



East Haddam Public Schools
Reopening Plan
7-22-2020



Introduction

East Haddam Public Schools are preparing for the fall of 2020 with a plan and two alternatives to support our students, families, and staff through this time of pandemic.

Our goals:

- ❖ to mitigate risk of COVID-19 exposure to our students, staff, and families
- ❖ to maintain high quality learning experiences for all of our students
- ❖ to embed flexibility and adaptability in order to respond to unique needs of our community members



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STATE GUIDANCE

At the State Board of Education meeting on July 14 the SBE voted to change the required days for student attendance from 180 to 177 student school days. The three days will continue to be staff attendance days for the purpose of professional development for the COVID related protocols and procedures. As a result, the first day of school for students will be Tuesday, September 1, 2020.

The State Department of Education provided a template for this plan, a guidance document for this process among many other resources. A key piece of this guidance is the state's expectation that districts create three distinct plans for student attendance. The different plans enable districts to prepare for the possibility of changing attendance models during the school year. While there is hope that our COVID-19 infection rates will continue to diminish, it continues to be prudent to be prepared for the possibility that infection rates increase and increased exposure risk compels the state to direct districts to operate at different levels.

The State Department of Education will notify districts which one of the attendance models is to be implemented. This is not a district decision.

The East Haddam Public Schools will appoint a COVID Liaison for the district.
Contact information:

East Haddam COVID Liaison
860-873-5090
Covid.liaison@easthaddamschools.org



ATTENDANCE MODELS

East Haddam developed three levels of attendance for the 2020-2021 school year.

LEVEL 1

Level 1 allows access for 100% of students to attend school physically in the school building. Parents may choose the distance-learning format. A process for parents to notify the school that they are planning to attend through distance learning will be communicated no later than August 21.

Should a parent choose to keep their child home for distance-learning and then would like to return to in-school classes, the district requests families provide one week's notice to schools to properly prepare the classroom and teachers for the students return.

Attendance will be taken for all students.



ATTENDANCE MODELS

LEVEL 2

Level 2 attendance restricts access to the buildings by 50% of students. To accomplish this, only 50% of students at a time are able to physically attend classes in the school buildings.

Scheduling this in an equitable manner is done by allowing 50% attend in the school building on Mondays and Tuesdays while 50% attends in the school building on Thursdays and Fridays.

Students will be distance-learning when they are not attending school in the buildings and on Wednesdays. The Wednesday allows for the more intense cleaning and sanitization of the school facilities.

The 50% will be grouped alphabetically by household. All households will be kept together regardless of multiple last names in the households.

Parents may choose a 100% distance-learning format.



ATTENDANCE MODELS

LEVEL 3

100% of students are learning through distance-learning. Students will be required to follow the school-day schedules.

Please note: The scheduling of classes to follow the regular school day is a change from the 2020 spring sessions for the elementary school and middle schools. The high school followed the school-day times and schedules last spring.



ACADEMIC PROGRAM

PK-12 students will be issued Chromebooks at the prior to or at the start of the 2020-2021 school year regardless of the student being in the school or at home participating in the distance learning model.

Instruction will occur simultaneously for both in-building and with distance-learning.

50% of the classroom instructional time is conducted in live interaction with the teachers to promote connection and a sense of classroom community.

Every class session will have a portion of the instructional delivery via teacher video. Videos may be prepared in advance of the lesson.

All student, in-school and distance learning, will follow a schedule based on their normal school start and end times.



TRANSPORTATION

Social distancing strategies:

Parent Transport:

While 100% of students will have the opportunity to ride the school bus, parents, when possible, are encouraged to transport their students to school. By August 24, parents will receive a form requesting them to indicate if they plan to transport their child to school. Parents are asked to allow a minimum of two school-days' notice when changing their status from 'parent driven' to 'taking the bus'.

Shortening Route Times:

Busses will not stop at bus stops where parents have indicated they will be driving their child to school. Decreasing the number of stops will decrease the length of the bus ride therefore decreasing the opportunity for illness spread.

Students will exit the bus upon arrival at the school to avoid sitting on the bus for additional time.

Minimize Proximity and Contact:

Students are expected to load from the back to the front of the bus unless otherwise directed.

Students are expected to sit with students from the same household while on the bus

Personal Protective Equipment:

Drivers and students are expected to wear masks at all times on the bus.

Masks will be available for students whom do not have one when getting on the bus



TRANSPORTATION (continued)

Bus Cleaning and Sanitization:

DATTCO initiated additional cleaning and sanitation protocols to support daily disinfection of buses.

Adapting the Response to Transmission Risk levels:

Responding to changes in COVID-19 transmission risk (Low or Moderate Risk.):

These risk levels and the data benchmarks for these terms are not yet released to districts.

In the event that the East Haddam Public Schools are required by state government to shift from Level 1, 100% access to building based learning to Level 2, the 50% or hybrid plan, or to Level 3, the 100% distance-learning model. Transportation transmission risk will decrease with both of these alternative plans.



STRATEGIES FOR MITIGATION

A. Staying Home

- a. Students and staff members alike are encouraged to stay home when they have symptoms

B. Symptom Vigilance

- a. Success in identifying and responding to symptoms of COVID-19 in our schools will require the coordinated efforts on the part of the entire community. Parents, educators, and students will be asked to support the district to reduce risk to the school community by working collaboratively.
- b. Training for symptom identification and communication will be shared with staff and families
- c. Protocols are being developed to support parents and staff to report symptoms as outlined by the Department of Public Health and CDC guidelines.

C. Social Distancing

- a. Educating Ourselves:
Our first line of defense with social distancing is to have all educators and students learn effective strategies for ensuring social distancing with students.
- b. Redesign Classroom spaces:
 - i. Increase distance between individuals (staff and students)
 - ii. Classroom furniture is limited to desks, tables and chairs.
 - iii. Desks/tables are spaced out throughout the classroom for maximum distance.
- c. Clear plastic dividers on tables where increasing distance between students is not possible
- d. Cafeterias, or during meal service, dividers will be used.
- e. Markings (tape) on tables to promote distancing.



STRATEGIES FOR MITIGATION (continued)

D. Hallway Management

- a. Directional and spacing markings are affixed to the floors to guide students and staff to increase social distancing. These markings include arrows for directions and dots for spacing.

E. Restrooms & social distancing:

- a. Signage, consistent with CDC guidance, is posted to support social distancing, hand washing, and hand sanitizer use.
- b. Limiting number of stalls available
- c. Cohorts assigned to bathrooms
- d. Signage for restricted use.

F. Face Coverings/Masks:

- a. Per state guidance, all students and staff will wear facemasks while in the building.
- b. Students and staff are encouraged to bring re-usable and washable masks from home. Masks and other protective equipment have been purchased by the district and will be made available for anyone requiring one. (Either Child or Adult)
- c. Students are encouraged to bring three masks a day. Having additional masks support students to change masks if they become damaged or soiled.
- d. Masks must be appropriate for the school setting. Masks that disrupt the school environment will not be permitted.

*Administration may require a student to use a district provided mask in the event that a mask is insufficient, broken, or disruptive.

Mask Exemptions:

Students may be exempted from wearing a face coverings if he/she is unable to remove the mask without assistance [per CDC guidance](#).

Students may be exempted from wearing a mask where it is unsafe to wear a face covering. Alternative face coverings, such as face shields, may be required.



STRATEGIES FOR MITIGATION (continued)

G. Symptom Monitoring:

In collaboration with the Chatham Health Department, the district nursing services will monitor symptoms for the duration of the pandemic.

H. Auxiliary Health Room:

Each school has established a room, separate from the health office, to support students whom exhibit symptoms of COVID-19.

I. Limitation of necessary visitors only**J. Entry and exit procedures** adjusted to eliminate time with students waiting in groups.



COHORTS

Cohorts will be established for students of all grades. The size of the cohorts varies by grade level as a result of the programmatic differences.

Grades PK-4

Pre-Kindergarten through fourth grade cohorts are based on each classroom groups of students.

Students will stay with their class during the school day. Unified Arts and Specials teachers will teach in the grade level classrooms to decrease student contact and exposure among multiple cohorts.

Grade 5 through 12

Cohorts will be based on grade level. The size of these Cohorts range from 70 – 85.



INCIDENT RESPONSE

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is initiated when an exposure to students/staff is identified. Tracing will be conducted in consultation with local and state health departments

Cancellation of Classes

In order to meet this goal, the decision to cancel, which will be made by the Superintendent of Schools, follows the escalation order of:

1. Individual, 2. Cohort, 3. Multiple Cohorts, 4. School-Wide, 5. District-Wide

The length of cancellation will follow CDC guidelines and health department advice.

The length of cancellation will vary according to the Timing of COVID-19 test results and guidance from the CDC, state and local health departments.

Communication:

Communication for COVID-19 Exposure will include:

- Communicate with parent/guardian of exposed student
- Contact local health department
- Conduct contact tracing process in collaboration with local health department
- Identifying Cohort(s) that have had an exposure
- Communicate with parents/guardians

Student and Staff Dismissal Policy:

Students and staff with one or more COVID-19 symptoms will be dismissed from school.



FOOD SERVICES

School Meals and distribution

School meals will continue to be available to students. At the beginning of the year, the school meals will be similar to the grab and go lunches currently available during the summer.

School lunches will meet all state and federal guidelines.

Meal distribution will be available for students in distance learning and students attending in school.

Meal distribution in school will be adjusted to support social distancing. Schools are identifying outdoor spaces and other larger areas that would support students to social distance for lunch.

Meal distribution for students on distance learning will be communicated. Guidance from state and federal agencies is required prior to a final plan.



SPECIAL NEEDS

With administrative support, special education case managers will meet with parents and students to identify unique challenges for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and 504 Plans.

With administrative support, case managers will identify instruction related obstacles to program delivery presented by Personal Protective Equipment or social distancing guidelines.



FAMILY SUPPORT & COMMUNICATION

Communication with Families

Reopening information sessions at schools with school specific information before reopening.

Safety expectations for students and visitors will be communicated to parents via email, website, and in introductory sessions.

School principals and nurses will serve as primary liaisons for schools.



FAQ

Question 1

How do I choose distance learning in Level 1 or Level 2?

Answer: An application for distance learning will be sent to every parent before the start of school. Each student planning to attend via distance learning will need an application submitted.

Question 2

How do I know what symptoms to check for?

Answer: The State Department of Health will be issuing guidance on the precise symptoms to monitor.

Question 2

What data benchmarks or cut points will the State Department of Education use to inform districts that they need to change from level 1 to level 2?

Answer: The state has not provided any metrics for this decision-making.



Please note that all plans and items included in this document are subject to change based on requirements and/or advice from the Governor of Connecticut, the Connecticut State Department of Education, and the Chatham Health District.

Contact the Superintendent of Schools for additional information and/or questions:

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Moodus, Connecticut 06469

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