



Back to School In-Person Return Plan

2021-2022
School Year



HICKSVILLE
Public Schools

Burns Avenue Elementary Dutch Lane Elementary East Street Elementary
Fork Lane Elementary Lee Avenue Elementary Old Country Road Elementary
Woodland Elementary Hicksville Middle School Hicksville High School

200 Division Avenue, Hicksville, NY 11801



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Revised 2/18/2022

Revised 3/18/2022



Message from the Superintendent Marianne Litzman

Dear School Community,

One thing the emergence of a global pandemic has made abundantly clear to all of us is the necessity to traverse a wide chasm of constant change.

Our opening of school this September will not be where we ended up last June. The chasm of change driven by the Pandemic widened over the summer. One thing we have learned and know for certain is that whatever we do will not satisfy all parties. However, we have heard all voices who shared their thoughts with us, either in person at public meetings, online during live streamed meetings, in letters sent to me and the Board of Education and in answering a survey. All voices are important and we are grateful for the opportunity to hear all sides.

Our Board of Education has accepted and approved the District Opening Plan for the full return of students on **September 1, 2021**. The plan was based upon guidance from the Center for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the New York State Education Department, and the Nassau County Department of Health and soon to come directives from Governor Hochul.

The District Opening Plan is a living document as we know we will have to react to changes in the Pandemic which are sure to come; could be better, could be worse. As a living document, we will return to discuss the plan as the landscape changes. Our priority is the safe return of all students. We will open our school house doors on September 1, 2021 to all students for in-person instruction. We are planning for a spectacular September.

Please see highlights of the plan below:

- Full In-Person Instruction for all students September 1, 2021
- All buildings open with regular daily schedule
- Universal masking indoors for all students and staff
- Mask breaks will be (2) 5-minute breaks every 40 minutes of instruction
- Mask required on school buses
- No masks required outdoors
- Social distancing of 3 feet in all buildings
- No completion of health app or daily temperature taking
- Visitors will complete a health screening, have temperature taken and mask required
- COVID desk shields have been removed
- Contact tracing protocols in conjunction with Nassau County Department of Health (*revised 2/3/22*)
- Quarantined students will have access to remote, asynchronous learning with assignments posted in Google classroom and synchronous learning as follows: (*revised 2/3/22*)
 - Secondary teachers will provide one hour of instruction each week for the core subjects (English, Math, Science and Social Studies)



- Elementary teachers will provide 1.5 hours of instruction each week – 45 minutes ELA and 45 minutes Math
- All breakfast and lunch meals are free for all students
- Families should still complete free and reduced lunch applications
- Elementary playgrounds will be open for student use
- Athletics is returning to usual schedule
- Field trips will be evaluated when they are submitted to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction
- All existing 504 Plans remain in effect
- A Parent/Guardian with a health concern for their child regarding return to school may write a letter with documentation from the child's healthcare provider either to the building principal or Ms. Mishiev. School personnel will contact each parent/guardian for next steps
- All usual extra-curricular activities will be available to students
- Building principals will provide information particular to their school for Back to School
- The full opening plan follows

Should you have further questions about your child's school, day, please call your building principal.

We are all looking forward to welcoming your children back to school in a safe manner but more importantly with our hearts as our students learn best in school, with their teachers and administrators.

I am grateful for the thoughts shared with us by many members of our school community and look forward, walking together in gratitude and unity, supporting each other and our children.

I wish to thank the Board of Education for countless hours of deep thought and contributions in considering the District Opening Plan. We are all in this together and will continue to work together as we provide support for all our children who are trying to grow up in a Pandemic and will look to adults to help them navigate through difficult times. I am looking forward with hope and believe we shall overcome and provide an education for children in meeting their potential.

Sincerely yours,

Marianne Litzman
Superintendent of Schools



Health and Safety

All COVID 19 Pandemic Health and Safety guidelines, protocols and requirements set forth by the CDC, NYS Department of Health, Nassau County Department of Health and the New York State Education Department will be closely followed and adhered to by all schools and buildings within Hicksville Public Schools.

Healthy Hygiene

Practices will be taught and re-taught in all schools by building administration and teachers. A Parent/Student handbook and Staff Handbook will be published by the District in coordination with the District's Communication Advisory Committee and the Public Information Office. Adequate supplies to allow for frequent hand hygiene will be provided through the District Facility Office. Building administrators will convey the importance of this task to staff upon return from the summer break.

The Public Information Office will provide posters and informational signage to post in all schools. Building administrators will provide daily messages in their morning announcements to remind students and staff to:

- Stay home if they feel sick.
- Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering
- Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
- Adhere to social distancing instructions.
- Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19.
- Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
- Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

Buildings will display signage and posters at entrances, restrooms, cafeterias, classrooms, administrative offices, auditoriums and custodial areas to remind students and staff to wear masks, social distance, and observe recommendations for hand washing and good hygiene. Written protocols will emphasize these procedures. Floor decals will define social distancing and directional arrows will facilitate foot traffic (sample exhibit 1).

HICKSVILLE COMETS

SOCIAL DISTANCING DECALS

Please keep in mind that the health and safety of our employees, students and those around us is our top priority, which is why we are continuing to adhere to all COVID-19 workplace regulations and guidelines from local and national government authorities.

NON-SLIP REMOVABLE VINYL DECALS

Our 7mm Non-Slip Removable Vinyl Decal is a great solution for your floors, walls, and windows. This material can be easily installed on a variety of interior and exterior surfaces, while being easily removed with minimal damage. It works on tile, wood, metal, concrete, commercial carpet and painted surfaces. It is ideal for wall and floor graphics, painted cinderblock, locker rooms, break areas and entryways within your facilities.

- Easy to Self-Install
- Clean Only with Non-Abrasive and Non-Solvent Solutions
- Last 6-12 months depending on local conditions

Size	CIRCLES		RECTANGLES				ARROWS
	12	16	10 X 14	12 X 18	18 X 24	36 X 24	16 X 6.5
Qty per sheet	32	18	27	14	10	6	40

CAMPUS BRANDING | BSNSPORTS.com / 877-207-7484 / campusbranding@bsnsports.com

FULL SHEETS	QUANTITY 1-4	\$299	QUANTITY 5-24	\$269	QUANTITY 25-99	\$239	QUANTITY 100+	\$199
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As recommended by the District-Wide Safety Committee, building visits by vendors, guests, contractors and guardians are by appointment only. Parents will use drop boxes located outside the building to drop off student belongings. All visitors entering the building will be required to complete a health screening and temperature check must maintain 3 feet of social distancing and wear a mask. Copies of the District's protocol will be sent to families and staff and made available at all buildings.

Hand Hygiene

Students and staff will practice good hand hygiene to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. The District will plan time in the school day schedule to allow for hand hygiene.

Hand hygiene will include:

Alcohol based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol will be provided throughout District buildings. Touchless hand sanitizing stations will be available as follows: One at the entrance to each elementary school, two at the Middle School (4th Street Entrance and Main Entrance), three at the High School (Main Entrance, Athletic Wing, Student Entrance), and one in each health office (Exhibit 2). On order are wall-mounted hand sanitizing dispensers for each classroom at all buildings. Alcohol based hand sanitizers are flammable, and will not be installed in hallways or available on school busses or any other area prohibited by FCNYS 2020 Section 5705.5.



Exhibit 2

Bathroom hand dryers have been disconnected and replaced with touch free paper towel dispensers. Soap and paper towels are available in elementary classrooms next to the classroom sink. Custodial staff will ensure that sanitizing supplies are replenished as needed.

Written protocols for sanitizing and disinfecting that follow Department of Health and CDC Guidelines have been provided to custodial staff.

COVID-19 Testing and Reporting:

If you are experiencing COVID-19 like-symptoms, please stay home and test. All results need to be submitted to the portal on the district's website using this link: [Student COVID Test Reporting](#) or email the COVID Coordinator, Gail Hunker at ghunker@hicksvillepublicschools.org.

- Test results can be obtained from a testing facility or using a home test kit.
 - Home test kits need to have the child's initials and date written on the kit.
 - All results are to be uploaded to the portal or email to Gail Hunker.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, you are required to stay home in isolation for 5 days and may return to school masked for days 6 -10.
 - If you have been exposed to COVID-19 as a close contact it is strongly recommended you test on day 5.
 - If you need a COVID-19 home test kit, you can pick one up in your child's school building. Additionally, the Hicksville Aquatic Center is still open for testing members of the community by appointment and can accept walk-ins if needed.
 - COVID-19 test kit and testing location resources can be found on the district's website link: [2021-2022 RETURN PLAN & COVID-19 RESOURCES](#).



Face Coverings

As of February 28, 2022

The New York State Department of Health provided school district's with updated guidance relating to COVID-19 protocols for schools. The full document can be viewed using this link: [New Masking Guidance Update](#). Our district has consulted with the Nassau County Department of Health, and the following are important points of this guidance to share with our families.

- Masks are optional in schools and buses based upon currently low-infection rates in the area and updated guidance from the NYSDOH and Governor Hochul.
- Masks can still be worn by individuals that feel more comfortable wearing one.
- Masks are required for individuals testing positive for COVID-19 when returning from isolation on days 6 -10.
- Masks are strongly recommended for individuals with a known exposure to COVID-19. It is recommended that a mask is worn for 10 days, and testing occurs on day 5.
- Additionally, the Board of Education of the Hicksville Union Free School District hereby declared that, effective upon the expiration of [10 NYCRR 2.60](#) on February 21, 2022 or a later date determined by Governor Hochul, or effective upon its earlier repeal, and provided no other law, rule, regulation, decision and/or order is adopted and/or issued requiring face coverings in P-12 schools, it shall be the policy of the Board of Education that:
 - Each Hicksville Union Free School District teacher, student, staff member and/or visitor will have the individual discretion to determine whether they will wear a face covering/mask while on District property
 - Any face covering/mask requirements established as a result of this resolution shall be applied consistent with federal and state law, including but not limited to laws governing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and the Americans with Disabilities Act

In an effort to support Hicksville Public School student when this change occurs, the Mental Health Coalition reconvened and worked together to support students' transition back to a new COVID-19 protocol environment in schools. Our district was prepared to begin using lessons, resource materials, videos, strategies and discussion techniques in the elementary schools, middle school and high schools on the morning upon return of February 28th if the mask mandate had been lifted over the Winter Recess break or later date as designated by Governor Hochul, Department of Health or New York State Courts. Hicksville Public Schools has a history of promoting the values of respect, inclusivity, and celebrating diversity within our schools and community. The lessons developed focus on these values and other primary social/emotional values that are important to our district and families. Talking points were also be provided to parents, which can be used to talk with your children to prepare them for this change. The plan and resources are noted as follows:

- Elementary buildings will use their OLWEUS program and Morning Meetings to conduct lessons
 - [Diversity is our Strength PowerPoint K-5](#) (PowerPoint)
- The Hicksville Middle School will be using their Advisory Period and a video to implement these lessons
 - Focus: Start with Hello Program, HMS Mantra philosophy (*details on p. 24*), and [Tik Tok video](#)
- The Hicksville High School will have a designated time with a video, announcements, and discussion
 - Focus: Start with Hello Program and [Tik Tok video](#)
- Parent Talking Point document for families
 - [Conversation Starters](#) (Document)



On March 2nd when this new guidance went into effect, teachers, counselors, social workers, psychologists, administrators, and staff in each building serving grades K-12 worked together with students to prepare them for this transition of no longer requiring masking in our schools.

Our district values each person's individual choice whether to choose masking or not masking while in our schools and while riding our buses. Everyone's experiences with COVID-19 are unique to the individual, and the staff and students' personal choices are respected.

While the transition to optional masking in our schools appeared to occur seamlessly, the district continues to support students in any way needed related to COVID-19 protocols being in effect. In the event that your child is experiencing any difficulties related to the impact of implementing this new guidance in our schools, please contact your child's teacher, guidance counselor, social worker, administrator or related staff member for assistance.

Hicksville Public Schools and the Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal. The district has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity. As previously implemented, staff, students, and visitors will continue to follow the [HPS Code of Conduct](#) as the guidance document regarding behavioral expectation.

When required or selected, students and staff are encouraged to wear their own mask. The District will maintain an adequate supply of child and adult sized masks, should a student, staff member or visitor forget their mask. Similarly, a mask will be provided for any student prior to boarding the bus, if necessary. Currently, the District has 70,000 child size masks, 60,000 adult sized masks, and 11,000 pairs of gloves in stock. Additional supplies are on order. The Director of Facilities works closely with the District COVID Coordinator to insure there are ample quantities of PPE equipment for all District health professionals. *If mask requirements change under order of the governor, we will follow **the current** guidelines. (*revised 2/3/22)

Group Size

With 3-foot distancing – classrooms will return to the usual number of desks during pre-COVID times.

There may be situations at the elementary level that may necessitate using other instructional spaces such as the all-purpose rooms and gymnasiums. Individual building principals will communicate student assignments to parents later in August.

Building principals will establish designated areas for student drop-off and pick-up, limiting contact and entry of parents/ guardians into the building, limiting large group contact to the greatest extent possible.

Students will maintain social distancing when moving through the hallways. Signs on floors and walls will indicate distancing.



Where possible in-school movement will be reduced by keeping students within a defined area or classroom. This may include the necessity of eating lunch at student desks within a classroom at the elementary level and a combination of socially distanced seating in the secondary cafeterias and use of classrooms if necessary.

Special area teachers (e.g., music, art, physical education) may go to individual classrooms versus rotating all students through a shared space. Whenever possible, physical education and music classes will be held outside with social distancing.

Use of the restrooms will be staggered, allowing for social distancing. Bathrooms may be monitored by staff to ensure social distancing, that it is clean, and students are washing hands after use.

Individual student belongings will be kept separately by their desks. There will be no sharing of supplies.

Locker assignments at the secondary level will be minimized.

Elementary playgrounds will be open for student use during recess with proper safeguards in place. Use of the playground may be staggered to ensure social distancing.

COVID Closure for Cleaning and Disinfecting

If there is a report of a COVID positive case in school, the school district will notify the Nassau County Department of Health, and in accordance with Nassau County DOH and CDC cleaning and disinfecting procedures, the school district will follow the recommendations and guidance.

Remote learning will be done on the days when schools are closed in the case of an outbreak.

The school district will follow the CDC guidance for all cleaning and disinfecting, including the products that may be used.

Contact or Exposure Notification:

- Quarantining is no longer required for those individuals that have been exposed to another individual that has tested positive for COVID-19.
 - Those exposed should be monitored rather than being placed in quarantine with the updated guidance from the state.
- The district will continue to notify families in which the individual is exposed to someone who had tested positive for COVID-19.
- Potential exposure does not indicate that there was direct close contact between your child and the positive case.
- The district continues to post the daily positive COVID-19 data on the district's website, which is located on the COVID-19 Positive Case Tracker.
 - Results can be viewed with this link: [COVID-19 Positive Case Tracker](#).



Contact Tracing, Close Contacts and Quarantine Overview

The health and safety of our entire school community is a top priority. The use of masks **has allowed for a safe return to all of our students for** in-person instruction and **resuming extra-curricular activities**

The CDC has **recommended that staff and students, regardless of vaccination status, be tested on day 5 following the potential exposure.**

Guidance with Exception: In the **K–12 indoor classroom** setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed) if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

With correct and consistent use of masks we reduce the interruption of instruction due to exposure to COVID and other respiratory illnesses that decreased last year, such as flu, and colds.

Time spent at home due to illness will be reduced giving students and staff more consistent instruction.

Both staff and students should stay home when sick and be tested regardless of vaccination status. *(revised 2/3/22)*

We will continue to follow the NYS DOH and CDC recommendations for returning to school following illness.

Current protocols will be monitored and adjusted if transmission rates change, or upon the recommendation of the Department of Health.

COVID testing will be offered weekly to staff and students.

Information about vaccine resources will be made available to staff and students/parents who are eligible.

Contact Tracing

Hicksville School District will work in collaboration with the Nassau County Department of Health to Identify students and staff who may need to quarantine following exposure to a COVID positive case. Confidentiality will be maintained.

The person who is positive is referred to as the case.

The people the case has been in contact with are considered the contacts.

Proper utilization of contact tracing will reduce the spread of COVID.

The district shall notify students and staff who have been potentially exposed to the positive case and ask them to monitor for symptoms, and are strongly recommended to wear a mask for 10 days and get tested on day 5 following their exposure.

Using the CDC guidelines for identifying a close contact.

The district shall notify students (including the parent /guardian) and staff who **have been exposed and ask them to monitor for symptoms, wear a mask for 10 days, and get COVID-19 tested on day 5.** They will be given the list of COVID symptoms to watch for, resources for referral to healthcare and testing. They will be encouraged to call their healthcare provider for further guidance.



The COVID positive case must be 5 days after the start of symptoms AND fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications, **no runny nose, disruptive cough**, AND have improving symptoms **to return to school**. *(revised 2/3/22)* **Upon return to school the COVID positive case MUST wear a mask while at school for day 6-10.**

Return to school will be in collaboration with Nassau County DOH and the school medical director, following any current guidelines that are established.

The school buildings shall be cleaned and sanitized as per the CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting.

Many of the nursing staff have taken the contact tracing class through Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.

COVID 19 Coordinators

Each school building will designate a school nurse as the building COVID 19 coordinator. The District head nurse will be the District-wide COVID 19 Coordinator.

Each school nurse along with the District Head Nurse has identified an isolation area for sick students and staff.

Management of Sick Individuals

The following protocols are in place:

When students or staff present to the nurse's office, they will be triaged and assessed by the school nurse.

If no fever and no symptoms of COVID, then the nurse will treat and proceed as she normally would.

If the person is presenting with fever &/or symptoms of COVID, that person will be immediately isolated, and parent /guardian notified to pick up the child as soon as possible.

When the person arrives for the student, they will wait outside the building, show ID, sign out the child and then the student will be escorted to the person outside.

Resources for care will be given to the person accompanying the student, as well as criteria for return to school.

Criteria for return to school.

If tested for COVID, may NOT return to school, until results are provided to the school.

If COVID negative, the student must be 24 hours fever free without the use of fever reducing medications, and if antibiotics prescribed, must have received the first 24 hours of doses, and a note from a healthcare provider with diagnosis allowing them to return to school. The note may be reviewed by Dr. Friedman, district medical director, PRIOR to return to school. *(revised 2/3/22)*

If COVID Positive, the student may return to school 5 days after the start of symptoms AND 1 day/24 hours fever free without the use of fever reducing medications AND improving of symptoms AND note from healthcare providers allowing return to school. *(revised 2/3/22)*

This may be reviewed by Dr Friedman, district medical director.

COVID Positive Protocol

Once a student or staff member reports a positive COVID result,

1. Immediately notify the COVID Coordinator for the district, Gail Hunker, at ghunker@hicksvillepublicschools.org or 516-733-2149.
2. The COVID contact will notify the Nassau County DOH and inform administration.



3. After receiving guidance from the Nassau DOH, contact the students or staff who have been **potentially exposed to** positive case.
4. Advise the students, parents, guardians and staff members **to monitor for symptoms and strongly recommended to wear a mask for 10 days and get tested on day 5 following exposure.**
5. Those involved initiate remote learning
 - The positive case may return to school 5 days after the start of symptoms, are fever-free for 1 day/24 hour without the use of fever reducing medications, improving of symptoms, healthcare provider note allowing return to school, **AND required to wear a mask for day 6-10.** *(revised 2/3/22)*
6. ANY student or staff member who has been tested for COVID MAY NOT return to school, until the results have been received and documentation provided to the school.
7. All decisions regarding return to school will be made in conjunction with the Nassau DOH and Dr Friedman.

Communication/Family and Community Engagement

The Hicksville Public School District continues its commitment to effective communications with its parents, students and staff as we start the 2021-2022 school year. The Public Information Office (PIO) works closely with the Superintendent of Schools as well as the Board of Education in facilitating all aspects of communications as we prepare for an in-person return to school. These aspects include (English and Spanish):

- Letters to parents and staff
- Website postings and updates
- Emails, SMS text messages, and robocalls to school community through the District's notification system
- Emails to staff dispensed through the Personnel, Facilities, and building level offices
- Social media posts
- News releases to the local weekly and online community publications
- Posters and signage district-wide

The District will be holding special meetings of the Board of Education in August to keep all community stakeholders informed of this plan and what school will look like returning in September. The District and the Board of Education also supports the Communications Advisory Committee which includes school community stakeholders to further strengthen our home-school partnership.

We will also continue to remind students of health and safety protocols with colorful visual posters and signage. To reduce anxieties students may feel about returning to in-person learning, the PIO will utilize the "Be a Hicksville Superhero" character and graphics campaign in all school buildings throughout the district. This campaign will include posters for school buildings and various collateral pieces to communicate hand washing, social distancing, and the proper wearing of masks.



Here are examples of the “Be a Hicksville Superhero” characters and posters



**Refillable Water Stations**

Each building has been equipped with fillable bottle stations as follows: one in each elementary building APR/Cafeteria, one in each cafeteria in the Middle School (total two), five in the High School (main lobby, cafeteria (2), main gym and gym hallway).

Safety Drills

As required in the District-Wide Safety Plan, the District will continue to conduct four lockdown and eight fire drills during the year. Working with the BOCES Health and Safety Specialists, drills will be modified to maintain appropriate social distancing, for example, by staggering schedules. Masks will be worn during all drills.



Child Nutrition

The District will continue to provide students access to a healthy breakfast and lunch each school day. Breakfast and lunch will be in compliance with USDA/Child Nutrition guidelines for a complete meal. Meals will be prepared in compliance with all health and safety guidelines and USDA / Child Nutrition guidelines for a complete breakfast and lunch meal. Whitsons Food Service staff has been trained in food safety and sanitizing protocols.

Elementary students will use classroom sinks to wash their hands before meal service. Secondary students will use a combination of bathroom sinks and/or hand sanitizers before meal service.

In District students will access a grab and go breakfast upon arrival to be eaten in the classroom. Elementary and Middle School students will be provided lunch to be eaten in the cafeteria or classrooms. High School students will have access to the cafeteria where service will be socially distanced to the extent practicable. Cafeteria equipment, including tables and chairs will be sanitized in between periods. The sharing of food and/or beverages is discouraged. Whitsons will continue to prepare individual meals for students identified with allergies.

Like last year, breakfast and lunch meals are free for all students. This does not include a la carte purchases such as snacks and water. However, families are urged to complete a Free and Reduced Meal application sent to families in August each year and also available on the District's website and at each building. Applications are available in Spanish. Personnel are always available to assist in the application process. **All information on the application is confidential, i.e. not shared with any other governmental agency, and students who receive benefits cannot be identified.** Applications can be submitted for consideration at any time throughout the year.

To reduce the exchange of money, families are strongly encouraged to use My School Bucks for a la carte purchases, the District's pre-payment plan for meal service. Information on this program will be available on the District's website in September.



Transportation

The District has received the following assurances from its transportation provider:

Bus drivers and attendants will complete a daily health assessment and be temperature checked upon reporting to work. Any employee with a temperature of 100.0 or greater will not be permitted to work.

All bus drivers, attendants and monitors are required to wear masks.

The District's contract provider will provide their employees Personal Protective Equipment, including masks to be worn at all times. Drivers, attendants, and monitors have been trained on the proper use of PPE. Drivers will receive periodic refreshers on the use of PPE.

Students from the same family will be seated together. Students and staff will be trained and wear masks. Students must wear a mask when entering the bus, while on the bus, and when exiting the bus. Students with disabilities will not be denied transportation should they be unable to wear a mask. Masks will be provided for students who forget to bring their own. As required, students will be trained and periodically retrained on the proper use of PPE, social distancing and the signs and symptoms of COVID 19.

To increase ventilation and air flow, passenger windows will be open 1 inch from the top as well as the roof hatch on weather permitting days.

All buses and vans will be cleaned and disinfected daily. High touch surfaces, for example, handrails, will be wiped down after each morning and afternoon run. Due to combustibility, hand sanitizer is prohibited on buses, however, hand sanitizer will be provided at the dispatch office, garages, and lunch rooms.

All students who qualify for transportation and attend in-district or private, parochial or special education programs will be offered transportation. Parents are strongly encouraged to consider alternate means of transportation to reduce density on buses if they are able to do so.



Social Emotional Well-Being

SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN AMENDMENT (2/2022)

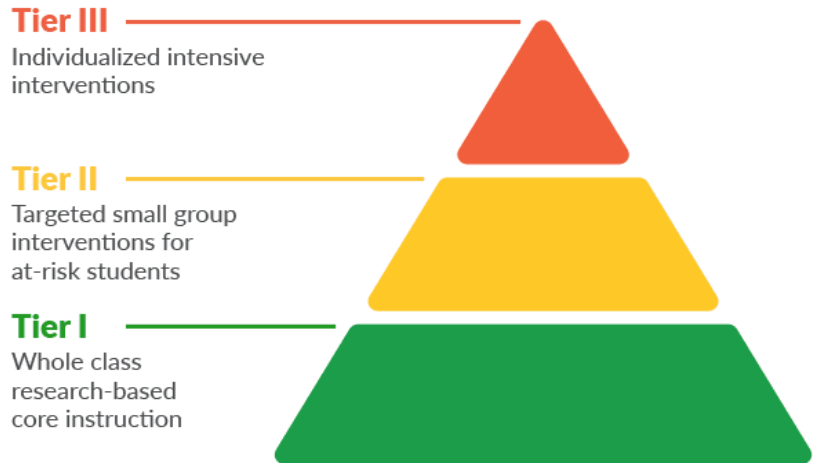
This Amendment was designed as a living, breathing document that can be adjusted to meet the evolving social and emotional needs of our students, parents and staff.

Social Emotional Well-Being

District-wide and building-level school counseling programs and services were reviewed and updated for this School Reopening Plan Amendment (2/2022). This amendment highlights many of our existing current mental health programs and services, while providing a framework for the future. We utilized a three-tier approach to safeguard that all students' needs are addressed.

RTI Tiered Approach to SEL Interventions

- **Indicated (Tier III):** interventions aimed at individuals who are currently showing signs of distress
- **Selective (Tier II):** strategies are targeted to one or more subgroups of a population determined to be at greater risk for distress
- **Universal (Tier I):** actions designed for an entire population without regard to individual risk factors



With these three tiers in mind additional social workers and a bilingual elementary school counselor have recently been hired. These new staff members are providing universal, selective and indicated services.

The Hicksville Mental Health and Wellness Coalition was designed to be a solution focused task force centering on mental health and related issues. It is composed of parents, school district leaders, community-based service providers, teachers, certified school counselors, and other pupil personnel service providers including school social workers and psychologists.

Fresh Horizons, a “social emotional learning series” for our parents was a recent Coalition initiative. Fresh Horizons was designed with the goal of creating a virtual platform for parent workshops. The topics for these workshops were chosen after the results of Hicksville’s Social Emotional Learning (SEL) parent and student survey was conducted. Topics were Mental Health, Mindfulness and Google technology.



Additionally, the Coalition helped to create and distribute Communication Keys to all parents in the community with the goal of providing important contact information for Covid related questions and concerns.

Workshops were facilitated by our guidance counselors, psychologists and social workers on the elementary and secondary levels entitled “Lunch- Time Conversations” for parents.

In collaboration with the PTA, Hicksville parents on the secondary level were able to view two nationally acclaimed video presentations that focused on the impact of social media, screen time, and how it influences teen’s mental health. Strategies to support students and families in the face of current technological challenges were discussed.

Our new Resource Mapping initiative, utilized the Harvard Resource Mapping Guide format to create a snapshot of our current resources and services. This process allowed support staff to better assess the resources in place and plan for the future.

Supporting Students and Staff

One of the biggest priorities as we navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic is the need to create supportive, responsive learning climates that will ensure students can thrive emotionally. **Students cannot learn if they don't feel safe. Supporting and caring for our students and families** has involved tremendous teamwork. **When we entered the pandemic, counselors, psychologists, social workers, teachers and administrators reached out and contacted every student and family to check in on their mental and emotional well-being. These individual connections assisted the school teams in identifying students and families that needed further support.**

School counselors play a significant role in improving student achievement and serve as student and systems advocates. Through a comprehensive school counseling program of developmental, preventive, remedial, and responsive services, school counselors address academic development, career development, and the personal/social development of students.

As indicated in the [Hicksville Comprehensive School Counseling Plan K-12](#), school counselors, **social workers and psychologists work collaboratively to support and nurture the Whole Child; academically, socially and emotionally.**

The standard for personal/social development is to provide a foundation for personal and social growth as the students’ progress through school and into their adult life. “Personal/social development includes the acquisition of skills, attitudes and knowledge that help students understand and respect self and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, understand safety and survival skills, and develop into contributing members of our society.” Hicksville’s school counseling program:

- Reaches every student
- Is comprehensive in scope
- Is preventative in design
- Is developmental in nature
- Is an integral part of the educational program for student success



- Is conducted in collaboration with all stakeholders
- Uses data to drive program decisions
- Monitors student progress

During the pandemic, school counselors, social workers and psychologists district-wide completed the following two-day trainings.

Day 1: Creating Suicide Safety in Schools (CSSS): This workshop empowered the Hicksville mental health support staff to establish realistic short-term plans for effective suicide prevention and response planning. All participants spent time planning and problem-solving for specific actions needed for suicide-safer schools. The workshop's format included didactic presentations coupled with small workgroup discussions, checklists, group planning documents, and exposure to free and low-cost resources that meet best practice recommendations and/or evidence-based practice standards. Creating Suicide Safety in Schools incorporates key aspects of the Social-Ecological Prevention Model, public health perspectives, and recommendations for school-based suicide prevention practices. All participants were provided with a resource binder created by the Suicide Prevention Center of New York.

DAY 2: Lifelines Postvention-Responding to Suicide and Traumatic Death. This training assisted school crisis teams review current procedures for suicide and other traumatic deaths in the school community. The strategies presented were designed to respect the critical role of the school in the recovery process and provide support, control, and structure to maintain order while assisting in the grieving process of school community members. The workshop was based on the Lifelines Postvention Model which is on the National Best Practices Registry of the Suicide Prevention Resource Center and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Practical templates and step-by-step guidelines were presented in the context of foundational theories such as: grief concerns of children and teens, contagion prevention and crisis intervention. This theoretical background prepared crisis teams to respond to the broad variety of needs that arise as a result of tragic events. Participants were able to:

- Describe the competent community model of response to traumatic death in the school community.
- Clarify the role of the school administrator in postvention.
- Outline the roles and responsibilities of the crisis team.
- Clearly define the roles of other members of the school community including: teachers, parents, students and community providers.
- Customize templates and tools to meet the unique needs of their school
- Develop a process for responding compassionately and appropriately when faced with the death of a student.

A draft of the Hicksville Public Schools Crisis Safety Plan was reviewed and updated by District-wide psychologists, social workers and school counselors.

Mindfulness: Since the 2017/2018 school year, secondary school counselors, psychologists and social workers were trained in Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). The course was modeled after the MBSR program, founded in 1979 by Jon Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center and was based on a practice known as mindfulness, a way in which to observe one's inner experiences and to intentionally work with the difficulties encountered in life rather than avoiding them. The cultivation of attention, awareness, acceptance, and compassion, key elements of mindfulness, have been shown to promote optimal health in mind, body and relationships.



MBSR has a foundation of over 35 years of clinical research exploring the effectiveness of Mindfulness and the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program. Some of the many positive benefits associated with its practice include:

- Better ability to cope with stressful situations
- More positive states of mind
- Reduced anxiety and emotional distress
- Increased ability to relax
- Reduced chronic pain
- Lowered blood pressure
- Better quality of life

In addition, mindfulness practice has been demonstrated to positively influence:

- Overall brain function including attention and emotional reactivity.
- The nervous system
- Stress hormones
- The immune system
- Health behaviors, including eating, sleeping and substance use.

Secondary physical education teachers were trained in mindfulness and developed 5 session lessons and incorporated the practice in their physical education classrooms. Middle school counselors, social workers and psychologists provided push-in lessons that focused on social-emotional learning lessons and mindfulness lessons. This practice will continue. School counselors, social workers, psychologists **and physical education teachers** will also continue to use the techniques learned in their trainings to continue to support their students.

Elementary Guidance Program

The goal of the elementary guidance program is to incorporate social-emotional learning, mindfulness and teach coping skills in the classroom. Students in the elementary schools will receive Tier 1 intervention. This program is designed to help students manage their emotions, set goals, show empathy, maintain relationships and make good decisions.

Students will:

- Develop their academic self-concept and feelings of competence and confidence as learners.
- Begin to develop decision-making, communication and life skills, as well as character values.
- Develop and acquire positive attitudes toward school, self, peers, social groups and family.
- Begin to learn strategies, self-management and social skills. This will help promote success for today's diverse learners
- Develop a sense of understanding and acceptance of themselves and peers.



All students in grades K-5 receive Tier 1 SEL classroom lessons. Guidance lessons are created to align with our district's social-emotional learning themes for each month. The monthly themes for the 2021-22 school year include - but are not limited to - community and resilience, citizenship and empathy, kindness, gratitude, respect, self-awareness, perseverance, inclusivity and acceptance. The elementary school counselors also center around supporting the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, which is designed to improve peer relations and make schools safer, more positive places for students to learn and develop.

The elementary guidance program creates a supportive forum for students to talk about feelings, express concerns, share ideas, and problem solve. In addition, counselors provide targeted support in the classroom and assist with crisis intervention and identify and resolve issues, needs and problems. This program will help our students achieve academic success and develop social/emotional skills in response to the various issues they are facing at this time.

Our new bilingual elementary school counselor SEL lessons and support for our ELL students in our bilingual classrooms. Our bilingual counselor works with our ELL students and families by providing any support needed.

Remote Learning – Guidance Lessons

If the district were to pivot to remote learning, the elementary guidance counselors will create a guidance website for each of the seven elementary schools and incorporate the guidance program into remote online learning. The counselors will create guidance lessons for all elementary students which will include social and emotional topics with interactive activities for students.

K-5 Olweus Bully Prevention Program

The Olweus Bully Prevention Program is a comprehensive SEL and bully prevention approach that includes school-wide, classroom and individual components. The goals of the program are to support social-emotional learning and reduce and prevent bullying problems as well as improve peer relations and school climate.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention program helps students learn new skills to help them with coping strategies especially when they are having a hard time and are experiencing stress. Please see some of the attached links for videos of strategies students can use either in school or outside of school. [Strategies link](#)

Class Meetings are an essential component of the Olweus Bully Prevention Program. Facilitated by the elementary school classroom teachers, *Class Meetings* are designed to:

- increase positive rapport between students, as well as between students and staff.
- build a sense of community and establish a feeling of safety.
- create an opportunity for students to feel heard.
- offer students consistent adult support.
- generate camaraderie amongst students.



- enhance social emotional learning.
- help to resolve problems before they escalate.
- result in a reduction in bullying, as well as an increase in upstander behaviors.

Online *Class Meeting* manuals provide topics, activity ideas and lesson planning resources that support social skill development. The SEL skills evident in the goals and outcomes of the class meetings include empathy, listening skills, social inferencing, recognizing non-verbal cues, identifying feelings, and regulating emotions as well as the skills and behaviors necessary for friendship development and team building/cooperation.

Social Workers K-12

The goal of School Social workers is to be part of the front lines to assist students and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. We now continue to support the students, families, staff and community in the support of personal choice, acceptance and empathy as we once again deal with the change of mandates.

The roles and responsibilities of the school social worker includes a variety of outreach methods to best support our students and families. Social workers are directly involved in crisis management, in class push in lessons, conflict resolution, pull out support groups, individual counseling, parent contact and support. They are also available to share resources with families as well as supporting the school staff. Social Workers engage the school community in implementing social emotional programs, including but not limited to Start with Hello, The Sandy Hook Promise and OLWEUS. In addition, Social Workers work collaboratively with School Psychologists and Guidance Counselors to deliver lessons K-12 on self-awareness, self-management, relationship skill building and responsible decision making. Social Workers leave students with takeaway resources after a class presentation and are available to support teachers with extension activities that can be done in the classroom.

As the mask mandate might be changing and evolving, Social Workers will continue to be part of the emotional support of the school climate to promote respect and empathy of others. This might include purposeful push-ins to classrooms, recorded video presentations, parent communication and support as well as teacher guidance when needed, as they relate to the changes in the state mask mandates. Social workers push-in lessons include those on individual choice, based on making informed decisions. As this is already part of the instruction that is offered to students, the extension of mask wearing, if it were to become optional, will become a part of that discussion with students.

Social Workers are also the liaison between school and home. Social Workers make home visits, when needed. The outcome of home visits can be to provide families with outside resources to support the whole family. Social Workers support families through recommendations to outside agencies and are familiar with those that require insurance and those that can be accessed for free.

Hicksville School District has a partnership with Northwell Health. Northwell Health is able to provide families with direct and indirect support, based on individual circumstances. The School Psychologists and School Social Workers work collaboratively to support families who are experiencing challenges, especially as a result of COVID-19. Northwell Health also delivers multiple presentations to families throughout the year. They have a catalog of presentations for families and some presentations suitable for students.



Northwell Health

The district has an ongoing partnership with Northwell Health. They provide community resources and development to staff and families. On March 8, 2022 at 8:00PM, Northwell Health will present through Zoom to all families in the community on how parents/guardians can support their children with the changing environment and its impact on everyday life.

Mental Health and Community Resources

School counselors, psychologists and social workers have compiled some wonderful resources on our school website, specifically mental health resources. Links to Community and Mental Health Resources, Long Island Counseling Centers, and guide from New York State Office of Mental Health that focuses on talking to children about COVID-19 -it's a parent resource that provides tips in 6 different languages, including Spanish. The link to Support Services provides the email address of the elementary psychologists and social workers in each building.

NYSED Mental Health Resources

Benefits.gov: Finding the Right Help During the COVID-19 Outbreak

LI Counseling Centers Hospitals Hotlines

NYS Office of Mental Health Managing Stress during COVID (Spanish)

#WeThriveInside: Helping Kids Through COVID-19 and Beyond

LI Food Pantry Flyer

Food Distribution Centers

Mental Health Resources for Children and Families

Nassau County Mental Health Help Line: 516-277-8255 (TALK)

Nassau County Mobile Crisis Team Website

Start with Hello

Start with Hello Week is run through the Sandy Hook Promise, a national non-profit organization founded and led by several family members whose loved ones were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012. *Start With Hello* promotes connectedness, kindness, and inclusion among students. This program teaches students to make a difference among their peers and raises awareness to help them identify students who are showing signs of social isolation. It is a fun, easy, & impactful way to create an environment that values each individual at the school. "Start with Hello" teaches students the skills they need to reach out and include those



who are in need. This program teaches students in grades 6– 12 to help their peers in a fun and meaningful way. They take small but powerful actions to promote inclusion and to support students who are showing signs of loneliness or social isolation. Hicksville High School and Hicksville Middle School have incorporated the beliefs and values of the “Start with Hello” program into their schools’ cultures and is implemented through assemblies, announcements, posters in the hallways, advisory period (HMS), and overall promotion of unity, kindness, and inclusivity for all.

Hicksville Middle School

Students at the Middle School were welcomed back to an extended advisory period as an orientation during the first two days of school. Students began each day with more than 2 hours devoted to the acclimation and re-acclimation process.

Over the two days*, there were six sessions that will addressed student needs. The sessions consisted of building tours, teacher introductions and ice breaker activities for students to get to know their classmates, as well as two assemblies where administrators introduced themselves and familiarized students with the administrative team, the rules and expectations for the building. Students were assigned lockers, received agendas, and had ample time to meet their teachers and their peers. There was time for students to ask questions and get acclimated to the building and their teachers. See Sept. 1 & 2 schedule below:

Advisory Program

The middle school advisory program is fifteen minutes of each student’s day every day. Advisory is used to further connect students to other students across the grade levels and to provide students with a teacher who is consistent in their schedules throughout their middle school years. The teacher is an additional resource for students. Advisory is the vehicle through which we promote our social emotional programs, activities and initiatives without taking time from instructional activities.

Advisory periods are used to initiate the “Start with Hello” program which promotes inclusion and teaches students to create an environment that values each and every individual at the school while encouraging students to make connections with their peers in a fun and meaningful way.

The Middle School Mantra

The middle school motto of Heart + Motivation = Success promotes acts of kindness, positive efforts, and successful outcomes each day. The motto along with our building star promotes the five tenets of “Be Respectful”, “Be Responsible”, “Be Punctual”, “Be Prepared”, and “Do your personal best” that support all of our programs at the middle school. Our building wide focus on respect transcends the different challenges of the pandemics as well as the efforts and changes that occur as we emerge from the pandemic as well.

Some of the programs that we offer at the middle school are as follows:

These middle school programs aim to support students with the skills of resiliency, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship-building skills, self-management, and responsible decision-making.

- Start with Hello
- Social Media and Your Digital Footprint Assembly
- School Violence Prevention Assembly
- Monday Morning Messages of Positivity



- Stress Management and Coping Skills classroom presentations
- Resiliency Workshops
- Diversity/Tolerance Workshops
- Wellness Walks for students – Fall and Spring
- World Kindness Day – November 12th
- P.S. I Love You Day – February 11th
- Learning to Breathe (Mindfulness Training)
- Wellness Exercises for staff during faculty meetings
- Individual and Group Counseling as needed
- Referrals for outside counseling agencies and programs
- Beautiful Me
- Transition to Middle School Assembly
- Transition to High School Assembly
- Peer Mentoring Academy with High School student mentors
- Diversity Assembly
- Peer Mediations
- Articulation with Elementary and High School staff
- Home Visits by PPS Staff
- South Oaks Mental Health affiliation
- Committee on Special Education meetings
- Bimonthly parent updates
- Resources for parents

September 1 & 2 Modified Middle School Schedule*
7:35 to 7:50 H*O*M*E Base (Check-in)

September 1, 2021

Times	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
8:00 to 8:30	Admin Presentation	Building Tour	Welcome/Agendas
8:40 to 9:10	Welcome/Agendas	Admin Presentation	Building Tour
9:20 to 9:50	Building Tour	Welcome/Agendas	Admin Presentation

September 2, 2021

Times	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
8:00 to 8:30	Admin Q & A	Start w/Hello/	lockers
8:40 to 9:10	lockers	Admin Q & A	Start w/ Hello/Help
9:20 to 9:50	Start w/ Hello Help	lockers	Admin Q & A



September 1 & 2

Period	Duration
1	9:53-10:15
2	10:18-10:40
3	10:43-11:05
4	11:08-11:41
5	11:44-12:17
6	12:20-12:53
7	12:56-1:29
8	1:32-1:54
9	1:57-2:20

Defining the modules:

Module	Activities
Welcome	Use time to make introductions/Icebreakers in shared document
Administrative Assembly	Escort students to the auditorium /teacher can utilize time for Prep
Administrative Q & A	Escort students to the auditorium/teacher can utilize time for Prep
Building Tour	Escort students on a 10-15-minute tour/return to classroom to address questions
Lockers	Use the time to distribute lockers/ visit locker bank/troubleshoot question or problems
Start w/Hello/Help	Use module to introduce Start w/ Hello/participate in icebreakers and activities/ answer student questions/ resolve student technology issues/concerns



Hicksville High School

“Start with Hello” Monthly Assemblies:

Hicksville High School has brought the philosophy of **Start with Hello** to life and embedded it into the culture and mindset of the school via a series of school-wide livestream assemblies that reach students in real time throughout the building on a monthly basis. During each assembly, led by the Social Work and Psychology team, students learn about a different social-emotional topic and also gather in groups to participate in meaningful activities wherein they have the opportunity to share and engage with one another in order to strengthen the depth of the lesson as well as their communication skills and connections. Additionally, through the activities, students are encouraged to continue these lessons beyond the classroom to promote a culture of kindness, connection, inclusion, empathy and social responsibility in their daily lives at school, home and in the community. This program also serves as a way for all students to see and get to know the building social workers and psychologists regularly and remind them that if they or a friend or classmate is ever struggling in any way, whom they can go to for help.

In preparation for the new school year, assemblies focusing on “**Start with Hello**” had been scheduled. The specifics of these assemblies are listed below:

August 25

Freshman Orientation - small group streaming assemblies (See schedule below:)

“State of Me” - Personal Identity & Understanding Others

- Evaluate and embrace their own unique talents and abilities
- Encourage students to try new things and make new friends
- Motivate them to embrace the differences in others and help them feel accepted

STATE OF ME will help students recognize, embrace, and fire up the possibilities inside them to excel and reach their potential. They will seek to value the differences in those around them. We can let those differences divide and separate us or we can respect each other, work together and use those unique differences to make this world a better place to be.

Go Viral - Kindness-Social Media-Digital Citizenship

GO VIRAL challenges students to make “real” connections. Students will be motivated to be “real” within the social media world. They’ll be challenged to post more encouraging and comforting comments. They’ll be inspired to seek out face to face encounters and go viral with kind words and a smile. They’ll be given the tools needed to lift one another up and champion each other’s accomplishments.

GO VIRAL will motivate students to build authentic relationships. Students will be inspired to improve themselves and look for the value in others. They will begin to establish an identity that others will look up to, and will work hard to become a role model for others to follow. GO VIRAL – think about it - Imagine what the world could be like if we can go viral with our positive actions and attitudes. Let’s work together to make our positivity not only be contagious but to GO VIRAL!

As part of the Go Viral campaign, a Schoolwide Streaming Assembly **was held on October 13th.**



The Start with Hello themes this year to date have been as follows:

- November - Making Social Connections
- December - Gratitude
- January - Empathy
- February - Self Love and Self Care

The program will continue with monthly assemblies in March, April and May, with the March presentation being centered around Diversity and Acceptance.

Freshman Orientation

Here is a sample program for a freshman who attends orientation on the 25th:

SESSION	GROUP 1 - MOLOF
Introduction: 9:05-9:10 Auditorium	Introduction: 9:05-9:10 Auditorium
1. 9:15-9:50	Guidance - 232-233
2. 9:55-10:30	Activities - Cafe B
3. 10:35-11:10	Tour
4. 11:15-11:50	Lunch - Patio
5. 11:55-12:35	Code of Conduct - Auditorium
6. 12:30-1:05	Camfel Productions

Students will be grouped by counselors in 8 groups and follow a rotation. For any grade 10 student who was exclusively remote last year, we will be offering, by invitation only, a similar program that includes a tour and assembly.



Technology and Learning

Except for Pre-K students, students will have a one-to-one device to access Google.

Teachers will continue to receive training in the following technology and applications:

Seesaw - Students show their learning using built-in annotation tools to capture what they know in Seesaw's digital portfolio. Teachers gain insights by deeply understanding student thinking and progress enabling them to teach more effectively. Families gain a window into their student's learning and engage with school happenings.

Kami - Students enjoy annotating text and editing documents using Kami's Google Classroom integration. Using the child-centered app, students can annotate on eBooks, publisher-supplied PDFs, worksheets, etc. Students can be creative as they draw freely and annotate with a selection of colors, shapes and text sizes. Teachers can markup, discuss and provide feedback using Kami's text, audio, and video annotation tools. These collaborative tools encourage active, real-time participation in the classroom.

Screeencastify- Teachers make learning more personal by recording full and/or bite-sized lessons, assignment solutions and explanations and verbal student feedback.

iPad - An iPad is a tablet computer. All iPads can connect using Wi-Fi and perform Internet functions such as web-browsing and emailing.

Chromebook - A Chromebook is a laptop that is used primarily by students to perform a variety of tasks with most applications and data residing in the cloud rather on the machine itself.

Field Trips

Field trips will be evaluated when they are submitted to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction; however, principals may approve educationally appropriate virtual field trips.



Physical Education – In-Person Elementary and Secondary

According to the CDC recommendations, masks will be worn at all times when indoors. Students will come prepared for physical education classes. All physical education classes, whenever possible, will be taught outdoors at both the elementary and secondary levels. Students will be prepared to go outside (just as currently specified for recess) as long as the temperature exceeds 40 degrees and when outdoors, students will not be required to wear masks. All shared supplies and equipment will continue to be sanitized accordingly after use by the physical educators after class.

Driver Education

Working closely with the East Meadow Driving School, we will continue to follow the NYS recommended guidelines with regards to the “In Car” portion of the driver education program. Students will complete the ‘in car’ portion of the class under parental supervision. Parents will be provided with the necessary guidance and curriculum to complete the ‘in car’ training. After completion parents will sign documents over the school for verification that all objectives have been met. The Lecture portion of the class will be provided remotely via ‘Zoom’ classes. Upon satisfactory completion of both the lecture (all lectures must be attended) and the parental documents students completed and received we will then issue the MV285 which allows students to schedule a road test and also provide a discount for insurance.

Athletics

NYSPHSAA Sports

New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) will start the Fall Season as planned.

We will be returning to regularly scheduled play both games and practices. The Fall Season will officially start on August 23rd for Football and August 30th for all other fall interscholastic teams. No masks will be required for outdoor events, practices, games or for spectators.

The following guidelines which will still be in effect include:

- Facemasks must be worn at all times by student athletes indoors. (*revised 2/3/22*)
- Facemasks must be worn by spectators for indoor events
- Testing is voluntary and will be available at the Administration building each week.



Special Education

Summary

The back to school plan for students with Disabilities will adhere to IDEA provision of FAPE (Free and Appropriate Education) in the LRE (Least Restrictive Environment). The federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the needs of individual students.

Every aspect of the back to school plan addresses FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those providing special education and services. Programs and services offered will be documented in the Individualized Education Plan and provided to students with disabilities as well as communications with parents. The use of interpreters and Propio will address meaningful parent engagement in the parent's preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of services to each child. Plans for monitoring and communicating student progress and a commitment to sharing resources will include progress monitoring and progress reports. Elementary grade students will receive a progress report three times a year and ungraded students will receive a progress report four times a year. All secondary students will receive progress reports four times a year. Contact teachers speak with parents on an ongoing basis. Students will have access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology including assistive technology to meet the unique disability related needs of students. Testing accommodation rooms will be established to meet the requirements of testing accommodations.

Elementary Instruction

I. **Grades K-5 (Ungraded, Non-Integrated (Graded 15:1), ICT, Resource Room and Related Services Only Students)**

K-5 integrated co-teaching and non-integrated students will receive specially designed instruction by a special education teacher, as per their IEP mandates. All students will receive their related services within the school day.

II. **Grade K-5 (504 Plan Students)**

Grades K-5 students with a 504 Plan will follow the schedule of general education students and receive all related services in school.

[Parent and Educator Resource Guide to Section 504 in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools](#)

Secondary Instruction

I. **Grades 6-12 (ICT, Non-Integrated, Resource Room and Related Services Only Students) (Regents Track)**

6-12 ICT and non-integrated students will receive specially designed instruction by a special education teacher, as per their IEP mandates. All students will receive their related services within the school day.

II. **Grades 6-12 (504 Students)**

Grades 6-12 students with a 504 Plan will follow the schedule of general education students and receive all related services in school.



III. Work Sites (High School Ungraded Students)

High School Vocational 3 students participate in career readiness at job sites outside the school district, under the direction of a special education teacher and teaching assistant support.

Related Services

(Speech and Language, Counseling, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Vision Services, Hearing Services, Audiological Services, Behavior Intervention Services)

Related Services will be provided to all students in school, as per their IEP documents.

Testing Accommodations

Students will be provided with testing accommodations, per their IEP or 504 documents. The testing accommodations will be provided with the use of Teaching Assistants, as in previous years.

Parent Involvement and Communication

I. Committee on Special Education (CSE) and 504 Meetings

CSE and 504 meetings will be offered in-person or over the Google Meet Platform, based on family preference.

II. Initial Referrals to Special Education, 504 and Evaluations/Re-evaluations

Students referred to the Committee on Special Education or 504, will evaluate and collect the necessary data to proceed with the evaluation within the mandated time frame.

III. Contact Teachers K-12

Contact teachers are special education teachers assigned to each student to be the bridge between school and home. Contact teachers will review all IEP/504 documents on their caseload and ensure that students are receiving their programs, services and accommodations. Contact teachers for special education students are always teachers of the student. Contact teachers participate in students' CSE meetings and collaborate with parents on an ongoing basis. Contact teachers of 504 students will introduce themselves to the student, family and the teachers of their 504 students. Contact teachers of 504 students ensure that accommodations are provided to students and attend their annual 504 meeting.

IV. Social Workers and Psychologists

Social Workers and Psychologists will provide counseling services to students with an IEP and/or a 504. Services will be provided individually or in a group, per student IEP or 504 documents. Social Workers and Psychologists connect with families on an ongoing basis to ensure that students are meeting with success and supporting students who are experiencing challenges.



V. **Northwell Health School Based Mental Health Services Partnership**

The school district and Northwell Health will be providing services to our school community with a focus on long-term success. The partnership cultivates a collaborative relationship between the district mental health staff (social workers and psychologists) and Northwell Health psychiatrists and licensed mental health professionals. The coordination of services aims at improving the overall wellbeing and academic success of students in need.

VI. **Parent Counseling and Training (PCT)**

Parent Counseling and Training (PCT) is a related service provided to parents of students classified with Autism. PCT is a monthly meeting held after school in the evening for parents. PCT meets monthly for an hour, with relatable topics for parents of students classified with Autism and/or those parents who would benefit from the additional support at home. PCT may be held through the Google Meet Platform, to support a wider range of parents who may require the service.

VII. **SEAC (Special Education Advisory Committee)**

The Special Education Advisory Committee meets after school hours to discuss various topics impacting the community, as they relate to Special Education. This forum enables families and the school district to participate in an open dialogue about the challenges and opportunities that are available to students with disabilities. The SEAC will be held through Google Meet Platform for the 2021-2022 school year. *(revised 2/3/22)*



Staffing

I. TEACHER and PRINCIPAL EVALUATION SYSTEM (EDUCATION LAW 3012-D: APPR)

The District fully intends to implement its currently approved APPR Plan during the 2021-2022 school year.

If necessary, the District will determine whether it will follow the process to seek an APPR variance for the 2021-2022 school year.

II. CERTIFICATION, INCIDENTAL TEACHING, AND SUBSTITUTE TEACHING

CERTIFICATION

All teachers are duly certified for their Board appointed teaching positions. The district consistently ensures that teacher assignments align with their NYS teacher certification status.

INCIDENTAL TEACHING

In consideration of the 2021-2022 ability of the Superintendent to assign a certified teacher to teach a subject not covered by their certificate for a defined period of time, the District will consider this option if necessary during the school year.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHING

The District requires its substitute teachers to possess a valid teaching certification.

The District recognizes that it has the ability to hire substitute teachers who possess only a high school diploma, if the Superintendent certifies that a good faith effort to hire certified substitute teachers has been unsuccessful. This option will be explored with the Board of Education, if necessary.