disease in our community will be at the forefront of our decision making as we move to open our schools.

### **Reopening of Schools Task Force:**

Following the July 1, 2020, Fort Ann Central School District Board of Education meeting, where the board discussed initial fall reopening challenges, the superintendent and the administrative team established a new task force structured to prioritize and expedite information-gathering and development of recommendations for reopening of schools based on guidance from Governor Cuomo, Washington County Public Health Department and New York State's guidance.

The District has found that it cannot accommodate the entire student population for in-person learning while maintaining six feet of social distance in classrooms. In light of this finding, the District is considering a reopening that provides quality educational instruction using a hybrid approach. Full face-to-face learning will be provided for students that need it most (younger students, low-income students, special education students, English language learners, and those with limited access to technology and internet connectivity). Face-to-face learning opportunities for other students on a rotating basis will also take place, as will remotely learning.

The District plan allows for students in grades PreK-5 to attend school in-person daily. Students in grades 6-12 will be taught via a combination of in-person and virtual learning (alternating days) to reduce the student population in the building to allow the District to meet social distancing requirements within classrooms.

For students in grades (K-12), parents may opt for their children to receive instruction **virtually only**. Classes will be live-streamed whenever possible and students learning virtually will be required to attend classes at their scheduled times.

### **Communication/Family and Community Engagement:**

To help inform our reopening plan, the district has sought feedback and input from stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians of students, local health department officials and health care providers, employee unions, and community groups. Engagement efforts included online surveys, virtual meetings, and one-on-one conversations.

The district remains committed to communicating all elements of this reopening plan to students, parents and guardians, staff, and visitors. The plan is available to all stakeholders via the district website at [www.fortannschool.org](http://www.fortannschool.org) and will be updated throughout the school year, as necessary, to respond to local circumstances.

As part of its planning for the reopening of schools and the new academic year, the district has developed a plan for communicating all necessary information to district staff, students, parents/guardians, visitors, and education partners and vendors. The district will use its existing communication channels – including the district website, school messenger, mailings and Facebook. Live-streamed informational sessions for parents and students will be offered once our finalized plan is in place. Informational letters and newsletters from the district in regards to reopening will be mailed to all households. Time will be dedicated during the first week of school to familiarize students and staff with all new protocols and safety guidelines. Appropriate signage and training opportunities to support the dissemination of consistent messaging regarding new protocols and procedures, expectations, requirements and options related to school operations throughout the pandemic will also be incorporated. The district will continue existing internal and external communications channels to notify staff, students and families/caregivers about in-person, remote and hybrid school schedules with as much advance notice as possible.

The district is committed to ensuring that all of its students and their families are taught and re-taught new expectations related to all public health policies and protocols. As part of this continuous training, the district will assess the best approach to communicating the information for each students' age group and will provide frequent opportunities for students to review these policies and protocols. This targeted education will help ensure that all students and their families know what is expected of them as they successfully return to the school setting.

### **Teaching and Learning:**

The school calendar includes two staff-only days before students arrive at school. Acknowledging the challenges that our teachers and staff have faced this spring delivering remote instruction under stressful circumstances, the district will focus these in-service days on

providing support to staff in the areas of COVID-19 safety procedures/protocols, social-emotional health and technology integration.

The week of September 8-11 may also be utilized for student orientation. This time would allow small groups of students to meet with their new teacher and begin to establish the relationship necessary for a successful school year. Any changes made to the 2020-2021 School Calendar will be shared with our school community by August 28, 2020.

As we enter the new school year, teachers will be encouraged to spend time building relationships, supporting students with the transition back to school, and teaching social distancing etiquette at developmentally appropriate levels.

Assessing student learning gaps or areas of need will be critical. Formative assessment before a unit of instruction to assess student understanding of pre-requisite skills will be common practice.

Acknowledging that the typical content in a given grade level or course may need to be adjusted, the content will be prioritized to ensure that students receive instruction for the prioritized learning standards, key understandings, and skills necessary for students' success in future study. Whenever possible, certified teachers will be placed in each classroom setting.

For information relating to teaching and learning in BOCES special education and Career and Technical Education programs, please see the BOCES website [www.boces.org](http://www.boces.org).

### **Guiding Safety and Health Principles:**

As a District, we continue to follow all guidelines provided by the NYS Office of the Governor, the New York State Education Department, and the Washington County Department of Health. Any and all discussions about how to safely and effectively reopen our schools requires us to understand the *how* of safely reopening. For us to safely reopen in-person instruction, there are four major areas that need to be considered – proper wearing of face coverings, social distancing requirements, hand and respiratory hygiene, and screening – all of which will be covered throughout the course of this planning document.

As a baseline, we as a school district are required to maintain six feet of distancing in most scenarios; wear appropriate face coverings and PPE while in transit, when we cannot appropriately socially distance; we must maintain proper hand hygiene, and adhere to the CDC's and Department of Health's guidance as they relate to the cleaning and disinfection of our classrooms. We will perform screening of all staff, students, and faculty members as they enter, or prior to their entry into the building. In order for us to safely reopen, we need to be able to achieve and maintain these requirements.

The district will create and deploy signage throughout the district to address public health protections surrounding COVID-19. Signage will address protocols and recommendations in the following areas:

- Proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Acceptable face coverings and requirements related to their wear
- Hand washing
- Adherence to social distancing instructions
- Symptoms/prevention of COVID-19

In addition to signage, the district will encourage all students, faculty, staff and visitors through verbal and written communication to adhere to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE through additional means.

The school district has designated Mr. Kevin A. Froats (Superintendent of Schools) as their COVID-19 Safety Coordinator. This individual shall be responsible for the continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or "new normal" levels.

The school district has designated Mrs. Michelle Discenza (Elementary School Principal) and Mr. Justin Hoskins (Middle School/High School Principal) as the primary points of contact upon the identification of a positive COVID-19 case within their building and will be responsible for subsequent communications. These individuals shall work closely with the superintendent and will be responsible for answering questions from students, faculty, staff, and parents or legal guardians regarding the COVID-19 public health emergency and the plans being implemented in the school.

#### **Health Checks:**

The district will provide resources to educate parents/guardians and staff members regarding the careful observation of symptoms of COVID-19 and health screening measures that will be required each day before students can attend school. The resources include the requirement for any student or staff member with a fever of 100°F or greater and/or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection to not come to school. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [list of Coronavirus symptoms](#) was used to develop these resources.

#### **Screening:**

- Students/families will be required to complete a screening questionnaire related to COVID-19 exposure and symptoms prior to arrival.
- All staff members must also complete a daily questionnaire related to COVID-19 exposure and symptoms.
- No individual with a temperature of 100.0 or higher will be permitted entry to the building or school bus, as applicable.
- If a staff or faculty member screens positively, they will be immediately sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and possible testing.
- If a student screens positively, they will be immediately separated from other students and supervised until they can be retrieved.
- Positive Screening Results will be referred to Professional Health Care Providers.

- Responsible parties will be required to immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if diagnostic test results are positive for COVID-19.
- The District will establish protocols and procedures with the Washington County Health Department to determine when an individual who tests positive can safely return. Documentation from a health care provider following evaluation, negative COVID-19 diagnostic test results, and symptom resolution will also be required.

### **Elementary School - Operationalize Academic/Instructional Parameters:**

#### **Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 5**

- Grade K-5 is planning for daily, onsite, in-person instruction (approximately 250 students).
- Pre-Kindergarten will remain a half-day program. However, students will attend on a rotating basis, to reduce density.
- Students in grades K-5 may be assigned to a new class/teacher to reduce density.
- Students will be socially distanced to ensure 6 feet of spacing between each pupil while in the classroom.
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- Due to social distancing requirements, all school spaces will be used as instructional spaces (e.g., classrooms, gymnasiums, library, cafeteria, special area classrooms).
- Potential staggered student arrival is under consideration to accommodate for potential transportation seating limitations and increased traffic at schools due to parent drop-offs.
- Students in self-contained, special education programs will be on-site daily when school is in session.
- Students receiving special services will continue to receive these services in-person or virtually (e.g., ELL, OT/PT, Speech).
- Students will be taught to follow new COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly.
- As previously noted, if your child or family has any trouble accessing our educational resources, please contact Elementary School Principal Mrs. Michelle Discenza at 518-639-5594, ext. 52100 or IT Director Mr. Ted Wood, at 518-639-5594 ext. 52075.

### **Middle School/High School -Operationalize Academic/Instructional Parameters:**

#### **Grades 6-12**

- Students in grades 6-12 (approximately 225 students) will be provided with in-person instruction on a rotating A-day/B-day basis with virtual instruction when not on campus, allowing for social distancing in classrooms and hallways.
- If all K-12 students do not fit on one bus run, a staggered start will be considered for all K-12 students.
- The schedule may be adjusted to allow for extended or staggered passing times which may lead to extended periods of face-to-face instruction.
- Since social distancing in the hallways may be difficult to adhere to, masks are required for all staff and students while in the hallways.

- Students, faculty, and staff may not congregate in the hallways with others.
- Students, faculty and staff will follow all signage for hallway traffic.
- On virtual instruction days, students will be required to participate in classroom work remotely and/or complete assignments. Student expectations on virtual days will be determined by the teacher based on what will work best for the specific class and what is being learned. As an example, students in Social Studies class may be assigned independent reading or writing, while students in Math class may watch the day's lesson live and from home.
- All students are required to follow their schedule and attend classes at their assigned time whether they are on campus or doing virtual instruction at home (if they are asked to do so).
- On virtual instruction days, students will be required to participate in classroom activities. Assignments or lessons being live-streamed will be determined by the teacher.
- Attendance on virtual days will be taken daily.
- Science labs will be scheduled on days when the student is on campus. Students who are on virtual instruction will also be required to complete science lab associated activities.
- Students in self-contained, special education programs will be onsite daily when school is in session (unless otherwise noted in IEP).
- Students receiving special services will continue to receive these services in-person or virtually (e.g., ELL, OT/PT Speech).
- Students will not be allowed to utilize lockers, they will be permitted to carry backpacks during the day, students will be required to carry a minimal number of materials daily.
- Students will be taught to follow new COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly.
- If a household does not have access to the internet or the appropriate hardware, please contact school principal, Mr. Justin Hoskins at 518-639-5594; Ext: 52060. If your student is having computing issues with their Chromebook, please contact Mr. Ted Wood at our IT Department directly, at 518-639-5594; Ext: 52075

### **Students with Disabilities**

- K-5 students receiving services will receive services (program and/or related services) in person or virtually in accordance with regulations and the child's Individualized Education Plan.
- 6-12 students receiving services will be provided services (program and/or related services) in person on a rotating A/B day basis with virtual instruction when not on campus, allowing for social distancing in classrooms and hallways.
- Needs of students with disabilities grades 6-12 will be considered when deciding if it is in the best interest of the child to receive all services in person or if the student can participate in the hybrid learning model, same as his/her non-disabled peers.
- Parent engagement will remain consistent, and in the parent's preferred language or mode of communication through the use of phone calls, virtual meetings, emails, and mailing. Face to face discussion will be considered upon parent request.

- All approved communication modes will be utilized to communicate with each stakeholder in all CSE and CPSE related matters, including progress monitoring, provision of services, and IEP planning and implementation.
- Whether learning virtually or in person, students will have access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology to meet their unique needs.
- When services are not in person, logs will be maintained by each special education teacher and service provider, documenting parent communication, and the service provided to the student including service, frequency, duration, mode, method and manner.
- Students in district self-contained, special education programs will be onsite daily when school is in session.

### **Virtual Learning (K-12-Full Time) Expectations:**

- K-5 students, parents and guardians will be asked to commit to Virtual Learning for the marking period (13 weeks) at a time.
- 6-12 students, parents and guardians will be asked to commit to Virtual Learning for a marking period (10 weeks) at a time.
- If a parent opts for virtual instruction for their child (children), they will be required to follow their daily schedule and attend all classes during the assigned time. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. With this model, students will need to be present with the camera on and microphone off until directed by the teacher.
- If a parent of a student with disabilities opts for virtual instruction for their child (children), they will be required to follow their daily schedule and attend all classes during the assigned time. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. With this model, students will need to be present with the camera on and microphone off until directed by the teacher.

### **Social Distancing, Face Coverings & PPE**

The district has developed a plan with policies and procedures for maintaining social distancing of all students, faculty, and staff when on school facilities, grounds and transportation. If social distancing of 6 feet cannot be maintained, proper face coverings must be worn in common areas such as hallways or school buses. For those medically unable to wear face coverings, parents must provide a letter from a medical provider.

Students, staff and visitors to our schools will be expected to wear face coverings indoors and outside, including on the school bus, when six-foot physical distancing is not possible. Students will be allowed to remove face coverings during meals, instruction, and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance. The District will follow all Department of Health guidelines for medical exceptions for face covering requirements.

Because students and staff will need to be prepared to wear a face covering if another person unexpectedly cannot socially distance, they will be required to wear a face covering in all common areas (e.g., entrances and exits) and when traveling around the school.

Face coverings will be provided to students and staff, if needed, at no cost. Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include, but are not limited to, cloth-based coverings and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose.

The district will instruct students, parents/guardians and staff, contractors and vendors on:

- The proper way to wear face coverings
- Washing hands before putting on and after removing their face covering
- Proper way to discard disposable face coverings.

Students will be asked to follow all of our PPE procedures. Failure to do so may cause a disruption in education and may lead to disciplinary consequences.

Students that can not wear a mask due to medical reasons are asked to supply medical documentation to the school nurse, Lisa Pearl, prior to school starting.

### **Health Hygiene:**

The district will emphasize healthy hygiene practices for students and staff by providing initial and refresher education in hand and respiratory hygiene, along with providing adequate supplies and time for frequent hand hygiene. Signs will be posted throughout the school (e.g., entrances, restrooms, cafeteria, classrooms, administrative offices, auditorium, custodial staff areas) and regular messaging will be shared with the school community. Signage will be used to remind individuals to:

1. Stay home if they feel sick.
2. Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others or in accordance with any stricter policy implemented by the school.
3. Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
4. Adhere to social distancing instructions.
5. Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19.
6. Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
7. Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

### **Hand Hygiene:**

Students and staff must carry out the following hand hygiene practices.

- Wash hands routinely with soap (any kind) and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Dry hands completely after washing. Use paper towels to dry hands if available instead of a hand dryer if they are available.

- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol. Hand sanitizer should be rubbed on the hands until it is completely absorbed. DO NOT dry hands if sanitizer is used.

Hand washing should occur:

- Before and after eating (e.g. snacks and lunch).
- After going to the restroom or after assisting a student with toileting.
- After using a tissue.
- Before and after using shared materials.
- Before and after putting on or taking off face masks.
- After coming in from the outdoors.
- Anytime hands are visibly soiled.

### **Respiratory Hygiene:**

The COVID-19 virus spreads from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes. Therefore, the district will emphasize the importance of respiratory hygiene.

Students and staff must carry out the following respiratory hygiene practices.

- Cover a cough or sneeze using a tissue. If a tissue is used, it should be thrown away immediately.
- If you don't have a tissue when sneezing or coughing, sneeze into your elbow.
- Wash your hands after sneezing or coughing.
- Face coverings are protective. Wearing a face covering will keep the respiratory droplets and aerosols from being widely dispersed into the air.

### **Cleaning, and Disinfection:**

The district will ensure adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including "Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19," and the "STOP THE SPREAD" poster, as applicable. Cleaning and disinfection logs will be maintained that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.

Examples of facility types where cleaning and disinfection frequency will be distinguished include

- Bathrooms
- Athletic training rooms, locker rooms
- Health offices, isolation rooms
- Administrative offices (main office, reception area)
- Frequently touched surfaces in common areas (door handles, elevator buttons, copy machine keypads, etc.)
- Breakrooms
- Cafeterias/Kitchens

- Computer labs
- Science labs
- Classrooms
- Maintenance offices and work areas
- Bus Garage
- Buses, school vehicles
- Libraries
- Large meeting areas (auditoriums, gymnasiums, music rooms)
- Playgrounds (cleaning only)
- Outdoor seating areas (plastic or metal)

Students, faculty, and staff will be trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, and such information will be provided to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home.

The district will provide and maintain hand hygiene stations around the school, as follows:

- For handwashing: soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.
- For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.
- Accommodations for students who cannot use hand sanitizer will be made.

Regular cleaning and disinfection of the facilities will occur, including more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high-risk and frequently touched surfaces. This will include desks and cafeteria tables, which should be cleaned and disinfected between each individual's use. Cleaning and disinfection will be rigorous and ongoing and will occur at least daily, or more frequently as needed.

The district will ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms should be cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use.

- Responsible Parties must adhere to and promote hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection guidance set forth by DOH and the CDC.
- Responsible Parties will train all students, faculty, and staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene and will provide information to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home.
- Responsible Parties will maintain logs that include the date, time and scope of cleaning and disinfection, that take place in classrooms and throughout our buildings.
- For the elementary classes (which will be separated into cohorts) minimal or no disinfection will be necessary during the school day as the same individuals will be using the same spaces.
- For middle school and high school classes, staff will be assisting with wiping down desks and commonly used classroom areas in between classes.
- Shared books and supplies will be minimized and where used, books (e.g., library books, trade books) supplies (e.g., science lab materials) will be disinfected or allowed to remain untouched for 3 days between use (or length specified by CDC).

### **Vulnerable Populations & Accommodations:**

We recognize that some students and staff members are at an increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness, live with a person who is at an increased risk, or simply do not feel comfortable returning to an in-person educational environment. It is our goal that these individuals are able to safely participate in educational activities. As stated before in this document, virtual learning is an option for all students.

### **Visitors on Campus:**

No outside visitors or volunteers will be allowed on school campuses, except for the safety and well-being of students. Parents/guardians will report to the front office and not go beyond unless it is for the safety or well-being of their child. Essential visitors to facilities will be required to wear face coverings and will be restricted in their access to our school buildings.

Visitors must follow all safety protocols as listed above.

### **Management of ill persons, contact tracing and monitoring:**

The district requires students, faculty, or staff members who develop COVID-19 symptoms during the school day to report to the nurse's office. If there are several students waiting to see the school nurse, students must wait at least 6 feet apart. The district has designated areas to separate individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 from others until they can go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on severity of illness. One area will be used to treat injuries, provide medications or nursing treatments, and the other area will be used for assessing and caring for ill students and staff. Both areas will be supervised by an adult and have easy access to a bathroom and sink with hand hygiene supplies.

### **Return to School after Illness:**

The district will establish protocols and procedures, in consultation with the local health department(s), about the requirements for determining when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment at school. These protocols may include:

1. Documentation from a health care provider following evaluation
2. Negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result
3. Symptom resolution, or if COVID-19 positive, release from isolation

The district will refer to DOH's ["Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure"](#) regarding protocols and policies for faculty and staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the faculty or staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.

The district requires that individuals who were exposed to the COVID-19 virus complete quarantine and have not developed symptoms before returning to in-person learning. The

discharge of an individual from quarantine and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.

### **Contact Tracing:**

The district will notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual within school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors of the district.

To assist the local health department with tracing the transmission of COVID-19, the district has developed and maintained a plan to trace all contacts of exposed individuals in accordance with protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.

Districts may assist with contact tracing by:

1. Keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members
2. Ensuring student schedules are up to date
3. Keeping a log of any visitor which includes date and time, and wherein the school they visited
4. Assisting the local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program.

### **Social-Emotional Well-Being:**

As a District, we recognize that the social-emotional well-being of our students and staff during these challenging times is critically important. The district will continue to provide available resources and referrals to address mental health, behavioral, and emotional needs of students, faculty, and staff when school reopens for in-person instructions.

The district has established an Advisory Council that will meet at least two times each year and incorporates shared decision-making, the council is composed of parents, students, members of the board of education, school building administrators, community-based service providers, teachers, certified school counselors, and other pupil personnel service providers. The advisory council will inform the comprehensive developmental school counseling program plan. This program plan has been reviewed and updated to meet current needs.

The district will continue to provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on how to talk with and support students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, as well as provide support for developing coping and resilience skills for students, faculty, and staff.

### **School Safety Drills:**

The district will conduct fire (evacuation) drills and lockdown drills as required by education law and regulation and the fire code. It is required that schools must continue to conduct mandatory fire and lockdown drills according to the existing statutory schedule. Our School Safety Drills will be conducted in a manner that maintains social distancing at exits and

gathering points outside the building, while still preparing students to respond in emergencies. Protocols and procedures will be developed by key stakeholders to minimize the risk of spreading infection while conducting drills.

### **School Closures:**

A closure refers to contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale or scope of in-person education and/or closing the school. The district will collaborate with the local health department to determine the parameters, conditions or metrics (e.g., increased absenteeism or increased illness in the school community) that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.

### **Child Nutrition/Student Meals:**

School meals will continue to be available to all students, including those attending school in-person and those learning remotely.

For students onsite, meals will be provided while maintaining appropriate social distancing between students. Students do not need to wear face coverings when seated and eating so long as they are appropriately socially distanced.

The district will ensure social distancing between individuals while eating in the school cafeteria or in classrooms. If the cafeteria is not feasible for lunch, meals may be served in alternative areas (e.g., classrooms, small gym) or in staggered meal periods to ensure social distancing and proper cleaning and disinfection between students.

The sharing of food and beverages (e.g., buffet-style meals, snacks) is prohibited, unless individuals are members of the same household. Adequate space will be reserved for students, faculty, and staff to observe social distancing while eating meals.

### **Transportation:**

The district will conduct transportation activities that are consistent with state-issued public transit guidance and NYSED School Reopening guidelines. Students and school staff must wear acceptable face coverings at all times on school buses (e.g., entering, exiting, and seated) and should maintain appropriate social distancing to the extent practicable.

Students who are able will be required to wear masks and social distance on the bus to the extent practicable; however, students whose physical or mental health would be impaired are not required to wear a face covering, but must be appropriately socially distanced. Members of the same household may be assigned to sit together. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to drop off or walk students to school to reduce density on buses.

All buses that are used every day by districts and contract carriers will be cleaned/ disinfected once a day. High contact sports will be wiped down after the morning (AM) and afternoon (PM) run depending upon the disinfection schedule.

School buses shall not be equipped with hand sanitizer due to its combustible composition and potential liability to the carrier or district. School bus drivers, monitors and attendants must not carry personal bottles of hand sanitizer with them on school buses.

- We currently have ten buses which can contain 22 students on each bus (one per bus seat). This allows us to transport 220 students per run.
- If all K-12 students do not fit on one bus run, a staggered start time may be required.
- To the extent possible, social distancing will be maintained on buses (one per seat).
- Buses will be filled from back to front and emptied from front to back.
- Buses will release students either on a staggered basis, to specific doors in buildings.
- Students will exit the bus or car and report directly to their classrooms.
- Parent drop off/pick up- will be in designated areas at designated times.

#### **School Bus Staff:**

School bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics are required to perform a self-health assessment for symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving at work. If personnel are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19, they will notify their employer as per the reporting policies and seek medical attention.

School bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics must wear a face covering.

Transportation staff (drivers, monitors, attendants, mechanics and cleaners) will be trained and provided periodic refreshers on the proper use of personal protective equipment and the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Drivers, monitors and attendants who must have direct physical contact with a child must wear gloves.

#### **Field Trips:**

- Field trips will not be permitted at this time.

#### **Filtration and Ventilation:**

- Will meet or exceed minimum requirements.

#### **Athletics/Extra-Curricular Activities:**

- Currently all interscholastic sporting competitions are not permitted.
- Fall Sports Season delayed – new start date: 9/21/20
- Clubs & Extra-Curricular Activities – Placed on hold until 9/21/20.

#### **Physical Education/Band & Chorus:**

- Given the 12 feet social distancing guidelines for these classes, and the rotating A/B day schedule for 6-12 students, the combination of in-person and virtual instruction may be necessary. Additional options may include instrumental and voice lessons only.

**Recess:**

- Recess for K-5 students will be held outside when possible.
- Physically active indoor recess will not be permitted in the classroom setting.
- Intermingling during recess will be limited, by use of a playground schedule and social distancing guidelines.
- Students will be required to keep 6 or 12 ft of space between one another depending on the activity.
- Students will be required to stay within the same cohort while using the playground.
- Students may use playground equipment (climbing structures, swings, slides).
- Small equipment (balls, jump ropes, bats, etc) will not be used.
- The playground will be cleaned according to CDC guidance. Cleaning staff will routinely clean high touch surfaces made of metal or plastic, such as grab bars and railings.
- Disinfectants will not be required on the playground.

**Dismissal:**

- Students will exit the building a grade at a time to their assigned buses. Masks will be worn until they have left the bus at their stop.

**Grading:**

- Traditional grading practices will be instituted and potentially reevaluated as needed.

**Future Supports:**

- Academic Intervention Services will be provided to support students' attainment of learning standards, according to the district plan, if deemed necessary in Fall 2020. AIS services may be delivered in the child's classroom or at an alternative location.

**General School Information:**

- Schools reopening or reclosing will be directly linked to regional metrics.
- New York State's guidance places a tremendous emphasis on considering a combination of in-person instruction and remote instruction.
- The hybrid model that we plan on implementing will provide full face-to-face learning for students that need it most (younger students, low-income students, special education students, English language learners, and those with limited access to technology. Schools will provide face-to-face learning opportunities for other students on a rotating basis based on the capacity of each school building.
- A flexible schedule may be implemented during the first week of school for K-12 students to familiarize students and staff with modified or new safety protocols or procedures.
- Families will be notified on changes to the District Calendar and to the orientation schedule and official start date at the end of August.
- Breakfast and lunch will be pre-packaged and served to ensure appropriate social distancing, including an allowance for eating in classrooms. The procedures for food service stations and delivery are being developed.

- Alternative locations will be provided for students with severe food allergies, as needed.
- Hallway traffic will be one-way, where possible. Classes transitioning within the hallway will be closely monitored to reduce the number of students in the hallway at a given time.
- Teachers will be encouraged to have windows open and instruct parts of classes outdoors, where feasible.
- Lockers will not be used at the secondary level.
- Students will be asked to carry a reduced number of materials with them daily.
- Safety and social distancing signage will be posted on campus and throughout the buildings.

#### **Extra-Curricular, Athletics, Physical Education, and Performing Arts:**

- Feasibility to provide physical education and performing arts given requirement to ensure 12 feet between participants is being assessed.
- Interscholastic sports are currently not permitted. Additional guidance is expected to be forthcoming.
- Extra-curricular activities will be examined to determine which can be conducted virtually.

#### **Shifting to Virtual-Learning in the Event of School Building Closure Due to COVID-19:**

- Full remote or virtual learning will take place as a last resort should the metrics determine we need to close physical schools again.

#### **Additional Resources are listed below:**

Students with Disabilities Direct support: Mrs. Lori Johnson; 518-639-5594; Ext: 52022

English Language Learners support: K-12; Mr. Justin Hoskins; 518-639-5594; Ext: 52060

Social-Emotional needs: K-6, Ms. Ashley LaVine, 518-639-5594; Ext: 52046; 7-12, Mrs. Candice Spooner; 518-639-5594; Ext: 52099; K-12 Mrs. Kristen Casey; 518-639-5594; Ext: 52025

Homelessness Concerns: K-12; Mr. Justin Hoskins; 518-639-5594; Ext: 52060

School Nurse: Mrs. Lisa Pearl; 518-639-5594; Ext: 52060

School Safety Specialist: Mrs. Micki Jones; 518-639-5594; Ext: 52303

#### **Key & Additional References:**

- [State Education Department Issues Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 16, 2020)
- [State Education Department Presents Framework of Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 13, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, NYS Department of Health](#) (July 13, 2020)

- [Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)  
(June 26, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Food Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.](#)  
(June 26, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Office-Based Work during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.](#)  
(June 26, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Public Transportation Activities during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.](#) (June 26, 2020)
- [New York State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [New York State Education Department Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19 Website](#)

8/11/20 update:

## COVID-19 Supplemental Guidance

### Virtual Learning (K-12-Full Time) Expectations:

While we recognize that nothing can replace fact-to-face learning experiences, we are determined to provide a continuity of learning and a sense of community for all Fort Ann students during remote learning.

Overview:

Faculty will communicate with students and families using the Google Classroom platform that we have previously used in order to continue learning while promoting the academic, social and emotional needs of our students.

- K-5 students, parents and guardians will be asked to commit to Virtual Learning for the marking period (13 weeks) at a time.
- 6-12 students, parents and guardians will be asked to commit to Virtual Learning for a marking period (10 weeks) at a time.
- If a parent opts for virtual instruction for their child (children), they will be required to follow their daily schedule and attend all classes during the assigned time. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. With this model, students will need to be present with the camera on and microphone off until directed by the teacher.
- If a parent of a student with disabilities opts for virtual instruction for their child (children), they will be required to follow their daily schedule and attend all classes during the assigned time. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. With this

model, students will need to be present with the camera on and microphone off until directed by the teacher.

- Students are expected to complete daily assignments. Parents or caregivers should monitor student work. Students will receive assignments in ELA, Math and other content areas.

### **Management of ill persons:**

The district requires students, faculty, or staff members who develop COVID-19 symptoms during the school day to report to the nurse's office. If there are several students waiting to see the school nurse, students must wait at least 6 feet apart. The district has designated areas to separate individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 from others until they can go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on severity of illness. One area will be used to treat injuries, provide medications or nursing treatments, and the other area will be used for assessing and caring for ill students and staff. Both areas will be supervised by an adult and have easy access to a bathroom and sink with hand hygiene supplies.

### **Testing for COVID-19:**

As situations arise in which identify needs or requests for COVID-19 testing, school administrators will coordinate with the Washington County Public Health school liaison. Washington County Public Health will assist with testing orders/referrals to a local testing site and/or coordinate with a student or staff member's medical provider of their choice – testing will be based on availability of testing and/or testing supplies and processes thereof.

Responsible parties must notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test results by an individual within school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

### **Contact Tracing:**

The district will notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual within school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors of the district.

As in any investigation or active COVID-19 case situation, Washington County Public Health and our state contact tracing team will conduct contact tracing for any official investigation, as per current CDC and New York State Public Health guidance and protocols.

To assist the local health department with tracing the transmission of COVID-19, the district has developed and maintained a plan to trace all contacts of exposed individuals in accordance with protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.

The district will assist with contact tracing by:

1. Preserving accurate attendance records of students and staff members
2. Ensuring that student schedules are up to date
3. Keeping a record or log of any visitor which includes date and time, and wherein the school they visited
4. Maintaining updated transportation rosters
5. Retain and update Student / staff contact information
6. Assist the local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program.

### **Return to School after Illness:**

The district will establish protocols and procedures, in consultation with the local health department(s), about the requirements for determining when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment at school. These protocols may include:

1. Documentation from a health care provider following evaluation
2. Negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result
3. Symptom resolution, or if COVID-19 positive, release from isolation

Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 regardless of whether the person is symptomatic or asymptomatic, the student or staff may return to work upon completing at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of symptoms or 10 days of isolation after the first positive test if they remain asymptomatic. The LHD will release the person from isolation.

The district will refer to DOH's ["Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure"](#) regarding protocols and policies for faculty and staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the faculty or staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.

The district requires that individuals who were exposed to the COVID-19 virus complete quarantine and have not developed symptoms before returning to in-person learning. The discharge of an individual from quarantine and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.