Date Posted	December 2021 (will be submitted to CSDE through a link in the ARP/ESSER grant application)	
LEA Name	Regional School District #1: Cornwall Consolidated School Housatonic Valley Regional High School Kent Center School Lee H. Kellogg School North Canaan Elementary School Salisbury Central School Sharon Center School	
Reopening Plan Point of Contact	Lisa Carter, Superintendent	
Contact Email	lcarter@region1schools.org	
Contact Phone	(860)824-0855	
LEA COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison:	Cornwall Consolidated School - Mary Kay Ravenola, Principal Housatonic Valley Regional High School - Ian Strever, Principal Kent Center School - Michelle Mott, Principal Lee H. Kellogg School - Robin Faust, Interim Principal North Canaan Elementary School - Alicia Roy, Principal Salisbury Central School - Stephanie Magyar, Principal Sharon Center School - Karen Manning, Principal	
Liaison Email:	Mary Kay Ravenola - <u>mravenola@cornwallschool.org</u> Ian Strever - <u>istrever@hvrhs.org</u> Michelle Mott - <u>mottm@kentcenter.com</u> Robin Faust - <u>faust@kelloggschool.org</u> Alicia Roy - <u>aroy@nceschool.org</u> Stephanie Magyar - <u>smagyar@salisburycentral.org</u> Karen Manning - <u>kmanning@sharoncenterschool.org</u>	



## REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1 Canaan, Cornwall, Kent, North Canaan, Salisbury and Sharon

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction & Continuity of Service Plan

December 20, 2021

## Introduction A Message from the Superintendent of Schools

The Safe Return to In-Person Instruction & Continuity of Service Plan 2021-2022 has been updated per the expectations of CSDE as a provision of the conditions for ARP/ESSER funding. The plan was updated with the recognition of the following public health factors:

- A recent surge in COVID-19 positivity rate, due to the emergence and spread of the Delta and Omicron variants.
- Increasing numbers of fully-vaccinated individuals who are 5 years of age or older.
- Extremely low probability of in-school transmission of COVID-19.

Given the persistence of the virus, Region 1 schools will maintain the suite of virus mitigation practices that have been in place since the end of the 2020-2021 school year. However, given the aforementioned variables and research that confirms the importance of authentic student-teacher relationships, the CT State Department of Education has indicated that it is best for all students to continue to be present in the classroom and that there is no need for students to have access to distance learning.

This plan outlines the continuing expectations for the safe operation of schools. Because the situation continues to change with respect to emerging virus mutations, such as the Delta and Omicron variants, there is still the opportunity for public health practices to change as a result of COVID-19 trends. The plan assumes the continuation of current COVID-19 patterns and therefore provides for the opportunity to maintain more normal school operations, while continuing to observe these mitigation measures:

- All students and staff will be required to wear masks.
- Students and staff will maintain a social distance of 3-6 feet,
- Hand sanitization will continue to be practiced throughout the day.
- All school staff as well as operations and service providers will have to be fully vaccinated or in the process of becoming fully vaccinated by September 21, 2021.

However, there will be greater flexibility with respect to cohorting in the Pre-k-8 schools, meal service for all students, and offering after school activities.

We will continue to fine tune the plan throughout the school year and will be reaching out to stakeholders for input per the requirements of the American Rescue Plan Grant application instructions and according to the direction of the CSDE. We are optimistic with respect to the improving educational environment and we look forward to continuing our strong partnership with the Region 1 stakeholders as we prepare for a robust and healthy start to the new school year.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by: lisa Carter FA3841308E6A444

Lisa B. Carter Superintendent

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## PART 1

## Health and Safety Strategies



## **Region One Priorities**

Region One Schools in collaboration with the Continuity of Service Committee have identified four priority areas that must be in place to reopen.

Safety of Students and Staff Schools will be prepared to reinforce healthy practices among our staff and students, take preventative actions to prevent the spread of all respiratory illnesses, and prepare for any increased cases of COVID-19.
A Flexible and Equitable Approach to Education Schools will be prepared to reopen with instructional schedules and models that are flexible. Given the low level of COVID-19 transmission in the area, the expectation is that students and staff will start and remain in school for in-person learning throughout the school year. However, Region One will be prepared to transition to a new schedule and model that will allow our students to continue to learn at high levels should the public health situation change.
Attention to Social and Emotional Well-Being for All Schools will reopen understanding that the COVID-19 pandemic has created a wide variety of traumatic experiences and varied levels of stress for staff, students and families. Region One educators will have access to professional learning and support to help them to practice self-care and to meet the social and emotional needs of our students and their families.
Strive to Meet Grade Level Achievement Expectations Curriculum, instruction and assessment will be monitored at the local and regional levels to provide the support needed to ensure continuity of practice appropriate to the setting in which learning will occur. Region One educators will continue to closely monitor student performance using multiple data sources to provide opportunities for students to achieve the expectations outlined in our curricula.

from ADAPT, ADVANCE, ACHIEVE: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together

## State of Connecticut Guidelines and Expectations

Region One staff, board and community members have created a plan for full reopening in the fall. We know from our experience in the 2020-2021 school year that we have the capacity and capability to switch to distance learning should that unexpected demand for a transition occur due to a change in the public health situation. This plan does not include those contingencies as it is expected that we will not need them. However, should the situation change we will refer to the 2020-2021 reopening plan to guide us through the transition and will communicate with all stakeholders appropriately. We have adhered to the State's guiding principles from a Regional perspective to ensure the level of consistency expected by the Connecticut Department of Education; however we have used our discretion to address the specific needs of each of the schools in the Region.

Schools should plan to have all students in all districts return to schoolhouses for full-time instruction at the beginning of 2021-2022. This model will be supported with virus mitigation strategies and specific monitoring, and containment practices.

Consistent with the guidance from the Connecticut State Department of Education, as Region One schools plan to reopen, the guidance and considerations outlined in this document are grounded in six guiding principles:

- 1. Safeguarding the health and safety of students and staff.
- 2. Allowing all students the opportunity to return to school full time starting in the fall.
- 3. Monitoring the school, students, and staff and, when necessary, taking appropriate action to control potential virus spread.
- 4. Emphasizing equity, access, and support to the students and communities that occurred during the 2021-2022 school year from this historic disruption.
- 5. Fostering strong two-way communication with partners such as families, educators, and staff.
- 6. Considering the continuing challenges to the physical safety, social emotional well-being, and the mental health needs of our students.

## **Keeping Our Schools Open**



Keeping our schools open is everyone's responsibility!

Region One Schools will rely on the cooperation of families, students, and staff members to reopen and stay open on a traditional schedule.

The expectation for the fall of 2021 is to safely bring back students to in-person school settings and to maximize learning and address our students' social and emotional needs. This document details our plans for a fall return with a focus, first and foremost, on getting all of our students back into our school buildings in a setting that is as "normal" as possible.

There is a clear consensus from both education and medical groups that we must keep in mind the risks associated with COVID-19 for in-person school programs. While distance learning has provided the best possible alternative during school closures, there is no substitute for in-person instruction when it comes to the quality of students' academic learning. In-person school plays an equally important role in our ability to support students' social-emotional needs, including their mental and physical health, and in mitigating the impacts of trauma. We also recognize the disruptive impact that the closures have on families trying to maintain regular work schedules and manage household needs, including childcare, while also facilitating remote learning.

Families play a critical role in supporting the new culture of health and safety that each of our schools will establish. Most importantly, families can help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in our schools by checking their children daily for any COVID-19 symptoms and keeping them home from school when they are sick or have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. Families can also contribute by supporting the use of face coverings or masks in school and on the bus, communicating concerns with teachers and school leaders, and continuing to follow state guidance on health and safety outside of school.

With adherence to the State of Connecticut's comprehensive set of critical health and safety requirements along with Region One Schools' commitment to a safe and appropriate education, we can bring our students and staff safely back to school, and keep them in school while supporting the well-being of our families.

## **Region One Continuity of Mitigation Strategies**

All Region One Schools will work with the Medical Advisor, CSDE and the Torrington Area Health District to ensure <u>CDC guidelines</u> are followed to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

	Continue Morning health checks by caregivers To prevent transmission among the school population, families should screen students before leaving for school. Caregivers should check to ensure temperature is below 100.0° F and observe for symptoms associated with COVID-19 outlined by public health officials.
	Face coverings or masks required. Students must wear face coverings or masks that completely cover the nose and mouth while inside the school building and on the bus, with exceptions only for those students with medical conditions for whom it is not safe to do so. "Mask Breaks" will be provided during the day. Families will be responsible for providing students with face coverings or masks. Schools will have backup disposable masks available for students who forget them. Policy
	Social distancing required. Students must maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible. Students are expected to practice social distancing when entering and exiting the building, in classrooms, and moving throughout the school.
•	<b>Frequent hand washing or hand sanitizing expected.</b> Students must engage in frequent hand washing or sanitizing upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, and after coughing or sneezing. Hand sanitizers will continue to be available throughout each school building, in classrooms, and other common areas.
	<b>Clean and Well-Ventilated Facilities</b> Schools will continue to follow cleaning guidelines and will ensure that HVAC systems provide adequate air circulation or that fans are used to improve air circulation in each classroom.
Contraction of the second seco	Contact Tracing, Isolation and Quarantine Schools will continue to isolate students who become ill during the school day, contact trace to determine all close contacts and quarantine individual students or cohorts of students as required by DPH and CDC guidelines. The Superintendent, building principal and school nurse will work with the Region 1 Medical Advisor to determine quarantine decisions.
	<b>Diagnostic Screening and Testing</b> The Superintendent will work with CSDE and the CT Department of Health to provide information about and access to diagnostic screening and testing for COVID-19.
	Access to Vaccination The Superintendent will work with the CSDE and the Torrington Area Health District to continue to provide information about and access to vaccination clinics as needed throughout the duration of the pandemic. All Region 1 schools will comply with Executive Order No. 13A, which mandates that all staff be fully vaccinated.
DISABILITY ACCESS SERVICES	Appropriate Accommodations for students with Disabilities Region 1 schools will continue to use extra layers of mitigation when needed to provide maximum safety when working closely with students with a disability that makes masking impossible.

## **Region One Student Expectations**



24	<b>Stay home when you feel ill.</b> Students must stay home if they are feeling sick, have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. Students should visit a healthcare
	provider for a COVID-19 test and follow quarantine rules should they test positive.
	Morning health check by parents required.
	In order to prevent transmission within the school population, parents are expected to screen students before leaving for school. Check to ensure temperature is below 100.0° F and observe for symptoms associated with COVID-19 outlined by public health officials.
	Face coverings or masks required.
	Students must wear face coverings or masks that completely cover the nose and mouth while inside the school building and on the bus, with exceptions only for those students with medical conditions for whom it is not safe to do so. "Mask Breaks" will be provided during the day. Parents will be responsible for providing students with face coverings or masks. Schools will have backup disposable masks available for students who forget them.
	Social distancing required.
	Students must maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible. Students are expected to practice social distancing when entering and exiting the building, in classrooms, and moving throughout the school.
	Frequent hand washing or hand sanitizing expected.
•	Students must engage in frequent hand washing or sanitizing upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, and after coughing or sneezing.

## **Region One Adult Expectations**



## Keeping our schools open

A C	Stay home if you feel ill. Teachers, staff, and volunteers must stay home if they are feeling sick, have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. They should visit a healthcare provider for a COVID-19 test and follow quarantine rules should they test positive.
	Morning health self- check required. In order to prevent transmission among the school population, teachers, staff, and volunteers are instructed to self-screen before leaving for school. Check to ensure temperature is below 100.0° F and observe for symptoms associated with COVID-19 outlined by public health officials.
	Face coverings or masks required. Teachers, staff, and volunteers must wear face coverings or masks that completely cover the nose and mouth while <u>inside</u> the school, with exceptions only for those with medical conditions for whom it is not safe to do so. "Mask Breaks" will be provided during the day. Schools will have backup disposable masks available for teachers, staff, and volunteers.
	Social distancing required. Teachers, staff, and volunteers must maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible.
•	<b>Frequent hand washing or hand sanitizing expected.</b> Teachers, staff, and volunteers and staff must engage in frequent hand washing or sanitizing upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, and after coughing or sneezing.
	Vaccination All Region 1 schools will comply with Executive Order No. 13A, which mandates that all staff be fully vaccinated.



Keeping our schools open

Our students will return to school with our In-Person Learning Model that includes the continuation of mitigation practices in alignment with CT Department of Public Health and CSDE guidelines.

## **In-School Learning**

Minimal/No Spread of Virus (or Virus Contained) 100% Student Attendance in School
Schools operating up to 100% capacity, <u>no distance learning</u>
Face coverings/masks for students and staff while inside school building Isolation of sick students/staff if they become sick during the school day
Some cohorting of students used, particularly in Grades K-8, some restrictions on group activities
Maximize spacing of seating as feasible
Regular cleaning and sanitization protocols
Extracurricular activities, including most sports, are offered with appropriate protective measures as defined by the CIAC, the CDC, and state and local health officials.
Buses up to full capacity with face coverings/masks in place during transit, controlled loading/unloading of riders

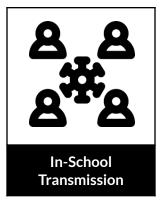
The State of Connecticut is expecting all schools to have all students, in all districts, return to their local schools for full-time in-person instruction at the beginning of the 2021–2022 school year.

## Region One Model for Learning Fall 2021

IN PERSON LEARNING Traditional Schedule with Health & Safety Expectations. All students attend every day.\*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	rs attend every day wit ional activities are adju	-		ce. Classroom

## **COVID-19** Cases in School



If a student or staff member who has been present in school has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, the School Nurse will notify the building Principal, who will then immediately contact the Superintendent. In all cases, everyone involved will maintain confidentiality in accordance with FERPA, privacy expectations, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Superintendent of Schools will notify the Region 1 Medical Advisor, local health officials (Torrington Area Health District) and CSDE immediately.

Schools will follow current CSDE and CT DPH requirements concerning:

- CONTACT TRACING
- CLEANING
- QUARANTINING
- CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION

The decision to suspend or close a school (or the entire school district) will be made by the Superintendent or designee based on information and recommendation from local health officials (Torrington Area Health District) and the CSDE. Board of Education members and town officials will be notified of closure immediately.

All communications to the school community including staff and families are made through the Region One Central Office together with the Principal of the school(s) that is/are closing.

During school closures, all extracurricular activities, athletics, and school-based afterschool programs are canceled.

# PART 2 Continuity of Services



A set of students character Free Vector

## Region One Continuity of Service Committee Focus Areas

Compliance Liaison - School Principals - supported by Jacquie Rice			
Communication	Technology and Digital Tools	Operations, Facilities, and Food Service	Transportation
Lisa Carter Janet Carlson Ian Strever Pat Mechare Scott Fellows Jill Pace Tina Bunce	Jill Pace Scott Fellows Mike Ellington Pam Sangster Beth Johnson Leslie Klish	Sam Herrick Steven Schibi David Valcin Bill Hurley Jeff Lloyd Michelle Mott Sal Apicella Andrea Wilson Betsy Maury Heather Dineen Glen MacGillvray Trish Malloy	Sam Herrick Marty Lindenmeyer Michelle Christen Alicia Roy Leslie Sheldon

Compliance Liaison - School Principals - supported by Jacquie Rice			
Health & Wellness	Athletic and Extracurricular Activities	Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning*	Fiscal Responsibility
Martha Schwaikert Dr. Suzanne Lefebvre Devon Sheehan Scott Fellows Jill Pace Jacquie Rice Doug Cahill Theresa Graney Letitia Garcia-Tripp Mary Cadman Lindsley Colligan Lori Foley	Anne MacNeill Lisa Carter Mike Ellington	Scott Fellows Jill Pace Karen Manning Mary Kay Ravenola Carl Gross Melissa Bachetti John Conklin Deb Morin Beth Foulds Allison Bryant Sara Cousins Donna Begley Celina Huber Bethany Keck David Moran Jacqueline Fenn Lindsley Colligan	Sam Herrick Lisa Carter Scott Fellows Jill Pace Cindy Webb Sue Bucceri

\*Includes Social-Emotional Awareness and Development

## Guidance for Local Planning:

The information for each of the task group areas is presented in accordance with the categories that were included in the 2020-2021 Region 1 Reopening Plan. The Region 1 practices that evolved over the course of that year are currently the best practices to ensure health and safety for all while providing a high quality educational experience for all students. The same framework will be used for the 2021-2022 school year and includes these categories:

- Communications
- Health & Wellness
- Daily Operations, Facilities and Food Service
- Transportation
- Curriculum, Instruction, Professional Learning and Staffing (Includes SEL)
- Athletics and Extracurricular Activities
- Technology
- Fiscal Responsibility

The guidance provided outlines the expectations from a Regional perspective and will be implemented according to the specific needs of each school district in Region One.

## A. Communications

## 1. General Communications

### **Region One Practice**

- 1. Videos will be redistributed one about the opening of school and one about health and hygiene topics. These videos will be sent to families and to all staff and will be posted on school websites and social media prior to the opening of school.
  - a. Virtual community meetings will be held in each school district:
    - i. Each community will have its own meeting (Superintendent, Principal, Board Chair and Assistant Superintendent) to be completed in August. The Continuity of Service Plan will be presented with time for Q&A.
    - ii. Each school staff will have its own meeting similar to the community meetings.
- 2. Each school (and RSSC) will continue to host a COVID-19 landing page that will include this plan, recordings of meetings, and anything specific to the school related to COVID-19.
- 3. All materials will be translated into Spanish. Celina Huber (EL Coordinator) will facilitate this work.
- 4. Two way communication will be fostered through the ability of individuals to contact the Central Office staff, principals, and (potentially) BOE members. Feedback will be solicited at regular intervals through the use of surveys and telephone calls to ensure that our communication meets the needs of the community.
- 5. The Superintendent will provide any information provided by the CSDE to the building principals, who will be responsible for communicating with the building staff and families. Principals' communications will occur through email, social media, school webpages, and CATV6.
- 6. Regular, monthly communication from principals will keep members of the local communities apprised of current status of the policies.

## 2. Compliance Liaison

- 1. Each principal will serve as the first line Compliance Officer in the school.
- 2. The Administrators team (Superintendent/Assistant Superintendents) are the second line.
- 3. Jacquie Rice, Salisbury Ambulance Leader and EMT, will serve as a primary contact for school personnel.

## **B. Health and Wellness**

## 1. Medical Professional

#### **Region 1 Practice**

1. Each school has the appropriate number of nurses to staff the health room and the isolation room.

## 2. Health and and Virus Mitigation Strategies

#### Region 1 Practice

- 1. Vaccination Per the CT DPH, vaccination is the most effective mitigation practice in preventing COVID-19. Thus, per Executive Order No. 13D, issued on August 19, 2021, by September 27, 2021 all staff including teachers, support staff, and educational and operational service providers must:
  - a. Be fully vaccinated (two weeks past the receipt of one dose of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine or past the second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines); or
  - b. Have received the first dose or the second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines or have an appointment for the second dose in the two dose series; or
  - c. Prove exception due to a condition that has been diagnosed by a healthcare provider, supported with the submission of required documentation; or
  - d. Prove exemption due to a sincerely held religious practice, supported by the submission of required documentation.
  - e. Proof of vaccination or exemption must be provided by the employee as follows:
    - i. CDC-COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card (or photo of the card)
    - ii. Documentation from a healthcare provider or electronic healthcare records
    - iii. State Immunization Information record (per <u>Executive Order NO. 13C</u>, school nurses will have access to this information)

iv. Documentation that proves a sincere religious belief (to be provided by the Region) Per the order, after September 27, 2021, a school board shall not employ, or maintain a contract for in-person services, any employee unless the employee meets the requirements noted above.

Region 1 schools are required to maintain records for all staff with respect to COVID-19 vaccination status. Failure to comply with this regulation will result in a fine of not less than one thousand dollars and not more than ten thousand dollars as determined by the Commissioner of Education. The dollar amounts will be withheld from State grant disbursements for the current and/or future years.

- 2. Students will continue to be educated and engaged in expectations related to all public health policies and protocols
  - a. Video guidance before school year begins, school provided (see Communications, p. 19).
- 3. The school facilities manager or custodian will ensure that adequate supplies are provided, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethyl alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol (for staff and older students who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, and face coverings.
  - a. Building administrator, health staff, and custodial staff will order needed supplies starting

Summer 2021.

- 4. The Principal will remind staff and students to maintain social distancing between individuals to reduce the transmission of the virus per the public health guidelines.
- 5. Teachers will remind students about the key public health expectations (e.g., to cover their coughs and sneezes into their elbows and to ensure that soiled tissues will be discarded immediately after use).
  - a. Any changes in protocols will be forwarded to teachers by the Principal to be incorporated into the weekly updates.
  - b. Teachers and administrators will address individual students who fail to follow the guidelines to ensure that they understand the need to do so.
- 6. Preparations have been made for times when social distancing may be particularly difficult, including but not limited to:
  - a. Accommodating students with special health care needs or disabilities whose learning (e.g., direct instruction) or other needs (e.g., assisting with toileting or ambulation) may require closer proximity and/or direct contact.
  - b. Conducting health assessments or screenings when there is a suspicion that symptoms exist or there was exposure (e.g., the school nurse listening to lung sounds).
- 7. Region One COVID-19 cleaning protocols will continue for specific spaces in the school building (restroom, classroom, hallway, stairwell, health office).

## 3. Health Guidance – Symptoms, Testing and Containment

- 1. Staying home from or leaving school:
  - a. Students and <u>staff</u> must inform the school if they are sick with COVID-19 related symptoms, particularly if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population. They must stay home when they are sick, especially if they have COVID-19 symptoms such as fever and cough.
    - i. Each school will communicate school-wide sick protocols, including signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and temperature thresholds requiring students or staff to stay home (100°F).
    - ii. All staff and students (or their parents and guardians) will continue to perform a selfassessment prior to leaving for school to identify fever and other possible COVID-19 symptoms. Principals will communicate this expectation and provide parents with a checklist for the <u>symptoms consistent with COVID-19</u> that require keeping their students at home.
    - iii. Each school will educate staff and families about when to <u>stay home</u>. Schools should properly communicate the content of this or any updated guidance.
- 2. The Principal and the school nurse will receive reporting about all absences.
  - a. Each school will maintain all information about employee or student illness as a confidential medical record.
- 3. Students who exhibit COVID-like symptoms should report to the nurse immediately to be screened and then be placed in isolation from other students until a parent or guardian arrives. Students will remain supervised in the isolation room.
  - a. When conducting screening, the nurse will follow these protocols:

- i. Use touchless or disposable (preferred) or oral thermometers with single-use disposable covers or adequate disinfection between individual uses.
- ii. The health screener must wear a face mask and face shield while performing this action.
- b. For the purposes of contact tracing, schools must log all persons who entered the room. The individual supervising the room will be equipped with proper PPE.
- c. A consistent policy for dismissal of students or staff who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 has been developed, including input, where appropriate, from the local health department, school Medical Advisor and school nurse supervisor.
- 4. Follow the Region One written protocols for containment and immediate response if an individual has signs or symptoms of COVID-19, there is a known exposure, or a member of the school community has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.
- 5. Testing and Screening PCR testing is available at no cost to schools
  - a. Grades K-6 students and unvaccinated staff
  - b. CSDE/DPH provided
  - c. Weekly testing by independent laboratory
  - d. Parental consent required
  - e. Screening for positive asymptomatic cases only

A survey will be administered to assess family interest. Testing will begin in mid-September if there is enough support.

## 4. Personal Protection

## Use of Face Coverings, Masks, and Face Shields



Face Covering A cloth, paper, or disposable face covering that covers the nose and mouth; may or may not be medical grade



Face Shield A clear plastic shield that covers the forehead, extends below the chin, and wraps around the sides of the face



**Clear Plastic Barrier** A clear plastic or solid surface that can be cleaned and sanitized often

- 1. Region One will require the use of face coverings for all students and staff when they are inside the school building or on a school bus, with certain exceptions, listed below:
  - a. For anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance, face coverings and masks should not be required.
  - b. For anyone who has a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face covering, masks should not be required.
  - c. Students and staff who cannot wear a face mask must have a health care provider's note.

- d. Other face protection mitigation strategies will be investigated (e.g., face shields, plexiglass partitions) to protect the student, staff members and others.
  - i. The maximal level of possible mitigation will be explored on a case-by-case basis, potentially through communication with the students' health care provider.
  - ii. Investigate types of masks and face shields that might be usable by students who cannot wear a traditional mask (or other levels of mitigation).
- 2. Region One will ensure that masks are available on-site for students or staff who may need one.
- 3. Region One will ensure that face shields are available on-site for students or staff who may need one due to assignment.
- 4. Students and staff will adhere to the Region 1 Policy with regard to mask use and care.
- 5. Students who have cloth masks that become dirty will be provided with a new mask and, through the nurse's office, will bag the cloth masks to transport home for cleaning.
- 6. Each school will develop a procedure for mask breaks for students and staff.
- 7. After all teachers are fully vaccinated, Region 1 teachers may remove masks in the classroom during periods of active instruction. They should remain at the front of the room and must maintain a distance of six feet at all times when unmasked.

## 5. Protecting High Risk Educators

## **Region 1 Practice**

- 1. The district will provide necessary PPE (surgical masks and face shields) based on the disability of the students who cannot socially distance.
- 2. The district will provide the required training about medical requirements of the students to allow for their learning needs.

## 6. Non-COVID-Related Health Screening

## **Region 1 Practice**

1. Region 1 schools will emphasize the importance of protecting students by staying up to date on regular required (by the State) immunizations, but allowing for flexibility and assistance to families who may have difficulty accessing a health-care provider during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 7. Visitors and Attendance Monitoring

- 1. Each school will be disseminating a plan for the use of facilities before and after school.
- 2. As appropriate, individual schools will determine the requirements necessary for continuation of after school child-care based on current health and safety guidelines.
- 3. Visitors will be allowed in buildings on a case-by-case basis and must follow all school virus mitigation practices. Proof of vaccination is recommended, but not required.

- 4. Non-essential visitors/meetings should be in the building after the end of the school day.
- 5. Essential provider visits should take place as needed.

## C. Operations, Facilities and Food Service

1. Using Cohorts:

#### **Region 1 Practice**

- 1. In all Pre-k-8 school buildings, the Principal will work with the Leadership Team to create cohorts that are formed by homeroom in the elementary grades (K-3 or 4). Cohorts may be mixed as long as teachers maintain seating charts for all students in each classroom.
- 2. In all Pre-k-8 school buildings, the Principal will work with the Leadership Team to create cohorts that are formed by academic groupings/homeroom in middle school grades. Cohorts may be mixed as long as teachers maintain seating charts for all students in each classroom.
- 3. HVRHS does not cohort students. Students are socially distanced and teachers keep seating plans for each classroom to help with contact tracing.
- 4. When cohorts must be mixed, teachers will maximize safety precautions such as more closely monitored use of facial coverings, hand washing, and sanitizing between cohorts.

### 2. Student Meals

#### **Region 1 Practice**

- 1. Each school Principal will work with the Region One food service consultant to determine the safest and most efficient food delivery system for individual schools.
  - a. Students will be seated in the cafeteria maintaining three-six feet social distancing, if possible.
  - b. Students in the service line will maintain social distancing of 3-6 feet and wear facial coverings until seated.
  - c. Student meal payment will be managed via the point-of-sale system used in each school.
  - d. Single use, disposable items are not required for food service operations.
  - e. Schools should consider adding lunch waves (when possible) to reduce person-density in the cafeteria

## 3. Facilities Management:

- 1. In each school building:
  - a. The Principal and the custodial staff will plan and then monitor traffic flow outside and inside of the building as well as room use in each school building.
    - i. Markings on floor will define traffic patterns and social distancing.
  - b. The Principal and the custodial staff in each building will ensure access to hand sanitizer dispensers; individual cohort access recommended where appropriate.
  - c. The Principal and the nurse have selected a space to be used as an isolation room in the building

(not the nurse's office) for students who exhibit COVID-19-like symptoms

- d. The custodial staff will show compliance with DPH <u>Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting of</u> <u>Schools</u>, DPH <u>Return to Service Guidance</u> and <u>Guidance for School Systems for the Operation of</u> <u>Central and non- Central Ventilation Systems</u> by creating checklists that are visible to all staff.
- e. The custodial staff in each building ensure that signage remains posted for "stopping the spread" accessible for students with disabilities and in languages appropriate to the student population.
- 2. The Principal, custodial staff and teachers will follow these guidelines for each classroom:
  - a. Maximization of social distancing of 3-6 feet at all times
  - b. Use of outdoor instruction as often as possible.
- 3. All staff and students will maintain social distancing and face coverings in all common areas (e.g., cafeteria, teacher's lounge, workrooms)

## 4. Supplies Procurement

## **Region 1 Practice**

1. Sam Herrick, the Region One Business Manager, will collaborate with all custodial staff in the Region and facilitate the Purchase of PPE supplies through the Region One Central Office to meet the needs of each individual school.

## 5. Bathroom Protocols

## **Region 1 Practice**

- 1. The Principal and the custodial staff in each building show compliance with DPH <u>Guidance for Cleaning</u> <u>and Disinfecting of Schools</u> as it pertains to bathroom cleanliness.
- 2. The custodial staff will ensure the display of signage on the bathroom doors that identifies maximum occupancy.

## **D. Transportation**

Providing student transportation to schools is an important legal mandate that requires ensuring that all students have access to education at school.

## **Region 1 Practice**

## 1. Bus Transportation

- a. Bus transportation can operate up to full capacity with face coverings/mask requirements .
- b. All Region One students on buses are required to wear masks (with the exception of those students who have provided a note from their physician stating they are unable to wear a mask for medical reasons).
- c. Face masks must be in place (over mouth and nose) **<u>before boarding the bus</u>**. If a student does not have a mask, one will be provided to them by the driver. If a student refuses to wear a mask,

the student will not be allowed on the bus unless the student has a documented medical condition. Masks must be worn during transit.

- d. Students will be expected to ride the same bus to school in the morning and home in the afternoon every day.
- e. Students will not be allowed to change seats during the route.
- f. Students must face forward at all times.
- g. School principals will collaborate with Star Transportation to create a seating chart for each bus.
- h. Social distancing (3-6 feet) will be followed at all bus stops and all parents at bus stops are expected to wear masks.
- i. The District will develop clear expectations for drivers and bus monitors related to face coverings and other safety measures. Bus drivers will follow the same health protocols as district employees.
- j. Transportation employees will clean the driver compartment and high-touch points using approved cleaning materials in accordance with CDC and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines. Every bus will be cleaned daily with approved cleaning materials according to CDC guidelines. In the event of a bus swap, employees must clean the driver's compartment and all high-touch surfaces.
- k. The bus company will provide additional training relating to cleaning, masks and social distancing.
- I. The district will adhere to State guidelines at all times.

## 2. Parent/Guardian Transportation

a. Parents can drop off and pick up their children off at school according to the protocol of each school. Parents cannot enter the building when dropping off or picking up students.

## E. Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning (Includes Social/Emotional Awareness)

1. Priority Access for Special Student Populations Requiring Learning Recovery Support

- 1. Region 1 will provide a variety of summer learning experiences as follows:
  - a. offers virtual and in-person opportunities,
  - b. balances SEL and academic learning needs,
  - c. allows for small group learning and tutoring situations,
  - d. ensures equity of access by providing transportation for all students.
- 2. All teaching staff will review student data available in Educlimber and FastBridge.
  - a. K-12: Review data from 2020-2021 to identify students that were of concern because they were distance learning.
- 3. 9-12: Engage in "just in time" assessment and review of student learning to allow students to make adequate progress in their coursework by beginning the year with on-grade level instruction.
- 4. K-12: Provide learning recovery support to identified students during available periods during the day when teachers are made available.
- 5. K-12: Make available (and/or required) access to high quality online resources such as Khan Academy,

ALEKS, Gizmos, CT Learning Hub materials for remediation as needed.

- 6. Utilize a referral process for identified students involving teachers, counselors and administrators to determine learning recovery support for those students.
- 7. Use available screening programs to further identify students needing learning recovery support in ELA and Mathematics.

## 2. Supporting the Social & Emotional Wellbeing of Students and Staff

### Region 1 Practice

- 1. Region One Schools will begin the school year with a focus on building community.
  - a. SEL strategies will be implemented to support all students.
  - b. Individual school and class schedules will include time for embedded SEL instruction.
  - c. Routines, norms, and expectations will be taught to all students .
- 2. Region One teachers and counselors will use information regarding students who were disengaged last year (at each school location) and/or also those with significant learning needs to prioritize contact with one or more teachers, administrators, or counselors each week. Staff will be mindful of the need to coordinate contacts with each family/student in a given week.
- 3. Continue to survey faculty and parents/caregivers on a regular basis to help identify and address SEL needs.

## 3. Teaching and Learning Considerations

## Region 1 Practice

- 1. Region One Schools will begin with a focus on building community.
  - a. SEL strategies will be implemented to support all students.
  - b. Individual school and class schedules will be adjusted to provide time for SEL.
  - c. Teachers will be aware of equity as well as cultural competence and understanding.
- 2. SRBI/Intervention will proceed as it has in the past. Teachers will be expected to report students who may require remediation to (a) Department Chairs (at the High School) and (b) SRBI Teams (all schools).
- 3. Guidance will be provided to teachers and families about the expectations for learning.
- 4. Time will be provided at the end of the 2020-2021 school year and the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year for teachers to review priority standards for courses and make adjustments to planning accordingly.
- 5. Teachers will begin with grade-level curriculum at the start of the school year, employing "just-in-time" instruction rather than "just-in-case" remediation.

## 4. Professional Learning

### **Region 1 Practice**

#### **Staff Learning**

- 1. The Region 1 PDEC Committee will identify necessary professional learning and determine prioritization of back to school Professional Learning Days.
  - a. Focus will be on SEL, scaffolding for learning, acceleration, and equity of learning experiences for all students.

### 5. Special Education:

#### **Region 1 Practice**

- 1. Put academics aside for the first (to be determined) amount of time. Allow students to just share, be together, and process social/emotional concerns and information.
- 2. Initial intake/screening to homogeneously group student SEL needs (i.e., high, moderate, low).
- 3. Initial intake to homogeneously group student academic (e.g., reading/writing, mathematics, etc.) needs.
- 4. The three learning recovery groups may be those who are functioning as expected, those who are in danger or showing minimal regression, and those that are not close to expectations. A rubric may need developing for teachers to be able to refer the students to any of these groups. Then, School Psychologist and/or ALPSS Clinician can confirm upon closer look into each student's situation.
- 5. Offer an additional class for social-emotional instruction (modeled similarly to the current ALPSS/Bridges Community class) to students with special needs who are not in either of those cohorts.
- 6. Offer additional opportunities, or utilize the current academic labs/resource rooms, that will help support students academically. This requires additional staffing (Recovery Tutors) to provide intensified instruction for the various needs.
- 7. Intensify counseling time for students who are in need.
- 8. Increase self-contained or resource room teaching or remote services if students included in the general education setting are not accessing the curriculum met in that setting and to mitigate transmission risk with push-in services.
- 9. Utilize SEL modules for the Community classes/Resource rooms so that students who are in need can enter/exit that class according to the unit(s) in which they need support.
- 10. Consider utilizing project based learning so that students can be learning from any setting.
- 11. Incorporate authentic SEL lesson plans so that it is not seen as contrived and irrelevant to the student.
- 12. Provide ongoing training for the necessary staff who work with students most in need of significant support.

## 6. English Language Students

- 1. Assess language proficiency at the start of the year to get an accurate proficiency level for all ELs; Progress monitoring through Pearson TELL throughout the year.
- 2. Work with students individually using a pull-out model to mitigate transmission risk.
- 3. Collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure understanding of grade level curriculum.
- 4. Provide information for students and parents in both English and native language.
- 5. Include opportunities for professional learning for the English Learner instructor.

6. Assess potential EL students early in the school year.

## 7. Physical Education, Arts, and Extra Curriculars

#### **Region 1 Practice**

#### 1. Physical Education

- a. Provide physical education in the gym, following current COVID-19 mitigation practices.
- b. Support social-emotional learning through classroom instruction and utilizing appropriate games and activities.
- Match the instructional design to the available space; use stations, marked off areas, and staggered participation to ensure separation and distancing between students during activities. For example, the use of hula hoops on the ground or floor provide visual cues for maintaining distance to engage in learning.
- d. Consider reorganizing and prioritizing the sequence of units to provide content and learning opportunities that can be delivered outdoors in appropriate weather and other content delivered later in the year through a blended approach in homerooms or online. Repurposing gymnasiums to serve as classrooms may limit the ability to deliver some physical education content especially in the skill-building area. Cognitive and affective content and limited skill/fitness content could be delivered in an alternate space such as a classroom.
- e. If health and hygiene measures limit locker room use, this may affect hygiene needs associated with vigorous physical activity, which may limit the ability to fitness train and/or test. However, fitness/training concepts can still be taught though didactic instruction and reinforcing skill development and individual fitness goals.
- f. Loss of water fountain usage could affect physical activity delivery as hydration is important for student health and safety. Allow students to use personal water bottles and provide water bottles as needed. Guard against sharing water bottles.
- g. Educators can incorporate additional opportunities for movement in and/or out of the classroom through stretching, seated yoga, and walking outdoor classrooms.

## 2. Arts and Music Education

- a. Consult the resources provided by the <u>Connecticut Arts Administrators Association</u>.
- b. For handling musical instruments, consult the <u>National Association for Music</u> <u>Education's COVID-19 Instrument Cleaning Guidelines</u>.
- c. Provide sufficient instructional minutes to support standards-based curriculum, student learning expectations, and district goals.
- d. Add to class time for materials and tools to be distributed by teacher only or area designated for individual storage and to allow for proper cleaning of materials.
- e. Strive to return to a typical program of studies and course offerings, within safety precautions.
- f. Maintain proper spacing of at least 9x6 feet when students are singing or performing wind instruments (with bell covers) by scheduling large ensembles in auditoriums, outdoors, cafeterias, gyms or other large spaces. Focus on maximizing distancing for instruments that require blowing or for singing, compared with string and percussion instruments.
- g. Schedule large ensembles into smaller groups throughout the day.
- h. Maintain small homogeneous groupings of instruments for lesson instruction.
- i. Continue full access to beginning instrumental music.
- j. Await further guidance with respect to concerts and other group performances

## F. Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

#### **Region 1 Practice**

#### 1. High School Athletics

- a. The Region One Athletic Director will follow CIAC Guidelines
  - i. Plan for a full season in the fall including state tournaments.
  - ii. All students, coaches, and support staff are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID 19.
  - iii. While not required, presenting a copy of the student's COVID vaccination card will be helpful during contact tracing.
  - iv. Fully vaccinated students/staff who are a close contact with a known COVID 19 case do not have to quarantine from sports or other activities provided they remain asymptomatic and wear a mask until a negative COVID 19 test (taken between day 3 and day 5 from date of contact) or 14 days without a test.
  - v. Everyone must wear a mask regardless of vaccination status while inside the building including during all volleyball activities (practices and games), visiting the athletic trainer, participating in any classroom activities and while in the locker room and fitness room.
  - vi. Masks are required while riding the bus regardless of vaccination status.
  - vii. Cross Country, Soccer, Football and Golf do not have to wear masks while outside.
  - viii. Housatonic will allow spectators to all home games. Outdoor spectators will socially distance unless members of the same household. Indoor spectators will wear a mask and socially distance themselves regardless of vaccination status.
- 2. Middle School Local and Regional Athletics and Activities Programs
  - a. These activities will plan to safely operate in the fall. All athletic programs will follow CIAC guidelines and with local mitigation protocols in place.
    - i. Plan for a full season in the fall
    - ii. All students, coaches, and support staff are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID 19.
    - iii. While not required, presenting a copy of the student's COVID vaccination card will be helpful during contact tracing.
    - iv. Fully vaccinated students/staff who are a close contact with a known COVID 19 case do not have to quarantine from sports or other activities provided they remain asymptomatic and wear a mask until a negative COVID 19 test (taken between day 3 and day 5 from date of contact) or 14 days without a test.
    - v. Everyone must wear a mask regardless of vaccination status while inside the building including Art Garage.
    - vi. Masks are required while riding the bus regardless of vaccination status.
    - vii. Cross Country and Soccer do not have to wear masks while outside.
    - viii. Home and Visiting Spectators will be allowed at all home games. Spectators will socially distance unless members of the same household.
- 3. Extracurricular activities

- a. These activities may resume with all students and staff following required virus mitigation protocols.
- b. Away event procedures TBD.

## G. Technology

## **Region 1 Practice**

- 1. In the event that new software or applications are desired for use, Region One staff will follow the IT Approval Process to request that software or application be reviewed. Staff will discuss software and application needs with building technology staff and await approval prior to use.
- 2. Define the consistent usage expectations of the tools within each school.

## 1. Support PowerSchool Data Collection and Management

### **Region 1 Practice**

- 1. Provide access to platforms that support a three-tiered model of SRBI (Scientific Research-Based Intervention), SRBI resources, and MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) behavioral resources. (i.e., FastBridge, iReady [Pupil Services]).
  - 2.

## I. Fiscal Responsibilities

## 1. Funding Considerations:

	Actions
1. Securi	ing Funding and Planning
a.	The Region One Business Manager will develop funding scenarios to support the multiple areas that may require increased funding, including but not limited to student equipment, protective materials and cleaning supplies, increased staffing and physical changes to school buildings to enhance health and safety measures. He will use a regional approach to help streamline securing items.
b.	The Business Manager, the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendents will ensure that the Region maximizes access to available federal funding.
C.	The Business Manager, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendents and the Principals will maximize the use and combining of current federal program funds, as permitted, for which federal waivers have been secured to support individual school priorities.
2. Fundi	ng Priorities
a.	The Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendents and the Principals will assess how funds can best support efforts to provide equity and access to all students. As schools develop spending plans for the year, Principals will review and consider the <u>state level priorities established by the</u> <u>Commissioner of Education</u> . This includes:

i.	Equitable Access to Technology:
	<ol> <li>Survey families to collect information about devices and connectivity in their homes to support blended learning.</li> <li>Update policies for school-owned devices. Consider allowing broader use to address families' need for telehealth access and other state agency support if school devices are the only ones in the household.</li> <li>Prepare for the possibility a student, class, or school will require robust blended learning at some time during the school year.</li> <li>Assess if funding would be appropriate to support training adult family members more effectively in accessing Internet and digital resources used for blended learning opportunities.</li> </ol>
ii.	Equitable Access to High Quality Online Curriculum Including Necessary Supports:
	<ol> <li>Use funding to support further development, in consultation with state-provided resources, of high quality online curriculum, including necessary supports.</li> <li>Unlike the initial wave of the pandemic during spring 2020 where there was little time to prepare, schools should be well equipped to provide robust learning opportunities to students in the event class cancellations occur during</li> </ol>
iii.	<ul> <li>the 2021-22 school year.</li> <li>Education Recovery and Reopening Schools</li> <li>1. Ensure fiscal and budgetary planning includes support for education recovery, including but not limited to funding for staffing for extended day/after school remedial programming; summer school or extension of the school year; and additional instructional supplies/equipment.</li> </ul>
iv.	Social-Emotional Well-being 1. Review the detailed content of this document related to social-emotional learning (SEL) needs of students, staff, and the school community, and plan financial suppor

- 3. Reserving Funds:
  - a. The Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendents and the Principals will, where possible, reserve and plan funding to support the school boards' contingency plans to support students.

#### 4. Contracting, Insurance Policies, and Internal Protocols:

for a heightened need.

a. The Superintendent, the Business Manager and the Principals will assess with board counsel if contracts need revisions to align with the district's approach to reopening. Also, consider any other insurance policies, internal processes, and money-handling policies to determine if changes, additional spending controls, or available budget balancing strategies will be necessary.

## Part 3

## **Public Comment**



Region 1 will solicit input from stakeholders as follows:

- public comment at Board of Education meetings,
- spontaneous feedback from website and social media plan postings,
- Q&A sessions with residents of Region 1 member towns in the summer. The Region will ensure that the voices of typically underrepresented groups are solicited and included in the plan.

The Continuity of Service Team will review comments and questions and consider them as part of the preparation of the final plan.

## Part 4

## **Periodic Review Process**

The Superintendent will update stakeholders with regard to school performance on these dates:

- June 23, 2021
- December 23, 2021
- June 23, 2022
- December 23, 2022
- June 23, 2023

There will be an opportunity for stakeholder input before each of these milestone dates.

## Part 5

## **Understandable and Uniform Format**

## Statement of Understandable and Uniform Format

This plan can be made available in a language that all parents can understand, or, if not practicable, orally translated; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.

#### Additional Resources:

#### CDC

CDC Considerations for Schools

CDC Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes

CDC Cleaning & Disinfecting Guidance

CDC Symptoms of Coronavirus CDC What You Do If You Are Sick CDC Quarantine & Isolation

<u>CDC Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow</u> <u>the Spread of COVID-19</u>

CDC When and How to Wash Your Hands

CDC Planning for K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs

CDC Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs

CDC Schools Decision Tree for Schools Reopening

CDC Guidance Keeping Students Healthy While School's Out

**CDC Communications Resources** 

CDC COVID Print Resources, Multiple Languages

CDC COVID PSAs

CDC COVID Videos

CDC COVID Social Media Toolkit

CDC Child Posters, Multiple Languages

CDC What you Need to Know About Handwashing VIDEO

#### CSDE

Plan for Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning

Sensible Assessment Practices 2020-21 and Beyond

Full, Equal and Equitable Partnerships with Families: Connecticut's Definition and Framework for Family Engagement

edSight Active Endorsement Search Tool

#### Other

DPH: <u>Guidance for the Cleaning and Disinfection</u> of Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic

DPH: <u>Guidance for School Systems for the Operation of Central and non-Central Ventilation</u> <u>Systems during the COVID-19</u> <u>Pandemic</u>

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission COVID-19 Guidance

CIAC Resocialization of Interscholastic Athletics and Activities Programs Guidelines

NAFME COVID-19 Instrument Cleaning Guide

School Re-Entry Considerations: K-12 Physical Education, Health, Education & Physical Activity

Leveraging the Power of SEL as You Prepare to Reopen and Renew