

# **IPSWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS RETURN TO LEARN 2020-2021**



Submitted to the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

8/14/2020

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Letter from Superintendent</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Academic Calendar</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>COVID-19 Response Leaders</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Nimble Systems Committee</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>School Facilities/Reopening Oversight Committee</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Buildings</b>	<b>8-9</b>
<b>Guiding Principles</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Three Learning Models</b>	<b>9-19</b>
<b>Hybrid Learning Model</b>	
<b>Individual Level Plans</b>	
<b>Elementary Schools</b>	
<b>Middle School</b>	
<b>High School</b>	
<b>In-Person Learning Model</b>	
<b>Remote Learning Model</b>	
<b>Social Emotional Supports</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Extracurricular Activities and Sports</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Technology for Hybrid and Remote Options</b>	<b>20-21</b>
<b>Student and Staff Devices and Additional Hardware</b>	
<b>Remote Technical Support</b>	
<b>Student/Family Support</b>	
<b>Infrastructure and Filtering Off-Campus</b>	
<b>Digital Learning and Technology Tools</b>	
<b>Learning Around Digital Tools</b>	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS, Page 2

<b>Health and Safety Requirements</b>	<b>21-24</b>
<b>Masks and Face Coverings</b>	
<b>Physical Distancing</b>	
<b>Classroom Configuration</b>	
<b>Screening for COVID-19 Symptoms</b>	
<b>Hand Hygiene</b>	
<b>COVID-19 Medical Waiting Room</b>	
<b>COVID-19 Testing in Schools</b>	
<b>Vaccines</b>	
<b>Health and Safety/PPE Supplies</b>	
<b>Visitors to the Buildings</b>	
<b>Certification of Health and Safety Requirements</b>	
<b>Courses Requiring Additional Safety Considerations</b>	<b>24-26</b>
<b>Chorus &amp; Singing Instruction</b>	
<b>Theater</b>	
<b>Band and the Use of Musical Instruments</b>	
<b>Physical Education</b>	
<b>Visual Arts</b>	
<b>Special Populations</b>	<b>27-29</b>
<b>Monitoring Student Progress</b>	
<b>Initial Evaluations, Reevaluations, and IEP Team Meetings</b>	
<b>Considerations for Special Populations: In-Person Learning</b>	
<b>Considerations for Special Populations: Hybrid Learning</b>	
<b>Considerations for Special Populations: Remote Learning</b>	
<b>School Facilities</b>	<b>29-31</b>
<b>Cleaning and Sanitization</b>	
<b>HVAC and Air Quality</b>	
<b>Improvement Projects</b>	
<b>Food Service</b>	<b>31-32</b>
<b>In-Person Learning Model with New Safety Protocols in Place</b>	
<b>Hybrid Learning Model</b>	
<b>Remote Learning Model</b>	

**TABLE OF CONTENTS, Page 3**

<b>Transportation</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Protocols for COVID-19 Scenarios</b>	<b>32-40</b>
<b>Most Common Symptoms of COVID-19 and Testing Requirements</b>	
<b>Protocol: Student or Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19</b>	
> <b>Elementary Schools</b>	
> <b>Middle and High Schools</b>	
<b>Protocol: Close Contact of Student or Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19</b>	
<b>Protocol: Student is Symptomatic at Home</b>	
<b>Protocol: Student is Symptomatic on the Bus</b>	
<b>Protocol: Student is Symptomatic at School</b>	
<b>Protocol: Staff is Symptomatic at Home</b>	
<b>Protocol: Staff is Symptomatic at School</b>	
<b>Protocols for Potential School Closure or District Closure</b>	<b>41-42</b>
<b>Protocol: Presence of Multiple Case in the School or District</b>	
<b>Protocol: Presence of Significant Number of Cases in a Municipality</b>	
<b>Protocol: Statewide Regression to a Previous Reopening Phase</b>	

# **Return to Learn**

## **2020-2021**

### **Executive Summary**

On August 6, 2020, the Ipswich School Committee voted to accept the recommendation of the School Facilities/Reopening Oversight Committee and the Superintendent to begin the 2020-2021 school year in a hybrid model with a fully remote option available. This model provides the best opportunity for students and staff to return to school safely in these unpredictable times. Ipswich Public Schools is prepared to “pivot” to a full in-person learning model or a complete remote model of learning if deemed necessary. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has mandated that school districts prepare three models, but focus on the model being used to open schools.

The following pages contain information and background on the development of the three plans, the participants in the planning, and detailed examples of schedules at each level of our system (Elementary, Middle, and High School). The document also contains information on the health and safety requirements put in place, facilities and cleaning, information on courses requiring special considerations (music, arts, and PE), and special populations. The document concludes with a number of protocols for dealing with suspected cases of COVID-19.

Please take some time to familiarize yourself with this document and the particular information regarding your particular school and circumstances. As you know, this situation continues to remain fluid and we will make adjustments as deemed necessary to maintain the health and safety of our staff, students, and families.

## Letter from Superintendent

Dear Parents, Staff, and Ipswich Community:

On March 12, 2020, the education of our students in Ipswich was turned on its head. Schools were forced to close amid concerns about the spreading COVID-19 pandemic. The Ipswich Public Schools quickly transformed from a brick and mortar learning model to a fully remote model in a matter of days. Our staff and students are to be commended for their flexibility and commitment to learning. From March until June, our students, teachers, and families engaged, to the best of their ability, in this new learning environment. How we are responding to this pandemic will be the subject of discussion in the annals of history.

As we prepare for the opening of the 2020-2021 school year, we are faced with many of the same issues. How do we safely provide an education to ALL of our students while taking into account the health, safety, and individual concerns of students, staff, and families? There are no easy answers. There is no one correct answer (unless, of course, the virus were to disappear completely and we go back to educating our students as we did prior to March 12!).

Over the summer, there have been several groups working on researching models, conducting surveys (including students, parents, and staff), having conversations with staff, analyzing the data, and reviewing the many documents that have been provided by the state and other parts of the country. The groups included teachers, parents, staff members, and several members of the School Committee. In June, DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) asked Districts to develop three models of education to be considered for the fall: a full reopening, a hybrid model of some sort, and a full remote learning model. The document before you is the culmination of that work.

On August 6, 2020, the Ipswich School Committee voted to support the recommendations of the Superintendent and Oversight Committee to begin the school year with a Hybrid Model. All three models are presented here, including significant detail of the Hybrid Model. The district is positioned to “pivot” to either a full in-person model or a complete remote model based on our local situation in terms of the pandemic.

We know that anxiety levels are high and that each family and staff member must make decisions that best fit their individual situations. As I said earlier, there is no one “right” or “correct” answer to this complex issue. The plans presented here are the best options that we feel will meet the needs of the greatest number of people involved. Please know that the health, safety, and well-being of all of our staff, students, and families will continue to be our main concern and we will quickly adapt to the changing conditions in the future.

I thank you for your continued support as we work together through this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian J. Blake  
Superintendent of Schools

## Academic Calendar

Based on the announcement from DESE to reduce the requirement from 180 days of student learning to 170 days, and in order to provide time for faculty to prepare for the return of students, the school calendar will be revised to have students start school on **Monday, September 14, 2020**. The start date for teachers will continue to be August 31, 2020. Changes to the school calendar are subject to School Committee approval. The Superintendent of Schools will notify parents and families of any changes to the school calendar.

## COVID -19 Response Leaders

In accordance with the guidance provided by DESE regarding the reopening of our schools, the district has designated COVID-19 Response Leaders at the district and building levels who are responsible for developing and implementing plans for their buildings in coordination with District personnel, the Nimble Systems Committee, and the Oversight Committee.

The COVID-19 Response Leader for the District is Dr. Brian J. Blake, Superintendent of Schools ([bblake@ipsk12.net](mailto:bblake@ipsk12.net)). The COVID-19 Response Leaders for the individual schools are:

Paul F. Doyon Memorial School Principal, Sheila Halloran ([shalloran@ipsk12.net](mailto:shalloran@ipsk12.net))  
Winthrop Elementary School Principal, Sheila McAdams ([smcadams@ipsk12.net](mailto:smcadams@ipsk12.net))  
Ipswich Middle School Principal, Kathleen McMahon ([kmcmahon@ipsk12.net](mailto:kmcmahon@ipsk12.net))  
Ipswich High School Principal, Jonathan Mitchell ([jmitchell@ipsk12.net](mailto:jmitchell@ipsk12.net))

## Nimble Systems Committee

The Nimble Systems Committee was formed as the result of a William Paine Grant through the Feoffees. The purpose of the Committee was to gather and review data and research, including our local surveys, on Hybrid and Remote Learning Models and make recommendations to the Oversight Committee. The group also developed a criteria list of high-quality Hybrid and Remote Learning components. They will continue to meet throughout the year with the administration to review and make recommendations for future revisions. Members of the Committee are:

Dr. Brian J. Blake, Superintendent of Schools  
Tracy Wagner, Director of Teaching and Learning  
Keith Borgen, Director of Technology  
Amy Gregory, Digital Learning Specialist  
Elyssa Brand, Special Education Program Manager, Doyon  
Gena Bevilacqua, Adjustment Counselor, IMS  
Rebecca Higgins, School Psychologist, Winthrop  
Lisa Nylén, ELL Teacher, Winthrop  
Jake Patterson, PE Teacher, IMS  
Rebecca Slawson, English Teacher, IHS  
Molly Smith, History and Social Sciences Teacher & Dept. Head, IHS  
Jen Vickery, Elementary Teacher, Doyon

## **School Facilities/Reopening Oversight Committee**

This group has been meeting weekly to hear reports including: from the administrators working on building plans; the Nimble Systems Committee; Chris Rais, our Facilities Director; Tom Gallagher, our Athletic Director; Jen Reed, representing the school nurses; and Colleen Fermon, Town of Ipswich Director of Public Health. The Committee reviewed survey data, questioned plans as they developed, and made a recommendation to the full School Committee for the Hybrid Learning Model. Members of this committee include:

Sara Gilliam, School Committee  
Carl Nylan, School Committee  
Chub Whitten, School Committee  
Dr. Brian J. Blake, Superintendent of Schools  
Joanne Cuff, Director of Finance & Operations  
Tom Gallagher, Director of Athletics  
Meghan Persson, Director of Food Services  
Chris Rais, Facilities Director  
Colleen Fermon, Town of Ipswich Director of Public Health  
Jeffrey Carovillano, Assistant Principal, IHS  
Laurie Colitti, Music Teacher/IEA Vice President  
Sean Fitzgerald, Assistant Principal, IMS  
Sheila Halloran, Principal, Doyon  
Sheila McAdams, Principal, Winthrop  
Kathleen McMahan, Principal, IMS  
Jonathan Mitchell, Principal, IHS  
Jennifer Reed, School Nurse, IMS  
Rebecca Slawson, High School English Teacher/IEA President  
Melissa Carver, Parent  
Moriah Marsh, Parent  
Jason Wertz, Parent

## **Buildings**

In addition to the above committees, the following people were also involved in developing the plans at the building level:

Jeff Carovillano, Assistant Principal  
Emily Chandler, Science Department Chair  
Jim DePue, Student and Employee Database Manager  
Gerald Dolan, Director of Fine Arts  
Tom Gallagher, Athletic Director  
Meg Finnegan, Special Education Program Manager  
Susan Killian, World Language Department Chair  
Justine May, Student Support Department Chair  
Molly Smith, History/Social Studies Department Chair  
Carla Panciera, English Department Chair



## Guiding Principles

- Health and safety of staff, students, and families
- Develop High quality models to meet the needs of ALL learners
- Follow established guidelines (WHO; CDC; DESE)
- Establishing connections with students is critical for success
- What works best for IPSWICH?

## Three Learning Models

The safety and well-being of students, families, educators, and staff has been and will continue to be our top priority. Because public health is its priority, DESE has asked each district to plan for three possible scenarios in the upcoming school year.

- The first scenario, ***In-Person Learning***, assumes that current positive public health metrics hold and that as a community we commit to following critical health requirements.
- The second scenario, ***a Hybrid Learning Model***, assumes the district cannot meet health and safety requirements with all students in school simultaneously. In the Hybrid Model, cohorts of students alternate between in-person and remote learning.
- The third scenario, ***a Remote Learning model***, assumes COVID-19 requires widespread school closures and all instruction must be offered remotely. Remote Learning may also be an option for some students who are unable to return to school. Additionally, DESE has stated that “*parents/caregivers can choose to send their children to in-person school or keep them at home learning remotely.*”

The Ipswich Public Schools have developed the three models and will be prepared to implement the most appropriate model based on the pandemic and needs of the school community. At the August 6, 2020 School Committee meeting, a vote was taken to begin the school year with a Hybrid Model, which will be the focus of this document. The other two models are also presented.

## Hybrid Learning Model

IPS has developed a robust Hybrid Learning Model. While the model may differ from school-to-school to best support the needs of each school’s students’ age levels, the core of the Hybrid Model will remain uniform throughout the district. Each school will create two cohorts of students and schedule each cohort to participate in the Hybrid Model for at least two days of in-person learning and three days of Remote Learning. Wednesdays will be set aside for additional one-to-one support for our most vulnerable students as well as for asynchronous learning for students, staff meeting time, staff development, and teacher preparation time. With only half of each school’s student population in the building at a time, the Hybrid Model will enable us to more effectively distance students to reduce the likelihood of transmission of the virus. This appropriate distance of six feet between students, when coupled with mandated mask wearing and regular sanitizing of classroom space, provides both staff and students with the safest in-person learning option of the three models. With only half of our students reporting to school on a given day, the Hybrid Model also mitigates the crowding on school buses as well.

Each school will leverage outdoor learning opportunities through the use of existing space as well as rental tents. The schools will also explore the possibility of creating Learning Centers in available large and unused spaces for our most vulnerable students to come in for in-person learning for more than two days a week. The district will

strive to keep siblings in the same cohort from school-to-school to simplify for parents the need to arrange work and child care schedules. The first day of school will be delayed 6 school days to allow staff to set up classrooms, prepare curriculum, acclimate to new processes and procedures, and participate in professional development. It is possible that during the 6 days, small groups of students will be invited in to learn the new procedures before the official start.

The Hybrid Model provides teachers with an opportunity to develop the trusting relationships with students. These trusting relationships will be critical for student success in the event that the district needs to transition to a fully Remote Model due to worsening pandemic conditions in the community.

## **Individual Level Plans**

### **Elementary Schools**

In this Hybrid model, half of the regular education students in grades 3-5 with the last name beginning with A-La will attend school on Mondays and Tuesdays and students with the last name beginning with Lb-Z will attend on Thursdays and Fridays. On the opposite two days and Wednesday, students will be home engaged in Remote Learning. (see the sample schedule below of what a students' school day will look like.) Families will have the option to participate fully in Remote Learning at the start of the school year. Our Special Education students with substantial services will attend 4 days per week. Students who are considered academically vulnerable may be asked to physically attend school each day. Daily attendance will be taken as part of the expectations by DESE and IPS.

The DESE has stated that preK and Kindergarten students are vulnerable populations, encouraging as much face-to-face time as possible. The class size numbers in both of our elementary schools for K and Grade 1 will allow us to have these students in school 4 days per week. Relationship building between staff and students fosters, not only the social emotional well being of children, but builds a sense of community that can transfer to the online environment. Early instruction in reading and mathematics is a critical building block for future educational success. Additionally, learning how to use the technology effectively for Remote Learning is a goal in our unique situation. In recognition, we have looked closely at also providing as much face-to-face time as possible for students in K- 2. Similarly, to our older students, our youngest learners will be utilizing our outdoor spaces as much as possible.

Wednesdays are to be used throughout the district for extensive clearing. Teaching staff will engage in team planning, professional development, parent conferences and student progress meetings. Support personnel will offer synchronous check-ins and assignment support.

### **Curriculum:**

At this time, the scope of the curricula encompasses all state standards. Assignments will support synchronous and asynchronous teaching, with remote learning mirroring that experienced in person. Feedback and assessments will be embedded in instruction. Whenever possible, project-based, transdisciplinary learning will occur outside of the classroom. Ensuring joy in learning, particularly in the midst of educational disruption, is a primary goal. Our community offers many exciting resources to explore.

Specialists will need to utilize the outside areas, be assigned to a grade level cohort, and/or teach remotely with their newly developed teaching methods. During this pandemic, the importance of physical activity,

art and music was highlighted. Embedding specialists into the structure of a student's academic day may increase engagement, an problem that arose in the spring, as well as strengthen the interconnectedness of disciplines.

Technology is an essential component in the current instructional model. Each student will be assigned a Chromebook (3-5) or iPad (PreK- 2) to eliminate the need to share devices. In recognition of the need to balance screen time with physical activity, particularly for our youngest students, a blend of on and off-line assignments will be offered as a medium of the curriculum.

Developing close partnerships with parents is always a goal for our district. Remote Learning, particularly for young students, requires parental support. Office hours for parent/teacher conversations and check ins will be provided as well as both in person and video based technology training.

### **Arrival and Dismissal:**

Students will arrive at our elementary buildings by bus, car, bike or by walking. A staggered arrival and dismissal will be necessary to ensure appropriate social distances as students enter the building.

At the Paul F. Doyon School:

Students in grades 4 and 5 will wait in the front lawn by grade level and enter in the main door and cafeteria door. Students in grades 2 and 3 will enter through the doors in the back of the building. Students in grade 1 will enter through the side door on the left of the building. Our Kindergarten students will enter through the gymnasium door in the front of the building. They will all be greeted by staff and given directions as to how each student will stay 6 feet apart when in the classroom. There will be markings on the ground outside the building and on the floor inside the building.

At Winthrop School:

The location of the school building allows for a greater number of students to arrive by foot or bike. Smart Routes resources will be used to promote walking school buses, supporting neighborhoods in arriving to and from school safely. Neighborhood connections will be promoted by the school as well as the parent group.

Once on the property, students in different grade levels will proceed to designated areas near the assigned entry door. Staff will oversee social distancing as well as proper mask placement. Upon entering, students will proceed through directionally marked hallways to their classroom. Those students requiring breakfast will be directed to the cafeteria for their meal in socially-distanced locations in the cafeteria.

### **A Day in the Life:**

A student arrives on the school property prior to the official start of the school day. The student travels to the area designated for his class, the cafeteria for breakfast, or their outside learning location and, under the supervision of an adult, safety awaits entry to the building and/or their class.

After washing their hands, the students sit in their assigned seats and await Morning Meeting. Students attending remotely are projected on the front whiteboard (inside) or a visual display.

Academic instruction begins with an explicit lesson from the teacher. Guided practice occurs, with support personnel assisting students learning remotely.

Outside movement breaks include a snack, community building and/or an embedded art, music, or world language class. Remote learners explore an asynchronous activity.

A second academic block is formatted in a similar manner as the first block. Specialized instruction is embedded in the academic blocks through co-teaching and/or one-to-one, small group instruction by the special education teacher. Instruction occurs under all safety guidelines, when in person.

Lunch consists of a 'grab and go' container, taken outside for consumption, weather permitting. In the event that lunch occurs inside, classrooms will proceed to the cafeteria in established cohorts to eat, followed by a movement break.

Project based learning, preferably located throughout the community, occurs after lunch. Walks to the Ipswich River or through the local state forest, tai chi in the park, outdoor presentations by the local museum, storywalks and explorations of local ecosystems are all elements of the state frameworks elevated by the experiential learning. Students learning remotely enjoy family or individual explorations guided by the essential question posted for the assignment.

An end of the day closing meeting precedes hand washing, packing up, and cleaning of student materials. A staggered dismissal is initiated.

### **Safety:**

The consistent use of masks has been a scientifically proven mitigation action that has been stressed throughout this crisis. To that end, we are **strongly encouraging masks be worn by all students**. We recognize that, for our youngest learners, this may require support, encouragement, and practice for wearing the mask, but the end goal is to wear masks for the safety of all. Upon arrival at school, students grades 2-5 will enter the building wearing masks and continue to at all times while in the building. Mask breaks will occur throughout the day, particularly in outdoor locations. If students need to take a mask break at an alternate time, they will ask permission to go outside with the second adult who will be assigned to each classroom. Elementary students will require an additional level of supervision in many situations throughout the day. Staff will supervise students as they wash their hands upon entry, prior to dismissal and throughout the day.

Staff members will wipe down student desks with a disinfecting cloth, students will sit in assigned seats facing the same direction towards the front of the room where necessary. Desks will be organized 6 feet apart to social distancing. Our plan is to spend the majority of our school day outside the classroom in our outside spaces available on our school properties. Tents of various sizes with two as large as 30x45, will be utilized on both properties for outside learning and lunch as much as possible.

A sample daily schedule is below:

- Early childhood students would attend (in person) 4 days per week.
- Special education and high risk students would attend in person learning 4 days per week. Numbers permitting, in person learning students in intermediate grades could possibly also attend 4 days per week.
- Outdoor place-based learning could occur at the beginning of the day and flipped with on-site learning based on weather or planned exploration.

- Specialists would be embedded in grade level curriculum for a period of weeks at a time to allow for stronger relationship building and transdisciplinary education.
- Special education services would be embedded into academic learning time.

	Face-to-face Learning	Location	Remote Learning	Location	Synchronous Asynchronous
<b>8:15-8:45am</b>	Staggered start breakfast Hand washing			Home	
<b>8:45-9am</b>	Morning meeting	On school grounds- inside or out	Morning meeting	Home	Synchronous
<b>9-9:30am</b>	Instruction includes -literacy -mathematics -technology use -project-based learning	On school grounds- inside or out	Instruction includes -literacy -mathematics -technology use -project-based learning	Home	Synchronous lesson and support
<b>9:30-10am</b>	Relationship building -embedded specialist -mask break and snack -recess		Movement break & snack	Home	Asynchronous
<b>10-11am</b>	Instruction includes -literacy -mathematics -technology use -project-based learning			Home	Synchronous lesson and support
<b>11-12pm</b>	Grab and go lunch	Outside- on school grounds or in outdoor location	Movement & break	Home	Asynchronous

<b>12-2pm</b>	Project-based learning	Place-based learning location or onsite	Project-based learning Family or self-paced	Home	Asynchronous
<b>2-2:30pm</b>	Closing meeting	Place-Based location or On school grounds	Closing meeting	Home	Synchronous
<b>2:30-3:05pm</b>	Clean up -sanitize, wash hands -pack up Staggered dismissal	Onsite	Individual check in/support	Home	Synchronous

## **Ipswich Middle School**

Ipswich Middle School students will return to a hybrid model, with a remote option, for the 2020-2021 school year. The plan is for students in grades 6, 7, and 8 to be split into two groups: clusters. One cluster from each grade level will attend classes in the school building on Mondays and Tuesdays, the other cluster will attend classes in the school building on Thursdays and Fridays. These clusters will be divided again into two cohort groups that follow the same schedule. We anticipate that no more than 15 students will be in an academic cohort. Wednesday will be a remote learning day for all middle school students. Students will engage in remote learning classes on the days they are not scheduled to be in the building.

Students who are in the building will follow a full day schedule that includes academic and Related Arts classes as well as lunch and a support block called Project Assistance (also a time for students to meet in their band, orchestra, and choral groups). In order to minimize exposure to others and to promote in-depth learning, a modified block schedule will be followed. Students in grades 6 and 7 will have one full day of in-person Humanities classes - English Language Arts and Social Studies and another full day of in-person STEAM classes - Mathematics and Science. Students in grade 8 will have one full in-person day of Humanities - English Language Arts/Civics and Spanish and one full in-person day of STEAM classes - Mathematics and Science. Student cohorts will attend the same classes each day, again minimizing the amount of exposure to other students. All in-house learners will attend two Related Arts classes each day that may include Physical Education, Music, Art, Technology Engineering, and Health.

We believe that this schedule allows students and teachers to focus more deeply on learning objectives while practicing safety protocols. The block schedule will also be utilized during the students' remote learning days. Using Zoom and other technology, students will work with the same staff members in longer blocks of time. This will eliminate Zoom fatigue that occurs when a student is expected to be present in several different classes in one day. Students will not attend Related Arts classes on their remote learning days, instead Related Arts teachers will assign independent work that should be completed by the next class meeting date.

Students who choose to learn completely in a remote environment will be assigned to a cluster and expected to log into Zoom each day to engage in classroom or remote learning activities, essentially following the same schedule of other students in that cluster.

For all students, attendance during remote and in-person learning will be counted. Teachers will expect students to be present each day. Attendance procedures will be followed, with parents asked to notify the office if their child is unable to participate in school that day. Academic assignments will be graded and teachers will provide feedback on progress to students.

In order to accommodate students who have been identified as high risk learners, therefore requiring additional support during their remote learning days as well as delivering IEP services, learning centers for each grade level will be created in the school building. Identified students will be offered in-person support four or five days per week with school staff and additional personnel facilitating these spaces. The administration is working closely with our special education program manager, EL teacher, and 504 coordinators to identify these students. Data that was collected during remote learning in the spring of 2020 will be analyzed to determine other students who struggled to engage in learning during that time. These students will be invited to use the learning centers on their remote learning days.

Safety protocols have been established throughout the day. With approximately 40-50% of IMS students in attendance each day, procedures to keep all students and staff in the building have been put in place. We have reconsidered arrival and dismissal, transitions through the building, hallways, stairways, lockers, and cafeteria. Tents have been ordered and assembled for lunch time, music and band classes, and other classes that can be held outside.

**Example 6th Grade Student Schedule**

Period	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		<i>Remote</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>In-Person</i>	<i>In-Person</i>
1	7:45 AM	Morning Announcements	Morning Announcements	Asynchronous Remote Learning Time	Reading	Science
2	8:30 AM	Reading	Science		Writing	Science
3	9:25 AM	Writing	Science	Teacher Office Hours 9:00 - 11:00	Related Arts 3	Related Arts 3
4	10:10 AM	RA 3 Asynchronous Work Time	RA 6 Asynchronous Work Time		Lunch	Lunch
5	10:40 AM	Lunch	Lunch	Asynchronous Remote Learning Time	Geography	Math
6	11:45 AM	Geography	Math		Geography	Math
7	12:50 PM	Geography	Math		Related Arts 6	Related Arts 6
8	1:40 PM	Project Assistance	Project Assistance		Project Assistance	Project Assistance

**Example 7th Grade Student Schedule**

Period	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		<i>Remote</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>In-Person</i>	<i>In-Person</i>
1	7:45 AM	Morning Announcements	Morning Announcements	Asynchronous Remote Learning Time	Humanities	Science
2	8:35 AM	Humanities	Science		Related Arts 2	Related Arts 2
3	9:20 AM	Humanities	Science	Teacher Office Hours 9:00 - 11:00	Humanities	Science
4	10:20 AM	Related Arts 2 Asynchronous Work Time	Related Arts 4 Asynchronous Work Time		Related Arts 4	Related Arts 4
5	11:08 AM	Lunch	Lunch	Asynchronous Remote Learning Time	Lunch	Lunch
6	11:36 AM	Spanish	Math		Spanish	Math
7	12:40 PM	Spanish	Math		Spanish	Math
8	1:40 PM		Project Assistance		Project Assistance	Project Assistance

**Example 8th Grade Student Schedule**

Period	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		<i>In-Person</i>	<i>In-Person</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>Remote</i>
1	7:45 AM	Humanities	Science	Asynchronous Remote Learning Time	Morning Announcements	Morning Announcements
2	8:35 AM	Related Arts 2	Related Arts 2		Humanities	Science
3	9:20 AM	Humanities	Science	Teacher Office Hours 9:00 - 11:00	Humanities	Science
4	10:20 AM	Related Arts 4	Related Arts 4		Related Arts 2 Asynchronous Work Time	Related Arts 4 Asynchronous Work Time
5	11:08 AM	Lunch	Lunch	Asynchronous Remote Learning Time	Lunch	Lunch
6	11:36 AM	Spanish	Math		Spanish	Math
7	12:40 PM	Spanish	Math		Spanish	Math
8	1:40 PM	Project Assistance	Project Assistance		Project Assistance	Project Assistance

## Ipswich High School

In order to meet the 6' social distancing requirement in all classrooms, Ipswich High School will return to learning in a hybrid model to begin the 2020-2021 school year. Appropriate face coverings will be required in classrooms, common spaces, and hallways. Central to the high school's hybrid model is a transition to a four period "block" schedule similar to the one the school had in place several years ago. The hybrid model will allow the school to limit in-person learning to 50% of the student body at one time. The student body would be separated into two roughly equal "houses" or cohorts based on the letter of their last name. The district will work to ensure that siblings, regardless of their last name, are together in the same cohort K-12 to simplify child care arrangements for parents.

The schedule would include three longer classes that meet for a semester and one shorter class that meets for the full year. Attendance in the class meetings is required, whether those meetings are remote or in-person, and every course will have a traditional letter grade. Each cohort would have two consecutive in-person days and two consecutive remote days with one day on Wednesday for high needs students to get additional support while all other students work asynchronously. A support block shorter than the "academic" blocks will allow for implementation of relationship building and social emotional support. The support block rosters will be composed of students who already are together as a cohort in a shared academic class. The expectation would be that the full duration of each academic block be synchronous



and include a Zoom meeting followed by group and/or independent work with teacher check-ins to allow for formative assessment and feedback. There is also the potential for four days of in-person learning for our highest need students. There will be two lunches scheduled during C block during which students will be appropriately distanced so that they will be able to eat mask free at their own separate, individual tables in the cafeteria. The first semester hybrid block schedule is copied below as a visual reference:

COHORT A In-Person Learning		COHORTS A & B Remote Learning	COHORT B In-Person Learning	
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
B Block 7:45- 9:09	B Block 7:45- 9:09	Professional Development	B Block 7:45- 9:09	B Block 7:45- 9:09
G Block 9:13 - 9:58	G Block 9:13 - 9:58	Common Planning	G Block 9:13 - 9:58	G Block 9:13 - 9:58
Support Block 10:02 - 10:57	Support Block 10:02 - 10:57	Teacher Preparation	Support Block 10:02 - 10:57	Support Block 10:02 - 10:57
C Block 11:01 -12:52	C Block 11:01 -12:52	Remote check-ins for struggling students	C Block 11:01 -12:52	C Block 11:01 -12:52
F Block 12:56 - 2:21	F Block 12:56 - 2:21		F Block 12:56 - 2:21	F Block 12:56 - 2:21

The block schedule is advantageous during a hybrid model in that it reduces the number of interactions between staff and students, thereby reducing the chances of transmission as well as minimizing the potential contact tracing we would need to do if we had a positive case;

- reduces the number of classes students have to organize should the need arise to move to a remote learning model;
- minimizes the number of different classes for which teachers have to prepare;
- ensures a seamless transition to a remote model;
- enables teachers to build relationships and support students' social-emotional learning due to the longer duration of each block; and
- permits additional in-person support of students on Individualized Learning Plans during the support block and remote support on Wednesdays.

Safety protocols and policies have been established throughout the day. Given the variety of transportation options high school students take, their arrival time is naturally staggered. Administrators will position themselves outside the main entrance to ensure that students are appropriately spaced and masked prior to entering the building and informally screen for obvious symptoms of the virus. There will be three free-standing hand sanitizing stations that students will use upon entering the building. Students will proceed directly to their first block class and will not be permitted to use their lockers. We have designated and marked traffic patterns throughout the school to facilitate efficient transitioning between classes. Tents have been ordered and will be used for lunches, music and band classes, and other classes that can be held outside.

## **In-Person Learning Model**

The Ipswich Public Schools have developed a model to enable a full reopening of all Ipswich schools with the necessary guidelines in place. Given our space availability, the model will assume a distance of 3 feet for social distancing while students and staff are wearing masks and 6 feet without masks. The schedule for each of the buildings will likely remain the same, provided transportation needs can be met. Students and staff will have an option to participate remotely if necessary. The health and safety of our students and staff is and will be our main concern as we reopen.

We fully understand that full in-person education will still look very different than it did last February. Upon arrival to school, students will enter their buildings via pre-designated entrances wearing masks and immediately sanitize their hands before entering their classrooms. Hallways will be clearly marked. Students will sit in assigned seats all facing the same direction. Mask breaks will be incorporated into the daily schedule. Students will be closely monitored for compliance. During passing times, students and staff will be required to pass on the right side of the hallway which will be clearly marked. In most grade levels, students will have 1:1 devices, so there will be little sharing of materials. There will be hand sanitizer stations throughout the building including all entrances and exits, bathrooms, and all classroom areas. Each school will have large tents set up outside in order to provide adequate space for lunch, Music, Theater, and larger classes.

Buildings will be cleaned and sanitized nightly. Sanitization stations will be provided near the exits so that students can sanitize before and after using the tent or learning in other outdoor environments. Lunch will be provided in a "Grab and Go" model and students will be able to eat in the cafeterias and tents with adequate spacing so masks can be removed.

Finally, any student observed with signs/symptoms of illness will be sent to the health room. The school nurses will create a triage area to assess students and an isolation room for any student exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Adequate PPE has been ordered for staff and students, along with the necessary specialized equipment for nurses. Specific protocols provided by DESE will be followed and are included in this document. IPS has also received funding to employ a floating nurse to assist in all schools this year.

## **Remote Learning Model**

IPS will provide a Remote Learning opportunity for students who are unable or choose not to return to school in the fall. This model will also be available for the entire district in the event of school closures due to COVID-19. We will provide equitable access to technology through the deployment of a device for every student and educator to use at home as well as a wireless hotspot if needed. Educators will be given access to additional hardware, software, applications, and training as necessary to support remote instruction. The goals of our Remote Learning Plan include:

- high-quality lessons that support curriculum standards with expectations, assessments, and high student engagement through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning environments for students in which to participate;
- rigorous feedback, grades, and assessments including progress monitoring to chart student learning growth;
- the use of digital tools and strategies to promote student engagement and support during lessons and offline activities;
- streamlined, clear communication, and support pathways across all stakeholders;

- equitable access to remote learning by ensuring that all students have the necessary technology and wireless internet access;
- social/emotional needs of the whole student will remain a primary focus.
  - IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL
    - If/when we go to full remote, the expectation will be that students have a full synchronous schedule that includes a Zoom meeting in every class meeting for four days per school week according to the same schedule for the hybrid and in-person learning models. Time should be broken up with virtual breakout rooms and group and/or independent work.

## **Social Emotional Supports**

At the elementary level, the social-emotional wellbeing of our students and staff is always a top priority but most especially during these challenging times. The elementary school staff want to create a warm and caring environment where students can learn and engage with their peers in a safe and healthy setting.

As is the case when learning inside the classroom, Morning Meetings will begin the start of each day for students in both remote and non-remote settings. These community building meetings are an integral part of building a sense of belonging for all students.

In organizing students for the hybrid split at the elementary level, special consideration will be taken into account for neighborhood or pre-established social circles of students and their families. The goal is to support all students through the use of existing social networks. Additionally, every staff member will be assigned an advisory caseload. Each advisory will be responsible for daily check ins with their families. By using this advisory model, all students will have one point person, apart from their teacher, who can serve to support the child and their family.

At the Ipswich Middle School, on all school days whether in-person or remote, the guidance staff will be available for students' emotional needs. As in the spring, the guidance staff will meet regularly with teachers and administrators to discuss the individual needs of students. Counselors held consistent Zoom meetings with students and emergency meetings with others. The guidance staff will also consult with parents and provided resources for those students who are struggling with social-emotional issues. We anticipate that the social-emotional needs of our middle school students will continue to escalate as the pandemic continues and we will meet those needs on a group and individual basis.

At Ipswich High School, the longer duration of the instructional blocks will permit adequate time for teachers to build relationships and implement strategies for supporting students' social emotional learning for which all teachers received professional development last fall. School counselors and school adjustment counselors will be available for safe in-person support as well. After a highly successful inaugural year, the BRYT (Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition) will be operational in its mission to help students re-engage with school after a lengthy absence due to hospitalizations for physical or mental health issues. If we were to move to a fully remote model, these services would continue virtually through Zoom and phone calls home from counselors.

## **Extracurricular Activities and Sports**

The Ipswich Public Schools strives to provide additional learning and engagement opportunities to our students. Given the uncertainty of the pandemic, we are awaiting guidance from DESE and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) regarding guidance on extra-curricular activities and sports. The Ipswich public schools will address individual extracurricular activities on a case by case basis in accordance with state guidelines. At this time, the MIAA fall sports season has been delayed until September 14, 2020 and no additional guidance has been provided.

## **Technology for Hybrid and Remote Options**

### **Student and Staff Devices and Additional Hardware**

#### ***Staff Members:***

All staff members have district provided devices for the purpose of connectivity both inside and outside of IPS walls. These devices are augmented with projectors in classrooms, along with some combinations of hotspots, speakers, webcams, headsets, tablets, document cameras, additional monitors and other hardware provided on an as needed basis (subject to availability), for both hybrid and remote instruction.

#### ***Students:***

*Grades 3-12:* will receive a dedicated Chromebook for both hybrid and remote learning (if necessary). The Chromebook will travel with the student.

*Grades K-2:* will receive a dedicated iPad for use at the schools in the hybrid model. In the event of remote learning, the device would go home with the student.

*Pre-K:* iPads will be available as needed for accommodations.

### **Remote Technical Support**

The IPS Technology Team has a support email for staff to use to report any issues they are having: [techsupport@ipsk12.net](mailto:techsupport@ipsk12.net). Hybrid support will be provided on-premises where safely possible, and through either phone or remote desktop in remote or challenging hybrid environments.

### **Student/Family Support**

General instructions and information will be provided to families through a family support website (currently “Return to Learn 2020”), which will include trainings, FAQs and a feedback email. Individual support issues will be handled through a tiered support system.

### **Infrastructure and Filtering Off Campus**

#### ***On Campus:***

The Ipswich Public Schools infrastructure has two 1G connections through two different providers allowing for teaming and failover during loss of connectivity. Each of these connections goes through a state-of-the-art firewall providing both content filtering and virus protection, updated regularly. IPS also leverages Google’s content filtering service for Chromebooks as well as other third party tools, as situations dictate.

#### ***Off Campus:***

Google’s content filtering is still in effect when Chromebooks are removed from the IPS infrastructure.

## Digital Learning and Technology Tools

We are a Google Suite for Education district, all staff have access to the GSuite digital apps to support teaching and learning. In addition to the Google Suite of tools the IPS will use the following premium subscription digital learning tools for the 2020-21 school year district-wide:

- Screencastify: video recording of lessons
- Zoom: videoconferencing tool for teachers to host synchronous sessions
- Flipgrid: a video discussion tool for students and teachers
- Kahoot: a game based learning platform for teachers to create, share and play games related to content standards
- Pear Deck: interactive presentations and formative assessment tool for use with Google Slides
- Padlet: virtual bulletin board for students to post and share ideas
- Family ID: a digital secure family registration and information sharing platform

In addition to the district wide tools being offered we will also be purchasing digital tools specific to grade bands/levels or subjects such as: EdPuzzle, Seesaw, Brainpop, Parlay, Nearpod, Quizlet, digital access to textbooks, etc.

## Learning around Digital Tools

For IPS staff there is a frequently updated Digital Learning website [www.ipstigertech.com](http://www.ipstigertech.com) to access for professional development around digital tools. Training will also be made available to staff members.

For IPS families there will be resources available on the Return to Learn site for students and families to familiarize themselves with the digital tools they will be using this year. This will include handouts, slideshows, district created videos, and links to digital tool videos.

## Health and Safety Requirements

### Masks and Face Coverings

Masks and face coverings are among the **most critical** components of risk reduction for transmitting COVID-19. Masks/face coverings protect the general public against COVID-19 infection, with a recent retrospective study estimating near 80% effectiveness in reducing COVID-19 transmission, especially when worn prior to symptom onset. A growing body of evidence suggests that masks protect those who wear them and may drastically reduce severity of infection. Students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings may have the option of wearing a face shield, if possible. **Adults, including all educators and staff, are required to wear masks/face coverings that adequately cover their nose and mouth.**

Face coverings will be required to be worn by all students and staff in grades 2-12 unless they have provided a doctor's note documenting a medical or disability exemption. Face coverings are recommended for students grades PreK-1. All staff regardless of their students' grade levels are required to wear masks. Face coverings can be disposable or reusable and will need to fully cover the nose and mouth and secure under the chin, be made with at least 2 layers of breathable material, fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, and be secured with ties or earloops. If staff members or students do not have a face covering, they will be provided with a disposable one by the school district.

The only exceptions to mask/face covering requirements will be for those individuals who cannot wear a mask/face covering due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health/safety factors. Mask breaks are scheduled several times a day. During mask breaks students will be six feet apart. Mask breaks will ideally occur

during physical movement breaks outside (weather permitting) and always under the supervision of an adult. If it is not possible for students to be outside during a mask break, students will be in a room with windows and/or doors open for ventilation.

Families are expected to provide masks/face coverings for students. Extra disposable masks will be available in the event a student forgets their mask. Families should wash reusable masks daily or provide a fresh reusable mask each day. If a family is unable to afford masks, they should contact their building principal. Masks/face coverings must be worn by everyone on a school bus at all times.

## **Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing is an important practice that helps mitigate transmission of the virus. While the U.S. Federal CDC has recommended maintaining a physical distance of six feet between individuals, the World Health Organization guidance states approximately three feet (one meter). There is no precise threshold for safety. Studies suggest that physical distancing of three feet or more leads to reduced transmission, with additional distance providing additional protection. It is important to note that six feet distancing is emphasized in public health advisories especially when no mask/face covering is worn. American Academy of Pediatric guidance indicates “spacing as close as 3 feet may approach the benefits of 6 feet of space, particularly if students are wearing face coverings and are asymptomatic.” The Lancet published a systematic review of 172 studies and found that current policies of at least 1 m (3 ft. 3 inches) are associated with a large reduction in infection, and distances of 2 m might be more effective.

We will consistently implement other mitigating measures in addition to physical distancing (hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfecting, masks/face coverings). It is important to remember that no single mitigation strategy is effective; rather it is the layering and concurrent implementation of multiple mitigation strategies that will slow transmission. Clearly, schools must constantly analyze health data and layer mitigation strategies in a way that slows transmission while simultaneously providing as much educational benefit as possible.

The recommendations for physical distancing for in-person learning in the fall are predicated on the Commonwealth continuing to progress through phases of reopening with low COVID-19 prevalence into the fall and winter. Where the community prevalence of COVID-19 is a concern, increased distancing will need to be considered and may necessitate extending a Phase of the in-person plan, returning to a previous Phase, or implementing remote learning.

## **Classroom Configuration**

**Students will have assigned seats in every class and on the bus. This is essential in order to provide accurate notification in the event of an exposure.** Desks will be spaced at least 3 feet apart in the Full Learning Model and 6 feet in the Hybrid Model. To the extent possible, we will aim for desks to be spaced six feet apart. All desks will face in the same direction. Spaces such as the gymnasium, cafeteria, and library may be repurposed in order to maximize physical distance between desks.

## **Screening for Symptoms**

It is critical that families and caregivers check their child every morning for Symptoms of COVID-19. Checking children every morning at home will serve as the primary screening mechanism for COVID-19 symptoms. Families should use a checklist (provided in this document) every day before sending their child to school. DESE does not require schools to institute screening procedures at the point of entry and does not recommend temperature checks. Faculty and staff working with students will report to the nurse if they suspect any student of

exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or other illnesses. The district strongly encourages families to discuss testing with their health care provider if they have reason to believe their child has COVID-19 and keep the child at home until they are able to be tested.

Families play a critical role in supporting the new culture of health and safety that each school must establish. Most importantly, families can help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in their school communities by checking their children daily for any COVID-19 symptoms and keeping them home from school if they are sick or have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

## **Hand Hygiene**

Handwashing removes pathogens from the surface of the hands. While handwashing with soap and water is the best option, alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be utilized when handwashing is not available. Students and staff are required to exercise hand hygiene upon arrival to school, before eating, following bathroom use, after removing a soiled mask and prior to donning a new mask, and before dismissal. When handwashing, individuals should use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with an individual disposable towel.

Hand sanitizing is required if handwashing is not feasible. Hand sanitizer should contain at least 60 percent ethanol or at least 70 percent isopropanol.

## **COVID-19 Medical Waiting Room**

Each school has a designated COVID-19 Medical Waiting Room separate from the nurse's office. A student who shows COVID-19 symptoms during the school day will be moved to the COVID-19 Medical Waiting Room for isolation until they can be picked up by a family member. Prompt pick-up of students will be necessary. Information on the COVID-19 Medical Waiting Room in each school can be found in the individual school plans.

## **COVID-19 Testing in Schools**

At this time, in-school testing is not recommended or available. Families should discuss testing with their health care provider. As the accuracy of point-of-care testing develops, this guidance may change. (See section below on Response Protocols.)

## **Vaccines**

Parents must ensure that vaccines are current before children return to school in-person. Health care providers strongly recommend all students and staff get their regular flu vaccine. Ensuring all students, teachers, and staff receive the seasonal flu vaccine is an extremely high priority.

## **Health and Safety/PPE Supplies**

The district has ordered standard healthcare supplies in accordance with DESE guidance. Additional safety precautions are required for school nurses and any staff supporting high-intensity students in close proximity, when recommended social distance is not possible. These precautions include eye protection and a mask/face covering. Precautions may also include gloves and disposable gowns or a washable outer layer of clothing depending on the duration of contact and especially if the individual may come into close contact with bodily fluids.

## Visitors in Buildings

Visitors should make an appointment with the front office for any drop off of materials or required meeting with faculty, staff, or administration. Upon arriving for their appointment, they should wash hands or sanitize them using provided materials at a table outside the office, and then check in at the walk-up window. All visitors must enter through the main entrance and wear a mask. A waiting room outside of the office will be provided for visitors. The main office will maintain a visitor log including the first and last name of the visitor, the date of the visit, the visitor's phone number, arrival and departure times, and all areas the visitor entered in the building. A waiting room outside of the office will be provided for visitors.

## Certification of Health and Safety Requirements (See DESE list)

### Courses Requiring Additional Safety Considerations

Chorus, Singing Instruction, brass or woodwind instrument use, Physical Education activities, and Theater require enhanced health and safety measures because they may involve increased respiration. Research into optimal ways to maximize safety in these types of activities is ongoing. **DESE strongly encourages these courses and activities be held fully or partially online if possible. If they are held in person, they strongly encourage – and at times require – these activities to occur outdoors.**

Safety requirements for these activities are as follows:

- Chorus, Singing Instruction, Musical Theater, and Using Brass or Woodwind Instruments
  - These activities can occur outdoors with at least 10 feet of distance between individuals, and mask wearing is encouraged whenever possible.
  - **Note: At this time, these activities are not permitted indoors.**
  
- Non-Musical Theater
  - These activities can occur outdoors with at least 6 feet of distance between individuals, and mask wearing is encouraged whenever possible.
  - These activities can occur indoors with at least 6 feet of distance between individuals and masks are required.
  - **Note: These activities cannot occur indoors without a mask.**
  
- Physical Education Activities and Dance
  - These activities can occur outdoors, with at least 10 feet of distance between individuals, without masks.
  - These activities can occur outdoors with 6 feet of distance between individuals, and masks are required.
  - These activities can occur indoors with 6 feet of distance between individuals, and masks are required.
  - **Note: These activities cannot occur indoors without a mask.**
  
- Chorus and Singing Instruction

Singing carries a relatively higher risk of virus transmission because voice projection generates respiratory droplets.



- Consider what mask types may be most comfortable for singing and whether these masks can be provided to students.
  - When outdoors, staff should monitor student volume to prevent harm to students' vocal cords.
  - Consider pursuing musical pieces that are at a lower volume. The lower the volume, the less projection required. Consider, also, the volume of any background music. The higher the volume of background music, the more vocalists will need to project to be heard.
  - All students should face in one direction instead of facing one another. Avoid singing in a circle or semicircular formation.
  - Students and teachers should avoid sharing materials (e.g., music stands) when feasible.
  - When it is not possible to continue with singing instruction based on the guidelines, for instance, when activities cannot be held outdoors due to inclement weather or in colder seasons, courses could focus on other aspects of music instruction, such as history of music, music theory, or vocal anatomy. These courses could also be conducted virtually.
- Theater
 

Singing and voice projection, both common in theater, carry a relatively higher risk of virus transmission.

    - Musical and non-musical theater courses and activities must use the above guidelines for courses that require enhanced health and safety measures.
    - Intentionally select artistic works that may facilitate reduced in-person interaction, such as those that involve smaller casts or that are easily rehearsed outdoors.
    - Avoid sharing equipment as feasible. Any sharing of equipment, including props, set pieces, rails, and voice amplification equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as appropriate.
    - Do not share makeup or anything that comes into close contact with mouth or eyes (e.g., microphones).
    - Avoid sharing costumes and wigs.
    - Any rental equipment should be thoroughly disinfected upon receipt and before returning and regularly cleaned and disinfected, as with other equipment.
- Band and the Use of Musical Instruments
    - As is the case for chorus and singing, some musical instruments carry a relatively higher risk of virus transmission.
    - As noted earlier, instruction for musical instruments that require air blowing (e.g., flute, oboe, clarinet, trumpet, saxophone, trombone) can only occur outdoors when individuals are at least 10 feet apart. These instruments should never be shared.
    - Instruction for musical instruments that do not involve air blowing (e.g., strings, percussion, piano) may continue indoors or outdoors as long as health and safety requirements are met. If needed, these instruments can be shared between students if cleaned and disinfected as appropriate.
    - Students should be encouraged to clean their instruments regularly, especially the mouthpiece and high-touch surfaces, such as finger pads.
    - For cleaning guidelines specific to each instrument, the National Federation of State High School Associations, the National Association for Music Education, and the National Association of Music Merchants Foundation have published Covid-19 Instrumental Cleaning Guides.

- Physical Education

This section contains guidance for physical education classes during the school day. With physical activity, individuals tend to breathe more heavily and speak louder, which increases the potential for dispersal of respiratory droplets.

- No physical education classes can have activities with close physical contact.
- Physical education should prioritize activities that do not require shared equipment. For example, consider agility training exercises, bodyweight strength training (such as push-ups), yoga, track and field, running, step aerobics, or racquet activities (as long as racquets are disinfected before and after use).
- Prioritize outdoor activities, whenever possible.
- Students should wash or sanitize hands before and after physical education. Particular attention should be paid to washing and sanitizing hands before and after masks are removed and put on, if applicable.
- No sharing of water bottles, towels, mouth guards, helmets or other equipment that comes into contact with the nose or mouth is allowed.
- If feasible, close communal areas including athletic locker rooms. If not feasible, stagger locker assignments and access such that students who need to use lockers at the same time (e.g., those in the same physical education class) will be able to maintain physical distancing. Athletic locker rooms should be cleaned and disinfected at least daily.
- As part of the school cleaning/disinfecting protocols, frequently clean and disinfect

- Visual Arts

These courses and activities may involve the sharing of specialized equipment among students, such as paint brushes, paints, and cameras. Additional suggestions for visual arts courses and activities include:

- Pay particular attention to adding disposable protective covers to shared cameras and any other equipment that requires close eye or mouth contact.
- Adapt curricula, when feasible, to avoid expensive equipment (such as printers) that students need to share.
- Prioritize activities that require minimal supplies, such as sculpting clay, or create individual art kits with assigned supplies (e.g., colored pencils, markers) to use for the semester.
- Emphasize any elements of courses that could involve outdoor time such as drawing outdoors or nature photography.
- Change the focus of activities to avoid shared equipment use (e.g., switching a visual art class from screen printing to a focus on charcoal drawings where individual supplies can be used each class).
- Assign small student groups, e.g. create cohorts, at the beginning of the semester for visual arts courses which last for the entire semester. For example, consider assigning one student per camera to a photography assignment, with other students studying a famous photographer for one unit, and then switch these groups of students for the next unit. Clean and disinfect all high-touch surfaces (e.g., any equipment used) between uses and at least daily.

## **Special Populations**

Ipswich Public Schools is committed to providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students. In accordance with DESE Guidance on Fall 2020 Special Education Services, students with disabilities, particularly preschool-age students and those with significant and complex needs, will be prioritized for receiving in-person instruction during the 2020-2021 school year. These students will receive as much in-person instruction as is feasible within the health and safety parameters in effect at each particular time. In the event Ipswich Public Schools is operating in a hybrid or remote model, educators and administrators will make every effort to continue to provide up to full-time in-person instruction to such students. If in-person instruction cannot be provided and students with disabilities must receive instruction remotely, in full or part, through a hybrid model, they will receive special education instruction and related services necessary to provide FAPE through an Instruction and Services model of delivery (e.g., structured lessons, teletherapy, video-based lessons, and asynchronous activities, etc.). An Instruction and Services model includes tracking attendance and participation, remote learning aligned to state standards, the grading of student work, and two-way communication with parents and caregivers. In addition, in both the hybrid and remote models, students will receive the appropriate accommodations and modifications to which they are entitled in their IEPs, although they may need to be provided differently, given the conditions of the remote and hybrid learning environments.

The Ipswich Public Schools will provide EL learners equitable opportunities and access, including a prioritization of daily EL (direct ESL instruction) services, in-person when safe to do so; consistent collaboration between grade/subject teacher and ELL teacher; opportunities for two-way digital communication and provision of hardware for that purpose when needed; differentiation and flexibility with assignments; pacing instruction and utilization of vetted "best practices" according to pedagogy for EL students; additional digital platforms that support accessibility and accommodations; translation services; consistent and daily communication with families and students regarding expectations and support for daily school schedule (when remote). Additionally, in the hybrid and in-person models, IPS will provide EL Learners with proactive direct instruction to explicitly prepare students for potential transitions. Lastly, IPS will provide economically disadvantaged students with equitable opportunities and access in all three learning models, including prioritization of in-person instruction for students when safe to do so, technology including a personal device and wireless hotspot if necessary, and access to district food and support services including health and safety items.

When school resumes in-person, with health and safety requirements in place, general education, special education, and English language education staff members will collaborate in order to determine the unique modifications that will be necessary to ensure the least restrictive environment (LRE) is in place for students with disabilities. This will require careful planning and scheduling.

## **Monitoring Student Progress**

Ipswich Public Schools will continue to issue Progress Reports at least as often as report cards or progress reports are provided for students without disabilities, in accordance with 603 CMR 28.07(3). Progress Reports will be sent to families, guardians, and state agencies involved with the student through mail, email, student information systems, or online communication platforms, and translated into the language of the home when required.

Educators and service providers will collect data and use this data to monitor the student's progress in order to develop Progress Reports. If there are periods of remote learning, educators, service providers, parents, and

students will review a student's IEP and identify the types of data that can be collected from the student, family, and home environment. Staff can reimagine their roles in a hybrid or remote context, e.g., by using a tracking sheet to collect data from student videos, interviewing parents and students, or using remote or observational assessments.

## **Initial Evaluations, Reevaluations and IEP Team Meetings**

DESE recognizes that due to the closure of school buildings and settings and the unexpected suspension of in-person education in March, annual review Team meetings, evaluations and/or parts of evaluations may have been postponed. As we plan to return to in-person services and instruction, Ipswich Public Schools will continue to work with families to complete assessments as much as possible given professional practice guidelines and DESE guidance for tele-assessments and hold TEAM meetings. Ipswich Public Schools will continue to follow the direction on meeting special education timelines as described in the Department's Implementation of Special Education Timelines During the COVID-19 State of Emergency. IEP Teams will continue to conduct annual review Team meetings as they are due, in accordance with 603 CMR 28.04(3). The District will follow the Department's guidance to update the IEP as though the student will be attending school full time in-person; however, given the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 virus, schools and districts must be prepared to be adaptable in their approach to delivery of IEP services, based on the current health information and trends at that time. As was the case when schools closed in March, any changes to service delivery will be documented in writing to the parent.

It is important to note that a change in the delivery of services due to a school's change in learning model of in-person, hybrid, or remote, as a result of COVID-19 **does not result in a change in placement**. The services outlined in the IEP remain and are considered "stay-put". Ipswich Public Schools will maintain open communication and collaboration with families as they respond to the trajectory of the virus and make decisions about the opening and/or closing of school buildings and settings and the learning models to be utilized.

## **Considerations for Special Populations: In-Person Learning**

Services for special education students will be reviewed for each student to determine how best to provide services during each phase of the reopening plan. In some instances, students may come out of their classroom to receive instruction from a special education teacher or service provider. Services can also be provided within the student's general education classroom setting virtually to minimize movement and staff going into the classroom. Other services and support can be provided by staff who are assigned to the student's specific classroom. In all instances, care will be taken to minimize potential secondary spreading and ensure that health precautions are followed. Communication and collaboration with teachers, staff, and families will allow Ipswich Public Schools to meet the needs of all special education students.

Training for educators will be provided to those who will provide direct physical support to students with disabilities on the use of the additional personal protective equipment (PPE) they will need, including appropriately putting on and removing disposable gowns, face shields, etc.

Ipswich Public Schools will partner with parents to support a smooth transition to re-opening of school, given the introduction of the new physical distancing protocols and schedules. It is particularly important that educators work closely with parents of children who experience difficulty with changes in routine (e.g., students with autism) or children who experience anxiety with such changes.

## **Considerations for Special Populations: Hybrid Learning**

When planning for hybrid learning models, consideration for continuing to maximize in-person learning for students with disabilities will be prioritized. Preschool-aged students with disabilities and students with significant and complex needs will be considered for continuous in-person learning to the greatest extent possible. For example, even if most students are not in school each day, Ipswich Public Schools will make every effort to schedule small groups of students with significant and complex disabilities for daily in-person instruction. Where appropriate, peers without disabilities may also be included to ensure inclusionary services.

Learning and services provided remotely via a hybrid learning model will follow the guidance provided in the section on Remote Learning. Similarly, learning and services provided in-person will follow guidance provided in the section on full time In-Person Learning while meeting the current health and safety requirements.

## **Considerations for Special Populations: Remote Learning**

For school year 2020-2021 Instruction and Services must include the following components:

- A regular and consistent schedule of classes, interventions, services, and therapies as required by the student's IEP, offered synchronously or asynchronously;
- Structured learning time designed so that the student can access state standards;
- Frequent interactions with teachers and other staff members to ensure participation.

The consistent schedule of classes, interventions, services, and therapies must include time spent interacting directly with teachers and related service providers on a regular basis, as well as some independent work time, as appropriate, and opportunities for interacting with classmates. Synchronous remote lessons or teletherapy sessions may be provided via telephone or video conferencing. Students might also benefit from asynchronous pre-recorded videos of lessons to follow at home.

For students receiving the majority of their daily instruction through special education, teachers and therapists should assign supplemental work (beyond lessons taught synchronously or asynchronously) during the school day that can be accomplished independently with guidance from and accountability to the teacher or service provider.

## **School Facilities**

### **Cleaning and Sanitization**

Our site custodial teams will clean our school facilities on a daily basis using industry standard COVID-19 cleaning products. On Wednesdays and Saturdays, the custodial teams will engage in deep cleaning and disinfection during both in-person and Hybrid schooling learning modules. On a daily basis, the custodial teams will continue to perform standard cleaning practices to include the following:

- emptying trash and recycling
- wiping down tables and chairs
- sweeping and vacuuming of rugs and floors
- cleaning restrooms
- maintaining school grounds as needed.

In addition to performing these standard cleaning practices, the custodial teams will engage in COVID-19 related specialized cleaning routines to maximize and efficiently combat the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious germs. As part of this specialized cleaning, custodial staff will perform additional services to include:

- the use of electro-static sprayers in each building coinciding with the use of specialized concentrated cleaning products, which are designed to mitigate germ transfer;
- use approved pre-mixed disinfectant cleaners to clean up common areas and common issues;
- wall mounted hand sanitizer units throughout classrooms, bathrooms, and entry/exit areas;
- paper towel dispensers in each bathroom and classroom with faucets;
- classroom faucets and counters;
- classroom windows and sills;
- water bottle filling stations;
- daily cleaning of high volume areas and high touch points multiple times per day;
- bathrooms, toilets and urinals;
- doors, door handles, push bars and plates;
- light switches;
- ADA support bars;
- stair wells and handrails;
- entrance and exit areas; and
- elevators;

## **HVAC and Air Quality**

The three school buildings of the Ipswich Public Schools have various HVAC systems, differing depending on age and school construction/design, and we work to ensure that all of our HVAC systems have been properly and officially commissioned and are operating correctly. We recognize HVAC systems as an integral component in our safety planning to reduce potential COVID-19 transmission rates, and have made it part of our broad-based multi-modal district-wide infection control strategy. The most important component of the HVAC mechanicals are the air filters. We've recently updated our preventative routine on filter changes from twice per year to three times per year. We also clean the cooling and heating coil surfaces, disinfecting them with approved chemicals and methodology. In the HVAC systems that include wall-mounted or console-type induction units, the cabinets and fan compartments are vacuumed, washed, and sanitized as specified by the manufacturer on preventative maintenance routine.

On systems that allow it, a commercial HVAC system is typically designed to produce internal conditions with a relative humidity of 40-60%. Both the manufacturers and the commissioning agents require these standards to be met during installation and are checked on a yearly basis per our preventative maintenance plan. Our Ipswich Middle/High School HVAC is such a system that allows for a constant flow condition of relative humidity. We have performed and continue to perform ongoing various upgrades on our HVAC system at the Ipswich Middle/High School. These ongoing upgrades include moving the systems from pneumatic controls to DDC controls that allow for increasing airflow and efficiency. We have also updated the BMS software. This system maintains a constant induction of 15% outside air as a part of its design. Increasing the outside air rate or ventilation rate will likely result in increased energy usage and may result in mechanical difficulties to maintain the desired temperature and humidity within a building. In summation, IPS has taken prudent and practical preventative measures to improve air quality in our buildings and we are currently looking into additional methods to further increase air quality efficiency.

Across our school district, we have roughly 600 individual filters within our HVAC systems. As stated previously, filters are now changed three times per year, using 1800 separate individual filters in any given year. We have a specific strategy moving forward during COVID-19 operations for our aged school buildings where we

will utilize a mobile HEPA filter unit in addition to opening windows as much as possible for fresh air, plus the addition of enhanced and increased maintenance of our Univent units in these two buildings.

Ipswich Public Schools and the Ipswich Facilities Department will continue following practices as described and will engage in these activities to further reduce COVID-19 spreads risks:

1. HVAC preventative maintenance will be conducted as prescribed by the recognized industry standards and the preventative maintenance procedures we have established.
2. Facilities staff will confer with service providers to ensure timely service is delivered to our buildings.
3. Maintain and review with regularity all preventative maintenance and inspection records to ensure and confirm that duty of care has been provided.
4. Maintain HVAC systems with greater regularity to reduce COVID-19 and other infectious germ transmission potential.
5. In buildings with windows that open, we will open windows for regular airflow during the day and in the evening when possible.
6. The District has purchased a total of 72 Individual HEPA filter units for the Elementary classrooms, nurse stations/COVID-19 isolation rooms, and the Athletic Department at the high school.

## **Improvement Projects**

Across the district, we are also engaging in construction projects to provide further safeguards and measures for all students and staff members. These projects include installing desk mounted safety glass in the main offices and the guidance office at the high school, replacing 12 exhaust fans and 2 air handler systems at the Doyon School, and installation of a secondary wall mounted hand sanitization system. We also made repairs to windows, doors and various areas as well as creating COVID-19 assessment and treatment areas.

## **Food Service**

IPS fully intends to be able to accommodate every student or staff who needs a breakfast or lunch in the school district. Food Service has been operating all summer under the best information currently available regarding how to maintain the health and safety of students and staff in order to limit the risk of COVID-19 transmission. The following safety measures have been put into practice for staff:

- staying home if not feeling well
- wearing face coverings
- washing hands frequently
- 6 feet of separation
- regular cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting protocols
- COVID-19 training

The Food Service Department has developed the following plans for re-opening in the fall:

- **In-Person Learning Model with New Safety Protocols in Place**  
Food Service is presently in the beginning stages of setting up an online ordering system that students and parents can access through an app, enabling everyone to order breakfast or lunch on their computer or phone. Staff will fulfill those orders in the kitchen and place in individual brown bags with name and room # on them. They can be picked up at designated “drop zones”, delivered to the classrooms, or designated individuals will come to the cafeteria to pick them up. If a student is unable to order online, breakfast and lunch will still be able to be ordered in the classroom and sent to the kitchen.
- **Hybrid Learning Model**  
The students who are in school will be provided meals as described above for in-person learning. Meals will continue to be provided for those students who need/choose to bring them home for remote learning

days, and will be available for pick up on their way out of school. Staff will continue to deliver meals to the sites to which meals are currently being delivered, as well as have a pick up site located outside at each school. Breakfast and lunches will be packaged and put in bags to be delivered/picked up as has been done since March.

- **Remote Learning Model**

If all students are required to do remote learning, breakfasts/lunches will still be provided. Meals will be prepared in a central kitchen, loaded into vans, and delivered to predetermined sites at predetermined times. Communication of these sites and times will be provided through the district website, food service website, principals' notes, superintendent's district calls, and social media.

For the first couple of weeks of school, the intent is to only serve cold breakfasts and lunches, as the students and staff get used to the "new normal". As time progresses, Food Services aims to be fully operational in all kitchens. As this is a fluid situation, Food Service will do its best to keep the lines of communication open to all and be as flexible as possible.

### **Transportation**

We have developed transportation procedures in accordance with DESE Guidance for Transportation. Based on the Hybrid model (only half the students riding), we anticipate that the routes will be similar to last year. The district reserves the right to alter bus routes and established bus stops in order to accommodate length and time of runs.

The district will implement the following core practices on school buses:

- **Masks:** All staff and students on the bus, regardless of age, are required to wear masks at all times.
- **Distance:** Students will sit one person per seat, alternating sides per row; children from the same household may sit together on one bench. Bus capacity is set at 25 students.
- **Ventilation:** Bus windows must remain open at all times, unless not possible due to extreme weather conditions.
- **Seat assignments:** Every student will have an assigned seat on their bus; students must remain in their assigned seats at all times facing forward; students may not eat, sing, shout, or share items while on the bus. Families will be asked to commit to their students taking the bus every day - not just occasionally. We'll need to have committed ridership to assign the seats.
- **Hand sanitizer** will be available on all buses.
- A parent or caregiver must be present when a child boards the bus in the morning. If a child presents with symptoms, the child will not be permitted to board the bus. The parent or caregiver must contact the school nurse before bringing their child to school. If a student becomes ill with COVID-19 during the school day, the student will not be permitted to ride the school bus home.
- All school buses will be cleaned and disinfected between runs and at the end of each day.

### **Protocols for COVID-19 Scenarios**

Most people who test positive and have a relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days. People who test positive can resume public activities after 10 days and once they have:

- 1) gone for 3 days without a fever (and without taking fever-reducing medications like Tylenol); and
  - 2) experienced improvement in other symptoms (for example, their cough has gotten much better); and 3)
- received clearance from public health authority contact tracers (the local board of health or Community Tracing Collaborative).



Repeat testing prior to return is not recommended. Return to school should be based on time and symptom resolution.

**Close contacts of a positive COVID-19 case should be tested.** For general guidance, DPH defines close contact as:

- Being within less than 6 feet of COVID-19 case for at least 10-15 minutes. Close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case while the case was symptomatic or within the 48 hours before symptom onset, OR
- Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on) while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment.
- **In school settings**, close contacts include other students and staff who were within 6 feet of the student or staff for at least 10-15 minutes in a classroom, in other school spaces, on the bus, or at an extracurricular activity. In elementary and other school situations where the students are in self-contained classrooms for an extended period, all students/staff within this “cohort” are considered close contacts as they may have been within 6 feet of the person with a positive test result. Possible close contacts should not come back to school until they have been tested (or elected instead to self-quarantine for 14 days). If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, then self-isolation is for a minimum of 10 days **and** until at least three days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms as noted. If the test is negative, the student/staff can return to school if asymptomatic and wearing a mask.

### **Most Common Symptoms of COVID-19 and Testing Requirements**

The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to **STAY HOME**. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; please do not assume it is another condition. When in doubt, stay home.

**Please STAY HOME if you have any of the symptoms listed.**

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves:

- Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

**If staff or students have any of these symptoms, they must get tested for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to school.**

### **Protocol: Student or staff tests positive for COVID-19**

1. The student or staff member must remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. For most people who have relatively mild illness, they will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.
2. The student's parent/caregiver or the staff member informs the proper school official (e.g. a designated person that is the COVID-19 school lead) that the individual has tested positive for COVID-19. The designated COVID-19 school lead in turn notifies others as pre-determined by the school (e.g., school leadership, school nurse or school medical point of contact, building management, maintenance).
3. Determine whether the student or staff member was on the premises during the time frame that started two days prior to symptom onset (or testing positive if not symptomatic) until the time of isolation.
  - A. If so, promptly close off areas visited by the COVID-19 positive individual until such areas can be cleaned and disinfected, if they have not been cleaned and disinfected already.
  - B. Promptly clean and disinfect the student's or staff member's classroom and any
  - C. other facilities (e.g., extracurricular facilities) visited by the individual, if that has not been done already.
  - D. Promptly clean and disinfect the bus(es) the student or staff member was on, if any, and if not already done.
  - E. **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (e.g., student has self-contained classroom throughout the day):**
    - 1) Send a communication to the other families in the student's class (e.g., cohort) that there has been a positive test without naming the individual student or staff member who tested positive. b. Communications sent to families/staff should:
      - a) Inform them there was a positive test (not the specific individual) in the self-contained classroom.
      - b) Explain that since they were within this cohort and may have been within 6 feet of the person with a positive test, they are considered a "close contact" and therefore should be tested. (In cases where the student may have been in close contact with others outside their cohort, having assigned seating and keeping up-to-date seating charts will help identify who should be instructed to be tested: specifically, those who were sitting next to the student, plus any others who also had close contact with the student.)
      - c) Instruct those designated as close contacts to isolate prior to their test and while waiting for the results. In general, as the highest yield test will be a few days after the exposure, ideally, the test should occur no sooner than day 4 or 5 after the last exposure. (In other words, if an exposure lasted several days, the best time to test is 4 or 5 days after the end of the exposure period.)
      - d) Explain that if close contacts choose not to be tested, the student or staff member should remain home in self-quarantine for 14 days.
      - e) Remind families and/or staff of the importance of not having contact with higher-risk individuals (e.g., grandparents and those with underlying medical

conditions).

- f) Remind families and/or staff of the list of COVID-19 symptoms for which to monitor.
  - g) If the school finds out about the original COVID-19 positive test in the middle of a school day when the rest of the cohort is in class:
    - I) Make sure these students are wearing masks, including in kindergarten and first grade. Extra masks as may be needed should be provided by the school. Enforce strict physical distancing. Require students to wash their hands.
    - II) The school should quickly identify the individuals who may be “close contacts” of the student and notify students and their families.
    - III) Caregivers of students in the class or other close contacts may pick students up prior to the end of the day. Caregivers must wear a mask/face covering when picking up their student. Students who are close contacts and students with any symptoms should not ride the school bus to get home. Caregivers and students, as well as staff, should wash their hands upon arriving at home and change their clothes as a precaution.
    - IV) Close contacts should not come back to school until they have received the results of testing (or elected to instead quarantine for 14 days and are asked to communicate their test results to the school.
- 2) As feasible, to assist with contact tracing, make a list including phone number and email of any other close contacts the student or staff member had, beginning two days before the onset of symptoms (or positive test if asymptomatic) until individual was isolated. Instruct those students and/or staff members to get tested according to the same protocol as the student’s cohort above.

#### **F. MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL (e.g., no single self-contained classroom)**

- 1) The school should identify the student’s or staff member’s possible “close contacts” based on the assigned seating charts. The lookback period should begin two days before symptoms appeared (or two days prior to the date of the positive test if there were no symptoms) and include up until the time the student was isolated. Consider students and staff members who were within 6 feet of the individual for 10-15 minutes in class, on the school bus, or at extracurricular activities.
- 2) Follow the communication and other relevant Elementary School protocols above.
- 3) Close contacts should be tested for COVID-19 at one of Massachusetts’s test sites. Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.
  - a) Instruct the student or staff member to isolate while waiting for the results of their test.
  - b) An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead quarantine for 14 days and until asymptomatic.

#### **G. IF OTHERS IN THE SCHOOL TEST POSITIVE**

- 1) Perform all steps under this protocol for that person. **ALSO FOLLOW:** “Protocol: Presence of Multiple Cases in the School.”

#### H. IF NO OTHERS IN THE SCHOOL TEST POSITIVE

- 1) Close contacts can return to school immediately if they test negative and do not have symptoms; however, strict mask wearing covering the nose and mouth must be maintained at all times. The wearing of masks includes K-1 students for this 14-day period. If they have symptoms but test negative regardless, they should wait until they are asymptomatic for 24 hours before returning to school.

**Any area** of the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual must be closed off and/or cleaned and disinfected. The area can be used 12 hours after cleaning/disinfecting has occurred.

#### **Protocol: Close Contact of Student or Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19**

1. Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 should be tested.
2. The student or staff member who was in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 should be tested at one of Massachusetts's test sites. Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment. An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead quarantine for 14 days and until asymptomatic.
3. Close contacts should isolate at home prior to testing and while awaiting test results. Ability to mask is critical, so if the close contact cannot mask or is in K-1 and not masking they should not return for 14 days.
4. In order to return to school, close contacts need to have one negative test result and not be showing any COVID-19 symptoms, or if they do not wish to be tested, quarantine at home for 14 days. Because tests performed too early can be falsely negative, ideally the test should be performed no sooner than 4 or 5 days after the last contact with the person who tested positive.
5. **IF POSITIVE TEST:** The student or staff member should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.  
**FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** "Protocol: Student/Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19."

#### **Protocol: Student is Symptomatic at Home**

1. Family should monitor students at home each morning for the most common symptoms of COVID-19 (see list above).
  - A. **IF NO SYMPTOMS:** Send student to school.
  - B. **IF ANY SYMPTOM:**
    - 1) Do not send the student to school.
    - 2) Call the school's COVID-19 point of contact and inform the student is staying home due to symptoms.
    - 3) Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested. An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days and until asymptomatic.
    - 4) The student should get tested at one of Massachusetts's test sites. Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.
    - 5) Isolate at home until test results are returned.

- 6) Proceed as follows according to test results:
  - a. **IF NEGATIVE:** Student stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
  - b. **IF POSITIVE:** Student should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms. **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** “Protocol: Student/Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19.”

**Protocol: Student is Symptomatic on the Bus**

1. Although families are the most important first line of defense for monitoring symptoms, bus drivers and bus monitors also play an important role in flagging possible symptomatic students. **Note: This will require training for bus drivers (and bus monitors, if applicable).**
2. If symptoms are noticed as the student is getting on the bus and if there is a caregiver present, do not allow student to board the bus. Caregiver should then **FOLLOW:** “Protocol: Student is Symptomatic at Home.”
3. If student is already on the bus, ensure student is masked and keeps mask on. Ensure other students keep their masks on. Ensure student keeps required physical distance from other students.
4. Bus driver/monitor should call ahead to the bus service dispatch. The bus service dispatch should be equipped with appropriate cell phone numbers for school and district personnel (nurse or other medical personnel). The dispatch should contact the school to inform the school nurse (or school medical point of contact) of a possible symptomatic child.
5. School nurse (or school medical point of contact) should meet the bus as it arrives, wearing a mask. As practical, student with possible symptoms should exit the bus first.
6. Bus should be cleaned/disinfected.
7. Nurse (or school medical point of contact) should evaluate the student for symptoms (see list above: “Most Common Symptoms of COVID-19”).

**A. IF ANY SYMPTOM:**

- 1) Place the student in the designated medical waiting room. There is no specific capacity limit for the medical waiting room, but all students in the medical waiting room must be as far apart as possible, and no less than 6 feet. Strict mask wearing covering the nose and mouth at all times for every person in the room must be enforced. Students can work on individual schoolwork or other activities while in the medical waiting room.
- 2) Contact caregiver for pick-up.
  - a. **IF CAREGIVER CAN PICK UP DURING THE DAY:** Student waits to be picked up in the medical waiting room. Caregivers must wear a mask/face covering when picking up their student. Students should not ride the school bus to get home. Caregivers and students should wash their hands upon arriving at home and change their clothes, as a precaution.
  - b. **IF CAREGIVER CANNOT PICK UP DURING THE DAY:** The student should wait in the medical waiting room until the end of the day to be picked up

by caregiver. The student should not go home on a school bus with other students.

- i. Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested.
- ii. An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days and until asymptomatic.
- iii. Student should get tested at one of Massachusetts's test sites. Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.
- iv. Isolate at home until test results are returned.
- v. Proceed as follows according to test results:
  - **IF NEGATIVE:** If the student does not have COVID-19, the student may return to school based upon guidance from their clinician and necessary management of another diagnosis. Student stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
  - **IF POSITIVE:** Student should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms. **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** "Protocol: Student/Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19."

**B. IF NO SYMPTOM:** Send student to class.

### **Protocol: Student is Symptomatic at School**

1. Although families are the most important first line of defense for monitoring symptoms, teachers will play an important role in referring possible symptomatic students to the school nurse or other medical point of contact. (Note: This will require training for teachers.)
2. Teacher ensures the student is wearing a mask that fully covers nose and mouth at all times.
3. Teacher calls the nurse or school medical point of contact to inform them that they have a possible case.
4. Nurse or school medical point of contact comes to get the student from class.
5. Nurse (or school medical point of contact) should evaluate the student for symptoms (see list above: "Most Common Symptoms of COVID-19").

#### **A. IF ANY SYMPTOM:**

- 1) Place the student in the designated medical waiting room. There is no specific capacity limit for the medical waiting room, but all students in the COVID-19 waiting room must be as far apart as possible, and no less than 6 feet. Strict mask wearing covering the nose and mouth at all times for every person in the room must be enforced. Students can work on individual schoolwork or other activities while in the medical waiting room
- 2) Contact caregiver for pick-up.
  - a. **IF CAREGIVER CAN PICK UP DURING THE DAY:**
    - i) Student waits to be picked up in the medical waiting room. Caregivers must wear a mask/face covering when picking up their student. Students should not ride the school bus to get home. Caregivers and students

should wash their hands upon arriving at home and change their clothes as a precaution.

**b. IF CAREGIVER CANNOT PICK UP DURING THE DAY:**

- i) The student should wait in the medical waiting room until the end of the day to be picked up by caregiver. The student should not go home on a school bus with other students.
- ii) Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested.
- iii) An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days and until asymptomatic.
- iv) Student should get tested at one of Massachusetts's test sites. Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or appointment.
- v) Isolate at home until test results are returned.
- vi) Proceed as follows according to test results:
  - **IF NEGATIVE:** If the student does not have COVID-19, the student may return to school based upon guidance from their clinician and necessary management of another diagnosis. Student stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
  - **IF POSITIVE:** Student remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms. **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** "Protocol: Student or Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19."
  - **IF NO SYMPTOMS:** Send the student back to class.

**Protocol: Staff is Symptomatic at Home**

1. Staff should monitor themselves at home each morning for the most common symptoms of COVID-19 (see list above: "Most Common Symptoms of COVID-19").
  - A. **IF NO SYMPTOMS:** Report to work.
  - B. **IF ANY SYMPTOM:**
    - 1) Do not come to work.
    - 2) Contact the COVID-19 point of contact and/or other absence reporting mechanism established by the school.
    - 3) Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested. An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days and until asymptomatic.
    - 4) The staff member should get tested at one of Massachusetts' test sites. Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or an appointment.
    - 5) Isolate at home until test results are returned.
    - 6) Proceed as follows according to test results:
      - a. **IF NEGATIVE:**

- i) If the staff member does not have COVID-19, they may return to school based upon guidance from their clinician and necessary management of another diagnosis. Staff member stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
- b. **IF POSITIVE:**
  - i) Staff member should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.
  - ii) **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** “Protocol: Student/Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19”.

**Protocol: Staff is Symptomatic at School**

1. As noted above, staff should be encouraged not to come to school if they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.
2. If a staff member suspects any symptoms during the day, they should follow the school’s protocols for getting another adult to cover their class mid-day, if needed, and see the school nurse (or school medical point of contact) to be evaluated for symptoms.
  - A. **IF NO SYMPTOMS:** The staff member should follow the school’s standard protocols for being excused due to illness.
  - B. **IF ANY SYMPTOM:**
    - 1) Current Massachusetts DPH guidance is that all symptomatic individuals in Massachusetts, even those with mild symptoms, should be tested. An individual who does not wish to be tested should instead isolate for 14 days and until asymptomatic.
    - 2) The staff member should get tested at one of Massachusetts’s test sites. Sites may require pre-screening, a referral, and/or appointment.
      - iii. Isolate at home until test results are returned.
      - iv. Proceed as follows according to test results:
        - a. **IF NEGATIVE:** Staff member stays home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
        - b. **IF POSITIVE:** Staff member should remain at home (except to get medical care), monitor their symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer the call from local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days **and** until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.
        - c. **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** “Protocol: Student/Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19”.



## Protocols for Potential School Closure (Partial or Full) or District Closure

### **Protocol: Presence of Multiple Cases in the School or District**

1. If there is more than one confirmed COVID-19 case (students or staff) in the school at one time, or if there is a series of single cases in a short time span, school leaders and the superintendent should work with the local board of health to determine if it is likely that there is transmission happening in school.
2. For each individual case, **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** “Protocol: Student or staff tests positive for COVID-19.” Note that when there is one isolated case, the student’s close contacts will need to stay home and be tested, not the whole school.
3. When there is suspected in-school transmission *beyond one cohort or a small number of cohorts*, school and district leaders must consult with the local board of health as to proposed next steps. These steps could include, *for example*, making a decision to a) close part of the school or the entire school for a short time (e.g. 1-3 days) for an extensive cleaning or other facility mitigation, or b) close the school partially or fully for the longer duration of a 14-day quarantine period.
4. Should there be circumstances where there are multiple cases in multiple schools, school and district leaders must consult with the local board of health as to proposed next steps. These steps could include, *for example*, making a decision to a) shut down the district for a short time (e.g. 1-3 days) for an extensive cleaning or other facility mitigation, or b) shut down the district for the longer duration of a 14-day quarantine period.
5. **Before a final decision is made on a school or district closure, the superintendent must consult with DESE for further guidance.**
6. If the decision is made to close for some number of days, the school and/or district should send clear information and instructions to families and staff:
  - A. Informing them that it is possible COVID-19 is being transmitted in the school and/or district
  - B. Noting that there may be more potential cases that are not yet symptomatic
  - C. Recommending students quarantine and not have contact with others
  - D. Reminding families of the importance of not having contact with higher-risk individuals (e.g., grandparents)
  - E. Reminding families of the list of COVID-19 symptoms for which to monitor
  - F. Ensuring that remote learning is immediately provided to all students
7. Before bringing students back to school:
  - A. Check inventory levels of needed supplies (e.g., disposable masks, soap, hand sanitizer, cleaning products); re-order replacement inventory
  - B. Consider a school-wide refresher training on the importance of correct hygiene procedures (masks, physical distance, handwashing)
  - C. Reiterate the critical nature of masks, physical distancing, and hand hygiene when students return to school

### **Protocol: Presence of Significant Number of New Cases in a Municipality**

1. In the case of significant municipal outbreak, as determined by the local board of health or DPH, the superintendent and school leaders must consult with the local board of health to determine whether it is appropriate to close a specific school, schools, or an entire district.
2. **Before a final decision is made on a school or district closure, the superintendent must consult with DESE for further guidance.**

## **Protocol: Statewide Regression to a Previous Reopening Phase**

1. Massachusetts is tracking its overall statewide reopening in phases according to the Reopening Massachusetts plan. Currently, Massachusetts is in Phase 3 of reopening, where even more businesses can resume operations with specific guidance.
2. If Massachusetts moves back into a prior phase, DESE (in consultation with the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center) will communicate with school districts and schools to determine whether in-person school should continue.