

# The Community School Reopening Plan 2020

04-8358

Submitted

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## *DISCLAIMER-*

- The Community School Reopening Plan is an ongoing process and subject to change as directed by the New Jersey Department of Education or as dictated by changing circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Introduction:

- The health and safety of all our stakeholders is our number one priority while recognizing that our students need to return to in-person learning as much as is possible under the current circumstances and guidance.
- The reopening plan aligns with the NJDOE guidance through The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education. This guidance includes four key areas: *Conditions for Learning, Leadership and Planning, Policy and Funding, and Continuity of Learning*. It also aligns with the NYSED reopening guidance: Recovering, Rebuilding and Renewing the Spirit of New York's Schools.

## Introduction cont.-

- Our school serves students with mild to moderate learning and language disabilities in grades 2 through 8 to approximately 110 students. The students are diverse and come from areas of New Jersey and New York. The average class size is 6 -8 and our plan includes reducing the in-person population of students to approximately 50% on any given day with the use of 2 cohorts. This will allow for social distancing in almost every class and throughout the building.

# *Leadership and Planning-*

- Community School established a Restart Committee in order to formulate our Reopening Plan. The committee consists of a variety of stakeholders including:
  - Administrators
  - Members of the Board of Trustees
  - Educators
  - Parents
  - Students

# Surveying the Stakeholders-

- Two surveys were developed by the committee and sent to both parents and staff to gather their input on the reopening of our school.
- It included questions regarding:
  - Models for reopening including remote and hybrid.
  - Bussing concerns
  - Ways to protect our learning community including the use of PPE and distancing measures.
  - Stakeholders were also provided an opportunity to add comments and concerns.

# Pandemic Response Team-

- The school's existing crisis response team will serve as the Pandemic Response Team. They will work together as the pandemic evolves and make decisions regarding changes to this plan. The team consists of:
  - Principal
  - Teachers
  - Counselors
  - Subject area department heads
  - School Nurse
  - Janitorial and custodial staff
  - School safety team
  - Parents

# Scheduling-

- Due to staffing issues and medical reasons, Community School will begin the school year all remote. As soon as able we will shift to the below model.
- Once able to do so, we will utilize a hybrid of in-person and remote learning. Two cohorts will be developed consisting of an A- cohort made up of group 1 and 3 students and a B- cohort made up of group 2 and 4 students.
- Cohort A – group 1 and 3 students will attend in-person on Thursdays and Fridays as well as alternating Wednesdays each week. Cohort B- group 2 and 4 students will attend in-person on Mondays and Tuesdays as well as alternating Wednesdays.
- When either cohort is not in person they will attend through remote/ virtual means for their regular class schedule.
- This model allows for at least four hours of instructional time per school day as per N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3 whether in person or remote.



## Scheduling cont.-

- The school will share the proposed schedule with parents no later than four weeks prior to the first day of school to allow parents enough time to plan accordingly.
- The school expects to be able to pivot at any time and either go to an all in-person or an all remote model of instruction based on direction from state or local authorities and the current status of the pandemic.
- Staff will engage in professional development regarding the new platforms of remote engagement with students.
- The school is able to shift either way due to the hardware provided to all students and the educational platforms used to deliver instruction.

# *Conditions for Learning:*

- This reopening plan incorporates the CDC's recommendations and guidance, including:
  - Establishing and maintaining communication with local and state authorities to determine current mitigation levels in the community.
  - Protecting and supporting students and staff who are at higher risk for severe illness from Covid-19, including older adults and individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions..
  - Following the CDC's Guidance for Schools.
  - Promoting behaviors that reduce the spread which include:
    - Stay home when appropriate
    - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
    - Face coverings
    - Signs and messaging

# Classrooms and Other Spaces- Physical Modifications-

- Community School will allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable. This can be achieved by ensuring students are seated at least 6 feet apart. If we are not able to maintain this physical distance, additional modifications will be considered. These include using physical barriers between desks and turning desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other) or having students sit on only one side of the table, spaced apart.
- All small teaching spaces have had plexiglass shields installed as well as office spaces as needed.

# Classrooms and Other Spaces- Physical Modifications cont.-

- The water fountains have bottle filling stations. Students and staff are encouraged to bring their own water bottle. The fountain feature will be disabled.
- Everyone will move in one direction during class changes and there will be one up staircase and one down.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be located at building entrances and outside bathrooms as well as in each classroom.
- Signs promoting hand hygiene, social distancing and face coverings will be posted throughout the facility.
- Unnecessary furniture has been removed to increase available space.

# Face Coverings-

- Face coverings are required for students, visitors and staff unless it will inhibit the individual's health.
- The school has purchased a supply of cloth facemasks that will be distributed to staff. Students must provide their own face covering.

## Face Coverings cont.-

- The school also has a supply of face shields for those who may not tolerate a face covering due to medical reasons and for our related services personnel who due to the nature of their work, need student to see their face. Ie. Speech and language, reading etc.
- If wearing a face shield, it should be worn so that they wrap around the sides of the wearer's face and extend to below the chin.
- A supply of disposable face masks has been purchased in case a student or staff member forgets one for the day or it becomes damaged or soiled.

# Face Coverings cont.-

- Exceptions to wearing a face covering:
  - Doing so would inhibit the student's health.
  - The student is in extreme heat outdoors.
  - When a student is in water.
  - A student's documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an IEP, precludes the use of a face covering.
  - If a student is under the age of two (2) due to the risk of suffocation
  - During the period a student is eating or drinking.
  - The student is engaged in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities
  - Face coverings may be removed during gym and music classes when individuals are in a well-ventilated location **and** able to maintain a physical distance of six feet apart
  - When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task (for example, students operating machinery or which face coverings may get caught)

# Ventilation-

- Our systems fully comply with the standards set forth by the NJ DOE guidance. In all our rooms, our systems will be set to allow for the highest amount of fresh air flow into the classroom. The filters located in these units, have been replaced and will be changed more frequently this school year. In addition, as recommended by the CDC, teachers will be encouraged to keep windows open and allow additional fresh air flow through all instructional spaces.
- Filters for AC units will be maintained and changed/cleaned according to manufacturers recommendations.



# Hand Hygiene-

- Students will be encouraged to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Signs will be posted around the facility that encourage good hand hygiene practices according to the CDC.
- Hand Sanitizer Stations containing at least 60% alcohol will be located:
  - In each classroom
  - At entrances and exits of building
  - Near bathrooms

# Transportation-

- Transportation is provided by the sending districts of the students. However, the following guidelines should be followed by students while riding on a school bus.
  - Face coverings should be worn when social distancing isn't possible while waiting at a bus stop.
  - Face coverings should be worn by all students upon entering the bus.
  - Accommodations should be provided as detailed in the Face Covering Exceptions noted on the Face Covering section of this policy for young students or those with disabilities noted in the IEP who cannot wear a face coverings
  - Students should board the bus and fill the seats in the back row first, and then progress forward.
  - Students should maintain social distancing practices to the maximum extent practicable
  - Open windows if possible.
  - Drivers should practice all safety actions and protocols for other staff( eg. hand hygiene, face coverings).

# Transportation continued-

- School busses should be cleaned and disinfected by the bus company at least daily preferably between routes.
- Parents may consider driving their son or daughter to school in leu of using bus service. They should contact their district transportation coordinator if considering this possibility as reimbursement may be available .

# Entry to the Building- Health Screenings-

- All staff, students and scheduled visitors will have a health screening prior to being admitted to the school. All will enter through the entrance on West Forest Avenue. Busses will unload one at a time to reduce crowding and allow social distancing. The health screening will occur outside the entry door and include:
  - A visual check for symptoms
  - Students and staff will remain socially distant for the screening process. Cones or markers will identify where they will stand, at least 6 feet apart in line to be screened
  - Face coverings will be worn as per the Face Coverings Section of this Plan during screenings
  - A no-touch screening temperature check with a infrared forehead thermometer
  - Questions including whether they've been in contact with anyone who's tested positive, whether they've developed symptoms, and whether they've just returned from a high infection area. Anyone who has symptoms as noted on the checklist or gives an answer that is problematic will be quarantined pending an assessment by the school nurse.
  - We will assist our students with disabilities in answering the questions as needed. Perhaps repeating the questions or with further inquiry if needed. All answers will be documented each day.

# Health Screenings Continued-

- Based on any problematic screening, a staff member will be sent home and any student will remain in isolation in a designated quarantine area and supervised until picked up by a parent or guardian.
- Students and employees will be asked to leave or not come into school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit two or more of the symptoms of COVID-19, in column A or at least one in column B, that is not otherwise explained:

## A

A fever of greater than 100.3

Chills

Muscle pain

Headache

Sore throat

Fatigue

Nausea or vomiting

Diarrhea

## B

Cough

Shortness of breath

Difficulty breathing

New loss of smell

New loss of taste

- School staff will continuously monitor students throughout the day for anyone exhibiting symptoms of illness

# Health Screenings cont.-

- We are working on a daily parent questionnaire through Genesis that parents will attest to screening their child each day prior to sending them to school. Thus potentially eliminating students with any symptoms of illness attending school that day.
- Any staff or student who has tested positive for COVID-19 will follow the guidance of the NJ DOH for returning to the school. This includes staying home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and at least 24 hours have passed after reduction of fever without fever-reducing medications and improvement of symptoms. Persons who test positive for Covid-19 but are asymptomatic should stay home for 10 days from the positive test results.
- The school will immediately notify the LHD if an individual who has spent time in school tests positive for Covid-19. We will notify families and students of the school at large in accordance with LHD guidelines.

# Contact Tracing-

- Contact tracing is a strategy used to determine the source of infection and how it is spreading. Finding people who are close contacts to a person who has tested positive for Covid-19, and therefore at higher risk of becoming infecting themselves, can prevent further spread of the virus.
- Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone with suspected or known Covid-19 for at least 10 consecutive minutes.
- The school physician and school nurse will coordinate all aspects of contact tracing when applicable. This includes the notification of the local health department and helping identify close contacts of positive Covid-19 cases in the school.
- Staff and student families will be notified as applicable and along with the guidelines established by the DOH if anyone has had close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 while adhering to all federal and state requirements regarding privacy rights.
- Our cohort and attendance system will allow the school to know who was in attendance on what days and in what classes. This will help identify those in need of notification and other measures in consultation with the DOH.

# Facilities Cleaning Practices-

- The school will hire a new full time custodian who will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting throughout the day. These areas include:
  - Bathrooms on a regular schedule. A checklist will be used to note the times of cleanings.
  - High contact surfaces such as door handles, light switches, hand rails and other surfaces and objects.
  - After students and staff leave for the day, all classroom and office surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected. A checklist will be completed noting the cleaning performed each afternoon.
  - All materials used for cleaning/disinfecting will be EPA-Registered for use against SARS-Cov-2
  - We will provide disinfecting wipes to each classroom so that staff can wipe down surfaces if needed throughout the day.



# Meals-

- Students bring their lunch from home and there is no food service.
- Students will eat in their designated classroom while socially distant.
- All are encouraged to use the outdoor space to eat when possible.
- Students will be reminded to wash their hands before meals.
- Sharing of food will not be permitted.

# Recess / Physical Education-

- Locker rooms will not be used and therefore students should wear comfortable clothing and sneakers to school.
- Lessons will be modified to focus on individual fitness instead of team sports to eliminate shared equipment.
- Proper distancing will be enforced and classes will go outside as much as possible if conditions permit. Cones, tape or other markings will be used to maintain 6 feet of space between students.
- Phys. Ed. Classes will follow the face coverings exceptions described in the Face Coverings section of this plan when applicable.
- Students will wash their hands immediately after being outdoors for PE classes.
- Any equipment used will be cleaned and disinfected between each use.
- Students will follow these same procedures for any recess activities.

# Field Trips / Extracurricular Activities-

- To begin the school year there will be no afterschool activities or trips.
- We will reassess these decisions as the guidance changes moving forward.
- Once field trips/extracurricular activities resume, we will follow current guidance for social distancing and hygiene practices.
- External community organizations are not permitted to use our facilities. If this were to change they would be required to follow the school procedures for all health and safety protocols.

## *Policy and Funding-*

- Our school anticipated that due to the current pandemic, we would need to purchase items and supplies that would provide the necessary components to open safely. However, as this is a fluid situation and guidance is always changing there is no way to know exactly how much money would be needed.
- We have purchased PPE, plexiglass dividers for small spaces and offices as needed, signage, hand sanitizer dispensers, disinfecting wipes and modified plumbing in bathrooms and replaced water fountains. We will also be hiring a custodian to clean and disinfect throughout the day.

## Policy and Funding cont.-

- As an APSSD we will apply for whatever federal or state monies that are available for these types of purchases related to the pandemic as the guidance for such emerges. At this point, however we will use funds available to do so in order to be able to open safely.

# *Continuity and Learning-*

- As per the Governor's July 20<sup>th</sup> direction, parents will have the opportunity to choose all remote learning for their child. We will provide parents with the opportunity to select the instructional model they wish, either all remote or hybrid. Whatever instructional model is chosen, will remain in effect for the first marking period. Near the end of the marking period parents will have the opportunity to change the model chosen or to continue with their original selection for the second marking period.
- Parents were all given the opportunity to choose either all remote or the in-person hybrid model in early August through an email survey. Those who did not respond were called.

# Continuity and Learning cont.-

- Students will receive related service which includes counseling, speech and language therapy and OT to the greatest extent possible as per the student's IEP. While in-person or remote, students will meet with related services providers.
- All students are provided a school issued Chromebook. New students will be issued a Chromebook at the start of the school year. New students will receive training in the use of the device and applications. We will work with districts and parents to identify any issues of students lacking internet connectivity and will resolve those issues case by case.
- We plan to use a variety of learning platform including, GoGuardian, Google Classroom, Google Meet, Genesis, Zoom, IXL and others. These will allow both synchronous or asynchronous delivery of instruction.

# Continuity and Learning cont.-

- Whether in-person or remote, students will follow their regular schedule for all core subject. Teachers will teach in-person to students who are attending in-person that day, either cohort A or B, and teach live remotely to those who are not.
- Student are expected to be in attendance while remote during their regularly scheduled academic class times. Attendance will be taken through Genesis while in-person or remote.



# Technology-

- Community School has ensured that all students have the necessary hardware to access the technology needed to participate in remote learning. All students have been or will be issued a Chrome Book. We have documented the issuance of all hardware to ensure all students receive their needed device. We will prioritize the issuance of technology to students who in the absence of district –issued technology may be unable to participate in remote instruction.
- Any students who has connectively issues we will identify and work with districts to provide the needed connectivity for remote learning.
- We will continually monitor student access and participation in remote learning and prevent any lapses in access to remote learning as district or family circumstances evolve.

# School Calendar-

- The school calendar denoting which days cohorts will attend in-person instruction is attached to this plan through the end of November. When not in-person students will attend remotely as described.
- This plan and the school calendar denoting the days each cohort will attend in-person vs. remote instruction is located on the school website at-
- [www.communityschoolk12nj.org](http://www.communityschoolk12nj.org)

**END OF PLAN**