

# START Operational Guidelines: 2021-2022 School Year

Schools Transition and Reopening Team, Wolcott Public Schools

Original Document July 2020. Updated on: February 28, 2022

This document is an update of work completed in July of 2020 by 30 stakeholders from across our district with a wide variety of perspectives. The planning group included parents, teachers, administrators, and the local director of public health. We are thankful for the time that START team members have dedicated to driving this process. In this document, we describe the continuity that we plan to restore for the children of Wolcott in their public school experience.

**Our goal** is to return the daily operations of school to the most-normal-feeling experience possible for students and staff members. It is important to remember, that guidance from state and federal authorities have changed frequently throughout the pandemic and will continue to do so. **This document will be updated as necessary.**

## Restoring Continuity to Wolcott's Public Schools

	Wolcott Public Schools Fall 2021 Reopening Guidelines	Important Notes
Model of Instruction:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Unless otherwise advised by state or local health officials, the 2021-2022 school year will open for all students every day on the Board of Education school calendar.</li><li>An elective remote learning option will <u>not</u> be offered. Parents with questions regarding home schooling their child can contact the Superintendent's office.</li></ul>	
Attendance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All students attend school in person each school day.</li><li>When a student is absent from school, the school and teacher will make the missed work available as soon as possible.</li><li>Livestreamed instruction will not be provided for individual student absences.</li></ul>	Attendance will follow established Board of Education policies and Connecticut State Statutes.

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wolcott Public Schools</b> <b>Fall 2021 Reopening Guidelines</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Important Notes</b></p>
<p>Masks &amp; Personal Protective Equipment:</p>	<p>Students &amp; Staff Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masks will be encouraged but not required.</li> <li>All students and staff members should bring a mask to school with them in case a need for it develops during the school day.</li> </ul> <p>Visitors and Volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully vaccinated visitors and volunteers shall not be required to wear a mask.</li> <li>Visitors and volunteers who are not vaccinated will be asked to wear a mask as indicated by signage at each school.</li> </ul> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extra masks, face shields, and gowns will remain available upon request and as appropriate to the person's role.</li> </ul>	<p>N95 masks will remain available for staff members. Surgical masks will remain available for students.</p> <p>Visits to schools are governed by WBOE policies <a href="#">1250</a> and <a href="#">1251</a> among others.</p>
<p>Social distancing requirements:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students and staff members will exercise social distancing to the greatest extent practicable while still delivering high quality instruction.</li> </ul>	
<p>Handwashing:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hand sanitizer stations will remain available throughout all school buildings.</li> <li>Handwashing will continue to be encouraged through signage.</li> </ul>	
<p>Transportation:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus routes will return to normal operation.</li> <li>Student seating on buses will return to normal operation.</li> <li>Mask guidelines for buses will be governed by federal directives regarding public transportation.</li> </ul>	<p>Masking is encouraged but not required.</p>
<p>Arrival at school and dismissal:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To facilitate smoother arrivals and dismissals, parents who traditionally used the school bus to transport their child are encouraged to do so.</li> <li>Arrivals and dismissals will be safe and orderly but no special waves or assigned times will be used.</li> </ul>	
<p>Passing in the hallways:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be encouraged to maintain distancing while passing in the hallways.</li> <li>Students and staff members who elect to use masks while in common areas may do so.</li> </ul>	
<p>Respiratory etiquette:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signage will encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue when not wearing a mask and immediately wash their hands after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing.</li> </ul>	
<p>Visitors to schools:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitors will be allowed as described in Board of Education policy and as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>Visits to schools are governed by WBOE policies <a href="#">1250</a> and <a href="#">1251</a> among others.</p>

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<p>Services for special populations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with IEP, 504, or English Learner plans will continue to receive their services as prescribed.</li> <li>• For students who cannot safely socially distance or are a threat to themselves or others, additional safety protocols and/or PPE may be required.</li> </ul>	
<p>School meals:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The federal government has established that regular school meals shall be free of cost for all students in the 2021-2022 school year. This does not include a la carte selections.</li> <li>• Students in the cafeteria will be distanced to the extent practicable.</li> </ul>	<p>Parents who have requested free or reduced-price meals in the past are encouraged to submit these applications as this is important data for the school system.</p>
<p>Student materials and technology:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize the need to have multiple students sharing high touch materials to the extent possible while still maintaining high quality instruction.</li> <li>• These materials include, but are not limited to books, computers, calculators, writing utensils, computer keyboards/headphones, and art supplies.</li> </ul>	
<p>Social-emotional needs of students:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students and parents will be reminded about and encouraged to communicate with counseling staff members.</li> <li>• Counseling staff will perform formal and informal check-ins with students of concern.</li> <li>• The DESSA one-minute mental health assessment will be available to all students in grades K-12. The assessment will be used to help school administrators and mental health staff members more effectively provide services to students in need.</li> <li>• Federal rescue monies will be used to increase staffing levels of the district’s mental health professionals.</li> <li>• “Mental Health First Aid” training will be made available to all staff members.</li> <li>• Question Persuade Refer (QPR) refresher training will be offer to staff members.</li> </ul>	<p>Parents will be kept apprised of these offerings and will be offered an opportunity to provide consent for any assessments.</p>
<p>Extracurriculars &amp; Athletics:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubs will be implemented with all of the same precautions and mitigating factors as classroom instruction.</li> <li>• Athletics will be implemented according to guidelines published by the DPH, SDE, and CIAC.</li> </ul>	
<p>Other facilities considerations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ventilation capacity and frequency of filter changes will be increased to the degree feasible.</li> <li>• Teachers may open windows when safe to do so.</li> <li>• HVAC maintenance and repair schedule will increase in frequency with checks at least once per month.</li> <li>• Interior (non-security) doors may be held open to the degree allowable by fire code.</li> </ul>	

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<p>Contact tracing, isolation, and quarantining:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact tracing, isolation, and quarantining will be done in compliance with published guidance from DPH and SDE.</li> <li>• We will continue our strong partnership with Chesprocott Health District in contact tracing if mandated by State order.</li> <li>• The district will send frequent reminders to parents and staff members about the need to self-screen and to stay home when showing any signs of illness.</li> </ul>	<p>As of the date of this draft, contact tracing requirements for schools have been lifted.</p>
<p>Diagnostic COVID screening and testing:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the State of Connecticut provides a turnkey option for school districts, in-school testing may be made available.</li> </ul>	<p>At-home rapid tests are available for any student or family who requests one.</p>
<p>Efforts to provide vaccinations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district has partnered very closely throughout the pandemic with Chesprocott Health District and has already hosted four mass vaccination clinics. This partnership will continue should the broadening of vaccine eligibility cause the need for further clinics.</li> </ul>	

**Periodic Review Process:** This plan will be reviewed and possibly amended at least every six months. The target dates for these revisions are: June 23, 2021, December 23, 2021, June 23, 2022, December 23, 2022, June 23, 2023

**Stakeholder Input:** As stated in the introduction to this document, the original plan was constructed by a team of 30 stakeholders representing parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrative assistants, custodians, school nurses, school administrators, and district administrators. This update had input from the district’s administrative council and was emailed to all staff members and parents with an opportunity to provide feedback via a dedicated email address. Stakeholder input was incorporated into the plan where possible and appropriate.

Revision: February 14, 2022