

Hoosic Valley Central School District

REOPENING PLAN

The COVID-19 closures caused a disruption in our lives like we have never seen. As we move closer to the start of a new school year, there are many unanswered questions about the future. As you can imagine, we face a very difficult decision on reopening our schools.

Aside from a child's home, no other setting has more influence on their development and health and well-being as our schools. In developing a plan for reopening our schools, we have focused on three critical areas - academics, health and safety, and social-emotional learning.

Our children have been out of school since mid-March and we cannot underestimate the importance of in-person education and socialization for our students. Humans are social beings who need constant contact and interaction with one another. We need to ensure that our students are given a strong academic program. Both scientific and anecdotal evidence has proven live, in-person education to be the most effective means of instruction.

In addressing the academic needs of our students in the 2020-21 school year, we must take into consideration work that students may have missed during the 2019-20 school year closure. We must identify any gaps that were created and have instructional practices in place to help students fill in those gaps. At the same time, we must be cognizant of the fact that we must move forward in the development of the students' knowledge in a particular subject area or aspect of that subject.

Our reopening committees, under the guidance of High School Principal Eric Papandrea and Director of Instruction Lisa Cala Ruud, have developed a plan to address these priorities. Please note that a plan is not going to be perfect, particularly given the fluid situation.

It is a plan that meets the criteria set forth by Governor Cuomo and the New York State Department of Health and the New York State Education Department. It is a plan that attempts to make sure that all students can feel safe and return to school to see their teachers and friends as well as address the individual academic needs of all students. It is a plan that reflects the collaborative effort of our school community.

Looking ahead, we will continue planning and will refine our plan, as needed. I encourage every parent and staff member to read this plan and contact G. Michael Apostol mapostol@hoosicvalley.k12.ny.us with any questions or concerns.

#HVSTRONG

G. Michael Apostol - Superintendent of Schools

OPENING TIMELINE

The following timeline has been developed to ease students back into school after a four month closure. We feel that this time is necessary for students to acclimate back into the school environment. Additionally, this allows the Administration to assess its processes and protocols.

OPENING TIMELINE

- AUGUST 18 – 20
 - Kindergarten Screening
- SEPTEMBER 8- 11
 - Professional Development/ Superintendent Conference Days
 - Pre – K Screening
- SEPTEMBER 14 -MONDAY
 - Begin gradual reentry grades
 - Grades K – 2
 - Grades 7 & 8 "1" Group
 - Grade 9 "1" Group
 - Selected critical Groups
- SEPTEMBER 15 – TUESDAY
 - Grades K – 2
 - Grades 3 - 4
 - Grades 7 -8 "2" Group
 - Grade 9 "2" Group
 - Selected critical Groups
- SEPTEMBER 16 - WEDNESDAY
 - Grades K – 2
 - Grades 3 – 4
 - Grades 5 -6
 - Grade 10 "1" Group
 - Grade 11- 12 "1" Group
 - Selected critical Groups

OPENING TIMELINE (cont.)

SEPTEMBER 17 – THURSDAY

- Grades K -2, 3-4, 5-6 (full capacity)
- Grade 10 "2" Group
- Grade 11-12 "2" Group
- Selected critical Groups

SEPTEMBER 18-FRIDAY

- Grades K -2, 3-4, 5-6 (full capacity)
- Grades 7 -12 "1" Group

SEPTEMBER 21 - MONDAY

- Pre- K – 6 Full Capacity- Begin regular instruction
- Grades 7 -12 "1" Group

SEPTEMBER 22 - TUESDAY

- Grades 7 -12 "2" Group

SEPTEMBER 23- WEDNESDAY

- Grades 7-12 "2" Group

SEPTEMBER 24- THURSDAY

- Grades 7 -12 "1" Group

SEPTEMBER 25- FRIDAY

- Grades 7 -12 "1" Group

September 28 – MONDAY

- Grades 7 – 12 "2" Group

ACADEMIC PLAN

- ❖ High School Students will attend school in person on two consecutive days:
 - Students will be convened by group 1 or group 2 which will be determined alphabetically; siblings with different last names will be grouped together
 - The "1" group students (A – K)
 - The "2" group students (L – Z)
 - I.e.: Monday and Tuesday "1" group students, Wednesday and Thursday "2" group students, Friday and the following Monday "1" group students
 - When not in school, students will work on assignments/extensions from teachers
- ❖ Elementary School Students will attend school five days a week beginning on September 21
 - Begin gradual reentry by grade level starting September 14, reaching full capacity by September 18

EXCEPTIONS

- Any student who wishes to opt out of coming to school will be provided a remote learning format
- Any student who has any underlying conditions will be provided a remote learning format
- Although not finalized, we are working with Questar III on developing a distance learning model

TRANSPORTATION

- There are two (2) possibilities in regard to transportation
- Due to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Guidelines, we must have the students practice social distancing on the bus
- Consequently, we will have to decide to have one or two bus runs
- This will be determined by the results of the transportation survey sent to parents (not all have participated – they may be waiting to see the plan)
- If the second run is necessary, start and finish times for the elementary school will be adjusted. We would pick up the Jr Sr High School students first and the Elementary students second
- Before school care will be available at the elementary school, provided by the Mechanicville Area Community Center (MACC)
- All students and drivers will wear masks throughout the bus trip, to and from school
- If a student does not have a mask, the school will provide one

TRANSPORTATION (cont.)

- Drivers will be trained and have refreshers on the proper practice of social distancing
- All drivers and attendants will wear district provided gloves
- The drivers and attendants will be provided by the district masks, gloves, and other personal protective equipment (PPE)
- NO hand sanitizer can be stored on buses
- Hand sanitizers should be available at the bus garage and break room
- All buses must be cleaned, sanitized, and wiped down after each run
- Transportation staff will perform self- health assessment for symptoms of COVID -19 prior to arriving at work
- All contact points will be cleaned and disinfected after each run
- Drivers will constantly remind and demonstrate to students the proper use of PPE
- Drivers will observe and report any COVID – 19 symptoms

NUTRITION

- Meals will be available to all students while in school
- Meals can be provided to students who are learning remotely
- HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES
 - Staff will wear face masks, face guards and gloves while serving students as well as working the cash register and assisting students in the cafeteria
- Hand sanitizer will be available in the cafeteria, serving line, and kitchen
- Teachers and staff will remind students to wash hands before and after lunch
- Cafeteria staff will announce before each lunch shift that food sharing is not allowed
- Cafeteria staff will clean and disinfect tables, benches, serving lines, and kitchen equipment between lunch shifts
- There will be signage throughout the cafeteria reminding students and staff about hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene
- There will be signage throughout the cafeteria reminding students that face mask are required and social distancing should be practiced
 - Students will not wear face masks while eating but will practice social distance
- Communication with families in regard to procedures, nutritional needs, or changes will be through letters and the website

TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

- The district has provided all students with access to devices. Furthermore, we have had communications with district students and parents through letters and the website as to where and how they can obtain devices if needed
- The school district has contacted all students and parents through letter, website, text, email, and robo call to determine if they have access to devices as well as high speed internet
- The district will reach out through the guidance department to families who lack connectivity and those who are not active on the remote platform. This communication will include letters, phone calls, and home visits to determine need
- The district will assist any student who does not have connectivity. We will provide parents with possible resources
- The district will assist any student who does not have connectivity in obtaining necessary hot spots
- The district will assist anyone who can not afford connectivity by working with resources to obtain grants, scholarships or discounts to obtain service
- Staff will be provided continual professional development on distance and remote learning throughout the year

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The district's continuity of learning plan includes provisions for in-person, hybrid, and remote instruction
- We have in place and will expand on our remote learning model used during the 2019-20 school year
- We are prepared to go full time in person instruction at any point during the 2020-21 school year
- We are starting the 2020-21 school year with a hybrid model that has been explained previously
- Our three options include instruction that aligns with the New York State Learning Standards
- Our three plans call for student/teacher interaction to be substantial. Obviously the live model would be and the hybrid model lends itself to such
- In the remote model, teachers are required to have google meets and maintain office hours during any closure
- If a student does not respond, a phone call or home visit would be in order
- In our live and hybrid models there will be time built into each student's schedule for opportunities for instruction and time to meet with teachers to receive feedback and support
- The remote model requires that teachers have one to one and small group google meetings as well as maintain office hours

TEACHING AND LEARNING (cont.)

- The district will communicate with students and parents as how they can contact the school with questions regarding a student's instruction, work, technology, and progress. This information will be disseminated by letters, website updates, and using the school messenger system at the beginning of the year and at the mid point of any quarter
- The district's Pre-k program will come under all district guidelines including health and safety and continuity of learning

SCHOOL SCHEDULES

- The district will have their planned school schedule available at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. The schedule is a hybrid model
- The district has a contingency plan to blend into remote learning if any situation calls for it
- A master schedule will be developed for full live in person school when the time comes

ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

- In our hybrid model we will be following attendance:
 - If we need to switch to the fully remote model, we can determine who would be active
 - Any student that is chronically inactive would be considered absent and will be dealt with in accordance with our student code of conduct
 - Any continual chronic absenteeism with a student aged sixteen (16) and under would be referred to the Rensselaer County Child Protective Services (CPS)
 - An Educational Neglect charge would be filed if CPS cannot resolve the chronic absenteeism

SPECIAL EDUCATION

- The district will address the provisions of free and appropriate education and protect the health and safety of students with disabilities in accordance with NYSED guidelines; this includes those providing special education services
- Included in these provisions are:
 - Continue to meet Individual Education Program (IEP)
 - Related services provided as close to the traditional model as possible
 - We will have a plan if we are closed or to continue our hybrid model
 - District will provide access to accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services and technology to meet the unique disability needs of students
 - We will follow the district health and safety plans
 - In addition related service providers will wear PPE and face masks with clear openings around the mouth (speech therapists and teachers hearing impaired)
 - The wearing of face masks with openings around the mouth will be required of any teacher of a student who is hearing impaired
 - The implementation of services during any closure will apply to programs and services delivered in person or remotely
 - Related services and IEP programs will continue in person or remotely
 - Maximize contact time
 - Quality programs to be designed based on abilities

SPECIAL EDUCATION (cont.)

- Teachers and related service providers will maintain daily logs of special education applicable to the subject and IEP goal, as well as parent communication
- Students in self contained classrooms will be on site for "A" and "B" days
- Meaningful parent engagement in their language will take place (HVCS D does not presently have any ESL students with IEP and requirements of IDEA)
- Collaboration between CPSE, CSE, and program providers:
 - To understand provision of services consistent with IEP
 - Plans to monitor and communicate student progress
 - Commitment to shared resources

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

- HVCSD has a Comprehensive Guidance Plan. This plan will be reviewed by our newly created advisory counsel
- HVCSD has implemented The Responsive Classroom program that will enhance the social emotional well being
- HVCSD will form an advisory council that will include district stakeholder representation. Members will include parents, students, BOE members, administrators, teachers, community service providers, guidance counselors, school psychologists, and the school social worker. This advisory council will oversee the Comprehensive Guidance Plan
- HVCSD has the Rensselaer County Department of Mental Health personnel on site to address health, behavior, and emotional support services and programs
- The first four days of the 2020-21 school year will be Professional Development (PD). Some of this PD will be dedicated to training teachers how to talk to students about COVID -19. The training will also address how to provide supports for coping and resilience skills for students, faculty and staff
- The Responsive Classroom Program at the elementary school trains teachers on any interventions that are necessary. This approach will take into consideration the student's social emotional needs

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING(cont.)

- Our guidance counselors, school psychologists and school social worker will meet weekly and determine students at risk. They will work in collaboration with teachers to ensure awareness of issues and that the necessary supports are in place to address them
- Grade level meetings will assist in determining student referral to the guidance counselors so that a student will receive the necessary social emotional support

TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION

- Teachers and Principals will be evaluated in accordance with the HVCSD approved APPR plan
- Any variance applicable approved by NYSED will be applied

BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND WORLD LANGUAGES

- HVCSD refers all ELL students to Questar III BOCES
- HVCSD uses the registration form to determine what a student's primary language
- HVCSD contracts with Questar III BOCES for the assessment and instruction of ELL students
- When necessary we contract translation service to communicate with parents of ELL students in regard to meetings and written communication

PROTOCOLS

✓ Attached

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

- Staff are trained on the use of cleaning and disinfectants as well as the use of cleaning, disinfectants, and use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Mandatory requirement to wear gloves at all times
- Handwashing will be done frequently for 20 seconds
- Always wash hands after removing gloves
- Always wash hands after contact with a sick person
- Always wash hands after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Always wash your hands after using the restroom

Protocol for cleaning and disinfecting Hoosic Valley Central School District (HVCS D) facilities

- Disinfecting and cleaning will be done throughout the day and night when no one is in the buildings
- All custodial staff will wear gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces
- Surfaces must be cleaned using soap, water, and then disinfectant
- High touch surfaces (doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks)
- All disinfectant used by the Hoosic Valley Staff must be registered
- The carpeted areas in the high school should be cleaned with soap and water or with cleaning solutions approved for use on said surfaces
- HVCS D will disinfect products with EPA registered household items
- Vacuum in accordance with normal protocols
- HVCS D will use alcohol based wipes or sprays containing at least 70 % alcohol. Surfaces will be dried afterward.
- All outdoor equipment require normal routine cleaning, disinfectants do not have to be used
- High touch areas (surfaces made of plastic should be cleaned routinely, wooden surfaces need not be cleaned or disinfected)
- Additional staff will be hired to assist in cleaning and disinfecting

COMMUNICATION
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. On May 07, 2020, I announced the formation of two (2) reopening committees. Facilities reopening committee, headed by High School Principal Eric Papandrea and an Academic Reopening Committee, headed by Director of Instruction and Curriculum Lisa Cala Ruud. The committees are comprised of school personnel, parents, nurse's, local public safety officials, parent educators from other districts, union representatives, and alumni.
2. The Hoosic Valley Central School District communicates with its constituency through different means. Our main avenue and most popular use of communication is through our website. In addition, we send out communications using the school messenger system by phone call, text, and email. All who have registered for this communication will get a robo-call from the appropriate personnel to the contact information we have.
3. On the first day of school, a portion of the morning will be dedicated to the training of students in the areas of hand hygiene, the use of face covering, social distancing protocols, and respiratory hygiene. We will use training videos provided by the Center for Disease Control. Refresher training will take place periodically throughout the pandemic.

SIGNS OF ILLNESS

The following protocol will be followed in instructing staff to observe illness in staff and students. The protocol also requires symptomatic staff or students be sent to the health office.

- All staff will be provided with professional development on how to observe symptoms that may be related to COVID – 19
- Professional development will be provided by the School Physician, School Nurse, or outside health care professionals
- All staff will receive literature in regard to COVID – 19 symptoms
- Refresher to professional development on how to detect COVID – 19 symptoms will be held throughout the school year
- Any student showing signs of symptoms should be sent to the nurse's office immediately

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The following protocol will be followed for the screening of students and staff members:

- Staff should fill out the COVID – 19 questionnaire and check their temperature from home before school and send it electronically
- Parents should complete COVID – 19 questionnaire every Sunday evening and send it electronically
- If a family or staff member does not have access to submit questionnaire responses electronically they will report to the nurse's office upon arrival to school
- Parents should check a student's temperature before the student leaves home
- Students' temperatures will be taken on the school bus
- Students who drive or are driven to school will have their temperature taken before entrance to the buildings
- Any student with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will be sent to the nurse's office where their temperature will be taken again by the nurse
- If the student's temperature is still reading 100 degrees or higher the parent will be called to come and take their child home, the student will remain in the designated isolation room

Additionally, the following health and safety protocols will be followed:

- HVCSD will designate a COVID -19 safety coordinator whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan, as well as any phased in reopening activities necessary to allow operational issues to be resolved before normal activity resolves
- HVCSD Head Custodian has developed an inventory system where all PPE supplies are stored in one area and will require sign out procedures for staff. Head Custodian will work closely with the Purchasing Agent on communicating the use and frequency of supplies to ensure the procurement of PPE without a lapse

Parents should NOT send their children to school if the following symptoms are observed:

- Fever 100 degrees or higher
- Shaking, chills, or feeling feverish
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

- Cough, congestion, or running nose
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Persistent headache
- Unusual aches or fatigue

VISITORS

No visitors will be allowed at school at any time. Parents who need to pick up a student will wait in the vestibule until a staff member brings their child to them. The following protocol is for related service providers, contractors, and vendors who **may** need to enter our school.

- They will be informed of our requirement that they are to wear a face mask at all times
- They will be given a copy of our social distance protocol
- They will be given a temperature check by a trained staff member
- They will fill out a questionnaire that asks them if they have COVID – 19 symptoms, have been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID – 19 or have been in contact with anyone who lives with someone who has tested positive for COVID – 19

HAND HYGIENE

The Hoosic Valley Central School District will follow the subsequent protocols in regard to signage throughout the buildings:

- All signage will be in large print that can be easily read
- All signage will be laminated
- All restrooms throughout the district will have a sign to remind people to wash their hands and practice good hand hygiene (this includes locker rooms)
- All restrooms throughout the district will have signage illustrating the proper way to wash hands (this includes locker rooms)
- Signage in regard to using proper hand hygiene will be posted in all cafeterias. There will additionally be signage to remind students to hand wash before and after eating
- Aforementioned signage will be strategically posted throughout the building as appropriate including all common areas
- Signs reminding students, faculty, and staff to use hand sanitizer will be posted throughout the buildings including the faculty rooms

SOCIAL DISTANCE

The following protocol is for all person in any building in the district to follow in regards to social distancing.

- Face masks are to be used at all times
- Wherever there are a group of students, they are to maintain a distance of six (6) feet
- Desks are to be 6 feet apart in all classrooms
- Physical education and Music/ Chorus classes should engage in activities that do not involve personal contact so that students can maintain 12 foot distance
- There will be marking strips that are six feet apart in the cafeteria and at all entrances to the school
- Students passing to classes will be directed into single lanes closest to the walls on their right
- Faculty and staff should maintain the 6 foot distance in the faculty room
- Students will maintain the 6 foot distance in the cafeteria

CAFETERIA BETWEEN MEALS

The following protocols will be followed by the cafeteria and cleaning staff between lunch shifts.

- Floors should be mopped
- All tables and chairs (benches) will be disinfected with the proper cleaning materials
- All areas and equipment in the serving lines should be disinfected with the proper cleaning materials
- All refrigeration and other equipment that is normally touched by students should be disinfected with the proper cleaning materials
- All door handles going in and out of the cafeteria should be disinfected using the proper cleaning materials

STUDENTS AND STAFF AT RISK

The following protocol is for students and staff that are of high risk or live with a person who is high risk.

- Principals, nurse's, and guidance counselors will identify those students or staff members who are high risk or live with someone who is high risk
- Any student or staff member who is deemed high risk or lives with someone that is high risk will be given a space to have lunch isolated from the general population (location TBD upon completion of the master schedule)
- Faculty and staff will be trained to observe the signs of illness in all students. They will be given a list of those students at risk
- The school nurse's will be in constant contact with students who are at risk or those living with such person
- The school guidance counselors and the school social worker will be in contact with those students at risk or who live with such person to address any social emotional needs
- The nurse's, guidance counselors and the school social worker will be in contact with families of those students at risk or those students that live with someone at risk to address any health problems or any social emotional needs

The following protocol will be put in place if there is a confirmed case of COVID 19

- If the student is in school and the case is confirmed, the student will be put in the isolation room until such time they can be picked up by a parent or guardian
- The school health office will notify the Rensselaer County Department of Health. (RCDOH)

- The Hoosic Valley Central School District (HVCSD) will work in conjunction with RCDOH in any contact tracing
- The HVCSD will follow RCDOH lead on closure protocols
- The HVCSD will clean and disinfect the buildings in accordance with all protocols

FACE MASK PROTOCOL

The following is a protocol for the wearing of face coverings:

- Face masks should be worn at all times; surgical, homemade, or cloth/ bandana masks that can be worn over the nose and mouth
- Masks are a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the mask coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice
- The CDC does not recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for masks
- Planned breaks from face masks will happen throughout the day
- If a student does not wear a face mask, it will be considered insubordination and will be addressed in accordance with the code of conduct (VII – prohibited student conduct, B – Engage in conduct that is insubordinate)
- In the event that someone does not have a face mask, the school will provide one
- Face masks are to be worn on the school bus
- If a student does not have a mask, the bus driver will provide one

FIRE AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS

The following protocol will be followed during safety drills with modifications.

- All required fire and lockdown drills will take place in a timely manner
- Fire drills will follow this procedure:
 - Students will leave the building room by room in a staggered format
 - Students will maintain social distancing as they exit the building
 - Students will maintain social distancing while standing outside while staff take attendance
 - Students will reenter the building in reverse order room by room staggering while maintaining social distance
- Lockdown drills will be performed with some modifications of the standard drill:
 - Students will remain at their desks
 - All windows and doors will be **FULLY** covered
 - This protocol will not be in effect if the drill is “live”

RETURN TO SCHOOL

The following protocols for students and staff testing positive for COVID-19 will be sent to parents and staff members via school messenger and will appear on the district website.

If a student or staff member exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Loss of smell or taste
- Fatigue
- Sore Throat
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Nausea or vomiting
- Congestion of running nose
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Cough
- Muscle or body aches

They will move to a supervised isolation room. The District will call student parents to come and get them. The district will recommend that the parents of the student or the staff member contact their Doctor, who may recommend a COVID-19 test.

- ✓ If the student or staff member has tested for COVID-19 and the test result is **NEGATIVE**, the student or staff member must remain out of district for 72 hours symptom free without the use of medication.
- ✓ If the student or staff member has tested for COVID -19 and the test result is **POSITIVE**, the student or staff member must notify the school nurse and remain out of district for ten (10) days. Reentry to the district will require a doctor's note or a release from the Rensselaer County Department of Health (RCDOH) as well as be symptom free without medication.
- ✓ If a student or a staff member does not make contact with a doctor or refuses to be tested for COVID-19, the student or staff member must remain out of district for ten (10) days and be symptom free for 72 hours without medication. HVCS D must be notified of this information prior to returning to the district.

If there is a confirmed case of anyone student or staff member testing positive for COVID -19, HVCS D will inform the community via the school messenger system and the district website.