



Guidance to Re-opening

**For Incarcerated Youth and Adult
Literacy Programs, Westchester County
Department of Correction, Valhalla, NY
Center for Adult & Community Services**

Effective September 1, 2020

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Reopening plan development

In planning and implementing the reopening of instructional programs and continued operation of all SWBOCES administrative offices and services, Southern Westchester BOCES will continue to follow all directives of the New York State Education Department, the Commissioner of Education, the Board of Regents and the directives and Executive Orders of Gov. Cuomo, as well as guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New York State Department of Health. The governor's New York Forward plan has outlined a four-phase plan to guide reopening with the understanding that any region can move backward and forward between phases based on current data. Instructional programs may be able to open in Phase IV if appropriate metrics are met. This document focuses on the Southern Westchester BOCES plan for operation during the New York Forward COVID-19 response period and will remain in effect until further notice. This plan will be considered a "living document" and updates to this plan will be made based on any changes in official guidance or through evaluation of implementation.

With almost 1,000 employees, Southern Westchester BOCES has 32 component districts and serves over 60 school districts through regional services. During our COVID-19 response period and in developing our reopening plan, we took the following steps to engage stakeholders.

- A COVID-19 Response Team was formed on March 2nd and has led the SWBOCES response since that time. This team is also serving as the steering committee for development of the re-entry plan. The team comprises members of the Executive Team and representatives from Human Resources, Technology, Public Relations, Facilities and School Safety. The members of the team collectively represent all departments and services.
- A model was developed to engage all stakeholders.
 - The SWBOCES Cabinet, composed of the Executive Team, Directors and Assistant Directors meets twice weekly. The extended leadership team meets weekly.
 - Staff communication continues to include both written communication and virtual meetings. Districtwide written communication is accompanied by automated calls to alert staff of incoming communication.
 - Surveys were given to stakeholder groups to assess readiness for remote learning and gather input on decision points that could be made at the local level.

- The district problem solving protocol was used to capture the facts from guidance and identify key problems to be addressed. T
- he DOH guidance was aligned to the NYSED guidance. Team members were asked to facilitate problem solving with stakeholder groups and develop responses to each decision point.
- The COVID Response Team reviewed the guidance, consulted legal counsel when appropriate and crafted the decision points into a cohesive district-wide plan.

Stakeholders were engaged in the Reopening plan Development Process through meetings and/or surveys and/or written correspondence. The following groups have partnered in the SWBOCES COVID response and will remain partners throughout the implementation of this collaboratively developed plan.

SWBOCES Board of Education

Catherine Draper, Board of Education President
John Filiberti, Board of Education Vice President
Sheryl Brady
Lynn Frazer-McBride
Robert Johnson
Valarie D. Williams

SWBOCES Executive Team

Harold A. Coles, Psy.D., District Superintendent
Jacqueline O'Donnell, Deputy Superintendent/COO
Kathleen Conley, Executive Director of the Lower Hudson Regional
Information Center
James A. Gratto Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services
Stephen Tibbetts, Assistant Superintendent for Business

SWBOCES COVID Response Team:

Deputy Superintendent/COO Jacqueline O'Donnell
Assistant Superintendent for Business Stephen Tibbetts
Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services James A. Gratto
LHRIC Executive Director Kathy Conley
Senior Director of Adult, Community & Career Services Claudia Murphy
Director of Human Resources Suzanne Doherty
Director of Technology Victor Pineiro
Director of Operations & Maintenance Tom Briggs
Director of Communications Brian Howard
Supervisor of School Safety Brandon Cruz

Stakeholder and Resource partners

Westchester County Department of Health
Southern Westchester BOCES Component School Districts
Regional Pupil Personnel Directors
New York State BOCES Leaders
Southern Westchester BOCES Leadership Team
Southern Westchester BOCES staff
Southern Westchester BOCES students and parents
Southern Westchester BOCES community partners
Southern Westchester BOCES state partners

Our Process for Assessing a Model for Reopening for Staff and Students

In a commitment to social distancing, a variety of approaches will be used across the district to limit the number of individuals in a given space. Social distancing protocols will be observed in all settings.

In Instructional Programs:

- Recommended space calculations and review of specific student needs were used to assess sites for capacity for providing on site instruction. Current calculations indicate that most buildings have the capacity to offer on site instruction if it is allowed. Since enrollment at a BOCES program is always fluid, sites will continue to be assessed weekly and if the calculations indicate that space needs exceed the available space, a six day rotating schedule will be put in place. In the event that a six day schedule is needed, staff will report to location, providing some in-person instruction and some remote instruction as students move between the two settings.
- Recognizing that on site instruction decisions will be informed by county wide data and in collaboration with the Westchester County Department of Health, multiple models are being developed and include in person instruction, remote instruction or a combination of both.
- Models will be reviewed weekly based on current data with plan revisions as warranted.
- Professional development is being developed to support staff in leading instruction in all possible settings. Professional development will be offered prior to student start dates at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year and be ongoing.
- CDC, NYSED and NYSDOH guidelines will be observed in buildings.
- Visitors will be limited during this period and virtual meetings will be encouraged.

Protocols and Processes for Reopening

Communication/Caregiver and Community Engagement

Southern Westchester BOCES staff have regular and ongoing communication with staff at the Westchester Department of Correction. Email and phone call are a regular means of communicating. Additionally, meetings via technology platforms are held to have clear and consistent communication with the Department of Correction Administrative staff. Constant contact and online meetings were used to collaborate with Westchester Department of Correction.

In preparing for reopening at SWBOCES, a broad series of surveys were shared with staff, families, students and community partners and their input was compiled and used to inform decision making. Continued surveying of stakeholder groups will be conducted throughout the life of the plan.

Effective Communications and Caregiver Engagement

Throughout the reopening planning process and once the 2020-2021 school year commences, regular and routine communication with caregivers and students will take place. These communications will include updates and information about:

- The instructional program and scheduling including any changes to the school calendar
- Health and safety including, protocols in case of illness, and precautions in place including, but not limited to distancing, mask wearing, and limiting the use of shared objects – in accordance with DOH and NYSED guidelines
- Arrival, dismissal, and transportation protocols and changes
- Attendance
- Communication routines
- Opportunities for feedback
- Contingency planning
- Academic progress

Communications with caregivers/students will take the forms of:

- Surveys to students
- Email correspondences
- Virtual platform use for individual and/or group tele-meetings (Zoom, Google Meet)
- Phone correspondence

SWBOCES' Counseling Plan will address ways school counselors, psychologists, and social workers can support students and families during the transition back into the learning environment and to meet the challenging social emotional needs during this time. Communication to assess what supports may be needed and how best to provide these supports will be put in place.

Health & Safety

Physical Distancing

- A distance of at least 6 feet must be maintained among all individuals while in SWBOCES facilities or grounds, inclusive of students, faculty, and staff, unless safety or the core activity (e.g., instruction, moving equipment, using an elevator, traveling in common areas) requires a shorter distance or individuals are of the same household. **Regardless of the ability of individuals to maintain adequate social distance, acceptable face coverings must be worn (ensuring that mouth and nose are covered) at all times and in all spaces, in accordance with the [Westchester County Executive's order of Oct. 28, 2020](#).**
- In student programs, staff will develop activities that ensure that a distance of twelve feet in all directions is maintained between individuals while participating in activities requires projecting the voice (e.g., singing), playing a wind instrument, or aerobic activity.
- Teleconferencing is strongly encouraged for meetings for both remote and onsite attendees. When in-person conversation is essential, the number of people in a room should be limited to the capacity of the room to provide a 6 foot distance between all attendees. For larger, essential meetings, meeting locations should be held in rooms that allow for a six foot distance between all participants.
- All seating will be arranged to ensure the 6 foot distance. In instructional programs, all desks, including the teacher's desk will face in the same direction with appropriate distance between them.
- Passage through hallways should be limited to essential movement.
- Decisions regarding opening of pantries and staff lounges will be made by building, based on square footage and room configuration and number of staff members on site. Refilling of privately owned containers at water coolers is prohibited. Disposable cups will be provided at water coolers and should be filled from the platform below the spigot to avoid contact with the spigot. Hand sanitizers should be used. Lunch should be eaten following social distancing guidelines.
- Face shields or desk shields will be available for those whose location or position requires additional protection or cannot allow 6 foot distance between individuals.

Screening and Testing of Adults

- All staff are required to do a daily self-screening before leaving for work to determine who may have COVID-19 or been exposed to the COVID-19 virus.
- Staff are required to take their temperature daily as part of the self-screening.
- Staff are required to attest to their health and quarantine status using a sign-in sheet or digital health screening tool.
- Any staff member who is not able to affirm all screening questions will be denied entry to SWBOCES buildings and should avoid coming in contact with other staff members.
- The health screening consists of four questions. If a staff member affirms that any of the following are true, he/she should contact the immediate supervisor and remain/return home.

1) Self Assessment Questions

- Have you tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 10 days, or are you presently waiting for results of a COVID-19 test?
- Have you been designated a close contact of someone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
- Are you experiencing, or have you experienced in the last 10 days, a temperature of 100.0 F or above or have **new or worsening COVID-related symptoms?**

2) In alignment with the NYS COVID-19 travel advisory, do you need to quarantine due to travel? (<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>)

- In addition, all staff members will be asked to affirm that he/she has read the SWBOCES Guidelines for Reentry and agree to abide by all guidelines.
- Additionally, temperatures of all entering the Department of Correction will be taken upon entry by the Department of Correction staff.
- Staff members who do not come to work should follow their normal procedure for notifying their supervisor of their absence.
- If they are not attending work because of Covid related symptoms or because they were denied access due to answers on the screening app should email covidalerts@swboces.org.
- Information collected by the sign in sheets or digital health screening tool will be used to assess qualification to enter a SWBOCES building, to ensure maximum occupancy restrictions are maintained and to support tracing should it be needed.
- When using a sign in sheet or digital health screening tool, no health information such as temperatures will be collected or stored. The only information collected will be the identity of the person, the date and time of the health screening and whether or not the staff member was cleared for entry. Information will be kept until the school year ends.

- Once visitors are permitted back on site, they will take their temperature on site and will attest to the same health questions via a sign-in sheet which will record their name, email and phone number as well as the date and time of entry and exit.

In-Person Screening of Adults for staff assigned to the Westchester County Department of Correction

- Personnel performing in-person screening activities, including temperature checks, will be supervised by the Westchester Department of Correction.

Screening and Testing of Students

- Health screening of students at the Sprain Brook Academy and Adult Literacy students is performed by personnel of the Westchester Department of Correction.
- Personnel performing in-person screening activities, including temperature checks, will be supervised by the Westchester Department of Correction.
- No health information such as temperatures will be collected or stored by SWBOCES.

Positive Screen Protocol

Any staff member, who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, if screened at the school or other SWBOCES site, must be immediately sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing. Safe transportation will be arranged as needed for symptomatic faculty and staff.

Employees must notify SWBOCES when their responses to any of the aforementioned questions changes, such as, if they begin to experience symptoms or are exposed to COVID-19, including during or outside of school hours. Staff are directed to report this information by using the following designated email, covidalerts@swboces.org. A member of the HR Department will monitor this email and respond accordingly.

Staff who were denied building entry due to health screening for symptoms can return to work or the in-person learning environment in consultation with their health care provider once they have felt well and have had no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines; and, either provide a negative COVID test result or if they have been diagnosed with another condition and provide a written note stating they are clear to return to school.

Staff and students who were denied building entry due to traveling internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19, per the NYS Travel Advisory ([link: https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory)) must follow the guidelines provided by NYS.

If the staff tested positive for COVID-19 they need to have recovered and completed isolation before returning to work or the in-person learning environment. Discharge from isolation and return to work or school will be conducted in coordination with the local health department. SWBOCES will notify the state and local health department about any cases if diagnostic test results are positive for COVID-19.

For more information, please see the protocol for Return to Work/School.

Additional resources related to COVID-19 are available on the Human Resources Department website or by using the link below.

https://www.swboces.org/groups/49386/human_resources/draft_covid19_hr_resources.

Positive screening of students will be managed by protocols established by the Department of Correction in alignment with their required planning.

Guidance for symptomatic individuals who do not have a COVID test

Individuals who report having COVID-like symptoms, but do not get a test within 48 hours must be considered COVID positive. The district is required to begin contact tracing, and work collaboratively with the Westchester County Department of Health. Per NYS DOH guidance, these individuals must follow all quarantine guidelines and return to work protocols as they are deemed COVID positive in lieu of test results.

Protocol for Return to Work/School

SWBOCES' reopening plan has written protocols that comply with DOH and CDC guidance for the return to school of students and staff following a positive screen for COVID-19 symptoms, illness or diagnosis of a confirmed case of COVID-19, or following quarantine due to contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Return to school will be coordinated with the Westchester County Department of Health in alignment with CDC guidance, NYSED guidance and NYSDOH guidance. This guidance will be updated as needed.

- If an employee has **exhibited symptoms but in consultation with a health care provider was not diagnosed** with COVID-19, they can return to work/school once they have felt well and have had no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines; **or**, if they have been diagnosed with another condition and provide a written note stating they are clear to return to school.

- If an employee **tests positive for COVID-19, regardless of whether the employee is symptomatic or asymptomatic**, the employee may return to work upon completing at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of symptoms or 10 days of isolation after the first positive test if they remain asymptomatic. In addition, the individual must have been fever-free for three days without using fever-reducing medicine and it has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath. SWBOCES will notify the Westchester Department of Health of any positive test results to determine what steps are needed for the school community.
- If an employee/student has been designated a close contact of someone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19, the employee/student may return to work/school upon completing at least 14 days of self-quarantine from the date of last exposure.
- NYS Department of Health considers a close contact to be someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the person isolated.
- If an employee has had **close contact with a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time and is not experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms**, the employee may return to work upon completing 14 days of self-quarantine.
- If an employee **becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms while at the workplace**, the employee must be sent home immediately and follow the guidance above.
- All staff and students must follow the guidelines provided in the NYS COVID-19 travel advisory when traveling internationally or to any states referenced in the travel advisory. <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>

SWBOCES will refer to the DOH's "Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure" regarding protocols and policies for faculty and staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the faculty or staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19. In addition, we will also refer to the DOH's "Interim Guidance for Quarantine Restrictions on Travelers Arriving in New York State Following Out of State Travel." Please see the links below.

https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/06/doh_covid19_publicprivateemployeeereturntowork_053120.pdf

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>

Hygiene and Cleaning

Hand Hygiene

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not available.
- Key times to clean hands include:
 - Before and after the school/workday
 - Before and after work breaks or recess
 - After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing
 - After using the restroom
 - Before eating or preparing food
 - After putting on, touching, or removing masks/face coverings
- Hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol will be provided in the wall dispensers and at the copiers and printers.
- Staff and students must sanitize their hands and copier/printer buttons before and after using the copier/printer. Sanitizer will be provided.
- Immediately wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean hands with a sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - CDC Poster—Social Distancing & Face Coverings:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID19-social-distancing-cloth-face-coverings.pdf>
 - CDC Poster—Stop the Spread of Germs:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>

Space Considerations for Safety

Classroom Capacity

- All instructional spaces will be at a capacity not to exceed recommended guidelines.
- All instructional spaces will be arranged to provide proper social distancing.

Medically Vulnerable High Risk Staff & Students

SWBOCES is committed to providing a safe work and learning environment for staff and students. SWBOCES recognizes that certain populations are considered at increased risk

during the COVID-19 pandemic. The CDC has issued guidance on groups that are at increased risk and may require additional accommodations beyond the safety measures already put in place. Please refer to the following link for more information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html>

Any staff member with an underlying condition that puts them at increased risk may request a possible accommodation. The process is as follows:

- Employee will notify HR of their request for an accommodation.
- Employee will complete and return to HR an Accommodation Form, which includes information provided by their health care provider.
- HR will schedule a meeting with the employee to discuss work duties and possible reasonable accommodation.
- HR will schedule a meeting with the employee's supervisor to review essential functions of the job and possible reasonable accommodations.
- HR will meet with the employee to discuss reasonable accommodations and follow up with a final decision via letter.

Students with special needs, or who may be medically fragile or have underlying health conditions or concerns, may not be able to adhere to safety protocols requiring the use of face coverings, social distancing or hand hygiene. School Nurses will work directly with individual students and their families to identify how best to meet the child's needs at school, while continuing to protect their health and safety. Also included in the development of individual student plans will be the school principal, teachers, clinicians and related service providers and the child's health care provider, as appropriate.

Response to Positive COVID diagnosis or Potential Concern

COVID-19 is a health crisis that impacts all aspects of our society including schools. The partnership between state and local government, NYSED and schools in managing the crisis is ongoing and informed by guidance. Decisions regarding the response to positive COVID diagnosis or concerns will be informed by the guidance and made in collaboration with the Westchester County Department of Health.

Southern Westchester BOCES offers programming at numerous centers and within component districts, where component districts serve as hosts for our programming. Closure of programming will be taken very seriously, considering multiple factors that include: presence of or potential presence of COVID-19 within one of our programs, at or within one of our host districts, absentee rates of faculty, staff, and students, as well as determinations made by the NYS Department of Health, State Education Department, Westchester County Departments of Health and the COVID response team. Collaboration with the Westchester County Department of Health will be ongoing and data informed decision making will be used. Parameters allowing schools to continue in person instruction are clearly outlined and active cases are tracked daily.

(<https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov/views/NYS-COVID19-Tracker/NYSDOHCOVID-19Tracker-DailyTracker?%3Aembed=yes&%3Atoolbar=no&%3Atabs=n>);

Southern Westchester BOCES will cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing, according to requirements of the New York State Education Department. The Director of Human Resources will serve as the COVID 19 Resource Contact Person and be the primary contact and assist the Westchester Department of Health in knowing who may have had contact at school with a confirmed case. The COVID response team will continue to serve as a resource and provide leadership throughout this period. A member of that team, the District Deputy Superintendent/ COO, will serve as COVID 19 Safety Coordinator. Because SWBOCES has multiple divisions and almost 1,000 employees it is important that there is a resource person to support each division. Executive Team members will serve this role for their divisions, working closely with the Director of Human Resources who will remain the primary contact with the Westchester Department of Health. Each member of the SWBOCES Leadership team will be responsible for responding to daily concerns, assuring systems are working well to operationalize the processes and protocols in the SWBOCES Reopening Plan and assist members of their team in understanding guidance and the district plan.

Systems throughout the Southern Westchester district will be reviewed to assure that attendance records for both staff and students are up to date. Student schedules need to be updated regularly. Sign in sheets for visitors will include date, time and location of visit.

Southern Westchester BOCES will follow all requirements for assisting local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual at school in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.

Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. Our staff will not try to determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the local department of health.

Considerations for Closing

Any changes to the operational activities of our facilities and programs will be determined by the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator, district level staff, and the Westchester County Health Department in accordance with guidance. Decisions will be informed by metrics provided by the NYS and Westchester County Department of Health.

In the event of any multiple day program closure, the **Southern Westchester Plan for Remote Instruction** will be immediately implemented and all health and safety protocols will be in place.

SWBOCES School Health Office

Under the direction of the School Medical Director, and in collaboration with School Nurses, a District-Level reopening plan and protocols will be developed, to include, but not limited to:

- Management of individuals who are ill
- Procedures for the use of isolation rooms, in compliance with CDC and NYSDOH guidelines
- Communication with staff, students and families regarding safety protocols and procedures
- Providing students requiring special physical care from paraprofessionals or school nurses with adequate privacy and PPE for procedures and providing staff and students with appropriate PPE (masks, gloves, shields, gowns)
- Development of a training program for students on face coverings, hand washing, social distancing and respiratory hygiene
- Providing signage and periodic reminders on cough etiquette, mask use, hand hygiene and safe distancing
- Reporting procedures and requirements in the event of a positive case (notification to state and local health departments and cooperation with contact tracing efforts, while maintaining confidentiality)
- Documentation requirements for all Health Office visits
- Use of PPE when providing respiratory treatments (suctioning or using peak flow meters, administering nebulizer treatments)
- Required physical examinations, proof of health examinations

Under the direction of the School Medical Director, in collaboration with School Nurses and principals, needed trainings will be identified, planned and provided, to include:

- Nursing assessment of ill staff and students
- Training program for students and staff on reporting requirements
- Proper use of PPE
- COVID-19 prevention

Under the direction of the School Medical Director, in collaboration with School Nurses and Principals, within the guidelines of the District-Wide Health Office Reopening Plan, Building-Level Reopening plans will be developed, to include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Identification of isolation room locations, additional alternate locations and procedures for use
- Building level staff, student, parent and district communication
- Development of plans for families to pick up students or arrange for safe transportation home if they become ill at school
- Building level communication protocols regarding student temperature check.

Facilities

- Modifications to spaces or additional space may be required to comply with social distancing. All work will be done in compliance with all applicable codes, rules and regulations.
- All safety drills, including fire drills and lockdown drills will be conducted per NYSED requirements and will observe social distancing guidelines wherever possible.
- Annual Visual Inspection will be performed during the 2020-21 school year.
- Lead-in-water testing will be conducted during 2020-21 school year upon approval from NYSED.
- All spaces are being evaluated, and maximum capacity is being calculated to determine safe occupancy levels.
- Water dispensers with single-use cups will be available as required. Water fountains will be disabled to reduce cross contact.
- Restrooms will be available, but occupancy will be limited to comply with social distancing guidelines.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers are installed in multiple locations at all SWBOCES locations
- All ventilation systems will be assessed and will be operating as designed. Air filters will be upgraded to the highest practical MERV rating.
- All occupied spaces will be cleaned and disinfected between uses by different “pods” of students. All occupied spaces will be cleaned and disinfected daily or more frequently if required.
- All staff will be trained in cleaning methods that will ensure proper cleanliness and disinfection levels in all SWBOCES facilities.
- All facilities will use high-performance cleaning and disinfecting products (COVID-approved) and methods.
- All facilities will maintain cleaning logs indicating work date(s), areas cleaned, cleaning staff and any additional information to ensure proper procedures are followed.
- All applicable Operations and Maintenance staff and contractors will be fit-tested for N95-rated face masks.
- Cleaning products will be supplied to classrooms as requested. Staff-supplied cleaning products will not be allowed.

Social Emotional Well Being

SWBOCES is committed to enhancing our school community by acknowledging the necessity to take care of ourselves and each other, physically and emotionally. Activities and resources to do this are embedded throughout the organization.

Social Emotional Well Being of Staff

SWBOCES provides all staff members with access to professional learning opportunities, access to mental health resources and time to partake in team/group activities to share ideas in a supportive, encouraging environment.

Some of the ongoing avenues available to our employees include but are not limited to:

- SWBOCES participates in a 24/7 Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This provides confidential and experienced assistance to help an employee and their family resolve personal problems that affect their health, family, or job. In addition to assessment and referral services, the EAP provides information, education, and consultation both independently and in concert with other professional resources. EAP is designed specifically for educators. It offers a number of solutions for personal problems and a targeted menu of benefits and resources addressing the unique professional issues in an educational community. EAP starts with all the traditional counseling services designed to address significant life problems, and they add Work/Life benefits to address the everyday problems involved in juggling work and family. The goal of the EAP is to help all employees achieve their peak performance best through training, coaching and wellness. They can be reached by phone at 1-800-666-5327, at <https://www.theeap.com/educators-eap> or through the SWBOCES website. In addition, monthly newsletters are shared via email with all staff members.
- To assist staff members during these unprecedented times, SWBOCES has set up a “Coronavirus Resources for Employees” page on our district website https://www.swboces.org/groups/49386/human_resources/draft_covid19_hr_resources. The page includes:
 - A Coronavirus Resource Flyer
 - Frequently asked HR Question section
 - Summary of Benefits Providers with contact information
 - Active links to the CDC, NYS Department of Health, the DOL, and local health departments.
 - Mental Health Service Providers
 - Tips for Coping while Social Distancing
 - Information flyers and forms for the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and NYS Paid Sick Leave Law
- SWBOCES runs a Center for Professional Development and Curriculum Support. This service includes ongoing training, guidance and webinars on topics that include school building and community safety and wellness; crisis prevention and intervention; race, equity and social justice; and various additional initiatives on all topics related to school and social environments. In addition, the Lower Hudson Regional Information Center (LHRIC) of SWBOCES offers training through NY Model Schools. This Core Service provides instructional technology, professional development and other optional services for staff members.

- To offer support and guidance specifically to new teachers, counselors, social workers, therapists and administrators SWBOCES has a Mentoring Program. Mentoring provides personalized and intensive support to new employees in the professions mentioned. To assist in transition, SWB acknowledges the importance of helping personnel, new to their professions, by offering an environment that facilitates growth and development through guidance and support. A catalogue of events are available on MyLearningPlan.
- Each year, SWBOCES provides all new and returning staff members online training in several mandated areas through the Global Compliance Network (GCN). These areas include: Prevention and Emergency Response in K-12 Schools; Mental Illness Awareness for Educators; FERPA; Digital Security Protection; NYS Ed. Law 2D; Bloodborne Pathogens; Child Abuse; Dignity for All Students Act/Code of Conduct and Hazard Communications. In addition, GCN has a repository of over 100 optional training sessions on a variety of topics related to a school environment. These include six sections related to an understanding of COVID-19 and best practices that can be followed to help keep our staff and students as safe as possible.
- The Human Resource Department schedules monthly drop-in sessions at each site. HR staff will be available via virtual sessions to answer staff questions and share resources.
- SWBOCES has informed all staff to send any questions related to the COVID-19 district response to the Director of Communication, who in turn shares those questions with the District Response Team for review. Answers are shared either via email with all staff or with the leadership team.
- Superintendent conference days are held prior to the re-entry of students where staff will be provided with the opportunity to discuss preparedness for teaching and learning in the COVID-19 environment. Staff will also be given the opportunity to discuss related concerns. Opportunities are provided monthly for ongoing support to staff.

Social Emotional Well Being of Students

SWBOCES offers a variety of student programs, many of which have a therapeutic approach embedded within. Additionally, all student programs, including Special Education and Career Services students, incorporate *Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools* (TCIS)-researched strategies into the classroom environment. Implementing a Connected Learning Environment in all classrooms is a district-wide goal, and all staff members have received annual TCIS training. Also, some staff members at each site have participated in additional TCIS training and are certified to serve as TCIS Response Team members.

SWBOCES will also be developing a district-wide and building-level comprehensive developmental school counseling plan to meet current needs, which will include the establishment of shared decision-making teams or advisory council. School Counselors, Social Workers and Psychologists will be invited to participate in the development of the comprehensive developmental school counseling plan. Strategies to provide resources and referrals to address mental health, behavioral and emotional support services and programs will be included in the plan, as will the identification of professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on how to support students during and after the current public health emergency.

Technology and Connectivity

Through thoughtfully constructed surveys, parents, students, and staff were contacted and asked to participate in gathering data related to their access to devices and high speed internet. Surveys were conducted in multiple languages. All constituents involved in the survey were asked if they have adequate access to a device should we need to return to a modality of remote teaching/learning. The survey also inquired about adequate internet access for engagement in remote activities as part of teaching and learning.

Based on the survey responses, a small population of students and teachers lack the adequate access to devices and internet needed for remote and/or distance learning. In order to address the needs of students and teachers the following actions will be taken:

Devices for staff members

All teachers in the K-12 space will be given a 1:1 device for use as part of their digital toolbox. All teachers will receive either a laptop, Chromebook or custom device based upon their teaching role. These tools will be issued for the life of the device while they are employed by the district.

Internet access for staff

A small percentage of teachers indicated they do not have adequate internet access at home for remote teaching. In order to address this need, teachers can consult with the technology department members on how to purchase additional Internet access for their home and/or what is needed to ensure adequate access. Teaching staff can work with the technology department to determine if there are any low-cost solutions available for state employees through local ISPs or cellular providers. If this is not financially possible, then the use of cellular hotspot devices can be employed as a short-term solution should remote teaching become necessary in the future. These devices can be used on short-term loan during remote instruction periods.

Teaching and Learning

Southern Westchester BOCES offers K-12 special education programs as well as career and technical education programs for students in grades 11-12. Adult and Community Education programs include workforce development, practical nursing, adult literacy, high school equivalency and incarcerated youth.

Center for Adult & Community Services

Sprain Brook Academy

In- person instruction is planned with teachers moving from classroom to classroom.

- Department of Correction (DOC) will transport students in accordance with DOC regulations. Teachers will provide individual work for each student as they arrive until all students arrive for classes.
- If needed (depending upon enrollment), students will attend school on an alternate day schedule: A/B day.
- Hybrid instruction could resume if necessary, using paper packets of academic materials and tele-visits.

Small Spaces

Sprain Brook Academy

- Non-contact greetings will be used
- No hallway socializing is allowed.
- Staff will utilize the locker room with no more than two people at a time occupying the space.
- There will be no shared electronics (varies from past practice).

Faculty and Staff Meetings

Faculty and staff meetings will occur using video conferencing (Zoom or Teams) or telephone conference to facilitate disseminating information to all. All on-site meetings will adhere to appropriate social distancing requirements.

Sprain Brook Academy

In- Person Instruction

- Each classroom will be equipped with single desks that are spaced 6 feet apart.
- If needed, students will attend school on an alternate day schedule: A/B day.
 - If the school utilizes an A/B day schedule, students will be scheduled according to their housing blocks where possible.
- Students will be assigned seating, where their materials will remain daily.
- Students will not be allowed to bring materials into the school wing.
- Students will not be allowed to leave the school wing with materials.
- Any shared books will be isolated for a period of 48 hours or based on the latest CDC guidelines.
- Remote or Hybrid Instruction will include teachers creating content area instructional packets for students and sending and receiving them via SWBOCES/WCDOC personnel. Televisits through secure portal scheduled for students with each content area teacher arranged.

Shared Objects

Sprain Brook Academy

Students will not share objects in the classroom and teachers will bring their own BOCES owned device to each classroom for use.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation System

As required by the New York State Education Department, the SWBOCES APPR Plan will be fully implemented during the 2020-21 school year. The APPR committee will meet by September 15, 2020 to discuss possible variances to assure that the evaluation process in a fluctuating instructional environment continues to align with our commitment to using teacher and principal evaluation systems as a meaningful feedback cycle. A continued partnership with NYSED and collaboration with bargaining units will be leveraged to bring all parties together in this goal. Teacher and Principal rubrics will be used to inform discussions of equity and create a connected learning environment for all.

Certification, Incidental Teaching and Substitute Teaching

SWBOCES' Human Resources Department ensures that all certified staff hold a valid and appropriate certificate for their assignment except where otherwise allowable under the Commissioner's regulations (e.g. incidental teaching) or Education Law.

Prior to board appointment, the Human Resources Department verifies all new candidates' certification using the "TEACH" System. Once board-approved, certifications and their expiration dates are entered into Wincap for each new hire. Twice a year a report is generated from

Wincap to identify staff members with certification that will expire over the next 12 months. Identified staff members are contacted by the Director of Human Resources and reminded to begin the application process and contact the Regional Certification Officer with any questions about the process. The Director of Human Resources works closely with the Regional Certification Officers to track staff applications and ensure that they are processed in a timely manner and all staff are properly certified for their assignment.

To assist SWBOCES with filling staff absences because of the COVID-19 crisis, SWBOCES will utilize the following strategies.

- SWBOCES will engage in posting and recruiting for additional certified substitute teachers to increase the pool of available substitutes.
- SWBOCES will also actively identify institutions of higher education where students pursuing a certification by attending at least 6 semester hours of classes may be employed as a substitute.
- SWBOCES may implement the flexibility provided by Commissioner's Regulation 80-5.3 regarding incidental teaching. The SWBOCES District Superintendent may assign a certified teacher to teach a subject not covered by his or her certificate (incidental teaching) for a period not to exceed 10 classroom hours a week during the 2020-2021 school year, when no certified or qualified teacher is available, after extensive and documented recruitment.
- Finally, if additional substitute coverage is necessary during the 2020-2021 school year, SWBOCES may employ substitute teachers who do not hold a valid teaching certificate and are not working toward certification, but who hold a high school diploma or equivalent. These substitutes may be employed by SWBOCES beyond the 40-day limit for up to an additional 50 days (90 days total in a school year). This applies if the district superintendent certifies that SWBOCES has conducted a good faith recruitment search for a properly certified candidate, and there are no available certified teachers that can perform the duties of such position. In rare circumstances, SWBOCES may hire a substitute teacher beyond the 90 days if the district superintendent attests that a good faith recruitment search has been conducted, there are still no available certified teachers who can perform the duties of such position, and that a particular substitute teacher is needed to work with a specific class or group of students until the end of the school year.

About COVID-19

[According to the CDC](http://www.cdc.org/coronavirus), the best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure to the virus. (link: <http://www.cdc.org/coronavirus>)

How is COVID-19 mainly spread?

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

- By touching surfaces and objects with the virus on it.

When are people most contagious?

People with COVID-19 spread the most when they are showing symptoms of COVID-19, but people who are infectious but asymptomatic for COVID-19 are able to spread the virus.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, chills, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, nasal congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell.

[Source: Westchester County Department of Health](https://health.westchestergov.com/2019-novel-coronavirus)

(<https://health.westchestergov.com/2019-novel-coronavirus>)

What If I Get Sick?

If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you might be, [the CDC advises](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html) that you stay home except to seek medical care. If you become ill at work, return home and notify your supervisor as soon as you are able to do so after seeking medical care.

(link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>)

Anyone who tests positive; who is symptomatic and has not been tested; or who has had close contact with a person with COVID-19 who is symptomatic must self-quarantine for 10 days before returning.

Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and are able to recover at home without medical care. Take care of yourself. Get rest and stay hydrated. If you have trouble breathing or other concerning symptoms, call 911 for immediate help.

Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider and local health department. Your local health authorities will give instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.

The decision to stop home isolation should be made in consultation with your healthcare provider and state and local health departments. The decision to return to work should be made only after first consulting with your supervisor.

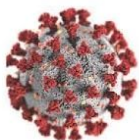
If you have been diagnosed with or exposed to someone who has had COVID-19, please refer to this guidance document from the New York State Department of Health: [Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/06/doh_covid19_publicprivateemployeeereturntowork_053120.pdf).

Link:

https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/06/doh_covid19_publicprivateemployeeereturntowork_053120.pdf

CDC guidance posters

What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others



Know about COVID-19

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.



Know how COVID-19 is spread

- You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person.
- You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.



Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

- There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Practice social distancing

- Buy groceries and medicine, go to the doctor, and complete banking activities online when possible.
- If you must go in person, stay at least 6 feet away from others and disinfect items you must touch.
- Get deliveries and takeout, and limit in-person contact as much as possible.



Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.
- There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but you can seek medical care to help relieve your symptoms.
- If you need medical attention, call ahead.



Know your risk for severe illness

- Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19.
- Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more severe illness.



CS 314937A 06/01/2020

cdc.gov/coronavirus

Help Protect Yourself and Others from COVID-19

Practice Social Distancing



Stay 6 feet (2 arm's lengths) from other people.

And Wear a Cloth Face Covering



Be sure it covers your nose and mouth to help protect others.
You could be infected and not have symptoms.



cdc.gov/coronavirus

CS 17/29/4 05/29/2020

How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Cloth Face Covering

Accessible: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

WEAR YOUR FACE COVERING CORRECTLY

- Wash your hands before putting on your face covering
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- Do not place a mask on a child younger than 2



USE THE FACE COVERING TO HELP PROTECT OTHERS

- Wear a face covering to help protect others in case you're infected but don't have symptoms
- Keep the covering on your face the entire time you're in public
- Don't put the covering around your neck or up on your forehead
- Don't touch the face covering, and, if you do, clean your hands

FOLLOW EVERYDAY HEALTH HABITS

- Stay at least 6 feet away from others
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Wash your hands often, with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds each time
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available



TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTH FACE COVERING CAREFULLY, WHEN YOU'RE HOME

- Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- Handle only by the ear loops or ties
- Fold outside corners together
- Place covering in the washing machine
- Wash your hands with soap and water



Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators, both of which should be saved for health care workers and other medical first responders.

For instructions on making a cloth face covering, see:

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Links to Posters

What You Should Know About COVID-19

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y1YhXu7VQc-e8i3peSw8pg5deb083grU/view?usp=sharing>

How to Protect Yourself and Others from COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID19-social-distancing-cloth-face-coverings.pdf>

How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Face Covering

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering.pdf>

Stop the Spread of Germs

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>

Helpful Links

[**INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT PRE-K TO GRADE 12 SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**](#)

[**Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing: The Spirit of New York's Schools - Reopening Guidance**](#)

[**NY Forward Safety Plan Template**](#)

[**Reopening NY Office-based Work Guidelines for Employers and Employees**](#)

[**CDC Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes**](#)

[**CDC COVID-19 Landing Page**](#)

[**CDC COVID-19 Symptoms**](#)

[**EPA Coronavirus Page**](#)

[**OSHA - COVID-19 Page**](#)

[**NYS Department of Health Novel Coronavirus webpage**](#)

[**NYSED COVID-19 Resource Page**](#)

[**Westchester County Department of Health**](#)

[**Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center**](#)

[**NYS DOH COVID-19 Tracker**](#)

[**WC DOH: Do I Need to Quarantine or Isolate?**](#)

[**DOH COVID-19 Testing**](#)

Video Resources

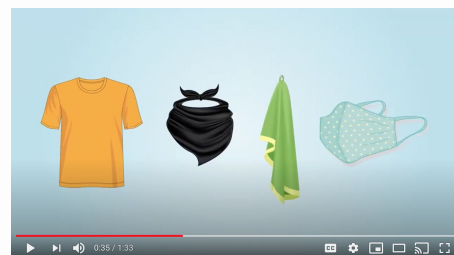
- [**Stop the Spread of Germs \(CDC\)**](#)



- [**What You Need to Know About Handwashing \(CDC\)**](#)



- [**Wear a Cloth Face Covering \(CDC\)**](#)



- [Managing Anxiety & Stress \(CDC\)](#)



Guide to Acronyms in this Document

ACCES	Adult Career and Continuing Education Services	HS	High School
APPR	Annual Performance Plan Review	IEP	Individualized Educational Plan
ATI	Assessment Technologies Institute	LHRIC	Lower Hudson Regional Information Center
BOCES	Board of Cooperative Educational Services	MS	Middle School
CACS	Center for Adult & Community Services	NYS	New York State
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	NYSDOH	New York State Department of Health
COO	Chief Operating Officer	NYSED	New York State Education Department
CoSer	Cooperative Service	O&M	Operations and Maintenance
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019	PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
CSS	Center for Special Services	RAEN	Regional Adult Education Network
DOC	Department of Correction	SEL	Social Emotional Learning
CTE	Career and Technical Education	SEPTA	Special Education Parent Teacher Association
DOH	Department of Health	SWBOCES	Southern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services
DOL	Department of Labor	TCIS	Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools
EAP	Employee Assistance Program	VDI	Virtual Desktop Infrastructure
ELL	English Language Learner	WBL	Work-based Learning
EPE	Employment Preparation Education	WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act		
GCN	Global Compliance Network		
HR	Human Resources		