

WEST ISLIP UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

**SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN
2020-2021**



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Dear Colleagues, Parents, Students and Community Members:

The physical and mental health and well-being of our students, teachers, staff, and community are our highest priorities. Through this lens, we have spent many long days trying to determine how best to reopen our schools in September. In accordance with direction from the Governor, schools will open for students if the Long Island region (Nassau/ Suffolk) is in Phase IV and the daily COVID-19 infection rate remains below five (5) percent using a 14-day average.

In June, we began to put together a Districtwide task force that explored seven areas for consideration for reopening schools:

- building procedures and general school operations
- arrival and dismissal procedures/transportation protocols
- health education and communication/mental health
- instructional program considerations
- preparing District stakeholders for a return to school
- facilities use/activities risk considerations
- personal protective equipment (PPE)/cleaning and disinfecting protocols

The members of these subcommittees represented stakeholders from across the District: administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and Board of Education trustees. After weeks of discussion, consultation with the local department of health, a thorough review of the medical literature and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, consideration of the results of surveys administered to parents, faculty and students, as well as the charge of the New York State Education Department (SED), we determined that the common goal is to have as many of our students return safely to the in-school setting in September as possible. Based on the metrics established by Governor Andrew Cuomo, we are encouraged that this is a real possibility. However, to protect all members of our educational community, it will be critical that everyone consistently follow established health protocols.

The document that follows provides initial guidance for school reopening. It is a work in progress that requires flexibility and will be revised as necessary and as conditions change. We know that you have many concerns and may be anxious about having your child in the school setting in September. We will do our best to allay those fears. We also acknowledge that whatever model we follow will likely elicit questions. To that end, a running series of FAQs will be posted on the District website throughout the summer.

I wish you good health. Remember, we are all in this together, and I look forward to working with you to ensure our students' successes in the school year ahead.

Respectfully,



Bernadette M. Burns
Superintendent of Schools

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of the children and adults in our schools is paramount. Health and safety considerations must always come first in every decision made and every action taken by our schools and District. Prevention is accomplished by following the recommendations of health authorities in the following areas: health checks, healthy hygiene practices, social distancing, personal protective equipment (PPE) and cloth face coverings, management of ill persons, and cleaning and disinfection. Protocols that are considered best practice and based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) have been developed and are included within this document.

Due to the number of students and staff, and based on the District/school ability to maintain appropriate social distance, schools will operate as follows:

- At the elementary and middle school levels, students will attend school in-person every day that it is practicable.
- At the high school level, an A/B schedule will be utilized. Half of the student population will be physically in the high school at the same time. Every effort will be made to ensure that siblings attend onsite school on the same days. The actual period times within the school day may be adjusted slightly to ensure social distancing in hallways during arrival, dismissal and passing times.

At this time, all students in the high school will begin on Tuesday, September 8 or Wednesday, September 9, in line with the A/B schedule proposal. At the elementary and middle school levels, students will return full-time to the learning environment on September 8, although the return of students to the building environment will be staggered by grade level.

Face masks are required to be worn by staff and all students throughout the school day, including on buses. Breaks will be scheduled by teachers within the class setting throughout the day. Staff and students will be encouraged to provide their own PPE and cloth face mask, but the District will make such items available should the need arise.

Parents will be encouraged to provide transportation to their child(ren), but regular bus transportation will be available to all eligible students who require it. A survey will be sent to parents to determine whether their child(ren) will ride the school bus if eligible.

The District has engaged with school stakeholders and community members when developing this reopening plan, including the Board of Education, administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians of students, the local health department, and affiliated organizations. The District will use its webpage, School Messenger system (robocalls, emails and text messages), ParentSquare and Facebook postings to convey instructions, provide training, and communicate applicable information to stakeholders. Communications will be provided in the language(s) spoken at home among families and throughout the school community. Written plans will be accessible to those with visual and/or hearing impairments.

The District has posted signs that encourage all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically acceptable face coverings, and when

social distance cannot be maintained. When students are in school, regular announcements will be made throughout the day in classes and over the PA system. During the first week of school, and on an ongoing basis, the District will ensure that all students are taught or trained how to follow new COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene.

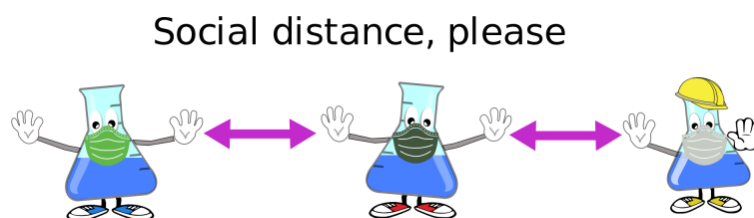
The Superintendent of Schools and building principals will be the District and building points of contact, respectively, upon the identification of positive COVID-19 cases. They will be the main contact upon the identification of positive COVID-19 cases and responsible for subsequent communication and answering questions from students, faculty, staff, and parents or legal guardians of students regarding the COVID-19 public health emergency and plans implemented by the school.

The Executive Director of Human Resources is designated the COVID-19 safety coordinator, whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or "new normal" levels. He shall work with the Director of Physical Education, Athletics and School Nurses to ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities as it relates to the health and safety of students and colleagues. Contact information for the points of contact and the safety coordinator will be available on the District website.

Written protocols that address myriad health and safety issues can be found in Appendix A, including:

1. relevant staff development as it relates to identifying potentially ill students or staff;
2. daily temperature and health screenings of students and staff;
3. healthy hygiene practices;
4. social distancing;
5. accommodations for those at high risk/vulnerable populations;
6. how to respond in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19;
7. guidance for returning to school after exhibiting signs of COVID-19;
8. cleaning and sanitizing; and
9. school safety drills.

Protocols may be amended as the situation changes.





FACILITIES

When students and adults return to their school buildings for in-person instruction, it is critical that physical spaces are configured and maintained in a way that provides the maximum possible protection from spreading the coronavirus. To that end, schools will rearrange or re-purpose physical space within the buildings as necessary, while ensuring compliance with the fire code.

The West Islip School District will ensure that all guidance related to health and safety will be followed.

- Schedules will be modified to reduce student use of the corridors.
- To reduce the spread of the virus from door levers and knobs, doors may be fixed in the open position. This is only permitted at doors without door closers and doors that are not fire rated. Stairs and corridor doors that are normally held in the open position and are automatically released by the fire alarm system will not be modified in any way.
- Plastic separators/dividers will be used in locations where social distance or mask requirements cannot be maintained.
- Access to adequate hand washing facilities will be ensured in all buildings. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be available in all school instructional areas and in buildings throughout the district.
- It is not anticipated that there will be changes or additions to facilities. However, should alterations be made, the proposed changes will be submitted to the Office of Facilities Planning (OFP) for review and to ensure that all requirements of the 2020 New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (BC) and the State Energy Conservation Code are met.
- If tents are used to provide relief to spacing in the cafeteria, a building permit will be submitted to OFP if required.
- The number of toilet and sink fixtures will not be reduced. As frequent handwashing is a key component to avoiding the spread of COVID-19, sinks and soap will be available to building occupants at all times.
- Drinking water fountains will be available for emergency use only. Students are encouraged to bring bottled water to school, but no student will be denied water at any time. Bottle fillers will be available in each school building.
- Each school in the District shall conduct standard fire (evacuation) and lockdown drills as required by Education Law and regulation and the Fire Code.
- Deadlines for the Building Condition Survey and Visual Inspections will be met.
- Lead-in-water testing will be conducted when the building is “normally occupied”, as required.
- The District will increase the fresh air ventilation rate to the extent possible to maintain a healthy indoor air quality. Windows should be open to improve ventilation whenever practicable. The use of air conditioners and fans should be minimized.

CHILD NUTRITION

A successful nutrition program is a key component to a successful educational environment. Children cannot focus on learning when they are hungry. School meals boost learning, and studies show that students perform best academically when they are well nourished.

The West Islip Union Free School District child nutrition program will continue to follow all national, state and local health and safety guidelines, and state and national waivers will be utilized as required. Additionally, the program will continue to be in full compliance with all NYSED Child Nutrition requirements. Standard operating procedures and staff trainings will ensure departmental compliance with all requirements.

All students enrolled in the District will have access to school meals each school day, including students in attendance at school and students learning remotely. Free and reduced-priced meals are available for qualifying students whose families meet current eligibility criteria, as determined by federal income guidelines. Families will have multiple opportunities to complete the meal benefit application, which can be found on the District website, in the main office of each school, and at the District Office. Phone and in-person support for families will be provided by the Office of Food Services, which shall receive and respond to communications from families.

The District strongly encourages the use of its online school payment system. Prepaid funds on school food accounts can be used for the purchase of full-price meals, reduced-price meals and/or any a la carte item sold in the cafeterias. Funds may be deposited into a student's school food account via *MySchoolBucks* or by check made out to the West Islip Cafeteria Fund. Cash payments will continue to be accepted at the point-of-sale to ensure low-income households and households without access to online payment methods have access to school food.

If students will dine offsite due to virtual instruction, meals will be available for curbside pick-up. In the event it is not possible for a student to access a school meal distribution site, delivery will be arranged on a case-by-case basis. School meals may be provided for multiple days at a time. When possible, students will provide meal preferences in advance.

Applicable health and safety guidelines will be addressed during all mealtimes. On site:

- Food service staff will properly clean and sanitize all frequently touched surfaces at the beginning and end of each shift, and between every meal period in the kitchen spaces, including but not limited to serving lines, pin pads, refrigerator and freezer handles and door knobs. Self-service condiment stations and share tables will be removed.
- Barriers will be added at the cafeteria point-of sale to protect child nutrition staff, and they will be educated about the importance of maintaining hygienic practices while working in the kitchen.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be located at the entry and exit doors for all cafeterias/dining areas. Students will sanitize hands before, if practicable, upon entering the dining area, and upon exiting a dining space after eating. Hand hygiene will be promoted to students via posters and verbal education.
- When possible, student arrival times to the cafeteria will be staggered.

- Students will socially distance on lines for school meals.
- Food service staff will place all food items on student trays (e.g. milk, fruit, condiments, etc.). Students will not self-serve any food or drink items.
- Students will be required to keep on their mask until they are seated.
- Students will be socially distanced at the appropriate distance of six feet while eating meals. Students may be assigned to eat in the cafeteria, or in a secondary location (e.g. gymnasium, outdoor area, classroom) due to space constraints.
- Vital student information as it relates to food allergies and account fund balance may be accessed on the point of sale system. In addition, all staff involved with supervision of meal consumption outside of the cafeteria will be provided with information on how to recognize an allergic reaction and the procedures to follow in such cases.
- The custodial staff will properly clean and sanitize all frequently touched surfaces at the beginning and end of each meal block, and between every meal period in student dining areas. This includes but is not limited to cafeteria tables and benches, door knobs/handles, hand sanitizing stations and water fountains.

To reinforce the need for social distancing and good hygiene practices, walkway paths, directional arrows, and social distance markers will be indicated on the floor. Students will be educated about the importance of not sharing food or drinks via posters and direct verbal instruction.

Multiple means of communication will be used to convey information to families about the food service program. Such methods shall include the District website, email, text message, phone call and postal mail. This information will also be shared with the District's English as a New Language (ENL) teachers to ensure that it is appropriately provided to all students/households who require translation. Contact information for the District's Food Service Director will be provided in all child nutrition communication. Applications for free/reduced-price meals will be readily available at all District schools, District office and online. Assistance with completing the application is offered to all households. All eligible households will be encouraged to complete an application for free/reduced-price meals.



TRANSPORTATION

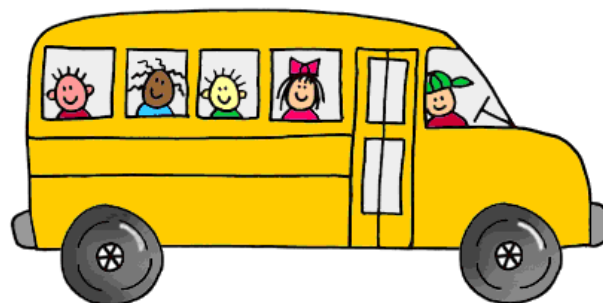
The West Islip School District transports over 2,800 students each school day. The school bus is an extension of the classroom, but presents certain unique challenges. The District's transportation program will continue to follow all state and local health and safety guidelines, and will fulfill all mandates regarding the safe and effective transportation of students who are homeless (McKinney-Vento), in foster care, have disabilities and attend non-public schools and charter schools).

Student Responsibilities

- Students are required to wear cloth face coverings on the bus if they are physically able. Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering, including students for whom such covering would impair their physical health or mental health, are not subject to the required use of a face covering. However, in such a situation the seating will be rearranged so the student without a mask is socially distanced from other students.
- Students are encouraged to wear their own face covering, but if they do not have one, it will be provided by the bus driver.
- To the extent practicable, students should social distance while waiting for the bus, while sitting on the bus, and when exiting the bus.
- Except in the case of kindergarten students, students shall fill the bus from the rear to the front to limit contact with others. Therefore, the first student to board the bus in the morning will sit in the last seat on the bus.
- When students exit the bus, they will be dismissed from front to rear to limit contact with others.
- Siblings or children who live in the same household are encouraged to sit together.
- Students may not eat nor drink on the bus, as this would require them to remove their mask.

Parent Responsibilities

- In a method established by the school district, all parents/guardians will be required to ensure their child/children are not experiencing any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and do not have a fever of 100 degrees or more prior to their child boarding their method of transportation to school.



School Bus Staff Responsibilities

- School bus drivers and monitors shall perform a self-health assessment for symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving to work. District employees will complete the self-assessment and Suffolk Transportation (STS) staff will follow similar protocol and report to STS each morning.
- School bus drivers and monitors must wash their hands with soap and water using appropriate hygiene practices before and after morning and afternoon runs.
- School bus drivers and monitors must wear a face covering on the bus and at any time they are within six feet of any person on school grounds or at a bus stop.
- School bus drivers and monitors who have direct physical contact with a child must wear gloves.
- When temperatures are above 45 degrees, school buses will transport students with windows slightly opened to provide air flow.
- Transportation staff (drivers, monitors, attendants, mechanics and cleaners) will be trained and provided periodic refreshers on the proper use of personal protective equipment and the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.



Other Considerations

- All buses will be cleaned and disinfected once a day. High contact areas will be wiped down after each bus run by the bus driver.
- All buses will be deep-cleaned monthly.
- School buses will not be equipped with hand sanitizer due to its combustible composition. School bus drivers and monitors must not carry personal bottles of hand sanitizer with them on school buses.
- Wheelchair school buses will configure wheelchair placement to ensure social distancing of six feet.

RETURNING TO THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

COVID-19 required schools to make critical adjustments to their instructional model in March 2020 with little or no time to plan. The goal for September 2020 is to resume in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible. However, scheduling decisions must be informed by health and safety standards and the most current guidance from the New York State Department of Health (NSYDOH). If COVID-19 cases develop, the District may need to restrict access to areas within school facilities and across school grounds in an effort to avoid full school/district closures. Regular communication with families and students will be critical to ensure a smooth transition to the school and/or virtual setting. To this end, schedules and any changes thereof will be communicated as soon as possible to allow families to plan childcare and work arrangements. All parties must be prepared to shift fully to a remote learning model should circumstances require schools buildings to close.

To maximize in-person instruction, measures will be implemented to decrease density and congregating in school facilities and on school grounds, to the extent practicable. The goal is to have all students to be physically present in the school building every day. However, this objective will need to be achieved over time. Schedules are tentative and may be modified in response to conditions as they relate to infection rates and other COVID-19 complications. At the onset:

- Pre-Kindergarten through grade 8 students will be physically present on all days unless social distancing guidelines cannot be achieved. In that event, students will be in school on alternating days until such time that class sizes that meet social distancing guidelines can be established.
- High school students will attend school on an A Day/B Day rotation, whereby half of the students will be in the high school setting on each day, and on the alternate day, students will engage in virtual learning opportunities that ensure continuity of instruction. As the hybrid model is preferable to the blended model, in-class instruction will be live-streamed to students engaged in remote learning whenever practicable.

Research indicates that missing ten percent of school days is the point at which student achievement declines. Chronic absence, or absenteeism, is defined as “missing at least ten percent of enrolled school days, which in New York State is eighteen days per school year, or two days per month”. Therefore, it is critical that students attend instruction on all days school is in session, whether in-person or remote. Teachers will take attendance of all students on days when school is in session, regardless of the instructional setting. This attendance will be entered into Infinite Campus, the District’s student data management system.

- Elementary teachers will take attendance for each subject area, regardless of the mode of instruction.
- Middle and high school teachers will take attendance every period, every day, regardless of the mode of instruction.

Students who drop out while still of compulsory age must be kept on the school attendance register until they exceed compulsory age or move out of the District. Administrators, registration office staff, teachers and school counselors will regularly attendance for all students and identify those for whom intervention services may be necessary.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) AND WELL-BEING

The West Islip School District follows a Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Framework. As part of this framework, the District takes into consideration how curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development support the social emotional well-being of our students. In addition, the District utilizes multi-disciplinary teams and a Response to Intervention (RTI) process to support staff as they consider student issues. The District recognizes that the unprecedented circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 virus requires a clear prioritization of mental health and well-being for staff and students. The first objective upon the students' return in the fall will be to assess student needs, followed by a plan to address those needs.



Resources and referrals are provided in multiple ways to address the mental health, behavior and emotional challenges that students may face. Each school in the District has a multi-disciplinary team in place that is trained in tiered intervention and problem-solving. One social worker is assigned to each building and serves as a liaison between the home and school community. Resources for students and families are available on the District website and staff Google Sites. The District has created a Continuum of Mental Health Supports during COVID-19 framework that outlines pathways of support at various levels of risk. In addition, an MTSS Google Site has been developed to provide ongoing resources and guidance to staff. Currently, the District is in the process of creating a central location on the website for mental health resources that will be available to all stakeholders.

In addition to the shared decision-making and RTI teams in each school building, a School Counseling Advisory Council has been established for the 2020-2021 school year. Members include teachers, administrators, parents and pupil personnel service providers from the various school buildings/grade levels throughout the District. Also, the District's [School Counseling Plan](#) has been updated to meet the current needs of students.

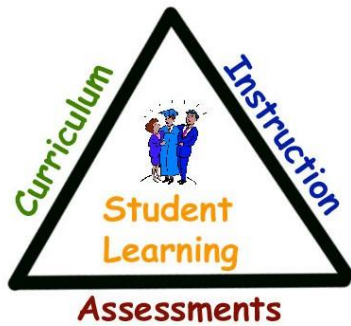
During the spring and summer of 2020, multiple professional development opportunities relating to COVID-19 have been provided for support staff, who will subsequently turnkey best practices to the school community. The District participates in the New York State RTI Middle School Demonstration Project and several staff members attended the 2020 Summer Institute focused on SEL presented by Safe and Civil Schools. In addition, members of the staff participated in the New York State Office of Mental Health virtual training on MTSS, as well as opportunities offered by the Long Island RBERN @ Eastern Suffolk BOCES. The District is currently in the process of creating a central Google site to house resources related to COVID communication and support. Lastly, the West Islip School District plans to incorporate professional development on crisis and trauma as part of its professional development plan for 2020-21.

TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

Technology knowledge and skills are vital for full participation in 21st century life, work, and citizenship. Sufficient access to computing devices and high-speed internet are essential for educational equity. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the District had introduced a 1:1 initiative that put a computing device into the hands of all students in grades K through 12. The District recognizes that consistent, reliable access to high-speed internet at a sufficient level to fully participate in remote/online learning is necessary for all students.

To ensure that all students have equitable instructional opportunities in the virtual environment, the District will survey parents to determine the level of high speed broadband in each child's place of residence, and provide information and access to the degree practicable.





TEACHING AND LEARNING

A continuity of learning plan has been developed for the 2020-2021 school year and accounts for in-person, remote and hybrid learning models. Links to the plans for elementary school, middle school and high school students will be located on the District website. Instructional time includes synchronous/ non-synchronous learning experiences, flipped classroom opportunities, whole group and small group instruction, intervention support and adherence to IEP/504 and ELL mandates. Regardless of method of delivery, instruction and outcomes are aligned to curriculum that supports and reflects the New York State Learning Standards and will be provided through regular and substantive interaction with an appropriately certified teacher. Intervention support will be available as necessary to all students and will include meaningful feedback on student assignments and methods of tracking student engagement.

Instructional experiences are not defined solely as a student's time spent in front of a teacher or in front of a screen, but time engaged in standards-based learning under the guidance and direction of a teacher. The overarching objective is that instructional experiences, when considered as a whole, are comparable in rigor, scope and magnitude to a traditionally delivered (180 minutes/week) unit of study.

The District is transitioning its communication tool to ParentSquare, which will be utilized to communicate with parents about instruction and/or technology via direct and group messaging, virtual parent-teacher conferences and newsletters. ParentSquare provides translation for 15 languages. In addition to ParentSquare, students/parents receive phone calls, text messages and e-mails from the District Office and administration via School Messenger, and are regularly directed to the District's website for posted communication/information.

At the commencement of the 2020-2021 school year, building principals will provide notification to students/parents regarding the various ways in which they can contact/communicate with the school (telephone calls, team meetings, email); classroom/subject area teachers will inform parents of the same.

The District's Pre-Kindergarten classes are included in all K-12 requirements/planning for in-person, remote and hybrid learning experiences as delineated above, and will adhere to the District's Continuity of Learning Plan for in-person, hybrid, or remote models that are aligned to the Prekindergarten standards.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Students with disabilities were particularly impacted by the closing of schools in spring 2020. It is critical that Individualized Education Programs and 504 Accommodation Plans are faithfully implemented to the extent possible for in-person, remote and hybrid learning models, while abiding by provision of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to safeguard the health and safety of students with disabilities.

To ensure meaningful parent engagement, the special education teachers and CSE chairpersons will be directed to utilize the translation services that the District utilizes (ParentSquare) in the parent's preferred mode of communication. The Special Education administration will work with the Director of Intervention Services to provide needed translation services.

The committees on preschool special education (CPSE) and committees on special education (CSE) regularly collaborate with outside providers/private placements to discuss student progress and recommendations. The administrators in the Special Education department will communicate with the various preschool programs and private school-aged programs to determine the provision of services (i.e. hybrid or in-person) to ensure they are consistent with the recommendations on the IEP. In the NYSED correspondence dated March 27, the SED stated, "NYSED will allow school Districts as much flexibility as federal and state laws and regulations allow in determining how FAPE is to be provided during the Coronavirus outbreak." To that end, the West Islip School District will provide special education and related services to the greatest extent possible through a combination of in-person, and synchronous/asynchronous/web-based platform(s). Student progress will be monitored through formative assessments, data collection and reporting, and progress monitoring on a quarterly basis.

All 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 that are addressed in their IEPs. Teachers will be aware of such, and will provide these necessary supports to the greatest extent possible, depending on the instructional model in place at any given time. Technology devices will be provided as necessary, and the District will coordinate training opportunities for parents to ensure the effective use of the devices and instructional platforms that students will be utilizing to meet their individual needs.

Parents of students with disabilities have received a written copy of their child's IEP that indicates the programs and services recommended at the student's Annual Review.



BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND WORLD LANGUAGES

In many cases, the COVID-19 crisis exacerbated existing educational inequities for English Language Learners (ELLs). The West Islip School District is committed to providing supports to ELLs to mitigate the potential learning loss that may have been a result of the school closures, and to their parents/ guardians in their preferred language of communication regarding instruction and the use of technology.

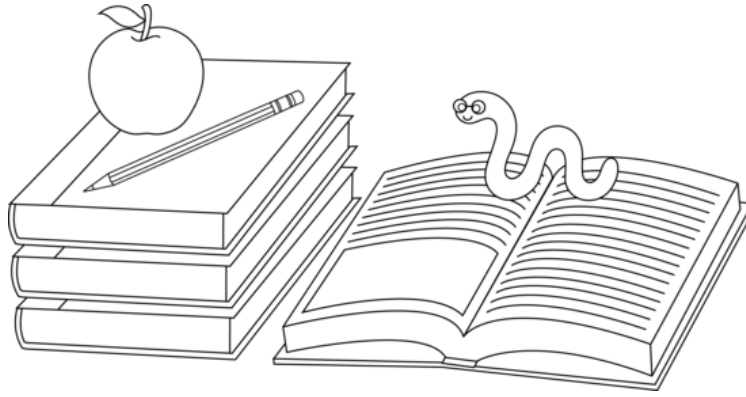
The West Islip School District follows the NYS ELL Identification and Placement process. The District did not have new ELL enrollees during the 2019-20 COVID-19 school closure who needed to be evaluated by trained personnel. However, the District will follow guidelines for newly enrolled students and will complete evaluations in mid-August for incoming kindergarten students. All new entrants will begin the identification process promptly as required by Commissioner's Regulations Part 154.

The West Islip School District will continue to follow the guidelines for Units of Study as determined by the students' English language proficiency level as assessed, and teachers of ELLs will continue to provide individualized support and instruction to students during in-person, remote or hybrid instruction.

The West Islip School District will continue to maintain regular communication with parents/guardians through weekly, if not daily contact. The English as a New Language (ENL) Department utilizes translation services and tools to ensure that parents/guardians have access to all communication in their preferred language. Parents will receive a letter in September 2020 outlining the provision of required instructional Units of Study.

Although West Islip does not currently enroll any Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE), it recognize that they are among the most vulnerable ELL subgroups, having already endured interruptions in their education prior to their arrival in NYS. The District will abide by all regulations as they relate to enrollment, identification and engagement in the in-person and/or remote learning process for SIFE students for the past and upcoming school years.





TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION SYSTEM (EDUCATION LAW §3012-D)/ APPR

Well-designed and implemented teacher and principal evaluations (“Annual Professional Performance Review”; “APPR”) are important tools to help support educator growth and development. Providing feedback and support to educators through the evaluation process can support them as they adjust their practice to distance learning, as well as guide focus areas for future growth when students and teachers engage in learning in their physical classrooms.

Pursuant to Education Law 3012-d, the West Islip School District will fully implement its currently approved APPR plans for the 2020-2021 school year.

CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to Education Law 3001, individuals employed to teach in the West Islip Union Free School District will hold a valid certificate.



Protocols

APPENDIX A – HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

1. Staff must be vigilant to **observe for signs of illness in students and staff.**

- Each school will designate two rooms for school health service personnel. One room will be for healthy students to obtain medications and nursing treatments. The second room will be for isolating ill persons.
- If any student or staff member exhibits signs of any type of illness such as flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue and/or irritability, and frequent use of the bathroom, they should be sent to the designated isolation room for an assessment by the school nurse. If a school nurse is not available, the school principal should be notified.
- Ill students and staff will be assessed by the school nurse and will be sent home for follow up with a healthcare provider should the nurse deem it necessary.
- School health personnel must wear PPE when assessing ill persons or conducting certain respiratory treatments.
- Disposable equipment and supplies will be used in the health office(s) as much as practicable.

2. Regular **health screenings** are required for staff, contractors, vendors, and visitors.

It is critical that parents/guardians and staff members be cognizant of symptoms of COVID-19 and other illnesses. Any student or staff member showing symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection should not be present in school. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) keeps a current list of symptoms of coronavirus on its website. At the current time, the following are the most common symptoms of COVID-19, which may present in isolation or in combination:

- fever or chills (100°F or greater)
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- fatigue
- muscle or body aches
- headache
- new loss of taste or smell
- sore throat
- congestion or runny nose
- nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea

A health questionnaire will be used to determine whether the individual has:

- knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19;
- tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
- has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F in the past 14 days: and/or
- has traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.

Staff must complete a health screening prior to arrival at school each day.

- The questionnaire will be posted online and accessed through email and/or a QR code.
- The Office of Human Resources will review the incoming reports of screening by staff on a daily basis.

Parents/guardians must screen their child(ren) before sending them to school each day by performing a daily temperature check. Additionally, parents must be alert to other signs of illness that may require that their child stays home from school.

- A questionnaire will be posted online and accessed through email and/or a QR code on a daily basis. The health office aide will review this information daily.
- In the event that parents/guardians indicate they cannot perform a temperature check prior to students arriving at school, or the school discovers that the parent/guardian did not perform the screening, the school nurse or trained building aide will conduct the temperature screening. To effect this, the staff member will:
 - Upon arrival, wash their hands and put on a facemask, eye protection (goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face), and a single pair of disposable gloves. A gown should be used if extensive contact with a child is occurring.
 - Take the child's temperature with a non-contact (temporal or infrared) thermometers;
 - Clean the non-contact thermometer with an alcohol wipe before and after each use;
 - After each screening, remove and discard gloves; and
 - Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol or wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Anyone who has a temperature of 100°F or greater or has a positive response on the screening questionnaire must be isolated from others and sent home immediately. Students shall be supervised in the isolation area while awaiting transport home.

Unscheduled visits to schools are strongly discouraged. In the event a parent/guardian must make an unscheduled visit to school, the visitor will be screened upon entry using the established protocol. Other guests and contractors are required to conduct a paper health screening when visiting any school facility.

The District will provide weekly reminders of the screening requirement to staff and parents via automated telephone message, email, or text in the parent/guardian's native language when it is known that families cannot access the information through the other methods.

Schools are prohibited from keeping records of student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data but are permitted to maintain records that confirm individuals were screened and the result of such screening (e.g., pass/fail, cleared/not cleared).

3. **Healthy hygiene practices** will be taught to both students and staff.

Prior to school opening, school nurses will provide instruction to all faculty and staff, who in turn will provide instruction on a daily basis to the school community in hand and respiratory hygiene. To facilitate this training and ensure compliance, a variety of methods will be utilized.

- Signs will be posted throughout each district facility, including but not limited to entrances, restrooms, cafeterias and faculty rooms, classrooms, administrative offices, auditorium, gymnasiums, and custodial staff areas and wherever sanitizing gel is available.
- Reminders will be conveyed over the PA systems, and messages will appear on the District website and social media pages reminding individuals to:
 - Stay home if they feel sick.
 - Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others or in accordance.
 - 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.
- Time will be allotted during each school day to allow for hand hygiene, which includes:
 - Traditional hand washing with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds (the preferred method);
 - The use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater) when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty.
- Hand sanitizer and/or disinfectant hand wipes will be available throughout common areas (ex. building entrances, cafeteria, library-media centers) and in each classroom.
- To facilitate proper hand hygiene, the following will be provided:
 - Adequate facilities and supplies for hand washing including soap and water;
 - Paper towels or touch free paper towel dispensers where feasible;
 - No-touch trash cans;
 - Alcohol based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol or disinfectant hand wipes;
 - Time in the schedule to allow for frequent hand washing; and
 - Promotion of proper hand washing before meals, after recess or physical education, before and after removing PPE, and other times, as appropriate.

- To facilitate proper respiratory hygiene:
 - Students and staff must cover their mouths or noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of the tissue appropriately.
 - A supply of tissues will be available in each classroom.
 - A no-touch trash can will be available in each room.
 - After sneezing or coughing, proper hand hygiene protocols will be observed.
- All students and staff members must wear cloth face coverings at all times in hallways, restrooms and other congregate settings, including buses. Face coverings must be worn in classrooms; however, frequent and regular breaks shall be provided at the direction of the teacher.
 - Students and staff are encouraged to provide their own cloth face covering. However, in the event they are not able to do so, the District will provide a replacement.
 - Accommodations will be made for students and employees who are not medically able to tolerate a face covering. Documentation from a healthcare provider will be required.
 - Regular and frequent mask breaks should be scheduled within each classroom setting, and especially for primary students, at the teacher's discretion.
 - Face coverings are not required for students if the mask would impair their health or would present a proven challenge, distraction, or obstruction to education services and instruction.
 - To properly wear a face covering:
 - Hands should be washed before putting on a face covering.
 - The mask should be placed over the nose and mouth and secured under the chin.
 - The mask should fit snugly against the sides of the face but not interfere with breathing.
 - The face covering should not be handled except to put it on and take it off.
 - Face cloth masks should be laundered on a regular basis. Disposable masks should be discarded after daily use.
 - Face coverings are for individual use only and should not be shared.

4. **Social distancing** will be observed and enforced in all school facilities, on school grounds, and on school buses.

Social Distancing means physically distancing - keeping a six foot space between parties whenever possible. The amount of space may vary based on the activity taking place within a location, and other options that may be utilized (ex. barriers).

- All persons in all school buildings and in District facilities shall keep social distance of at least six feet whenever possible.
- At the elementary school level, cohorts of students will stay together throughout the school day.
- Parents are encouraged to drive their child(ren) to school to minimize the number of students on buses.

- Cohorts of students may utilize different entrances/exits during arrival/dismissal times.
- Parents/guardians may not escort their child(ren) into the building at any time during the school day.
- Special area teachers at the elementary level (e.g., music, art, physical education) may go to individual classrooms versus rotating all students through a shared space, unless the space can be cleaned with each new use.
- Whenever possible, physical education and music classes will be held outside. Students must observe 12 feet of social distancing in all directions between individuals while participating in activities that require projecting the voice, playing a wind instrument, or aerobic activity whenever practicable. Masks are advised at all times.
- Staff will monitor the use of restrooms to ensure that no more than three students (socially distanced) are in the multi-user restroom at one time.
- Wherever practicable, desks will face in the same direction to reduce transmission caused by virus-containing droplets (e.g., from talking, coughing, sneezing).
- Wherever possible, windows should be open to improve ventilation. The use of air conditioners should be minimized.
- Individual student belongings shall be kept separated. Use of shared supplies should be limited, and cleaned between use by cohorts of students.
- Secondary students should visit lockers at specified times to minimize congestion in hallways. Lockers should be spaced to the extent practicable.
- As space allows, students should dine in the cafeteria. As masks will not typically be worn in the cafeteria, tables shall face in one direction, and students will observe a minimum of six feet distancing. Elementary cohorts may eat in their classroom or other alternative, if necessary.
- Elevators should be used by no more than two parties at one time, and both must wear masks.
- Faculty offices may be occupied by no more than two individuals at a time, and all individuals must wear acceptable face coverings. Adjustments may be made to this guidance based on the size of the office.
- In elementary school settings, playground use should be limited to a single cohort at a time.
 - Students must wash their hands before and after touching play structures.
 - Students must keep six feet apart from other children as much as possible.
- The following in-person events are cancelled/limited through December 31, 2020 and will be re-evaluated before the spring semester:
 - student assemblies
 - drama and musical performances
 - school-wide parent meetings and Open House
 - field trips
- Athletic practices and games will take place according to the guidelines received by the SED, in accordance with local DOH guidelines and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA).

- All employees, adult visitors, and students must wear a cloth face covering on school grounds, unless otherwise inadvisable.
 - All persons must wear a cloth face covering whenever social distancing cannot be maintained.
 - Teachers will ensure that students take regular “mask breaks” during instructional time in a manner, but will make certain that others within proximity are wearing masks or properly distanced.
5. The District will provide **accommodations to students and staff who are at high risk** or live with a person at high risk. These may include, but are not limited to individuals 65 or older, pregnant individuals, and individuals with certain underlying health conditions.
- Parents of students with special needs or students who are medically fragile, who may not be able to maintain social distancing, hand or respiratory hygiene, or wear a face covering or mask, shall contact the school nurse of their child’s building.
 - The building intervention team, in consultation with the parent/guardian and healthcare provider, will determine the appropriate accommodation for within the school setting. This may include additional PPE, an alternate schedule, or other accommodation.
 - In the event homebound instruction is recommended, documentation from the child’s healthcare provider or the healthcare provider of the family member at risk, will be required.
 - The District’s Chief School Physician may be consulted.
 - Staff at high risk should contact the Office of Human Resources to discuss appropriate accommodations.
6. The following protocols will be followed **in the event there is a confirmed case of COVID-19** in a school or a specific workplace.
- Whenever a student or staff member shows symptoms of any communicable or infectious disease, including COVID-19, he or she shall be excluded from the school and sent home immediately. School staff must immediately report any illness of students or staff to the school nurse or building principal.
 - If a student or staff member reports having tested positive for COVID-19, school administrators should notify the Superintendent, who in turn shall notify the local health department to determine what steps are needed for the school community.
 - All reports shall remain confidential, in compliance with FERPA and Education Law 2-d. If nurses choose to go to classrooms to make assessments of students, this also should be done in a manner that protects the student’s confidentiality.
 - School nurses and assessing or providing care to ill students and staff should follow appropriate precautions, including the use of appropriate PPE.
 - PPE will be available for use by school health professionals to assess and care for ill students and staff members, including but not limited to face masks (disposable

surgical masks), respirators (N95) masks, eye protection or face shields, gloves, and disposable gowns.

- Students suspected of having COVID-19 awaiting transport home by the parent/guardian must be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult present utilizing appropriate PPE. Multiple students suspected of COVID-19 may be in this isolation room if they can be separated by at least six feet from each other.
 - A facemask shall be provided to the student if the ill person can tolerate wearing it and does not have difficulty breathing.
 - Students should be escorted from the isolation area to the parent/guardian.
 - The parent or guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider or to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center.
 - Symptomatic students or staff members must follow the CDC's *Stay Home When You Are Sick* guidance unless otherwise directed by a healthcare provider or the local department of health.
 - If the student or staff member has emergency warning signs such as trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to arouse, bluish lips or face, the school nurse, principal or other designee should call 911 and notify the operator that the person may have COVID-19.
- School staff should be aware of the symptoms of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C).
 - The child should be referred for immediate follow up with a healthcare provider if they exhibit fever, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, neck pain, rash, bloodshot eyes or lethargy.
 - School staff should call for emergency transport (911) for a student who has trouble breathing, pain or pressure in the chest that does not go away, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face or severe abdominal pain.
- Areas occupied by a sick person should not be used by other persons until cleaned and disinfected.
 - If possible, outside doors and windows should be opened to increase air circulation in the area.
 - All areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas should be cleaned and disinfected after a 24 hour wait period.
 - Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, it can be reopened for use.
 - Individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
- In the event of a positive COVID case in the school environment, the principal will cooperate with the contact tracing of the local department of health by:
 - keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members;
 - ensuring student schedules are up to date;
 - keeping a log of any visitors which includes date, time and where in the school they visited.

7. Schools must follow CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to **return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.**

- If a person is not diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider, they can return to school:
 - Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
 - If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have a written note from a healthcare provider stating they are clear to return to school.
- If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms, or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be on school grounds and should stay at home until:
 - It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
 - It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); and
 - It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.
- Return to school for confirmed positive cases will be coordinated with the local department of health and will require a written release.

8. **Schools and District property will be cleaned and disinfected** according to CDC guidelines.

- PPE will be provided and available to custodial and other personnel engaged in cleaning and disinfecting school facilities.
- Each staff member will inspect their area daily and ensure they have sufficient PPE supplies and that classrooms have adequate hygiene supplies each day, as appropriate.
- Daily school wide cleaning will include classrooms, restrooms, cafeterias, libraries, playgrounds, and district buses.
- High touch surfaces, including tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards and tablets, restrooms and restroom fixtures, and classroom faucets and sinks will be cleaned and disinfected frequently throughout the day.
- Student desks will be cleaned any time the user changes.
- Cafeterias will be cleaned between each lunch period and disinfected daily.
- Head custodians will maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection in a facility or area.
- Elementary playgrounds will be cleaned on a daily basis.
- Shared athletic/gym equipment will be cleaned between each use.
- The school Health Office will be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis.
 - Cots, bathrooms and health office equipment will be cleaned after each use.
 - Disposable items, such as pillow protectors and thermometers (or sheaths/probes) and otoscope specula will be used as much as possible.
- The use of school/district facilities will be limited to district- or school-sponsored extracurricular activities and groups. If any community organizations are permitted to use outdoor school/district facilities, such organizations must follow all State and locally

developed guidance on health and safety protocols, including but not limited to social distancing and hygiene requirements.

9. **Required school safety drills** will be conducted with modifications that ensure social distancing between persons.
- Eight (8) evacuation and four (4) lockdown drills will be conducted by each school building according to the schedule established by Education Law § 807.
 - To the extent practicable, drills will be modified to minimize risk of spreading infection.
 - Students will be instructed that in an actual emergency that required evacuation or lockdown, the most imminent concern is to get to safety and social distancing is a secondary concern.
 - Modifications to evacuation drill protocols may include, but are not limited to conducting drills on a “staggered” schedule that includes all students on a single day, but classrooms evacuate separately rather than all at once and appropriate distance is kept between students to the evacuation site.
 - Modifications to lockdown drills may include, but are not limited to:
 - Conducting lockdown drills in the classroom setting while maintaining social distancing and using masks;
 - Conducting lockdown drills on a “staggered” schedule with smaller numbers of students present to maintain social distancing, but ensuring that all students are receiving instruction in emergency procedures and participating in drills while they are in attendance in-person;
 - Conducting lockdown drills in the classroom without “hiding”/ “sheltering” but providing an overview of how to shelter or hide in the classroom.
 - If schools re-open with a “hybrid” model, all students will receive equitable instruction in emergency procedures and participate in evacuation and lockdown drills while they are in attendance in-person.

RESOURCES

<http://www.nysed.gov/news/2020/state-education-department-issues-guidance-reopen-new-york-state-schools>

<http://www.nysed.gov/news/2020/state-education-department-presents-framework-guidance-reopen-new-york-state-schools>

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/prepare-safe-return.html>

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/SportsAndRecreationMasterGuidance.pdf>

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/offices-interim-guidance.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>