

Bolton Public Schools

School Reopening Plan

District Guidelines and Draft Planning Document



Fall 2020

The Bolton Public Schools Reopening Plan document is aligned to the reopening guidelines published by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) at [Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together](#)

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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

July 24, 2020

Dear Staff, Parents, Guardians, and the Bolton Community,

After many hours of deliberation and consideration, I share with you the Bolton Public Schools Draft Reopening Plan. Every school system in Connecticut is required to submit a Reopening Plan to the Connecticut State Department of Education by Friday, July 24th. We anticipate making further changes to this working draft as we continue to respond to changing health data and information.

I want to thank all of the students and families who completed surveys as that information guided our planning. I would also like to thank the BPS Reopening Committee, comprised of over 60 staff members who volunteered and were grouped into subcommittees, met numerous times throughout the spring and summer to articulate questions for consideration, review state level guidance, examine Bolton's survey data, and provide perspective on the development of our draft plan for reopening. All subcommittees were facilitated by members of the leadership team who regularly communicated needs and updates with me. The subcommittees and committee as a whole focused on health procedures, students learning, social-emotional supports, family and staff supports, technology, facilities, food services, and transportation. The guiding principles for the plan include: ensuring the safety of all students and staff; a focus on equity, access, and student supports; rigorous and engaging instruction for all learners; and, effective stakeholder communication. As required by the Connecticut State Department of Education, the plan includes three prescribed models: In-school Learning, Hybrid Learning, and Distance Learning.

At this time, all schools are being directed by the Connecticut State Department of Education to begin school with a 100% in-school learning. In early to mid-August, Governor Lamont has stated that careful analysis of public health data will drive the final determination regarding which model districts will implement when reopening for the 2020-2021 school year. We anticipate additional communications on this topic from the Office of the Governor and the Commissioner of Education. We will share information as it becomes available and host opportunities for parents to learn more about our plans at various grade levels via Zoom or another interactive platform after the decision is made by Governor Lamont.

We certainly live in unprecedented times and public schools are in uncharted waters. While we know that school will look different in the fall, we are excited about prospect of our students returning. We are committed to a reopening that emphasizes safety, community building, social-emotional learning, and getting back to the routine of school. We also plan to strengthen our use of blended and distance learning practices, engage in learning and reflection on issues of race and equity, and focus on the social-emotional needs of all learners throughout the school year. Finally, the success of our school district continues to be the direct result of the hard work of our administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents, and the community. We are committed to partnering with you to ensure the success of all of our students.

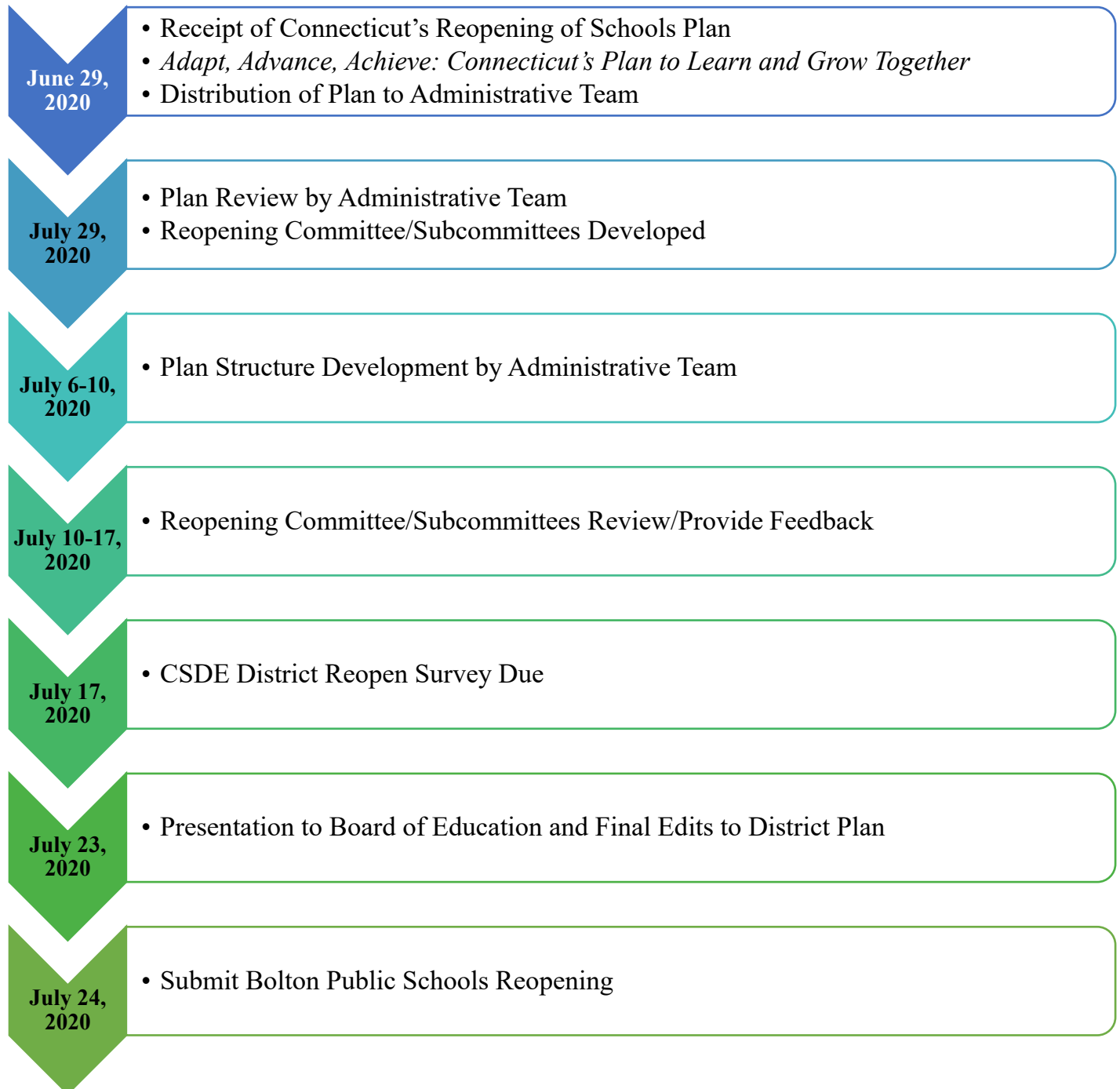
Stay safe and be well,

Kristin B. Heckt

Kristin B. Heckt
Superintendent of Schools

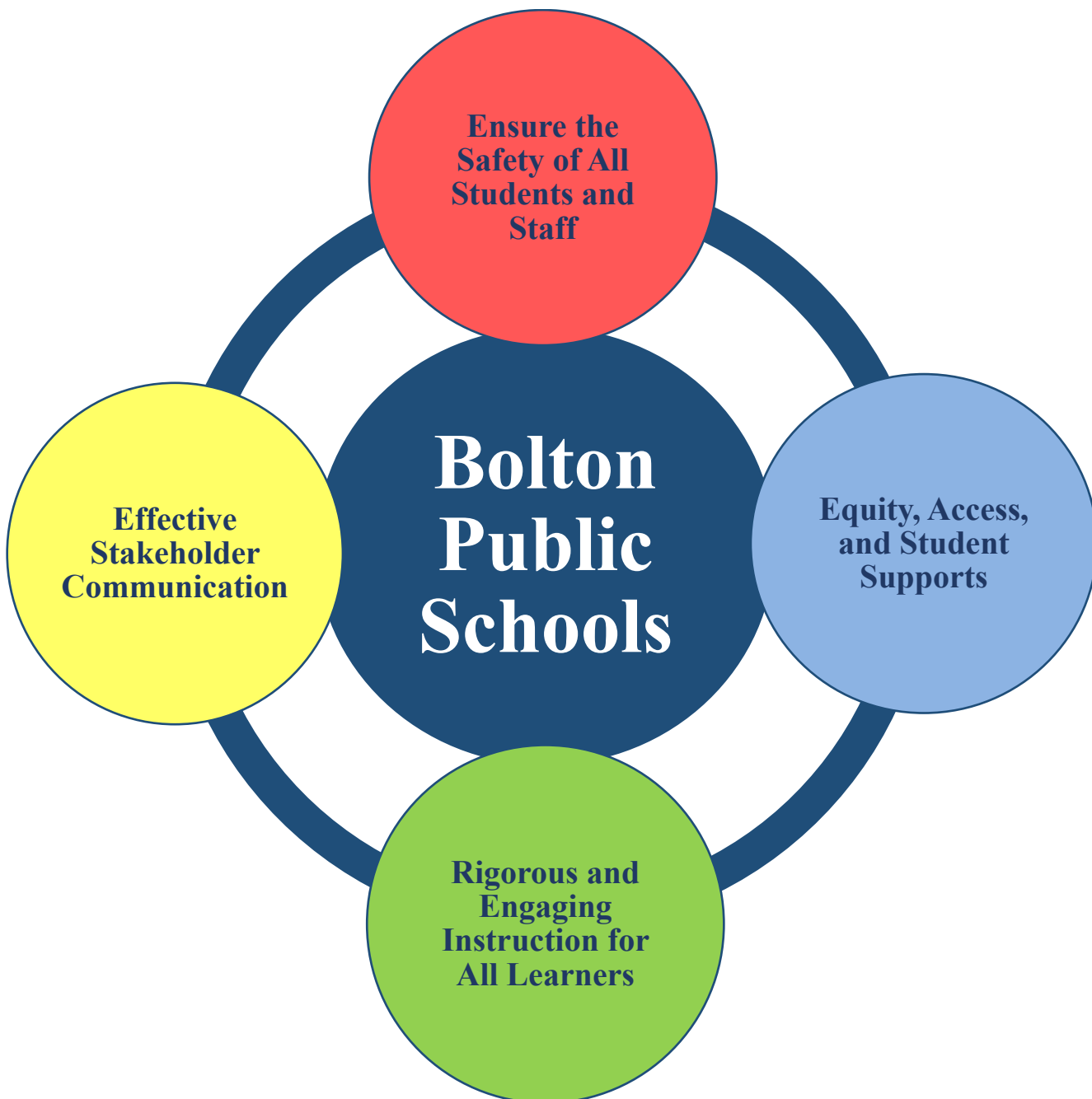
REOPENING PLAN DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

The Bolton Public Schools established a timeline to permit the opportunity for the development, review, and revision of a shared district plan by stakeholders including the district and school administrators, Return to School Committee, and the Board of Education prior to the CSDE submission deadline of July 24, 2020. A summary of the process is included below.



BOLTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS REOPENING PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Ensure the safety of all students and staff
- Effective Stakeholder Communication
- Equity, Access, and Student Supports
- Rigorous and Engaging Instruction for All Learners



STATE OF CONNECTICUT'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CSDE Fall Reopening Model

Districts should plan to have all students return to schools for full-time instruction at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, so long as public health data continues to support this model. This model will be supported with more intensive mitigation strategies and specific monitoring, containment, and class cancellation plans.

Districts will be prepared to modify plans to support partial reopening or scaling back with clearly defined action steps.

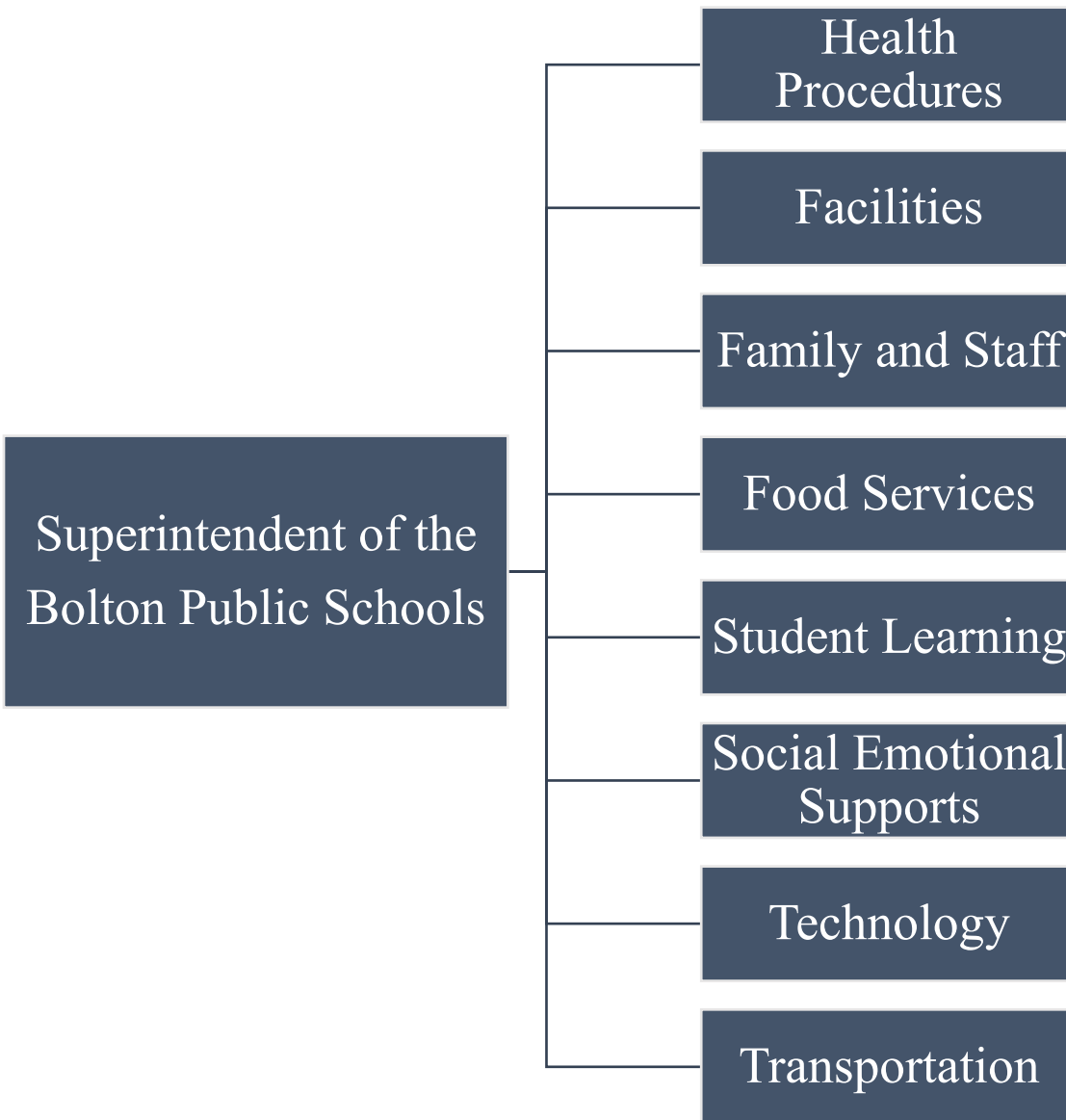
As Connecticut schools plan to reopen, the guidance and considerations outlined in this document are grounded in six guiding principles:

1. Safeguarding the health and safety of students and staff;
2. Allowing all students the opportunity to return to school full time starting in the fall;
3. Monitoring the school, students, and staff and, when necessary, potentially canceling classes in the future to appropriately contain COVID-19 spread;
4. Emphasizing equity, access, and support to the students and communities that are emerging from this historic disruption;
5. Fostering strong two-way communication with partners such as families, educators, and staff; and
6. Factoring into decisions about reopening the challenges to the physical safety, social emotional well-being, and the mental health needs of our students when they are not in school.

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

REOPENING COMMITTEE

The Reopening Committee for the Bolton Public Schools consisted of over 60 individuals representing administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrative assistants, custodians, food service personnel, business office staff, nurses, and town/regional health officials. The subcommittees indicated below met numerous times throughout the spring and summer to articulate questions for consideration, review state level guidance, examine Bolton’s survey data, and provide perspective to the development of the local district plan for reopening. All subcommittees were facilitated by members of the leadership team who regularly communicated needs and updates to the Superintendent of Schools.



LEARNING PLAN OVERVIEW

As required by the Connecticut State Department of Education, the Bolton Public Schools has developed a Scope of Learning Plan on the next page that includes three prescribed models: In-school Learning, Hybrid Learning, and Distance Learning. The model of learning in the 2020-2021 school year will be driven by public health data.

The State of Connecticut has developed plans for all students to return to traditional in-school learning for the start of the 2020-2021 school year so long as public health data continues to support this model. The Bolton Public Schools are continuing to develop procedures and protocols to ensure the safe return to school at the beginning of 2020-2021. In addition, the district will plan for students whose parents may temporarily choose to not allow their child/children to participate in the return to school.

Public health data and trends will be monitored daily. The Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with public health officials, will determine movement to a different learning model based on COVID-19 data. Bolton Public Schools will also follow directives from the State of Connecticut.

Further, short-term closures (2-5) days or longer (10-14) days may be implemented based on data and guidance from local health and municipal officials and will activate the distance learning model. Short-term closures (2-5) days or longer (10-14) days will allow for contact tracing and necessary cleaning and disinfecting of the facilities. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD), and town officials will be notified. Materials for continuity of learning will be made available. When a decision is made, district/school cancellation information will be shared with families and staff via School Messenger, district website, and/or social media.

Through professional learning and preparation with administrators, educators and staff, the district will be prepared to shift to a hybrid or distance learning model while ensuring that the highest levels of access to rigorous and standards-based instruction continue.

The Bolton Public Schools will continue to monitor health data and trends and modify action plans as appropriate for the reopening schools. Our priorities continue to be safety, access, and equity.

SCOPE OF LEARNING PLAN

In-School Learning	Hybrid Learning	Distance Learning
<p><u>Minimal/No Spread of Virus</u> <u>All Students Attend School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on lower levels of transmission of COVID-19, all students return to school in person as part of a full reopening • Remote learning will be available for families who choose not to have their child(ren) attend in-person learning • Buses up to full capacity with face masks in place during transit, and controlled loading/unloading of riders • Face coverings required for students and staff while inside school buildings • Identification/isolation of sick students/staff • Cohorts of students encouraged, restrictions on congregating • Extracurricular activities are virtual, if feasible • Decision on sports will happen closer to the start of school • Maximizing spacing of seating up to six feet when feasible • Increased cleaning and sanitization protocols • Heightened health & safety protocols will be in place, which can be reduced or ramped up as appropriate throughout the year. 	<p><u>Moderate Spread of Virus</u> <u>Reduced Student Attendance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on higher transmission levels of COVID-19, student numbers in the school are reduced by 50%. Students attend on Day 1 or Day 2 days. Students not attending in-person instruction engage in distance learning. • Buses at reduced capacity with, face masks in place during transit, controlled loading/unloading of riders, spaced seating between unrelated riders • Face masks for students and staff while inside school buildings • Maximize spacing of seating up to six feet when feasible with reduced class sizes • Identification/isolation of sick students/staff • Cohorts of students, restrictions on congregating, staggered start/stop times, and hallway transit • Extracurricular activities are virtual, if feasible, sports and other outdoor activities should consider restrictions on activities • Increased cleaning and sanitization protocols 	<p><u>High Virus Spread</u> <u>Full Distance Learning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on a widespread increase in transmission levels of COVID-19, learning takes place at home for all students as a result of school or district closure. • Schools closed, 100% distance learning • Bus transportation suspended • Extracurricular activities are virtual, if feasible, all sports suspended

DISTRICT and SCHOOL LIAISONS

Ensuring effective communication methods between school district staff and community stakeholders is first priority in ensuring an effective and safe reopening to schools. Communicating points of contact for each school building on campus establishes effective two-way communication to answer questions, discuss potential concerns, and receive timely updates in a quick and efficient manner.

School Access Plan Liaison

The individuals indicated below will serve as the health and safety officers for the district and each school. The liaisons will be available to all school stakeholders to answer questions or concerns about health and safety requirements.

District Liaison:

Beth Goldsnider, Director of HR and Student Support Services
72 Brandy Street
Bolton, CT 06043
bgoldsnider@boltonct.org
860-643-1569 x3405

School Liaisons:

Bolton High School
Joseph Maselli, Principal
72 Brandy Street
Bolton, CT 06043
jmaselli@boltonct.org
860-643-2768

Bolton Center School
Darryl Giard, Principal
108 Notch Road
Bolton, CT 06043
dgiard@boltonct.org
860-643-2411

COMMUNICATION PLAN

The Bolton Public School District is committed to establishing a multi-modal approach for communication of policies and protocols with staff, students, and families.

District Communication Strategies:

- Communication of policies, protocols, and relevant information will be shared utilizing multiple means, including the School Messenger Notification System (phone, text and email), the district website at <https://www.boltonpublicschools.com> and/or social media. Communications will be made available in the preferred language of families as well as for those with visual and/or hearing impairments.
- BPS will continue to maintain a focus on fostering two-way communication with the school community including staff, students, and families.

Data Collection Methods:

- Families will be surveyed in the early stages of plan development to determine if they will choose to have their children attend school in the school building, their intent to utilize bus transportation, and the availability of Internet access and technology.
- Additional surveys will be administered to gather information to support the district's planning and foster two-way communication.

Communication Expectations:

- Regular updates will be provided by the Office of the Superintendent and/or building principals.
- Critical information regarding policies or changes to the health data and/or the district's learning plan will be disseminated from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools utilizing the methods detailed above.
- If/when health data supports a change in the Learning Plan, information will be sent to the school community through the use of School Messenger (voice/email/text), the main page of the district/school websites, and/or social media.

FACILITIES

The Director of Facilities in collaboration with members of the district leadership team have developed operational plans to structure learning in a safe and organized manner for all students and staff upon the return to campus. The district will continue to monitor health data to modify the plan to enhance or relax restrictions throughout the school year.

Classroom Layout

- School administrators will oversee the organization of classroom spaces with maintenance staff, achieving six feet when feasible, to ensure instructional spaces are organized to maximize social distancing between student workplaces.
 - Desks/tables/students will be arranged in a forward facing direction to permit maximum engagement and interaction with classroom instruction.
 - A single teacher work station in each classroom space will be organized to allow for optimal social distancing to occur.
 - Available spaces in each school building will be repurposed for instruction to the greatest extent possible.
 - Certain non-essential school and/or personal property will be labeled, removed from instructional spaces, and placed into storage to maximize available space in classrooms and to permit custodial staff opportunities for adequate sanitizing and disinfecting.
- Procedures will be developed to familiarize staff who travel between instructional spaces as to appropriate hygiene procedures prior to transition to a different location within the school building.

Signs and Messages

Signs, formatted in languages appropriate for the school populations, will be displayed in visible locations throughout school buildings and videos will be made available to the school community to help mitigate spread of the virus. The Health Subcommittee will provide announcements (verbal and video), which will be shared with each school to utilize during daily announcements.

Signs will be posted throughout the district that include:

- Handwashing and hand sanitizing procedures.
- Proper application of facial coverings.
- Social distancing.
- Signs/symptoms of COVID-19 and instructions for when to stay at home.

Ventilation and Water Systems

Ventilation Guiding Document: [Guidance for School Systems for the Operation of Central and non-Central Ventilation Systems during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

- All ventilation systems will be functional and current on inspections and maintenance.
- All ventilation systems will be operated at full capacity one week prior to the reopening of school.

Building Water Systems Guiding Document: [Return to Service Guidance](#)

- All water systems will be functional and current on inspections and maintenance.
- Water systems will be flushed prior to school opening.

Training Related to Facilities

- Recorded training sessions will be developed to facilitate training with staff, substitutes, and students on protocols around social distancing, cleaning protocols, and effective hygiene practices.
- Professional development days will be allotted to permit staff to practice applicable safety and health measures **prior to the opening of school.**
- Each school will prepare a video of the necessary steps for staff and student safety in order to maintain health and safety protocols specific to the building and the links will be made available to families through the district website.

DAILY OPERATIONS

Class Groups and Cohort Teams

Cohorts will be established at each school to assist with contact tracing. **Cohorts shall not be based on any specific demographic or disability category.**

- PK-8 students organized in cohorts by classroom teacher with specials and related service staff rotating into classrooms where appropriate and feasible.
- Grades 9-12 will maximize grade-level cohorts where appropriate and feasible.
- Physical education classes may occur within the gym, classrooms, and/or outdoors (weather permitting).
- Staff will follow appropriate hygiene measures (hand washing, use of facial coverings, hand sanitizers) prior to entering instructional spaces.
- Principals will develop schedules that structure passing times to reduce the number of students in school corridors at any one time.
- BCS staff will disinfect student desks prior to another student using their desk and at the end of the day.
- BHS staff will disinfect student desks at the end of each period and the end of the day.

- Classroom use of areas of congregation within a classroom space will not be permitted without administrative approval and proper precautions.
- All students will be provided a minimum of two “mask breaks” during the school day.
- District-sponsored, after-school programs will operate remotely and students and staff will continue to adhere to school policies and procedures.

Social Distancing

In conjunction with the guidelines and protocols concerning classroom and hallway social distancing rules, staff and students will maintain social distancing between individuals to reduce the transmission of the virus following the current public health guidelines. These guidelines are subject to change if guidance from the CDC or DPH changes due to shifting public health data or evolving understanding of the COVID-19 disease, including transmission:

- Students and staff will maintain the recommended social distancing to the maximum extent possible.

Special considerations may need to be considered for these circumstances:

- Accommodating students with special health care needs (i.e. assisting with daily living skills) or whose learning (direct instruction) may require closer proximity and/or direct contact.
- Conducting health assessments, screenings, or other health office interventions by the school nurse when there is a suspicion that symptoms exist or there was exposure.

Foot Traffic, Hallways, and Shared Areas

- All schools will designate patterns for directional foot-traffic within corridors through clearly labeled markings on the floors to minimize face-to-face contact of students.
- Schools will develop plans to minimize the number of students in hallways during passing periods.
- Time will be allotted to permit staff and students to learn about and practice applicable health and safety protocols.
- Use of lockers will be limited to minimize student contact with surfaces and congregation of students in corridors.

Material Sharing

- Each school will develop protocols to minimize the need to have multiple students sharing high touch materials to the extent possible for items including, but not limited to, computers, calculators, books, writing utensils, mathematics manipulatives, and supplies for physical education, music, and art.
- Parents will receive a list of back to school supplies to provide for their child(ren) in early August.
- For the appropriate grade levels, individual student containers will be provided for instructional materials.
- If and when items are shared, they will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Sets of shared classroom textbooks will be removed from service.

Recess/Playgrounds

- Each class cohort will be assigned a designated area and time for recess and mask breaks.
- Playscapes will not be used during the school day.
- Students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before returning to class.
- Outdoor play equipment used at recess will be disinfected regularly.

Bathroom Protocols

The Director of Facilities will be publishing universal protocols for the cleaning and disinfection of restrooms at all schools. **All plans will be in alignment with the guidelines set forth through the CDC [CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) during COVID-19.**

Cleaning and Disinfection:

- When feasible, schools will designate restroom by use for certain areas of the building or establish times for various classrooms to utilize the restroom facilities.
- Twice daily, the cleaning and disinfection of restrooms will occur when the building is occupied.
- Cleaning and disinfection of restroom surfaces will also occur after conclusion of the school day.
- Custodial staff will complete a checklist to document regular daily cleanings of high touch surfaces.
- All cleaning products utilized on surfaces should follow [Connecticut School Green Cleaning Law](#).
- Cleaning and disinfecting products should follow the manufacturer's stated instructions for use including contact time and surface application.

Restroom Use Procedures:

- Staff will use tracking procedures (sign-in sheets) to track and limit the number of students accessing restrooms at any one time.
- Bathrooms will be assigned by cohorts where feasible.
- Certain sinks and stalls will be closed to promote social distancing.
- Touch-free paper towel dispensers are available in all restrooms throughout the district.
- Trash cans without lids will be available in restrooms to minimize surface contact.
- Health and safety protocols will be posted in every bathroom.
- All restroom entrance doors will remain ajar to avoid handling of door handles/knobs when feasible.

Visitor Access

- Building access for parents will be limited and in compliance with CDC, state and/or local health guidelines.
- Plans for picking up and dropping off students in each building will be shared with families prior to the start of school via School Messenger, district website, signage, and/or social media.
- Visitors will not be permitted into the buildings without prior approval by administration.
- Any parent/guardian or previously approved visitor should cancel and reschedule appointments by phone should they be symptomatic (cough, fever, respiratory distress).
- Parents/guardians and visitors entering district buildings must wear facial coverings at all times.
- Posted protocols for appropriate hygiene techniques and social distancing will be expected to be followed by all who enter the district/school buildings.
- Each school will provide a location for drop-off and retrieval of documents to limit in-person contact.

Building Use Guidelines

- Building use will be restricted to school-sponsored activities until further notice.
- Middle and high school interscholastic sport activities will adhere to all Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) guidance.
- The Athletic Director will provide regular updates to the Superintendent of Schools regarding modifications that will need to occur for student participation in athletic practices and exhibitions.

CHILD NUTRITION

Compliance Assurances with NSLP and SBP

- The Director of Food Services will continue to follow National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) program guidelines.
- The Director of Food Services will continue to determine eligibility for students needing free and reduced price meals and milk maintaining relevant documentation for claiming methods.
- The Director of Food Services will continue to adhere to guidelines for the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) policies for school meals and milk including meal pattern requirements.

On-site Meal Distribution Services

- Food service staff will be provided with and required to wear relevant PPE including, but not limited to masks, gloves, and physical barriers at serving stations.
- In collaboration with building principals, the Director of Food Service will outline protocols for student meal access on campus.

- Students at Bolton Center School and Bolton High School will receive lunch via delivery to their grade level cohort lunch location.
- Trash cans for disposal of trays and other discarded items will be made available in each space and emptied after each lunch wave.
- Tables will be cleaned in between each lunch wave in each location.
- The following guidelines will be in place at both schools to ensure social distancing:
 - In the assigned lunch location, student seating will be arranged to maximize social distancing.
 - Floor designations will be placed in six-foot increments to organize students in line waiting to receive lunch.
 - Families are highly encouraged to enroll in and use the [MySchoolBucks](#) system to avoid cash transactions.
 - All self-service or buffet stations will be removed from serving areas.
 - Utensils will be provided in purchased pre-packaged meals.
 - Students participating in the breakfast program will be assigned a designated location to eat. Social distanced seating will occur.

Off-site Meal Distribution Services

- The Director of Food Services will make available grab-and-go meal options for any students learning remotely while in-school learning is in session or when the hybrid model is utilized at an assigned location.
- During distance learning, grab-n-go meals will be available for pick-up at an assigned location.

TRANSPORTATION

Student Bus Transportation

General Expectations:

- The district will partner with M&J Bus to provide guidance to familiarize transportation staff with effective disinfection procedures and signs/symptoms of COVID-19.
- **Masks are required to be worn at all times on the bus and must cover the nose and mouth prior to entering the bus.**
- The district will ensure that a supply of disposable masks are provided to each school bus for students in need of a mask.
- Students will load the bus from back to front and upon arrival to school they will unload from front to back.
- Passengers are encouraged to keep their hands to their sides to avoid touching the seats as they enter and leave the bus.

- Students will not be permitted to change seats during the route.
- Drivers will ensure that high touch surfaces are cleaned in between school routes. The driver will maintain a daily log indicating the times that the bus was sanitized.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to transport their children to and from school.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) has determined a tiered system to assist in our decision making approach that includes a Safe, Low, and Moderate Status.

Connecticut Transportation Designations



Safe Status

Bus transportation can operate with no restrictions.



Low Status

Bus transportation can operate up to full status with mask requirements and loading and unloading restrictions.



Moderate Status

Bus transportation can operate with seating and spacing restrictions, mask requirements, and loading and unloading restrictions.

Transportation Expectations – Safe Status

- Bus transportation can operate with no restrictions.

Transportation Expectations - Low Status

- Seating will begin in the rear of the vehicle and fill toward the front of the bus to the maximum extent possible. Students will exit the vehicle beginning in the front and moving toward the rear.
- Students will not be permitted to change seats during the route.

Transportation Expectations - Moderate Status

- Upon guidance from DPH, the Superintendent of Schools will notify the bus company and families that due to the increased risk of transmission, the transportation protocols will be modified to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- Non-family members will be spaced six feet apart using a system of alternating, diagonal seating.
- All Low Status Transportation Expectations apply including masks being worn at all times on the bus.

Student Drop Off and Pickup

- Buses will unload in a staggered manner and multiple building entrances will be used to organize the flow of students by grade/cohort.
- Staff will be outside during arrival and dismissal to monitor adherence to health and safety procedures.
- Prior to the start of the school year, each school will communicate the plan for traffic flow and procedures to be used for student drop off and pick up via School Messenger, the school website, and/or social media.

HEALTH PRACTICES and PROTOCOLS

Standard Public Health Practices

All students and staff will utilize a video presentation during the first **three days** of school to discuss how COVID-19 is spread and actions students and staff should undertake to mitigate virus spread to include:

- Effective handwashing procedures
- Application of hand sanitizer
- Cough, sneeze, and nose blowing etiquette
- Safe donning and removal of facial coverings
- Effective social distancing
- CDC signs and symptoms and guidance for staying home

To continue to reinforce expectations, the school nurses will prepare announcements (verbal and/or video) that may be incorporated into daily morning announcements to remind students and staff of common health and hygiene practices.

Supplies

All schools will be provided with appropriate PPE (including masks and gloves) for staff use.

- Students and staff arriving to school and in need of a mask will be provided a disposable mask.
- Students and staff will be provided with access to facial tissues.
- All schools will be provided with a supply of cleaning and disinfectant products in accordance with CDC, DPH, and CSDE guidelines. Approved cleaning and disinfectant products for application will be indicated within the cleaning protocols developed by the Director of Facilities.
- School health offices will be provided with no-touch scan thermometers.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed at points of entry and other high traffic regions.

Immunizations and Health Assessments

Health Assessments:

In accordance with CT General Statutes Section 10-206, the Bolton Public School BOE must require each pupil enrolled in public schools to have a routine physical (Health Assessment Record/ HAR) prior to school enrollment, entering grade seven and again entering grade eleven. The HAR requirement is an important element in ensuring a healthy and safe learning environment.

The CT State Department of Education (CDSE) understands that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, “well” child appointments have been subject to cancellation and may be limited in availability prior to and during the 2020-2021 school year. Due to the unavailability of appointments, there may be barriers for a child to obtain a required health assessment.

Boards are permitted to deny attendance to a student who does not have the appropriate HAR on file. However, during the 2020-2021 school year, boards of education are encouraged to prioritize keeping students in the classroom where it is possible. With this guidance in mind, Bolton Public Schools will work with parents and guardians to have an appointment scheduled as soon as possible for the required HAR rather than deny attendance to students. Please contact your school nurse when you have made the appointment.

Immunizations:

The cancelling or lack of availability of “well” child appointments have resulted in fewer vaccines being administered, leaving children at risk for vaccine-preventable diseases. The CT Immunization Program (CTIP) surveyed pediatric vaccine providers to determine whether a grace period should be considered for immunizations required at the start of school this fall 2020-2021. However, based on the responses from the survey and from discussions with other state and federal partners, the CTIP has decided to maintain that children need to be up to date on their immunizations at the start of school.

Parents and guardians may be reassured to know that many health care providers have made changes to their routine immunization services to deliver vaccines more safely by minimizing the chance of exposures to ill children during immunization visits. Parents and guardians of students who are in need of vaccinations should contact their primary care physician or health care provider to schedule a visit for the required immunizations and to discuss any concerns.

Reporting Illnesses and Addressing Vulnerable Populations

It is anticipated that the Connecticut DPH will be providing additional guidance on the information in this section the coming days. Therefore, this information is strictly preliminary and subject to change. The goal of this section is to reduce the risk of spreading or contracting COVID-19 while ensuring adherence to privacy and health protection laws.

Illness Monitoring Guidelines:

- Parents should check their children and staff should check themselves prior to coming to school each day to be sure they do not have symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
- Families and staff may refer to following CDC links for specific updated illness guidelines:
 - [“When You Can Be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19”](#)
 - [CDC Symptom-Checker](#)

When to Stay Home:

Students or staff with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be required to remain home. These will include, but are not limited to:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ● Fever or chills | ● Muscle or body aches | ● Congestion or runny nose |
| ● Cough | ● Headache | ● Nausea or vomiting |
| ● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | ● New loss of taste or smell | ● Diarrhea |
| ● Fatigue | ● Sore throat | |

The presentation of just one of the above symptoms does not necessarily trigger a dismissal from school, or a directive to stay home. The specific clinical presentation criteria for this purpose is still under development by the Connecticut Department of Public Health. It will be incorporated into the plan when it becomes available.

If someone is showing any of these COVID-19 emergency warning signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

(Source: [CDC Symptom Information](#))

Recommended Dismissal for Students and Staff:

- Dismissal will occur when a student or staff member exhibits symptoms consistent with COVID-19 as detailed above **or** at the nurse's discretion.

The presentation of just one of the symptoms does not necessarily trigger a dismissal from school, or a directive to stay home. The specific clinical presentation criteria for this purpose is still under development by the Connecticut Department of Public Health. It will be incorporated into the plan when it becomes available.

Illness Reporting Protocols:

- Parents and staff are to inform the school nurse if their child (or the staff member) is sick with COVID-19 related symptoms, or if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Parents/guardians/staff will be encouraged to seek medical evaluation and COVID-19 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing.
- If students or staff receive a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, the School Nurse will notify the district liaison. The (identify person responsible) will notify the EHHD immediately, ensuring that all privacy, public health information confidentiality laws, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) confidentiality has been maintained.
- If a positive test result is reported then immediate coordination with EHHD including compliance with requests for information to assist with contact tracing while adhering to relevant privacy and confidentiality laws.
- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has provided [guidance](#) that the district is permitted to ask employees if they are experiencing symptoms of the pandemic virus.
- Screening will not be required for all students or staff entering the school building.
- Any staff member or student that travels to [CT DPH current list of COVID-19](#) advisory states will be required to quarantine for **14 days prior to returning to school/work.**
- Schools will maintain a confidential document to be located in the school health office to report and track COVID-19 cases at each school site for staff and students. The document will be submitted to the liaison and the Eastern Highlands Health District at the conclusion of each school week.
 - The district will maintain all information about the employee or student illness as a confidential medical record.

Use of Face Coverings, Masks, and Face Shields

Connecticut State Department of Education Approved Facial Coverings



Face Covering

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



**Required for
Students and
Staff**



Face Shield

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



Clear Plastic Barrier

A clear plastic or solid surface that can be cleaned and sanitized often

- All students, staff, and approved/scheduled visitors entering a school building are required to wear a mask or other suitable face covering that completely and securely covers the nose and mouth as required by State of Connecticut guidelines for reopening.
- If a parent does not want their child to wear a mask, or does not believe that they should be required to wear a mask, they should choose to remain at home and participate in remote learning during in-school learning.
- Schools will have masks available for any student or staff member who does not have one.
- “Mask breaks” will be provided throughout the school day while maintaining appropriate social distancing guidelines.
- Students and staff may remove facial coverings to consume meals or when students and staff are outside of the school building, as long as appropriate social distancing guidelines are followed.
- Students may remove facial coverings to eat or drink or when taking a mask break as long as appropriate social distancing is maintained.
- Students and staff arriving at the school building or boarding a school bus without a mask will be issued one and expected to apply the covering immediately.
- Modifications to these plans may be made for students with disabilities or other special populations as well as for staff when it is necessary for students to view the face/mouth of the staff for instruction/evaluation purposes.

HEALTH MONITORING PLAN

It is anticipated that the Connecticut DPH will be providing additional guidance on the below matters in the coming days. Therefore, this information is strictly preliminary and subject to change.

Protocols for Monitoring Symptoms Related to COVID-19

- Students showing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while in school will be placed in the isolation room. Staff showing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while in school will be dismissed immediately from the school building. These symptoms included but are not limited to:
 - Fever or chills
 - 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 or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

- If someone is showing any of these COVID-19 emergency warning signs, the school will seek emergency medical care immediately:
 - Trouble breathing
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - New confusion
 - Inability to wake or stay awake
 - Bluish lips or face

(Source: [CDC Symptom Information](#))

- The student or staff member will be sent home until guidelines for returning to school and work are met (See Return to School and Work Criteria).
- Active screening will not be required for students or staff entering the school building.
- Students will remain in an “isolation room” (see separate Containment Plan) until they can be released to a parent or guardian.
- Parents/guardians/staff are encouraged to seek medical evaluation and COVID-19 PCR testing.
- EHHD will be notified immediately, including compliance with requests for information while maintaining relevant privacy and public health confidentiality laws.
- The school nurse will coordinate with the EHHD regarding the review and monitoring of any health data trends.

CONTAINMENT PLAN

It is anticipated that the Connecticut DPH will be providing additional guidance on the below matters in the coming days. Therefore, this information is strictly preliminary and subject to change.

The purpose of a local containment plan is to mitigate potential spread of the virus.

Symptom-based Response:

- Students that exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be immediately sequestered to a designated isolation room within each school building that is monitored by a school staff member. Staff members will immediately be sent home. This room will be separate from the school health office.
 - Each isolation room will have a specific restroom space assigned to it for student use during isolation.
 - If multiple students are confined to the space at any one time, all students will continue to maintain social distancing and face coverings.
 - The school nurse will maintain a log of information including student name, date, time of entry, time of dismissal, and time the room was disinfected and sanitized.
 - For purposes of contact tracing, a log will be kept with names of all persons who entered the isolation room.
 - The student will remain in this location until a parent or guardian arrives to sign the student out of school for the day.
- Staff or students symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be isolated and dismissed immediately as detailed above from the school setting. These will include, but are not limited to:
 - Fever or chills
 - 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 or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- If someone is showing any of these COVID-19 emergency warning signs, the school will seek emergency medical care immediately:
 - Trouble breathing
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - New confusion
 - Inability to wake or stay awake
 - Bluish lips or face

- Disinfection and cleaning procedures will be initiated following student release from an isolation room or staff dismissal from school in compliance with [CDC guidelines](#). These guidelines include:
 - Close off areas and allow a period of time to occur before entering the area to enact disinfection. Open any windows or turn on ventilation systems to assist in the process.
 - Soiled surfaces should be cleaned with soap or appropriate cleaner prior to disinfection.
 - All disinfectant products should be utilized in compliance from the approved list of agents provided by the Director of Facilities.
 - The use of the school health office will continue to be utilized to treat and consult with students exhibiting other illnesses or injuries.
- The District Liaison will be contacted by the School Nurse immediately upon identification of symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in a student or staff person. This information will be tracked, and shared with the EHHD. All health information will be treated as private and confidential. The school district will confer with the EHHD on any interim actions or control measures necessary.

Confirmed Case Based Response (positive test result):

- Upon notice from a staff person, parent, guardian of a positive test result for a student or staff member, the school nurse will immediately notify the District Liaison. The District Liaison will immediately notify the EHHD and the Superintendent of Schools.
- The EHHD shall initiate a case contact investigation with the support and cooperation of the school district. The school district shall provide any information necessary for the swift identification and exclusion of close contacts from the school setting. All information provided will be treated as private and confidential.
- School administration shall confer with EHHD regarding the merits of a short dismissal period for the school.
- Disinfection and cleaning procedures will be initiated following the identification of a confirmed case in compliance with [CDC guidelines](#). These guidelines include:
 - Close off identified areas and allow a period of time to occur before entering the area to enact disinfection. Open any windows or turn on ventilation systems to assist in the process.
 - Soiled surfaces should be cleaned with soap or appropriate cleaner prior to disinfection.
 - All disinfectant products should be utilized in compliance from the approved list of agents provided by the school facilities.
 - The use of the school health office will continue to be utilized to treat and consult with students exhibiting other illnesses or injuries.

Source: [CDC Guidance for Schools](#)

Return to School or Work Criteria:

The ability for students or staff to return to school will be determined based upon research-based guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

1. [Symptom-based Strategy](#): Isolation and precautions can generally be discontinued 10 days *after symptom onset* **and** resolution of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, **and** with improvement of other symptoms.
2. [Time-based Strategy](#): (for those asymptomatic but tested positive)
 - At least **10 days** have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.
 - If they develop symptoms during this period then the symptom-based strategy should be used.

Suspected Case of COVID-19:

For those students or staff that are dismissed (or out of school/work) due to symptoms consistent with COVID-19 but may return to the school setting by following the criteria below:

1. If not tested, then Symptom-based Strategy detailed above is met, OR;
2. If not tested, then physician's clearance note provided and symptoms improve consistent with standard school guidelines, OR;
3. Negative COVID-19 test result provided and symptoms improve consistent with standard school guidelines.

Identified Close Contact to Confirmed Case of COVID-19:

A student or staff person that has been identified as a close contact by the Eastern Highlands Health District should **stay home and quarantine for 14 days after their last contact** with a person who has COVID-19. Additional guidance can be found [here](#).

Travel Advisory:

Any staff member or student that travels to [CT DPH current list of COVID-19](#) advisory states will be required to quarantine for **14 days prior to returning to school/work**.

Return to School:

All students and staff returning to school **will immediately report to the school nurse for a health screening before returning to work/classes**.

COVID-19 Response Team Roles and Responsibilities

School Nurses: Assessment of symptoms, medical interventions, and notification to parents.

Building/District Administrators, District Liaison: Notification to health officials and Superintendent, supervision of containment room, and dissemination of information.

Custodians: Cleaning and disinfecting.

Administrative Assistants: Communicate with school nurse that parents have arrived for pick-up.

COVID-19 School Isolation Room Locations

School	Isolation Room Location	Restroom Location
BCS	Main office conference room	Directly across hall from conference room
BHS	Main office between Dean's office and conference room	Directly across from office

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES, DISTANCE LEARNING, and REOPENING PLAN

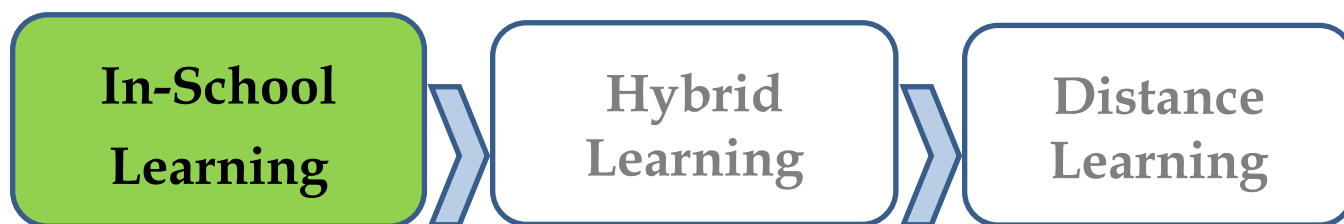
The Connecticut Department of Health (DPH) will be working with school districts throughout the state to develop specific community and school-based indicators to assist school leaders in determining the learning model best for students and staff at that time.

In-School Learning	Hybrid Learning	Distance Learning
Assumes low incidence of virus spread	Assumes a shift to a moderate incidence of virus spread	Assumes a sustained community transmission of the virus
↓	↓	↓
100% of students have option to attend on-campus instruction five days per week	Instruction is shifted to 50% capacity in-school learning in buildings and 50% engaged in distance learning on assigned days	Instruction is shifted to 100% of students learning via online instruction from home
↓	↓	↓
Attendance for all students recorded through PowerSchool and reported to school offices	Attendance recorded through PowerSchool	Attendance recorded through PowerSchool
↓	↓	↓
Social distancing, disinfection, and screening protocols in place	Social distancing, disinfection, and screening protocols in place	All school events and athletics cancelled
↓	↓	↓
Superintendent of Schools continues to monitor local health trends with health officials to determine movement to other levels	Superintendent of Schools continues to monitor local health trends with health officials to determine need to shift to distance learning model	Superintendent of Schools orders cleaning of all building classroom spaces and monitors health data with the health department
	↓	↓
	Shift to hybrid model communicated to BPS staff, families, EHHD, and CSDE	Shift to distance learning model communicated to staff, families, EHHD, and CSDE

ACADEMICS

Plan for Continuous Learning

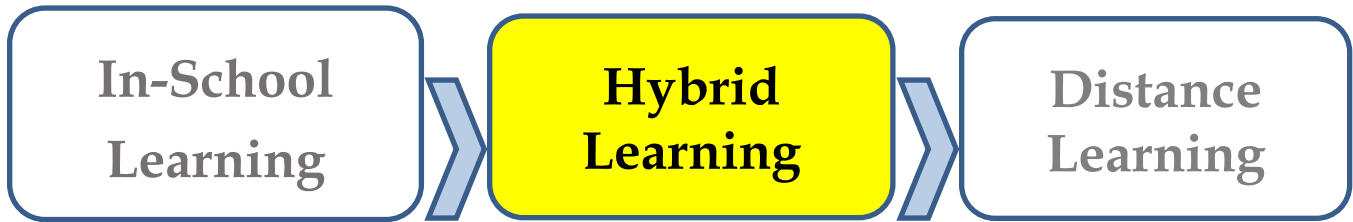
The term “continuous learning” means establishing and maintaining connections with students and families to provide learning materials and supports using a variety of communication channels and modalities (e.g., email, phone, printed learning materials, and available online platforms).



In-School Learning:

In-School Learning is defined as a traditional schedule with attention to health and safety expectations. All students attend school every day.

- Instruction will be delivered Monday-Friday with all State guidelines and expectations in place.
- Classroom learning and instructional activities are adjusted to provide the safest environment.
- Students with health concerns, illness, or quarantine order may choose to participate in a **remote learning parallel track** in which the student learns at home with support of their parent(s) or guardian(s) OR learn via homeschooling.
 - Students on the **remote learning parallel track** will continue to access instruction through platforms that may include, but are not limited to, livestreaming, learning management systems (Google Classroom, Seesaw, etc.), school provided materials, and/or the [State of Connecticut Learning Hub](#).
- Learning will be assessed by their teacher(s) and attendance will be taken.
- Students who participate in homeschooling are not enrolled in the Bolton Public Schools. In this situation, parents choose all instructional materials and are solely responsible for student learning.
- Students learning from home may choose to return to in-school learning anytime. Parents are asked to provide a reasonable notification (1 week) to the school office so that preparations may be made to accommodate all learners safely.



Hybrid Learning:

Hybrid Learning is defined as schools operating at 50% occupancy with the remaining 50% of students learning from home as a result of higher transmission levels of COVID-19. In situations where the virus begins to demonstrate increasing levels of community transmission, the Superintendent of Schools, in collaboration the Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) and local health officials, will make a determination to shift to the hybrid model.

- The district will utilize an alternate school schedule with defined cohorts to ensure all State guidelines and expectations are met.
- Students alternate on Group 1 and Group 2 days where one day they attend school and the other day they continue their learning at home. Students not attending in-person instruction are working at home with materials provided by the teacher and school.
- Students will be assigned by administration to a group by last name, keeping households together.
- Schedules will be developed prior to the start of school and communicated to families.
- Students will continue to have access to all classroom materials and resources and will be provided feedback through, but not limited to, the following learning systems: Seesaw, Google Education Suite, Zoom, and PowerSchool.
- Student attendance and assessment data will be collected and submitted via PowerSchool.
- Evaluation of student performance will remain a standards-based system for grades PK-5 and numerical for grades 6-12.
- Students with health concerns, illness, or quarantine order may choose to participate in a **remote learning parallel track** in which the student learns at home with support of their parent(s) or guardian(s) OR learn via homeschooling.
 - Students on the **remote learning parallel track** will continue to access instruction through platforms that may include, but are not limited to, livestreaming, learning management systems (Google Classroom, Seesaw, etc.), school provided materials, and/or the [State of Connecticut Learning Hub](#).
- Students who participate in homeschooling are not enrolled in the Bolton Public Schools. In this situation, parents choose all instructional materials and are solely responsible for student learning.

Sample Learning Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group 1	Group 2	All Remote	Group 1	Group 2
Group 1: In-school Group 2: Remote	Group 2: In-school Group 1: Remote	Remote Learning School Disinfection	Group 1: In-school Group 2: Remote	Group 2: In-school Group 1: Remote



Distance Learning ~ Short Term Closure (2-5 days, 10-14 days, etc.) or Long Term Closure:

Distance Learning is defined as learning that takes place at home for all students as a result of school or district closure based on an increased transmission level of COVID-19. Students engage in distance learning at home with materials and support from the school.

- All instruction will be delivered through a combination of synchronous* and asynchronous** learning models Monday through Thursday. Friday will be a student work completion day.
- Staff will meet face-to-face virtually with students in large and small groups or individually as determined by the class/course schedule.
- Schedules will be developed and communicated to family members at the school and/or district level.
- Student attendance and assessment data will be collected and submitted via PowerSchool.
- Student feedback will be shared through, but not limited to, the following learning systems: Seesaw, Google Education Suite, Zoom, and PowerSchool.
- Evaluation of student performance will remain a standards-based system for grades PK-5 and numerical for grades 6-12.

*Synchronous learning - Education, instruction, and learning that occur at the same time, but not in the same place.

**Asynchronous learning - Education, instruction, and learning that do not occur in the same place or at the same time.

Assessment Practices

Prior to the start of school, teachers, interventionists, and related service providers will:

- Participate in vertical teams with their colleagues from the prior grade.
- Review content covered pre-COVID and during distance learning at the end of the 2019-2020 school year to gain a clear understanding of student learning needs.

During the school year, teachers, interventionists, and related service providers will:

- Administer focused formative and summative assessments to inform teachers about the strengths and needs of each student in their class.

At the end of the school year, if allowed by the CSDE due to pandemic conditions at the time, students will be administered an on-grade summative assessment, which may be the state assessment for grades 3-8 and 11 to evaluate progress on the state standards.

Physical Education and Athletics

Physical education will remain a part of the school schedule.

- All CDC, state, and local guidelines related to social distancing and disinfecting areas and equipment used for physical education and physical activity including recess will be followed.
- Physical education will be provided through a combination of in-classroom instruction and activities tailored according to available spaces, restrictions on gatherings, and use of shared equipment.
- Curriculum will be adapted as necessary to implement teacher-led activities that are performed individually and focus on lifetime fitness, utilizing alternative environments, and individual sports/activities that can be taught in-person or through distance learning.
- Decisions regarding interscholastic athletics and activities will be made in consultation with CIAC and local health officials.

Arts and Music Education

Art and Music education will remain a part of the school schedule.

- All CDC, state, and local guidelines related to social distancing and disinfecting areas and equipment used for arts and music education will be followed.
- Consult the resources provided by state and national arts organizations, including the Connecticut Arts Administrators Association, the National Association for Music Education, the American Choral Directors Association, and/or the National Arts Educators Association.
- Provide individual art and music supply kits for each student or plan for increased sanitization between all uses.
- Designate space for individual storage and allow for proper cleaning of materials.
- For handling musical instruments, consult the National Association for Music Education's COVID-19 Instrument Cleaning Guidelines.
- Maintain proper spacing according to CDC guidance and scientific research studies for students who are singing or performing.

Career and Technical Education

- Class sizes for courses utilizing industrial technology workspaces may need to be adjusted to adhere to social distancing guidelines.
- Students are expected to maintain appropriate distancing when working on machinery that may be fixed near student seating.
- Face shields or other protective eyewear do not substitute for the use of facial coverings.
- Whenever possible, students may receive individualized supply kits for use in courses.
- All common shop equipment will be properly disinfected between use by students and/or staff including machinery utilizing a school-approved disinfection chemical.

Special Education

- The district will comply with all federal and state mandates and statutes.
- Staff will facilitate individualized and alternative means of re-entry based upon individualized student needs, present level of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input.
- Alternative protocols will be considered for students unable to wear protective personal equipment.
- Programming decisions will not be based on a student's disability.
- Protocols will be established and staff training will occur around safety and PPE for students who need physical assistance with daily living activities such as feeding and toileting.
- Protocols will be established and staff training will occur around safety and PPE for situations that require de-escalation strategies and emergency safety procedures.

English Learners (EL)

- All language instruction education programs for English Learners will continue.
- All language instruction education programs for English Learners will continue.
- Students who are dually identified as EL and having a disability will continue to receive their EL and special education supports.
- Communication with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in English will occur in their native language and/or through translation and/or interpretation services.
- All established processes for identification, parental notifications, assessment requirements, and provision of services will be followed.

August Professional Development Days

During the August professional development days (6 days), all district staff will participate in professional learning and mandatory trainings in the areas of:

- District health protocols.
- Use and proper application of facial coverings.
- Hygiene practices: cough/sneeze etiquette, handwashing.
- Health data reporting and confidentiality.
- Supporting students' social emotional learning and mental health.
- Planning of first units to ensure high probability of success.
- Virtual meetings with staff and families on new safety protocols.
- Other areas as deemed necessary or required.

FAMILY and STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Family Support and Communication

- Families will receive clear and ongoing communication regarding the Bolton Public Schools Reopening Plan including guidance on the school protocols related to health and safety guidelines via the School Messenger Notification System (phone, text and email), district website (<https://www.boltonpublicschools.com/>) and/or social media.
- The Bolton Public Schools Reopening Plan will be made available to the community via the BPS website.
- Continue to support families with resources.

Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health

Social-emotional learning (SEL) supports continuity of learning, academic growth and student connectedness are essential elements of student well-being. Social-emotional learning (SEL) will be integrated into academic content.

Prior to the first day of school for students:

- Communicate with families that SEL is essential to the success of the school community.
- Administrators and/or staff will reach out to students that were not engaged in distance learning during the previous school year.
- Develop programs designed to help children manage their emotions, establish positive relationships with others, and make responsible decisions.
- Provide PD for staff on social-emotional supports (i.e., Zones of Regulation), identify issues related to abuse and neglect in the context of the pandemic. Comply with all mandated reporting requirements.
- Provide SEL support to staff.

Integrate SEL activities into the reopening process:

- Time will be dedicated for staff, students, and families to acclimate back to school in order to reestablish routines and relationships.
- Continue providing lessons (K-8) via Second Step and/or other appropriate resources. The lessons will incorporate ongoing current topics (i.e., positively communicating the need for physical distance in classrooms, ways to communicate feelings given that wearing masks may affect the understanding of how people feel).
- Expand the use of high school Connections to address the social/emotional and community-building.
- Address the social emotional needs of students and provide appropriate supports.
- Survey the social emotional needs of staff in order to provide supports where appropriate.
- Assist staff in responding to students and families regarding conversations about the pandemic.
- Develop a plan to provide non-academic focused check-ins with students.
- Coordinate with staff and families ways to support and assist students who need additional support to physically distance or may not be able to wear a mask.

STAFFING and PERSONNEL

Certification and Personnel Planning

The Bolton Public Schools will comply with the legal and regulatory requirements related to personnel including, but not limited to, EEOC guidance related to ADA and COVID-19 pandemic.

The district will continue to:

- Solicit staff feedback regarding the pandemic period of school disruption.
- Seek implementable ideas to support teaching and learning during the pandemic.
- Develop a substitute teacher plan.
- Plan to support staff health.
- Engage with staff labor representatives.