

Norfolk School District Botelle Reopening Plan 2020 - 2021



This document was developed in accordance with the Connecticut School Reopening Plan — [Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together.](#)

Additional Details:

Plans should be submitted in font size no greater than 11pt, in PDF format.

Due: July 24, 2020

Submit to: SDE.REOPEN@ct.gov

Include the following completed table at the top of your submitted plan:

Date of Submission:	July 24, 2020
LEA Name:	Norfolk BOE
Reopening Plan Point of Contact:	Mary Beth Iacobelli, Superintendent
Contact Email:	iacobellimb@botelleschool.org
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LEA COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison:	Keondra Dillard, Nurse
Liaison Email:	dillardk@botelleschool.org

Clearly and specifically detail how you will address each critical “REQUIREMENT” listed below in your plan. While crafting your responses, it is imperative to work through the Connecticut School Reopening Plan which elaborates on certain requirements with additional considerations and also includes “GUIDANCE” to consider while developing a unique local approach.

Priorities

Fall Reopening Model

- LEAs should plan to have all students, in all districts, return to schoolhouses for full-time instruction at the beginning of 2020-2021, so long as public health data continues to support this model. This model will be supported with more intensive mitigation strategies and specific monitoring, containment and class cancellation plans.
 - In addition to full-time instruction plans as indicated above, LEAs must be prepared to modify their plans to support a partial reopening or to allow for scaling back at a future date if the public health data changes.
- Identify gaps and develop action plans for reopening that specifically address inclusion, equity, and access for all learners with strategies and clearly defined action steps.
- Botelle will reopen this fall, and all students are encouraged to return to school full time. The calendar will be tweaked to provide additional professional development days for staff to facilitate a safe and comfortable transition back to school. Students will return on Wednesday, September 2nd; they will be dismissed at 1:00 for the first three days so that staff can assess the reentry plan and address any areas of concern. After Labor Day, the school day will end at 3:00.
- Students will, to the degree possible, remain with their cohort and travel throughout the building will be minimized: Art, Music, and Library/Media teachers will travel to classrooms; additional lunch waves will be added to accommodate cohorts, bathrooms will be designated to specific cohorts.
- In the event that we are required to reduce the number of students in the building, our priority will be for primary grades to receive in-person instruction and the distance learning plan will be implemented for intermediate students. If partial closure is required due to an exposure issue, cohorts affected transition to the distance learning plan, with the goal being to safely maintain in-person learning for as many staff and students as possible.
- A robust distance learning plan will be implemented in the event that there is a full school closure.

Students will take their device home each day so that it is available for distance learning in the event of a partial or full closure is required. Additionally, distance learning can be implemented if school is closed because of inclement weather so that make up days will not have to be added to the end of the year.

Temporarily Choosing Not to Participate

- Plan for parents and students who may temporarily choose not to participate in the return to school.

Students who opt out of in-person instruction will be able to participate remotely:

- Students will be given a device (iPad or Chromebook) for use at home
- Assignments, with learning targets and success criteria, will be pushed out each morning
- Teachers will use recorded lessons, live streaming and explore other technology that enables remote learners to tune into morning meeting and whole lessons – schedules will be available prior to the first day of school. Because the teacher’s attention will be focused on students in

the classroom, the expectation is that an adult in the home will facilitate and monitor engagement at home. When in-person students are dismissed at 3:00, teachers will check in with remote learners to clarify instruction, address questions or concerns, and provide feedback on student work.

- Parents will be asked to sign an agreement which specifies expectations for remote participation.

School Liaison, Communications Plans, and Data Collection

- Designate an employee to serve as a COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison. This designated person will be responsible for engaging with students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to answer questions or concerns about health and safety requirements regarding COVID-19 concerns (e.g., school nurse).
- Put systems in place to communicate the most up to date policies and protocols related to the considerations herein, for staff, students, and families.
- Make communications plans available in relevant languages of families in the community, as well as accessible to those with visual and/or hearing impairments.
- Ensure the development of plans for ongoing two-way communication with the school community (staff, families, and students) about any new policies and/or protocols *prior* to reopening, any time there is a significant policy change, and upon re-entry if a school closes temporarily during the year.
- Develop expectations around frequency of communication, and ensure detailed updates are provided any time critical information regarding policies, protocols, or health data changes.
- Put in place a plan for how the community will be notified of any changed policies, need to cancel classes, or other changes or restrictions.
- Make plans easily accessible, including but not limited to being visible on the main landing page of the LEA and school websites.
- Prioritize gathering information from families prior to reopening. Collect information from families to properly plan for resuming classes in the fall.
 - This should align with the forthcoming CSDE District Reopen Survey
- The school nurse will serve as the designated COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison. The nurse will be responsible for engaging with students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to answer questions or concerns about health and safety requirements regarding COVID-19 concerns.
- The most up to date policies and protocols related to the considerations herein, for staff, students, and families will be communicated via newsletters, alert now messages (text, phone and email), and postings on the website.
- The nurse, as well as office staff will be available to support communication for individuals with visual and/or hearing impairments.
- We will provide opportunities for ongoing two-way communication with the school community (staff, families, and students) about any new policies and/or protocols *prior* to reopening, any time there is a significant policy change, and upon re-entry if a school closes temporarily during the year.
- Administrators will provide timely, detailed updates any time critical information regarding policies, protocols, or health data changes.
- The school community will be notified of any changed policies, need to cancel classes, or other changes or restrictions via Alert Now messages. Plans will be posted on the main page of the Botelle website.
- Surveys will be sent to collect information from families to properly plan for resuming classes in the fall.

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Operations Plan

Facilities

- Maximize social distancing between student workstations, achieving 6 feet when feasible, when determining the classroom layout.
 - Where necessary, assess other space that may be repurposed for instruction in the school, in municipal or other community space, or if the school will require additional modular space.
 - Maximize space between the teacher and students due to the risk of increased droplets from teachers during instruction.
 - Ensure all signs and messages related to stopping the spread are accessible for students with disabilities and in languages appropriate for the school population.
 - Identify the training needs of staff related to health and safety protocols; perform such training prior to the first day of classes.
 - Consider having training days and days to practice new protocols with staff only prior to having students enter the building.
 - Plan an in-person or online training that includes: social distancing; cleaning protocols; and hygiene practices. Require attendance by all students and staff, and make available to families who are interested. Consider repeating this training during the first months that school reopens, and as needed.
 - Ensure training is provided to substitutes or others who may enter the school outside of the first day or typical calendar start.
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- Measure classrooms for square footage and student capacity
 - Determine the exact student-to-teacher ratio based upon individual needs and available space. Consider students and additional support professionals when assessing the appropriate density for a room
 - Develop individual classroom layouts marking where desks will be placed
 - Install floor markings to illustrate social/physical distancing.
 - Use outdoor instruction where health and safety conditions and physical space allow
 - Identify other spaces to repurpose and move classrooms to spaces with adequate space to accommodate class size (i.e.: HOF, Science Room, 104)
 - Mark the 6 foot area a teacher can be to remove mask or face covering for instruction
 - Review DPH Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting Schools with custodians and create a checklist to mark off when completed. Each item should also be dated when it was done. Custodian will be responsible for compliance.
 - Review DPH Guidance for Building Water Systems and ensure we are in compliance. Custodian will be responsible for compliance
 - Print and post signs related to stopping the spread - nurse and team will organize
 - Ensure signs are accessible for students with disabilities and language appropriate for students
 - Provide students with explicit instruction about how to keep everyone safe (wearing a mask, distancing, and hand washing/coughing/sneezing practices)
 - Review DPH Guidance for School Systems regarding the operation of central and non-central ventilation systems
 - Custodians will be responsible for compliance
 - Create PD schedule

- Comply with required training August 24th – September 1st. Students return to school on September 2nd.
- Training to be implemented in August/September for staff and students. Messaging and signage will be displayed to reinforce protocols for staff, students and families.
- Training will be provided to substitutes or others who may enter the school outside of the first day or typical calendar start.
- Review DPH guidance for cleaning and disinfecting schools with custodians
- Establish a protocol for cleaning and disinfecting school
- Develop a checklist that will be checked off daily by custodians to ensure cleaning and disinfecting has been completed daily
- Disposal towels will be placed in each bathroom that does not have a touchless disposal towel dispenser
- Update policies and protocols related to facilities and operations with the understanding that we may need to react quickly to changing condition
- Monitor situation and exercise options to increase, or relax restrictions throughout the school year to respond effectively to changes in public health data.

Daily Operations

- Implement the key strategy of establishing stable cohorts within the school population, when feasible. Placing students in cohorts is **strongly encouraged** for grades K-8, and **encouraged where feasible** for grades 9–12.
- Develop consistent policies to address when clubs, before- and after-school programs, or other voluntary groups may be allowed to use school space. Include ways to safely allow access for before- and after-school and childcare programs.
- Students will remain in grade level cohorts throughout the day: Early Primary 1; Early Primary 2; Primary 1; Early Intermediate 1; Grade 5; Grade 6. Art, Music, and Library/Media teachers will travel to classrooms. Students will be assigned to lunch waves and recess as a cohort

After school activities will not be scheduled for the fall.

Child Nutrition

- Schools and institutions that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program, and Special Milk Program (SMP) as applicable, must continue to determine eligibility for and make available free and reduced-price meals and snacks and free milk to all eligible students.
- Schools and institutions must comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) regulations and policies for school meals and milk including the meal pattern requirements.
- Schools and institutions that participate in the NSLP are required to claim meals/milk provided to eligible students using accurate counting and claiming methods.
- Norfolk will continue to determine eligibility, and make available free and reduced priced meals to eligible students.
- Norfolk complies with all regulations and policies for school meals and milk, including the meal pattern requirements.

Norfolk claims all meals/milk provided to eligible students using accurate counting and claiming methods.

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Operations Plan, continued

Transportation

Low Transmission Risk

- Plan to operate at full capacity or close to while maximizing health and safety protocols, as well as considerations outlined in the plan.
- Require passengers to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth during transit, prior to boarding the bus, and must be kept in place until they are completely off the bus.
- Passengers should load into the bus from the back row to the front (where the first passengers onto the bus sit in the back row) and then unload the bus in a controlled manner upon arrival at the school from front to back by seat.
- Norfolk busses will operate at full capacity or close to while maximizing health and safety protocols, as well as considerations outlined in the plan (see appendix A)
- All students will be required to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth during transit, prior to boarding the bus, and must be kept in place until they are completely off the bus.
- Students will load into the bus from the back row to the front (where the first passengers onto the bus sit in the back row) and then unload the bus in a controlled manner upon arrival at the school from front to back by seat.

Moderate Transmission Risk

- Plan to operate at significantly reduced capacity while maximizing health and safety protocols, as well as considerations outlined in the plan.
- Bus passengers should be spaced with family members sitting together and non-family members should be spaced 6 feet apart utilizing alternating diagonal seating.
- Require passengers to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth during transit, prior to boarding the bus, and must be kept in place until they are completely off the bus.
- Passengers should load into the bus from the back row to the front (where the first passengers onto the bus sit in the back row) and then unload the bus in a controlled manner upon arrival at the school from front to back by seat.
- Every attempt will be made to reduce the capacity of students on the bus: encouraging parents to provide transportation; reducing the number of students coming to school at any given time.
- All students will be required to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth during transit, prior to boarding the bus, and must be kept in place until they are completely off the bus.

Students will load into the bus from the back row to the front (where the first passengers onto the bus sit in the back row) and then unload the bus in a controlled manner upon arrival at the school from front to back by seat.

Health Practices and Protocols

- Ensure that students are educated and engaged in the new expectations related to all public health policies and protocols. As part of this requirement, assess the best approach to communicating the information for the age group, and plan to set aside time at the beginning of the school year, as well as frequent reminders, to review the new policies and protocols.
- Familiarize all participants of the standard public health practices used to prevent the spread of diseases. These practices include, but are not limited to:
 - social distancing,
 - frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer,
 - use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth,
 - respiratory and cough etiquette, and
 - enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces.
- Provide adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethyl alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol (for staff and older students who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible), and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.
- Teachers will develop create age/grade appropriate lessons and plan instruction including, but not limited to: masks and face coverings; social distancing; hand washing; use of hand sanitizer, cough etiquette, and provide frequent verbal reminders. Additionally, signage will be posted in classrooms, hallways, and bathrooms
- Professional development, prior to the school year, will familiarize all participants with public health practices used to prevent the spread of diseases. These practices include, but are not limited to: social distancing; frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer; use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth; respiratory and cough etiquette; and enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces.
- Hand sanitizer in every room
- Sinks in every classroom
- Extra masks available
- Face Shields and desk dividers where needed

No touch trash cans in all spaces

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Health Practices and Protocols, continued

Reporting Illnesses and Addressing Vulnerable Populations

- Instruct students and staff to inform the school if they are sick with COVID-19 related symptoms, particularly if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population.
- Develop consistent protocols for information reporting, and a point person to appropriately receive and safeguard this information, such as the school nurse, district nursing supervisor, or principal.
- Educate staff and families about when to [stay home](#). Schools should properly communicate the content of this or any updated guidance.
 - Instruct staff and students (or their parents and guardians) to perform a self-assessment prior to leaving for school to identify fever and other possible COVID-19 symptoms. Communicate this expectation and provide parents with reminders about the [symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#) that require keeping their students at home.
- Establish and communicate school-wide sick protocols, including signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and temperature thresholds requiring students or staff to stay home.

- Staff members and parents of students will be required to inform the school if they are sick with COVID-19 related symptoms, particularly if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population.
- Implement consistent protocols for information reporting to the school nurse who will appropriately receive and safeguard this information
- Educate staff and families about when to stay home. – Instruct staff and students (or their parents and guardians) to perform a self-assessment prior to leaving for school to identify fever and other possible COVID-19 symptoms. We will communicate this expectation and provide parents with reminders about the [symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#) that require keeping their students at home.

Establish and communicate school-wide sick protocols, including signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and temperature thresholds requiring students or staff to stay home.

Social Distancing

- Assist staff and students to maintain maximum social distancing between individuals to reduce the transmission of the virus per the current public health guidelines.
- Frequent reminders and signage will reinforce social distancing practices.

Use of Face Coverings, Masks, and Face Shields

- Adopt policies requiring use of face coverings **for all students and staff when they are inside the school building, with certain exceptions listed below.**
 - For anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance, face coverings and masks should not be required, [per CDC guidance](#).
 - For anyone who has a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face covering, masks should not be required.
- Be prepared to provide a mask to any student or staff member who does not have one
- Masks will be required to enter the school. Masks will be worn throughout the school day. PPT or 504 meeting will convene to plan for staff members or students who request an exemption.

Health Monitoring Plan**Planning and Distribution of Information**

- Include in the LEA reopening plan written protocols for monitoring of symptoms that could be related to COVID-19, with the goal of decreasing the risk of spreading or contracting the virus and maintaining oversight related to the pandemic while complying with relevant privacy and health laws.
- The nurse will provide written protocols for monitoring of symptoms that could be related to COVID-19, with the goal of decreasing the risk of spreading or contracting the virus and maintaining oversight related to the pandemic while complying with relevant privacy and health laws.

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Containment Plan

- *The Connecticut Department of Public Health will be providing a tiered system to assist leaders and define the decision-making approach should partial or full class-cancellation become necessary. Anticipate this will be available at the time decisions will need to be made related to containment and possible school class cancellations.*
- Include in the LEA reopening plan written protocols for containment and immediate response if an individual has signs or symptoms of COVID-19, there is a known exposure, or a member of the school community has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. The purpose of containment plans are to decrease the risks of spreading COVID-19, and shall include the following:
 - Immediate coordination with the local health department, including being ready to comply with requests for information from the local health department to assist with contact tracing.
 - Identification of a response team within the school and LEA with specific responsibilities.
 - Consideration of what signs and symptoms exhibited by students or staff would require their immediate dismissal from school; for what period of time; and conditions for their re-admittance to school.
- Identify an “isolation room” (besides the health office) to accommodate students who exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19 until a parent or guardian arrives.
- Create a consistent policy for dismissal of students or staff who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 and must be dismissed from school.

Cancellation of Classes, Remote Learning, and Reopening Plans

- *The Connecticut Department of Public Health will be developing specific community and school-based indicators to assist leaders and define the appropriate decision-making approach.*
- Develop a plan for school class cancellations and reopening to be implemented in the event that the superintendent, their designee, or state government suspends or cancels in-school classes for some or all participants.
- Notify and consult with the CSDE immediately if the LEA is contemplating class cancellations.
- Include a communication plan and clear policies for faculty and staff regarding individual roles and responsibilities in the event of a shutdown occurring during the school year.
- Prioritize ongoing educational opportunities when drafting the plan for shutdown. Materials for continuity of learning must be made available to allow for school sessions to continue remotely.

Future Planning for Remote Blended Learning

- Be prepared to provide remote blended learning opportunities immediately upon cancellation of in-school classes.
 - Consider implementing a plan to gather feedback from families, students, teachers, and leaders on experience with remote learning. Incorporate any feedback into a revised remote learning plan and incorporate into hybrid learning model.
- Develop a plan for extended absences and communicate it with parents or guardians in the event of a second extended closure.
- *Awaiting guidance from SDE relative to blended learning*
- Teachers will monitor daily attendance, and will notify administration of any extended absences/disengagement.
- Parents or guardians will be notified in the event of a partial or second extended closure.

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Academics

Special Education

- Prepare with the understanding that there has been no waiver of requirements under the IDEA for provision of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). During COVID-19 school closures, schools were required to provide FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students, as well as those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students. Schools may not have been able to provide all services in the same manner that they are typically provided. Federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the individualized needs of students receiving special education services.
- Treat students eligible for special education and other special populations as general education students first. Guidance and policies related to school reopening plans apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for individual education programs under the IDEA and accommodation plans for eligible students under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If students with disabilities are unable to access the reopening plan as designed, facilitate individualized and alternative means of re-entry based upon student need, present levels of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input. Consider blended learning schedules if needed.
- Do not make programming decisions based on a student’s disability category. However, the nature and/or severity of a student’s disability may require unique considerations. Protocols should consider the student’s developmental level and skills.
- Address mask and face covering use for the population of special education students, including cases where masks may need to be removed to provide appropriate services, and the approach to implementing any other possible mitigating strategy, including but not limited to maximum social distancing.

Review student progress by utilizing data from the 2019-2020 school year including distance Learning data, service delivery logs, and parent communication logs in light of the CDSE’s guidance for providing services to the maximum extent possible during the COVID-19 school closure.

- Collect data on students’ current levels of performance as they return to the school buildings in conjunction with data from distance learning delivered at the end of 2019-2020 school year.
- Communicate with parents of students with disabilities on an ongoing basis to collaboratively provide special education service delivery in any and all formats (in-person, blended, or virtual).
- Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings occurring in accordance with IDEA requirements (including during the summer) to be current and in compliance with timelines. PPT’s will be held virtually to avoid unnecessary visitation to the school building.
- Utilize data to make Individualized determinations regarding needed supports and services based on present levels of performance.
- Monitor students’ performance and make appropriate revisions to their IEP’s as needed.
- Close communication with families regarding student programming and progress using multiple means of communication (phone, email, written).
- Communicate with families of students with a high level of need to develop transition plans to assist special populations and special education students in their return to the school building. Provide transitional opportunities prior to the beginning of school.
- Students with IEP’s will continue to receive interventions regardless of the school closure status. Child find obligations will be met. Psycho-educational and eligibility evaluations will

be conducted in accordance with IDEA guidelines and with district COVID-19 safety protocols in place.

- For students who are unable to attend due to existing medical conditions, distance and remote learning will be administered to the maximum extent possible based on students' specific needs.
- District safety protocols will be adhered to ubiquitously for regular and special education students including social distancing and physical space requirements, and wearing of masks/face shields.
- When possible, teachers will utilize face shields with higher needs students to allow for delivery of service in a safe manner. Clear plastic barriers may be utilized when necessary.
- Keep students in cohorts and in their general education classes to the greatest extent possible to avoid unnecessary movement and mixing of students.
- Utilize a "push-in" model when feasible to provide special services. If special education/related services are provided outside the classroom, district cleaning and safety protocol will be followed. Student's movement in and out of the classroom will be documented.
- Students IEP's will be implemented to the maximum extent possible in-person, in a blended format, or virtually. The Director and Supervisor of special education will continuously monitor IEP implementation.

Ensure all signs and messages related to stopping the spread are accessible for students with disabilities. Adult supervision for significantly disabled students will maximize compliance with safety protocols.

- Face shields worn with face masks may also be used by staff who support students with special healthcare needs who are not able to wear masks and who may need assistance with activities of daily living, such as toileting, eating).
- Individualized safety plans will be developed for the higher needs students to maximize social distancing and following of safety measures.
 - Instruction and assessment for students with disabilities will continue to consider the provision of supports, accommodations, and modifications as required in a student's IEP, Section 504 plan, or other intervention/learning plan. The special education team will continuously review the provision of services to ensure compliance with IEP's and 504 plans.
- Individualized safety plans which allow for students with disabilities to access the regular education curriculum and physical space will be developed, implemented, and monitored.
- Crisis intervention team protocols will be in place ensure the health and safety of special education and regular education students.
- Sensory break protocols will be developed for students who may need to go for a walk or take a break from instruction therapeutically.
- Masks and/or face shields will be required for everyone in the school building
- Masks and/or face shields are required for everyone on the school bus or transportation van.
- Masks/face shields can be provided by the student/family. Disposable face masks will be provided by the school district as needed.
- Clear plastic barriers, clear masks and/or face shields may be used to ensure access to specialized instruction as appropriate.
- Protocols for mask/face shield breaks will be developed taking into account individualized needs of students with disabilities.
- Mask and face shield wearing protocols as well as mask face/shield break protocols will be continuously revised as needed in light of CDC and CSDE guidelines for health and safety of students and staff.

English Learners (ELs)

- Understand that like all other students, ELs are entitled to FAPE. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IV, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (1974) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) provide guidance on the services to which ELs are entitled. ELs must have access to the general education curriculum as well as to a supplemental language instruction education program. During school closures due to COVID-19, ELs continue to be entitled to receive their supplemental EL instructional program in addition to their general education program of mainstream, grade-level and content-area instruction. Such language instructional education programs may consist of a range of services, including bilingual education, English as a Second Language (ESL), Sheltered Instruction and others. When returning to school buildings, language instruction education programs must continue.
- Comply with the requirement that eligible students in bilingual mandated districts are offered bilingual education programs. During COVID-19, school districts that are mandated to provide bilingual education remain required to offer a bilingual program to eligible students who have opted into the program. While program implementation may be altered during COVID-19 as compared to traditional in-building schooling, students in bilingual programs are still entitled to receive native language support as part of their school's designated bilingual program model. As with other language instruction education programs, when returning to traditional schooling, bilingual programs must continue.
- Communicate with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in English in a language they understand as required by Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. As during traditional schooling, communications during school closures due to COVID-19 may be provided through translation and/or interpretation.
- Provide ELs who are also identified as students with disabilities supports for their EL needs, as well as supports for their disabilities. During COVID-19, these dually identified students must continue to receive these supports. As in times with traditional schooling, dually identified students should have their language needs represented in their annual meetings about their IEP.
- We understand that like all other students, ELs are entitled to FAPE. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IV, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (1974) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) provide guidance on the services to which ELs are entitled. ELs must have access to the general education curriculum as well as to a supplemental language instruction education program. During school closures due to COVID-19, ELs continue to be entitled to receive their supplemental EL instructional program in addition to their general education program of mainstream, grade-level and content-area instruction. Such language instructional education programs may consist of a range of services, including bilingual education, English as a Second Language (ESL), Sheltered Instruction and others. When returning to school buildings, language instruction education programs must continue.
- We will comply with the requirement that eligible students in bilingual mandated districts are offered bilingual education programs. During COVID-19, school districts that are mandated to provide bilingual education remain required to offer a bilingual program to eligible students who have opted into the program. While program implementation may be altered during COVID-19 as compared to traditional in- building schooling, students in bilingual programs are still entitled to receive native language support as part of their school's designated bilingual program model. As with other language instruction education programs, when returning to traditional schooling, bilingual programs must continue.
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Family and Student Engagement

Family Support and Communication

- Comply with all state and federal family engagement requirements (e.g., School Governance Councils and Title I requirements) during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Prepare to provide families with clear and ongoing communication about what to expect, during and prior to reopening. This includes, but is not limited to, guidance on the school protocols related to health and safety guidelines.
- Continue to engage with families and students as the reopening moves forward to ensure they are informed and have the ability to provide feedback.
- Make reopen plans available on the LEA website, accessible, and clearly identify the school liaison.
- We will provide families with clear and ongoing communication about what to expect, during and prior to reopening. This includes, but is not limited to, guidance on the school protocols related to health and safety guidelines.
- We will continue to engage with families and students as the reopening moves forward to ensure they are informed and have the ability to provide feedback.
- The Botelle Reopen Plan will be posted on the website, accessible, and clearly identify the school liaison.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Mental Health

- Develop a detailed plan to reengage all students, staff and families. Particularly identify strategies to identify and engage populations and specific students that have been disengaged.
- Prepare staff to identify issues related to abuse and neglect in the context of the pandemic and comply with all mandated reporting requirements.

This fall, our students’ transition back to school amid a global pandemic will be unlike any other. As such, our students, families and educators will likely experience a range of emotions as they return to the school building. According to the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) “the attention to students’ social, emotional and academic development is particularly important now, as many students and adults may have experienced extraordinary stress and trauma.” Norfolk Public Schools believes that supporting our school community’s mental health will be paramount during this transition period. Therefore, with guidance from the CASEL and the Connecticut State Department of Education, Norfolk Public Schools has developed a multi-tiered model to provide social-emotional support to students, families and educators.

Mental Health Assessment

Upon return to the school building, Norfolk Public Schools will utilize a variety of assessment methods to gauge our students, families and staff members’ mental health needs. The following procedures will be utilized:

- Surveys will be administered prior to the start of the school year to help gauge students, families and staff members’ feelings, questions and concerns relating to the transition back to school. Responses will be confidential and analyzed by the school psychologist/principal. This data will be used to provide mental health interventions and support to at-risk students, families and staff members through the initial transition period. Surveys may be re-administered to re-examine the mental health needs of the school community once school is in progress.
- Student response to interventions will be monitored by the Scientific Research Based

Intervention (SRBI) Team SRBI and school psychologist. If deemed necessary, additional universal screening measures may be administered for at-risk students to gather further data and may be re-administered periodically through the year to monitor progress.

- In addition to formal assessment practices, informal practices, such as “Mood Meter check-ins,” parent forums and staff meetings may be utilized to help gather data relating to the social emotional needs of the school community.

Tier I Social Emotional Interventions for Norfolk Public School Students

Upon return to school, the following procedures will be utilized to engage **all students** in social emotional learning and to strengthen the school climate:

- According to CASEL, one of the critical social-emotional learning practices for reopening schools is to take time to cultivate and deepen relationships. Upon the transition back to school, teachers and school staff will take time to establish relationships with their students through a variety of strategies, including but not limited to creating a classroom charter, using restorative circles or morning meetings and planning team building activities, etc. While these activities may need to be reformatted due to social distancing requirements, they may be critical in helping students to re-engage in their school community.
- In addition to relationship building practices, teachers will establish routines that are sensitive to the mental health needs of their students. This may include embedding strategies from RULER, an evidence based approach developed by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. The RULER approach is used to build an individual’s capacity for emotional intelligence, including one’s ability to recognize, understand, label, express and regulate emotions. For instance, teachers may choose to establish a routine using The Mood Meter, to help students’ understand and regulate their emotions relating to the transition. Additional methods may be used, such as creating a classroom charter.
- Lessons focusing on social emotional competencies will be administered by the school psychologist in each classroom to support students’ transition back to the school building. Initially, lessons will be focused on relationship building and supporting students with new protocols. Lessons topics may then focus on RULER strategies and school wide expectations (SOAR). Lessons may be provided in person or virtually to support social distancing protocols. Teachers will also be provided with lesson resources to provide instruction on social emotional competencies during the school day.
- Additional support at the tier I level may be accessed depending on student need. This may include more frequent class check-ins with the school psychologist or lessons relating to a specific social emotional learning competency. Lessons may also be incorporated to address today’s social climate, including lessons relating to empathy, race and inequality.
- Considerations have also been made to support remote learners’ social-emotional well-being at the tier I level. Members of a remote learning team may offer weekly check-ins to support remote learners’ mental health and academic progress. Additionally, social emotional lessons may be provided virtually.

Tier II and Tier III Social Emotional Interventions for Norfolk Public School Students

Following the administration of survey measures, **at-risk students** will be identified by the SRBI Team/school psychologist. Particular attention may be given to students disengaged during the school closure (i.e. students who did not participate in virtual learning opportunities). The following procedures will be utilized to support the mental health of at-risk students:

- After analyzing formal and informal data, parent contact will be made. In partnership with families, a plan will be developed to provide social emotional support for each student at a tier II level. Tier II interventions may include services such as weekly check-ins with the school psychologist, weekly parent contact or small group counseling. To address containment concerns, students will only be placed in counseling groups with peers in their cohort and social distancing protocols will be maintained. Lunch bunches will be avoided, at this time, for safety purposes. Materials, such as journals, charts or games, will not be shared.
- After analyzing formal and informal progress monitoring data, students requiring an intensified level of social emotional support may be identified. Parent contact will be made. In partnership with families, a plan will be developed to provide social emotional interventions for each student at a tier III level. Tier III interventions may include individual counseling, daily check-ins, and

education in healthy coping strategies.

- The SRBI Team/school psychologist will remain in close contact with teachers and parents when administering tier II and tier III supports. Parent permission is required to provide ongoing counseling support.
- Resources may be provided to help families seek assistance outside of the school setting, such as when a student requires mental health support in the community. A list of local mental health providers has been developed.
- To support disengaged learners, an Outreach Team may be created. The Outreach Team will work to obtain and maintain contact with families who have not returned to school and/or are not participating in remote learning opportunities. The Outreach Team will work together with the school board, school staff and community to ensure that educational opportunities are provided to each family within the district.

Family Interventions and Resources

Upon return to the school building, the following procedures will be utilized to support the mental health and engagement of all families and to strengthen the climate of the school community:

- A fund of resources supporting children and families' mental health and wellbeing will be made available on the district website, as well as through other methods of parent communication (i.e. Class Dojo, Seesaw). This information will be updated frequently and will include resources to support current challenges in today's social climate, including health resources, information relating to financial hardship and race and inequality.
- To support families in their transition back to school, school staff will continue to provide opportunities for families' to meet with and connect with staff. This will include interventions such as "An Hour with Lauren" forum, technology help desk hours and individual office hours for teachers/specialists.
- To support families in addressing mental health concerns at home, the school psychologist may offer a virtual family support group. This may also include family education and training programs relating to RULER.
- Based on the results of social emotional needs assessments, the school psychologist/principal may address any individual family needs directly and promptly and plans will be developed on a case by case basis.
- Resources may be provided to help families seek assistance outside of the school setting, such as when a student requires mental health support in the community. A list of local mental health providers has been developed.
- To support disengaged families, an Outreach Team may be created. The Outreach Team will work to obtain and maintain contact with families who have not returned to school and/or are not participating in remote learning opportunities. The Outreach Team will work together with the school board, school staff and community to ensure that educational opportunities are provided to each family within the district.

Norfolk Public School Staff Interventions and Resources

Upon return to the school building, the following procedures will be utilized to support the mental health and engagement of all staff members and to strengthen the climate of the school community:

- A fund of resources supporting staff mental health and wellbeing will be made available on a shared folder on Google Drive. This information will be updated frequently and will include resources to support current challenges in today's social climate, including health resources, information relating to financial hardship and race and inequality.
- Administrators and mental health personnel will continue to encourage school staff to utilize RULER strategies throughout their workday. These strategies may include creating a revised staff charter, checking in on the mood meter daily and practicing meta-moments. Continued professional development activities relating to RULER may be offered virtually or in staff meetings.
- Administrators and mental health personnel may offer continued opportunities for school staff to express their feelings and opinions in venues such as staff meetings, forums or support groups. Additionally, administrators and mental health personnel may check-in with staff on an individual basis regularly.
- Professional development and training opportunities will be provided to staff relating to new

procedures and protocols. This will include a mental health training and a mandated reporter training to help identify issues related to abuse and neglect. Further information about mandated reporter training can be found here and should be completed before the start of the school year: <https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/Mandated-Reporter-Training/Home>

After-school programming

- Programs receiving funding from the CSDE through the State After School, Extended School Hours (ESH) and 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) programs, consult with the CSDE for individual grant-specific guidance.
- Follow the requirements outlined in this document, as applicable, including but not limited to requiring the use of face coverings that cover the nose and mouth, and maximizing social distancing.
- Any after school programming will adhere to all safety and health protocols, including but not limited to, wearing masks and maintaining appropriate social distancing.

Career And Technical Education

- Develop a plan for cleaning and disinfecting shared equipment in the shop or lab, before and after each use.

NA

Staffing And Personnel

Certification and Personnel Planning

- Prepare with school human resources and board counsel to comply with legal and regulatory requirements related to personnel, including but not limited to the EEOC [guidance](#) related to the ADA and the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Assess how to engage a full roster of staff, including potential substitute plan, and whether stipends or changes in substitute pay is required to support the needs of the school.
- Botelle School is completely staffed with certified personnel.

Professional Development

- Prioritize mandatory training for staff, before the beginning of the school year, that covers signs and symptoms of COVID-19, Standard Public Health protocols, Hygiene Practices, PPE, Reporting Illnesses, and supporting SEL. Plan ongoing trainings as changes occur in recommendations and public health data.
- Seven full days of PD are planned prior to the students' first day of school, and will cover the above topics.