



# Carmel Central School District

## *Cultivating Opportunities*

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### *Reopening Our Schools*

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**Updated August 26, 2021**

**NOTE: This document is based upon current guidelines and recommendations from the NYS Department of Health and the NYS Education Department. It is a living document and is subject to updates as more information becomes available.**



## Introduction

At Carmel Central School District our primary commitment is to the students and families we serve. Our priority must be keeping them safe. This updated School Reopening Plan will define our protocols and learning plan for Fall 2021.

This plan includes protocols and procedures that will be followed in our buildings which are each overseen by a COVID-19 Coordinator:

District/School	COVID-19 Coordinator(s)	Website
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<b>Carmel High School</b>	Lauren Santabarbara, <a href="mailto:lsantaba@carmelschools.org">lsantaba@carmelschools.org</a>	<a href="https://chs.carmelschools.org/home_page">https://chs.carmelschools.org/home_page</a>
<b>George Fischer Middle School</b>	John Piscitella, <a href="mailto:jpiscite@carmelschools.org">jpiscite@carmelschools.org</a>	<a href="https://gfms.carmelschools.org/home_page">https://gfms.carmelschools.org/home_page</a>
<b>Kent Elementary School</b>	Kathryn White, <a href="mailto:kwhite@carmelschools.org">kwhite@carmelschools.org</a>	<a href="https://kes.carmelschools.org/home_page">https://kes.carmelschools.org/home_page</a>
<b>Kent Primary School</b>	Dan Brown, <a href="mailto:dbrown@carmelschools.org">dbrown@carmelschools.org</a>	<a href="https://kps.carmelschools.org/home_page">https://kps.carmelschools.org/home_page</a>
<b>Matthew Paterson Elementary School</b>	Mike Kirk, <a href="mailto:mkirk@carmelschools.org">mkirk@carmelschools.org</a>	<a href="https://mpes.carmelschools.org/home_page">https://mpes.carmelschools.org/home_page</a>

We have developed a plan that intends to ensure that students and employees feel comfortable and safe returning to school campuses. Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#) and the [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\)](#).

## Guiding Principles

The development of this plan was guided by and grounded in the following guiding principles:

1. Safeguarding the health and safety of students and staff.
2. Providing the opportunity for all students to access education.
3. Monitoring schools, students, and staff. When necessary, modifying schedules to appropriately contain COVID-19 spread.
4. Emphasizing equity, access, and support to the students and communities that are emerging from this historic disruption in learning.
5. Fostering strong two-way communication with partners, such as families, educators and staff.



6. Factoring into decision-making the challenges to physical safety, social-emotional well-being, and the mental health needs of our students caused by school closure.
7. Considering and supporting diversity in our schools and school district as we provide education is essential.

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## Communication/Family and Community Engagement

To help inform our reopening plan, the district has sought feedback and input from stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, parents/guardians of students, local health department officials and health care community members. Engagement efforts included online surveys, virtual meetings and one-on-one conversations. The district remains committed to communicating all elements of this reopening plan to students, parents and guardians, staff and visitors.

The plan is available to all stakeholders via the district website at [www.carmelschools.org](http://www.carmelschools.org) and will be updated, as necessary, to respond to local circumstances. The district is committed to establishing and maintaining regular channels of communication and has reviewed and determined which methods have proven to be the most effective in communications with our school community. We will use existing communication channels – including the website, our robocalling system, our email newsletter, phone calls, mail, and our social media accounts – as well as appropriate signage and training opportunities to support the dissemination of consistent messaging regarding new protocols and procedures, expectations, requirements, and options related to school operations throughout the pandemic.

### Carmel Central School District Communication Goals

- To encourage all students, faculty, staff, and visitors through verbal and written communication (e.g., signage) to adhere to NYSED, CDC, and DOH guidance regarding the use of acceptable face coverings - a face mask covering the nose and mouth, when a social distance cannot be maintained.
- To provide regular updates about health and safety, scheduling, and all other information faculty, staff and families should be aware.
- To provide information to families through a wide array of platforms including mail, email, telephone calls, text messaging, social media and website postings.
- To provide information on how families can access technology and receive technical support to assist with the utilization and maintenance of equipment.

We will utilize communication methods used by the district to inform the school community.

Information will be dispersed in a variety of platforms that include:

- District website
- Call list/robocall
- Emails
- Correspondence (letters) to homes
- Social media accounts used by the district.



## Health and Safety

The health and safety of our students, our staff and their families remain our top priority. We want students and employees to feel comfortable and safe when on school campuses. Our plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED). It is possible that we may need to continue to alternate between in-person and remote learning due to recommendations and guidance from our partnering agencies, and stay-at-home orders from the Governor. The level of infection, the spread of the virus and response to the disease in our community will be at the forefront of our decision-making as we move forward.

### Face Masks and Other Face Coverings

Effective immediately, in accordance with the Commissioner's Determination issued pursuant to 10 NYCRR 2.60, any person over the age of 2 (including all students, personnel, teachers, administrators, contractors, and visitors) must always wear masks indoors in P-12 school buildings, regardless of vaccination status. People with medical or developmental conditions that prevent them from wearing a mask may be exempted from mask requirements, as documented by a medical provider. People do not need to wear masks when eating, drinking, singing, or playing a wind instrument; when masks are removed for these purposes, individuals must be spaced six feet apart. All mask requirements must be applied consistently with any state and federal law (e.g., Americans with Disabilities Act)."

The 6 feet apart when eating, drinking, singing, or playing a wind instrument is up to the discretion of the district. Therefore, students will be socially distanced to the greatest extent possible for singing, eating and playing instruments when unmasked.

Acceptable masks include disposable surgical masks and cloth masks purchased or made from household items. Gaiters, clothing and household items (like scarves, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels) are not acceptable in their original form for use as masks on district grounds. Masks with vents are not permitted.

"Mask breaks" will be instituted throughout the school day. Students may also remove their masks during mealtimes, when outdoors, and when six feet apart from other people. Mask breaks will be 10 minutes, maximum.

Accommodations will be made for students with medical or sensory intolerance to wearing masks. Parents should notify their building administration if there are documented reasons why a student cannot wear a mask. Assistance with mask tolerance will be provided to those students who require such support.



Any student who does not have accommodation for not wearing a face mask, and refuses to wear one when directed to, will be considered insubordinate. These situations will be handled by the administration according to the Code of Conduct.

### Physical Distancing

Students will be grouped by cohort whenever feasible. As feasible, special area classes will be held outdoors or within designated spaces clearly marked with physical distancing markers and protocols in place.

- All individuals use physical distancing to the extent possible. No less than 3 feet of distancing is implemented as feasible.
- Unvaccinated adults continue to physically distance by 6 feet when feasible.
- More emphasis for greater physical distancing is used for unvaccinated individuals.
- More emphasis for greater physical distancing is used based on increased community transmission. CDC has developed 4 levels of indicators and thresholds for community transmission of Covid-19. These are found on the CDC web site- **Interim Guidance for School-Based Health Centers Regarding Covid-19**
- Visual cues from signage must be followed.
- Enhanced ventilation via open windows and doors and additional filtration measures are incorporated to increase mitigation efforts are used to the greatest extent possible.
- Desks, tables, chairs, and other furniture are socially distanced by at least three feet in all areas where adults and children are as feasible.
- Spaces are adapted as needed in order to allow for greater physical distancing.
- Larger gatherings and meetings can be held virtually as feasible.
- 3 feet of distance will be maintained in all common areas as feasible.
- All visitors sign in.
- **Ultimately, the school district's decision to move to shorter physical distances will come down to a local community's risk tolerance based on its unique circumstances.**

### Daily Health Screenings

Parents and staff will be asked to complete a one-time agreement indicating that students and staff will remain home when sick and report any exposure to the school. Any member of the school community who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, is a direct contact of a person identified as having COVID-19 or has been otherwise exposed to COVID-19 should immediately seek diagnostic testing. The district ensures families without regular access to healthcare know where in the community to find testing if needed.



## Sickness at Work/School

Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, if screened at the school, must be immediately sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.

- Students who are being sent home because of a positive screen (e.g., onset of COVID-19 symptoms) must be immediately separated from other students and supervised until their parent/legal guardian or emergency contact can retrieve them from school.
- The district will provide such individuals with information on health care and testing resources, if applicable.
- The district must immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if diagnostic test results are positive for COVID-19.
- Asymptomatic individuals who are fully vaccinated or have recovered from laboratory confirmed COVID-19 in the previous 3 months who screen positive for COVID-19 exposure may remain at school.
- Anyone with symptoms must be immediately sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing irrespective of vaccination status or previous COVID-19 infection.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) keep an up-to-date list of [symptoms of Coronavirus](#) on its website. To date these include:

- 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 or vomiting; and/or
- Diarrhea

It is strongly recommended that all staff are educated to observe students or other staff members for 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.

Parents and guardians need to report all pre-existing medical conditions to the school nurse, building administration, and classroom teachers.

**Testing Protocols:** Referrals of diagnostic testing for students, faculty, and

staff for COVID-19, in consultation with local health department officials, are provided by School Health professionals when needed (unvaccinated symptomatic individuals, close contacts of COVID-19, suspected or confirmed individuals, and individuals with recent international travel as designated through the New York State Travel Advisory, before allowing such individuals to return to in-person to the school).

**Testing Responsibility:** The district assists with the identification of who in the community is responsible for referring, sourcing, and administering testing (e.g., local health department testing site, physician offices, hospital system).

### Contact Tracing

The district must notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual within school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors. In the case of an individual testing positive, the district maintains plans to support local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual, in accordance with the protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality is maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations. The district cooperates with all state and local health department contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine efforts.

Consistent with Executive Order 202.61, Responsible Parties must continue to make reports to the New York State Department of Health COVID-19 School Report Card Dashboard every day that school is in session, regardless of whether any new tests have been reported or whether the school was completely remote on that day.

Carmel Central School District assists with contact tracing by:

- Keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members





- Ensuring student schedules are up to date.
- Keeping a visitor log that includes date and time address and phone number, and where in the school they visited.
- Assisting the local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program.
- Informing local health department of staff member testing positive regardless of county of residence.
- For all contact tracing, the DOH will require the name, address, and phone number as well as the name and phone number of the guardian of a student.

If/when COVID-19 cases are discovered, in consultation with the local health department, Carmel Central School District will do the following:

- Close or quarantine locations of potential exposure for up to 24 hours.
- Clean and disinfect locations, as necessary.
- Provide DOH with information as required.

**Staff should not try to determine who is to be excluded without guidance and direction from the local health department.**

### Containment

- Public Health Officials assume the task of contact tracing, once notified. To ensure the District and its employees comply with contact tracing and disinfection requirements, the Carmel Central School District has the following containment protocols and procedures for how to respond to positive or presumed-positive, as well as preventative practices:
- Isolation Procedures to isolate individuals who screen positive upon arrival, or symptomatic individuals should they become symptomatic while at school, providing appropriate PPE for school health office staff caring for the symptomatic individual This includes protocols for safe transportation, including pick-up arrangements, if applicable, for symptomatic students, faculty, and staff.
- Collection: Protocols for how parents or legal guardians should pick up their student with instructions that the student must be seen by a health care provider.



- Specific cases will be reviewed with the Department of Health as to when an individual can return to work/school.
- In the event of a positive case, the district has a plan for cleaning, disinfection, and notifying the Department of Health. In the case of an employee testing positive for COVID-19, CDC guidelines are followed regarding cleaning and disinfecting your building or facility if someone is sick. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
- Areas closed off where the person who is sick was located until cleaning and disinfection can occur for up to 24 hours.
- Outside doors and windows opened to increase air circulation in the area.
- All areas used by the person cleaned and disinfected, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and copier machines.
- Space vacuumed with a vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available.
- Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.

For more information about how COVID-19 containment efforts will be communicated to students, families and staff members, visit the *Communication/Family and Community Engagement* section of our reopening plan.

### Closure Considerations

When a person has been identified (confirmed) or suspected to be COVID-19 positive; the factors for considering closing schools include:

- School administrators collaborating and coordinating with local health officials on the number of individuals who are deemed direct contacts required to quarantine as a result of the exposure.
- The number of staff affected would result in an absence of essential functions required for in-person learning.
- The ability to provide continuity of education, medical and social services, and meal programs, and establish alternate mechanisms for these to continue.



- As needed, short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. If this happens, CDC recommends the following procedures:
  - Closing off areas used by ill people and locking off area(s), signage can also be used to ensure no one enters the area. Wait up to 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. Area(s) are not used until cleaning and disinfection have taken place.
  - Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
  - Staff clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill person(s), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
  - Communicating as soon as possible with staff, parents, and students.
- Using DOH guidance/procedures for when someone tests positive.
  - In consultation with the local DOH, a school official may consider whether school closure is warranted and for how long (prior to re-opening) based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local DOH.
  - In accordance with the guidance for quarantine at home after close contact, the classroom or office where the COVID-19-positive individual was may need to close temporarily as students or staff quarantine.
  - Additional close contacts at school outside of a classroom should also quarantine at home as per the local DOH.



## Facilities

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection in the district, facilities operations take the following actions:

- Establishes the minimum number of toilet fixtures that must be available for use in a building is established in the building code.
- Maintains adequate, code-required ventilation (natural or mechanical) as designed.
- Uses sprayers in all areas daily.
- Where feasible, limits entry and egress in and out of all buildings to a single location. If applicable, a single point of entry and a single point egress is identified to minimize cross traffic. All entry to the buildings occurs through the main entrance to a check-in point at the security station. In some cases, alternate areas are established and supervised to avoid unnecessary crowding.

### Visitors and Vendors

- All visitors/vendors must be wearing a proper face-covering prior to entering any building, and while in the building.
- The visitors must sign in and out with the monitor on duty.
- All visitors/vendors must sign in and out at the main entrance of each building stating their destination at that building for contact tracing.
- Should a visitor/vendor become ill while on campus, they must alert the staff member they are visiting to report the issue and then immediately seek medical attention.
- At the end of each day, the receptionist/designee must submit the sign-in/out documents to building administration.

### Signs and Messages

- Signs are posted in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face cover).
- All entrances or areas of static wait have signage allotting for social distancing between all individuals.

## Space Design and Capacities

### General Office Area

- All offices practice social distancing as feasible.
- Individuals entering the main office wear a mask or face covering.



- Where applicable, all offices and small spaces are limited to one (1) individual at a time.
- Tasks requiring large amounts of people are reduced.
- Employees are encouraged to use virtual meeting tools, including phone and virtual teleconference, in lieu of in-person meetings, whenever possible.

### **Conference Rooms**

- In-person meetings are limited.
- If meetings are to occur in person, they are conducted as quickly as possible.
- Social distancing among participants is required to the greatest extent possible.
- Lingering and socializing before and after meetings is not permitted.

### **Break Rooms and Lunchrooms**

- Staggered break schedules are utilized to assist with separation concerns.
- If staff wish to take breaks together, they must do such in a large space or outside, where distancing can occur.
- Amenities that are handled with high contact frequency, such as water coolers, coffee makers, and bulk snacks are cleaned frequently throughout the day.
- Communal meals are limited to locations where distancing can occur.

### **Copier Rooms/Areas**

- Congregating in copier rooms/areas is not permitted.
- Cleaning supplies are provided at copier stations.
- Staff are encouraged to wipe down touch surfaces post and prior use.

### **Elevators**

- One person in an elevator at a time, unless a student requires an escort.
- Personnel must wear acceptable face coverings when in common use areas.
- Elevators are frequently cleaned.

### **Restrooms**

- Frequent cleaning and disinfection will occur.

### **Nurse Stations**

Protocols for caring for a student, faculty, or staff member who develops COVID-19 symptoms during the school day have been developed. These protocols include:

- Identification of a dedicated area to separate students, faculty, or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 from others until they can go home or to a health care facility, depending on severity of illness.
- Plans to ensure that symptomatic students who are waiting to be picked up remain under the visual supervision of a staff member who is physically distanced.



- PPE requirements for school health office staff caring for sick individuals, which include both standard and transmission-based precautions.
- In areas with moderate to substantial community transmission, eye protection (i.e., goggles or face shield)
- When caring for a suspect or confirmed individual with COVID-19, gloves, a gown, and a fit-tested N-95 respirator will be used, as well as eye protection.
- A supply of fitted N95 Respirators is available for nurses and nurse aides.
- Where applicable, nurse stations have been reconfigured to maintain social distancing.
- Students who receive daily medication are treated separately from students presenting symptoms of illness.
- Physical separation is achieved by utilizing individual exam rooms when available, retractable dividing curtain walls.

The district has developed protocols for asthma-related acute respiratory treatment care using an up-to-date standard of care:

- Nebulizer treatments and suctioning are identified by the CDC as aerosol-generating procedures requiring a N-95 mask fitted to the healthcare workers
- Consultation with students' healthcare providers for alternate asthma medication delivery systems, and
- Consultation with school maintenance and facilities department for environmental controls.

### **Isolation Rooms**

- Individuals presenting symptoms representative of COVID-19 are immediately isolated to reduce the risk of transmission.
- A separate isolation room with a door near the exterior is utilized for quarantining individuals who have symptoms representative of COVID-19.
- Where excess space is not available. Nurse stations are equipped with dividing curtains allowing for distancing and separation.

### ***Isolation rooms have been identified in each building:***

- Kent Primary School - Room #142
- Kent Elementary School - Room #121
- Matthew Patterson Elementary School - Room #166
- George Fischer Middle School - Room #118
- Carmel High School - Room #303



### Security Vestibule/Reception areas

- Security stations remain at all entrances of each building.
- Where a multi-entrance design is used, additional security posts are instituted as needed.
- Security stations serve as the primary location for accounting for all individuals entering and exiting the building.
- Signage is installed to indicate where visitors shall stand to maintain social distance.

### Playground Spaces

- Children are grouped into small pods and assigned to different play areas. They sanitize hands in between use. There are hand sanitizer stations outside. Specific recess equipment is assigned to each pod.

### Engineering Controls

- Portable hand wash stations are installed in the cafeterias.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is available in each entry, all corridors, and each classroom.

### Water Fountains

- As required by New York State, a potable water supply is provided per 150 occupants but not less than one source per floor.
- Water fountains are cleaned frequently throughout the school day.

### Ventilation

Carmel Central School District ensures sufficient ventilation and fresh air to all spaces of occupancy by means of:

- Modifications to the Building Management Systems to allow fresh air dampers to introduce more outside air.
- Spaces where fresh air is limited due to original building systems, fresh air is introduced through open windows and doors.
- More frequent maintenance and inspection of the systems occurs to mitigate extra strain on systems.
- Filter replacement schedules are more frequent.



## Cleaning and Disinfection

The Carmel Central School District ensures adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including “Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19,” and the “STOP THE SPREAD” poster, as applicable.

- Cleaning and disinfection logs are maintained that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.
- Students, faculty, and staff are trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, and such information is provided to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home.
- The district provides and maintains hand hygiene stations around the school, as follows:
  - For handwashing: soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.
  - For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.
  - Accommodations for students who cannot use hand sanitizer will be made.

Regular cleaning and disinfection of the facilities occurs, including more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high-risk and frequently touched surfaces. This includes desks and cafeteria tables, which are cleaned and disinfected between everyone's use.

- Cleaning and disinfection are rigorous and ongoing, and occur at least daily, or more frequently as needed.
- The district ensures regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms.
- Restrooms are cleaned and disinfected more often depending on the frequency of use.
- Disinfectants are products that meet EPA criteria for use against SARS-Cov-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface.

## Emergency Response Protocols & Drills

Emergency response drills, including evacuation and lockdown, may be spread across the different student populations dependent on the day each population is present the day the drills are scheduled.

## Shelter-In-Place

Areas that are used for the Shelter-in-Place along with those areas that cannot be used due to certain types of environmental hazards (i.e.: high winds, tornadoes, etc.), have been identified in each school.

Shelter-In-Place protocols are the same with the following changes:

- Spacing between students and staff during the Shelter-In-Place as feasible.





- Use of face coverings throughout the event. Teachers and staff ensure students have face coverings on when exiting the classroom or other area.
- Extra face coverings on hand if a person does not have one.

### **Hold-In-Place**

Hold-In-Place protocols are the same the following changes:

- Spacing between students and staff during the Hold-In-Place
- Use of face coverings throughout the event.
- Extra face coverings on hand if a person does not have one.

### **Evacuation**

Evacuation protocols are routinely the same with some minor adjustments:

- Areas outside of the building that will allow for separation of students and staff are identified in advance. The area is located so that students and staff do not impede emergency responders.
- To get all staff and students out of the building as quickly and efficiently as possible, face coverings are always worn.
- Extra face coverings on hand for any person who does not have one.
- The person holding the door to get out of the building is identified in advance, therefore reducing the number of people touching the door hardware when leaving the building.
- As written in the pre-established protocols, all necessary items needed are brought, and the following items are added: extra face coverings, in the event a face covering becomes unusable, and hand sanitizer.

### **Lockout**

Lockout protocols are the same, besides maintaining space between students and staff in the area.

### **Lockdown**

Lockdown drills will be announced during the time period of mandatory social distancing. Teachers and staff ensure students are wearing masks.

- Evaluate, in advance, if there is room to maintain social distancing without being in the line of sight.
- Face coverings are always worn during the event.
- Extra face coverings on hand if a person does not have one.



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## Child Nutrition

- School meals continue to be available to all students, including those attending school in-person and those learning remotely. The meal service program complies with the NYSED Child Nutrition Program requirements, USDA, and the Putnam County Health Department.
- The Food Service Department communicates to all families in the district in languages spoken by families by way of email, Robo calls, mail, newsletter, social media and through the Food Service website.
- Information with meal distribution pick-up days and times continue to be communicated to families that currently receive meal benefits or are eligible to receive free and/or reduced breakfast and lunch services.
- Multiple opportunities are available for families to complete meal benefit applications. Meal applications are available on the school website, at the front office for all schools, the school calendar, and via email, fax, or mail, including the name and phone number of the Food Service Director for in-person support.
- The Food Service Director's contact information is included in all written materials provided to families.
- School staff continue to receive and respond to communications from families.
- The Food Service Department website includes links and communications for families to directly access documents, along with answers to frequently asked questions.

## Meals onsite

- For students on site, meals are provided while maintaining appropriate social distancing between students. Barriers are used to help mitigate the spread.
- Students do not need to wear face coverings when seated and eating/drinking.
- The sharing of food and beverages (e.g., buffet-style meals, snacks) is prohibited unless individuals are members of the same household.

Other considerations and protocols that will be in place include:

- Safety shields in the existing cafeteria serving lines and cashier stations.
- Safety posters to aid in meal service.
- Separate allergy-free seating accommodations.
- Training for teachers on food allergies, including symptoms of allergic reactions to food.



- Handwashing stations and encouragement of proper hand washing before and after eating meals.
- Prepackaged Grab-and-Go options to expedite service.
- Prepackaged utensils and condiments
- Touchless ID system for Point-of-Sale system
- Meals offsite/remote Grab-and go offsite meals provided in the event schools are on remote learning model due to shut down.
- Bulk meals for multiple days are available for pick up in an area where families can easily receive food in the trunk of their vehicle.
- Alternate delivery arrangements accommodated to assist families with students who are unable to access the Grab-and-Go distribution.

### Safety and Sanitation

To ensure the safety and sanitation of cafeterias and other spaces utilized for school meals the following considerations and protocols will be in place:

- All health and safety guidelines are followed from NYSED, DOH and Putnam County Department of Health.
- Health Protocol & Safety training for all staff is continuous.
- Operating procedures are updated with COVID-19 protocols for sanitation of school kitchens, cafeterias, and food storage areas.
- Consideration of special feeding safety needs of students with disabilities.
- Additional equipment and supply needed in food service areas are in place. This includes barriers at point-of-sale and point-of-meal pickup, facemasks, soap, hand sanitizer, tissues, additional portable handwashing stations.
- Single-use gloves and disposable aprons used by staff when handling and delivering all foods.
- Only program staff, custodial staff, and approved volunteers are allowed to enter the program area.
- Sanitation procedures for custodial staff are established to clean and sanitize tables, chairs, and other surfaces between each meal service.
- All Food Service staff members are trained on the district's policies and protocols regarding health and safety.
- In the event of classroom meal consumption, all teachers will be trained on health and safety protocols.
- Food Services staff train, review and/or retrain on standard Food Service operating procedures.
- Staff cross-train so those essential activities can take place in the event of key absences or emergency situations.



## Vendors and Suppliers

- The district recognizes and understands that unexpected closures may impact food supply chains or availability.
- The Food Service Department works with food service vendors to determine the safest ways to handle food and supply deliveries.
- The department also has supplies on hand for in-person and Grab-and-Go meal service.

**NOTE: This document is based upon current guidelines and recommendations from the NYS Department of Health and the NYS Education Department. It is a living document and is subject to updates as more information becomes available.**



## Transportation

Carmel Central School District will conduct transportation activities that are consistent with state-issued public transit guidance and NYSED School Reopening guidelines.

- Students and school staff **must always wear acceptable face coverings** on school buses (e.g., entering, exiting, and seated) and should maintain appropriate social distancing to the extent practicable.
- Students who are able are required to wear masks and social distance on the bus to the extent practicable; however, students whose physical or mental health would be impaired are not required to wear a face covering but must be appropriately socially distanced.
- Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to drop off or walk students to school to reduce density on buses.
- All buses that are used every day by districts and contract carriers are cleaned/ disinfected once a day.
- High-contact spots are wiped down after the morning (AM) and afternoon (PM) run depending upon the disinfection schedule.
- School buses are not equipped with hand sanitizer due to its combustible composition and potential liability to the carrier or District.
- School bus drivers, monitors and attendants must not carry personal bottles of hand sanitizer with them on school buses.
- Wheelchair school buses configure wheelchair placement to ensure social distancing.
- Whether school is in session remotely or otherwise, pupil transportation is provided to nonpublic, parochial, private, charter schools or students with Individualized Education Plans that have placed them out of District whose schools are meeting for in-person sessions. All students are entitled to transportation by the district to the extent required by law.
- Transportation departments do not have the ability or the right to deny transportation for children who are in foster care, homeless or attend private or charter schools.
- Parents who may have missed the due date to request out-of-district transportation due to a reasonable excuse may file a 310 appeal with the Commissioner of Education.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Buses and other transportation vehicles are cleaned and disinfected daily (focus on high-touch areas) and in between runs if scheduled for multiple routes.
- At the end of the day, the entire bus is cleaned and disinfected.
- All trash is removed.
- Floors are swept and dust mopped.



The following areas are cleaned daily:

- Walls and windows
- High-touch surfaces
- Bus seats and seatbacks
- Seat belts, door handles, handrails
- Driver operator area

Cleaning and disinfecting products approved by the EPA will be used according to instructions.

### **Bus Protocols**

- Eating and drinking are prohibited on the bus.
- Buses are inspected to ensure cleaning/disinfecting protocols are followed on District-owned and contracted buses.
- All cleanings/inspections will be documented (via trackable log).
- Bus protocol for a reported case of COVID-19 on a school bus is immediately notified to the district, building principal, and Department of Health.
- Transportation works with building administration to contact parents of students who are exposed on the bus.
- A bus with an exposure is taken out of service and disinfected for 24 hours before the bus can be used again.
- Buses are disinfected following CDC guidelines.

### **Students on Transportation**

- As was outlined in the Health and Safety section of this guidance, all parents/guardians are required to ensure their child/children are not experiencing any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to them boarding their method of transportation to school.
- Students must wear a mask on a school bus if they are physically able. Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering, including students where such covering would impair their physical health or mental health are not subject to the required use of a face covering as documented by a 504 accommodation or Individualized Education Plan.
- In addition to a mask, parents have the option of their children wearing a face shield.
- Students who do not have a mask can NOT be denied transportation and will be provided one by the district.



## Training

The following training will be ongoing:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Exposure Control/Blood-borne Pathogen (BBP)
- COVID Awareness
- New Cleaning Protocols (buses, transportation center)
- Handwashing
- Face Covering (sizing, use, wear & care)
- Personal Health and Hygiene
- Special working conditions with face coverings (strenuous activity)

## Transportation Communication

Carmel Central School District will emphasize to parents that:

- The district has thoroughly disinfected all buses and student transportation vehicles.
- Student transportation vehicles are included in the District's COVID-19 plans and what part students and parents play in ensuring safety and minimizing infection while utilizing District transportation services.
- Parents should not send their children to school or board the bus if sick or with an elevated temperature.
- An "opt-out" option has been included in a survey to parents regarding transportation.
- Social distancing requirements extend to the bus stop.
- Multiple routing scenarios for different instructional scheduling options (split session, alternating days, hybrid option), density reduction and social distancing have been communicated with administration.

## Bus Capacity

- Siblings or those that live in the same household sit together.
- Students always wear face masks while in transit.
- Attendance is taken on every route, every day, to and from school. The attendance sheets are documented in writing and retained for contact tracing.
- The Bus Pass System is used to track contact tracing.



## Social Emotional Learning & Supporting Mental Health

The school closures and continual pivoting in learning due to the pandemic have had a significant impact on the social-emotional needs of students. Most students have not had a day-to-day structure of the classroom, and many families have been faced with the loss of income, loss of loved ones, and other stressors. Students have been separated from their teachers, friends and activities consistently. Their worlds have changed, and many students do not have the necessary support systems and coping mechanisms needed.

Now, more than ever, we must be ready to address these needs and ensure the well-being of our students.

The following activities and resources are available for families and students to access social and emotional support:

- Access to social skills groups.
- Individual counseling sessions as needed.
- Ongoing lessons and activities in Social-Emotional Learning.
- Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) in each school.
- Referrals to outside agencies.
- Social-Emotional Learning web page with resources for Mental Health and contact information for agencies.
- School Support Staff consisting of Psychologists, Social Workers, and School Counselors who are available to respond to students in need.
- Optional district-wide mediation session.
- Orientations for students returning to in-person learning.

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## Attendance, Attendance Reporting and Chronic Absenteeism

### Attendance and Attendance Reporting

All schools in the Carmel Central School District take daily attendance whether the school is open in-person, hybrid, or remote.

- Attendance policies and procedures are communicated by schools with families and students.
- Communication will take the form of building-level parent letters/newsletter, robocalls, emails, text messaging, and social media.
- Teachers will record daily attendance in eSchoolPlus, our student management system, based on the required daily schedule.
- Daily reports are generated to identify students who are absent and/or chronically absent.
- Contact with the families is made daily to determine reasons for absence and needs or barriers the student may have to participate in daily lessons.

### Chronic Absenteeism

While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to addressing chronic absenteeism, Carmel Central School District is committed to providing interventions to prevent and address health-related and mental health chronic absenteeism. We recognize that many factors will influence student attendance and may be greatly impacted by the instructional models provided; in-person, hybrid, and remote. The Carmel Central School District addresses chronic absenteeism as follows:

- Nurturing a culture of attendance.
- Communicating clearly to families and students what the attendance procedures are, and expectations for participating based on the model of instruction.
- Explaining the importance of attendance to the entire school community at curriculum nights, via ongoing principal communication and teacher communication.
- Tracking daily attendance, late arrivals, and student engagement in one central, secure location.
- Early identification and intervention.
- Regularly monitoring attendance data and communicating with parents about issues as they arise.
- Using data to identify which students are at-risk.
- Establishing intervention plans; parent phone calls, home visits, counseling, instructional modifications, engage community partners, etc.
- Creating a more positive school culture and a focus on engaging instruction.
- Evaluating and addressing students' engagement in learning.



- Helping students achieve positive social and emotional character development while reinforcing the behaviors that make up ideal school culture.
- Using goal-based incentives and rewards to motivate attendance and positive student behaviors where age-appropriate.

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## Technology

Access to technology is essential for the successful roll-out of this plan. The Carmel Central School District is committed to ongoing planning and implementation of District technologies to ensure equitable access for staff and students. The team has initiated plans that are mindful of student home access to reliable internet and computers.

- The district continues to gather data from teachers and families to identify their level of access to devices and high-speed broadband.
- If students and/or teachers do not have access, the district takes the necessary steps to meet their needs.
- An inventory of equipment and other assets is conducted on a routine basis.
- The district continues to procure, manage and/or maintain hardware, software, licenses, learning management systems, etc., to support and improve remote instruction and student engagement.
- The district continually identifies the professional learning needs of teachers and continues to support their development of skills and pedagogy in a remote-learning environment.
- A "Helpdesk" system is set up for parents/students/teachers to report technical issues.
- The district provides all students with access to learning materials and resources in multiple formats, wherever possible.
- The district supports teachers through professional development and coaching on pedagogical methods that enable students to participate in multiple ways so that they can demonstrate mastery of Learning Standards in remote or blended models using both synchronous and asynchronous technologies.
- If students do not have sufficient access to devices and/or high-speed internet, the district provides the students with these devices, and as needed, alternate methods to access materials and instruction (i.e., pick up materials at school, drop off materials to students' homes, etc.).
- The district also schedules opportunities to connect with families to educate them on how to use the technologies and connect to the instructional activities.



## Teaching and Learning

### Continuity of Learning, NYS Standards, Equity, Interaction & Feedback

To assure high-quality teaching and learning, a continuity of learning plan has been developed for the 2021-2022 school year. The Carmel Central School District plan assures that instruction is aligned with the New York State Learning Standards and assures equity as well as quality for all learners. Equity is at the heart of all school instructional decisions. All instructional practice in our District is designed so that whether it is delivered in-person, remotely, or through a hybrid model due to a local or state school closure, there are clear, comprehensive, and accessible learning opportunities for all students. Such opportunities are aligned with state standards.

During this pandemic, it may become necessary at various times through the 2020-2021 school year, for schools to utilize a full-remote plan when quarantining. In these cases, teachers will use the district curriculum and NYS Learning Standards to guide their planning and instruction as they would during an in-person regular school year.

Students will remain in person to the greatest extent possible. Students who have a valid medical exemption will be provided with alternate instructional delivery on an individual basis as per a 504 accommodation or an IEP. During times of quarantine, the below charts will be followed.

Elementary School (Grades K-4)	
<b>Quarantine</b>	When a student is absent due to quarantine the teacher will be in touch to plan for <b><i>asynchronous work</i></b> and possibly socialization. If a full class is quarantined due to exposure, the entire class will be remote.

Middle School (Grades 5-8)	
<b>Quarantine</b>	When a student is absent due to quarantine, the student will stream into classes. If a full class is quarantined due to an exposure the entire class will be remote.



High School (Grades 9-12)	
<b>Quarantine</b>	When a student is absent due to quarantine, the student will stream into classes. If a full class is quarantined due to exposure, the entire class will be remote.

### Career and Technical Education (CTE)

While planning for CTE instruction, whether in-person, remote or hybrid models, Carmel Central School District has collaborated with Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES (PNW BOCES) to ensure high school instructional plans are aligned. PNW BOCES has developed models that ensure NYS learning Standards, applicable industry certification requirements, clinical and work-based learning hours have been met. In addition, their plans follow all NYS/DOH health and safety guidelines and social distancing.



## Interscholastic and Extracurricular Activities

To mitigate the spread of the virus the following is being instituted:

- Seven-day practice rule for teams waived to enable greater opportunities for local participation.
- Maintaining current practice requirements.
- Encouraging of geographic scheduling for games & contests.
- Schools have the option, if permitted by state officials, to offer off-season conditioning workouts.
- Extracurricular Activities Club Advisors will submit a re-entry plan for their individual club/activity.
- Plans are to include a hybrid of in-person meetings and live video meetings.
- A calendar is active for all clubs to book larger rooms in order to ensure social distancing.
- Clubs that consist of student cohorts entering other schools will not be permitted.
- During remote learning, clubs/activities are to meet via live video.
- We continue to follow Return to Interscholastic Guidance from NYSPHSAA & The Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation Document from CDC:

[Guidance for Return To Interscholastic](#)

[NYS CDC Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)

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## Student Support Services (Special Education & ELL)

### Special Education Instructional Delivery & Related Services

As it relates to special education planning, the school district Re-opening Plan addresses the continued provision of a free and appropriate public education to its students with educational disabilities regardless of whether services are provided in-person, remotely, or through a hybrid model. Special Education Services continue to be offered consistent with the federal, state and local guidelines that are intended to protect the health and safety of both students and service providers. Instruction is designed in conjunction with the Learning Plan for all students, which enables transitioning between in-person, remote, and hybrid learning environments with changing health and safety conditions. Modifications to PPE and instruction may be necessary for different instructional settings. All efforts are made to provide students with severe disabilities in-person instruction consistent with the equitable delivery of instruction for all students, and dependent on the current health and safety needs. While school districts must ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with an educational disability is provided with the special education and related services identified in his/her IEP, school districts continue to have the same flexibility for delivery of IEP services (in-person or remotely) until schools return to normal operating conditions. Every effort is made to provide services in the most equitable and safest way possible.

### The Individualized Education Plan

The Individualized Education Plan, (IEP), documents the programs and services offered and provided to students with educational disabilities, as well as incorporates methods for ongoing communication with parents in the preferred language. The Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CSE/CPSE) make determinations regarding students with disabilities' access to the Least Restrictive Environment and documents such determinations in the student's IEP. Collaboration between CSEs/CPSEs and program providers is ongoing and ensures that there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on IEPs, plans for monitoring and communicating student progress, and commitment to sharing resources. The CSE/CPSE Chairpersons ensure that students have appropriate student access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services and technology.

IDEA permits parents and school districts to agree to use alternative means of meeting participation requirements, such as video conferences and telephone conferences. The use of video conference platforms to conduct CSE meetings has been one of the great successes during the COVID-19 building closure period, as it has enabled CSEs to meet regularly and effectively to conduct



educational planning for students with educational disabilities in a safe and appropriate manner. The district continues to use these methods to hold CSE/CPSE meetings while the pandemic is a factor.

### **Initial Evaluations/Re-evaluations**

School districts have a continuing obligation under IDEA to identify, locate, and evaluate all students who need special education and related services. The district makes every effort to conduct evaluations in-person, within the mandatory time constraints, as the health and safety of students and staff permits. School districts must keep in mind the impact that school building closures may have had on all students. Students should not be identified as having an educational disability merely because they have lost skills due to building closures, changes in the educational delivery model used by the district, or other factors unrelated to whether the student has an educational disability. However, if the parent or District believes that the student may have an educational disability, the student should be referred to the CSE and the process set forth in Section 200.4(a) of the Commissioner's Regulations should be followed.

### **Compensatory Education**

At a time when all IEP services could not be delivered consistent with state, federal and local guidance designed to protect health and safety, some students may have experienced a loss of skills related to the changes in the manner that IEP services were provided. In these cases, CPSEs/CSEs will make an individualized determination as to whether what, and how, compensatory services are to be provided once schools reopen. In making these determinations, it is important that schools be able to consider accurate information as to how the student's IEP was implemented, any factors that impeded the district's ability to implement the IEP consistent with its continuity of instruction plan, and the extent to which the student benefitted from such services. Relevant data will include service logs, report cards, progress reports on IEP goals, assessments and other data reflecting the student's functioning levels. Consideration will also be given to how compensatory services will continue if school closes again following reopening.

### **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**

MTSS is an evidence-based approach to comprehensive program delivery that addresses academic and behavioral challenges including proactive activities for all students (universal interventions), targeted activities for students identified at-risk (secondary interventions) and intensive activities for students identified at high risk (tertiary interventions). Universal interventions designed to support instructional needs, and social-emotional well-being are crucial to our collective success as students and adults return to instruction and the school environment with increased needs. The district continues to implement the adopted MTSS framework in each school. Services identified under MTSS





are delivered in conjunction with the District Learning Plan model being implemented based on in-person or school closure.

### English as a New Language (ELL)

Students who are English as a New Language Learners are afforded the opportunity for full and equal participation whether it be through an in-person, remote, or hybrid model of instruction. While many ELLs may have benefitted from learning through remote-learning platforms, it is important to consider their unique needs and to strengthen the home language and supports necessary for English language development. The ELL identification process continues to take place within the first 30 days of school for students entering the new school year. Instruction is consistent with the District Learning Plan and provides for equitable access in any of the three models of instruction. Instructional support is provided based on the student's most recently measured proficiency level. Ongoing communication with families in their preferred language continues throughout this period.

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## Staff (Professional Development & Training)

### Teacher and Principal Evaluation System

All teachers and principals are evaluated pursuant to the district's approved APPR plan. School leaders continue to attend annually required Lead Evaluator training.

### Certification, Incidental Teaching and Substitute Teaching

All teachers hold valid and appropriate certificates for teaching assignment, except where otherwise allowable under the Commissioner's regulations (e.g., incidental teaching) or education law.

### Student Teachers

Student teachers from NYSED-registered colleges or university programs can serve under the supervision of fully certified teachers in the Carmel Central School District. Student teachers will follow all the social distancing, mask-wearing, health status reporting, and other COVID-19 procedures that the teachers follow. Student teachers will serve under the supervision of our full-time certified teachers only. At no time will a student teacher be used as a teacher of record.

### Training

Carmel Central School District trains all personnel on protocols and frequently communicates safety guidelines. Training on the precautions listed below is conducted either remotely or in person. Social distancing and face coverings are required for all participants when training is conducted in person. Training material is designed to be easy to understand and available in the appropriate language and literacy level for all workers. The district ensures all students are taught or trained how to follow COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene.

Additional training is provided in:

- Prevention of disease spreads by staying home when they are sick.
- Proper respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- Avoiding the use of communal objects. If communal objects must be used, information on proper disinfection procedures between use is provided. Examples of communal objects include, but are not limited to, other workers' phones, desks, offices, computers or other devices, other work tools and equipment.
- Employees and students are provided with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19.
- Risk factors and protective behaviors (i.e., cough etiquette and care of PPE).

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



Nurse Aids who are familiar with CDC, OSHA protocols, and DOH guidelines in each building have been trained as screeners. Screeners wear appropriate employer-provided PPE, including at a minimum, a face covering.

### Topics for all Staff and Substitutes

- Proper handwashing: The District promotes frequent and thorough hand washing by providing employees, the school community, and visitors with a place to wash their hands. If soap and running water are not immediately available, alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol are provided. Training on proper handwashing and hand sanitizer use is available: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
- Proper cough and sneeze etiquette.
- Social Distancing: Training for faculty/staff on how to address close contact interactions with students as part of everyday job tasks is provided: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/socialdistancing.html>
- Operating Procedures (varies by building)
  - Entrance into the building
  - Cleaning procedures
  - Sick child pick up
  - Staff who are sick or suspected of being sick: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
- Proper cleaning techniques
  - Cleaning and disinfecting: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>
- Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html> and [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019ncov/community/pdf/Reopening\\_America\\_Guidance.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019ncov/community/pdf/Reopening_America_Guidance.pdf)
- Hazard Communication – Right-To-Know
  - Proper use of chemicals and Safety Data sheets: <https://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/>
  - No chemicals from home
  - Transfer of hand sanitizer in smaller containers
  - List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19): <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-useagainst-sars-cov-2-covid-19>
- Exposure Control Plan – with a focus on Pandemic/COVID-19



- Personal Protective Equipment - PPE
  - Hazard Assessment and PPE Selection Worksheet for all identified employees
  - Proper type, use, and size
  - Cleaning and sanitizing of the face covering (if applicable)
  - Provide training for staff and students on wearing, putting on, removing and discarding PPE, including in the context of their current and potential duties:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-facecoverings.html>
- Use of face coverings (donning/doffing) (cloth vs. surgical)
  - Face coverings don/doff video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQxOc13DxvQ>
- Respirator Protection (N95 - required for identified employees per NYS)
  - Inclusive into your existing Respirator Protection Program or can be a separate Respirator Protection Program for medical staff only.
  - Training provided for identified personnel only:  
<https://oshareview.com/2020/04/osha-requirements-for-occupational-use-of-n95-respirators-in-healthcare/>

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## Board of Education Policy & Finances

### Board of Education Policy

The district reviews existing Board of Education policies as they relate to current conditions.

Recommendations are made to the Board of Education for existing policies that may need to be modified and/or for new policies that may need to be added. Policies we address as needed include (but are not limited to):

- **Extracurricular Activities:** Policies regarding extracurricular programs and which activities are allowed, considering social distancing, PPE usage, and cleaning and disinfection, as well as the risk of COVID-19 transmission (e.g., interscholastic sports, assemblies, and other gatherings). Policies should consider how to maintain cohorts, if applicable, or members of the same household. The district will refer to DOH's "Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency" to assist in the development of these policies.
- **Before and Aftercare:** Policies regarding before and aftercare programs, considering social distancing, PPE usage, and cleaning and disinfection requirements, as well as the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Policies should consider how to maintain cohorts, if applicable, or group members of the same household.
- **Vulnerable Populations:** Policies regarding vulnerable populations, including students, faculty and staff who are at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness, and individuals who are not comfortable returning to an in-person educational environment, to allow them to safely participate in educational activities and, where appropriate, accommodate their specific circumstances. These accommodations may include but are not limited to remote learning or telework, modified educational or work settings, or providing additional PPE to individuals with underlying health conditions. The district must also identify and describe any modifications to social distancing or PPE that may be necessary for certain student or staff populations, including individuals who have a hearing impairment or loss, students receiving language services, and young students in early education programs, ensuring that any modifications minimize COVID-19 exposure risk for students, faculty, and staff, to the greatest extent possible.
- **Transportation:** Consistent with State-issued public transit guidance, protocols and procedures, which include those individuals must always wear acceptable face coverings on school buses.

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