



# REOPENING EASTCONN SCHOOL AND PROGRAM DOORS

Welcoming Back Our Students, Staff and Families

2020 -2021 School Year

DRAFT 7/24/2020



Created using Connecticut State Department of Education Guidelines  
*Adapt, Advance, Achieve 6/29/2020*

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# A Community Message

Dear EASTCONN Learning Community,

Four months ago, on March 13th, we left the certainty of our daily school and work routines, never really anticipating what the days ahead would hold. That one day forever changed the way in which we imagine learning. EASTCONN schools and programs have always been grounded in the mission to provide something different for students and families that allows students (and staff) to reach their maximum potential, to develop the knowledge, skills and habits of mind to be successful.

A great deal has happened across our country and in our state since that day in March and we have learned and experienced so much. As we prepare to reopen our doors and welcome our students, staff and families back into our buildings, we must understand that “schools” are not the only places that learning happens, but it has become the place we all miss. COVID-19 has provided us with the opportunity to continue to reimagine what the best, most effective means of learning is for each and every individual child. Once size does not fit all, especially during a pandemic. While we know that fear and uncertainty may persist, we must remember that learning must go on.

The following Reopening Plan is based, in part, on the Connecticut State Department of Education’s most recent guidelines, allowing for a safe reentry to school for all. It is also based on the ongoing advancement plans of our schools and programs as we continue to reimagine how to best meet the needs of all learners. While we know that uncertainty and fear may remain, we must remember how essential school is to the well-being of children and young adults. Teachers provide an important thread of consistency and continuity in children’s lives. They provide the love and care, and the learning foundation that students will carry throughout their lives. Returning to school to reconnect and prepare for the coming year is important. While students will find many changes when they walk through our school doors, we want to ensure that the joy of learning remains.

The EASTCONN Schools and Programs Reopening Plan has been created in collaboration with multiple stakeholders, including our three health districts, agency Directors, teachers, faculty, staff, parents and students. It includes options and plans to address several learning scenarios, including in-person, hybrid models and full distance learning plans. The plan is fluid and flexible to allow our schools and programs to switch between various models, depending upon health needs and data.

There were, and will continue to be, many details to consider in creating this plan, as we move toward reopening and thinking about the year. Please be patient, flexible and understanding as we revise and edit this plan with daily updates from local health officials, regional and state data, updates from Governor Ned Lamont and the State Department of Education. As we refine details, we will continue to communicate with you, enlist and listen to your feedback and work together to address the changing needs of our stakeholders and communities.

In closing, I would like to share the encouraging words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.:

“When our days become dreary with low-hovering clouds of despair, and when our nights become darker than a thousand midnights, let us remember that there is a creative force in this universe, working to pull down the gigantic mountains of evil, a power that is able to make a way out of no way and transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows.”

We look forward to the bright tomorrows when we welcome you back to school and reconnect safely in person.

Sincerely,

Diane Dugas

EASTCONN Director of Leading and Learning

# EASTCONN PRIORITIES

EASTCONN Schools reopening is based on identified priority areas that reflect our core values and beliefs, including: (1) the safety of the students and staff; (2) the awareness of social and emotional well-being of students, staff and families, (3) development of personalized and engaging models of instruction and evidence of learning that meet learner needs.



## Safety of Students and Staff

Our schools will be prepared to reinforce healthy practices among our staff and students, take preventative actions to prevent the spread of all respiratory illnesses, and prepare for any potential cases or increased transmission of COVID 19.



## Personalized and Engaging Model of Instruction

EASTCONN Schools and programs will reopen with instructional schedules and model options that are flexible and based on both the current transmission levels and personalized needs of students. We must understand that we may start the school year with one model, and as new information becomes available about health and safety, may transition to different models. All of our schools and programs are designing models that provide opportunity for students to actively and effectively engage in high quality synchronous and asynchronous learning fluently.



## Social and Emotional Well-Being

Our schools will reopen knowing that the COVID-19 pandemic has created different types of traumatic experiences and high levels of stress for many of our students, staff, and families. The pandemic has shown the importance of social/emotional well-being for all. Building upon EASTCONN's *Theory of Action* regarding SEL that is based on an in-depth body of research proving that social/emotional learning (SEL) is fundamental to academic success an SEL emphasis will serve as our foundation to reentry. In addition to our own priorities, EASTCONN schools and programs are expected to follow the guidelines of the State Department of Education - ***Adapt, Advance Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together***, published on June 29, 2020. The publication from the state is a fluid document with guidelines that may change prior to school reopening in the fall.

The document from the state is "intended to be a fluid document that will evolve based on the public health data trends as well as the understanding of the best way to mitigate spread. As we proceed toward the fall, we will continue to receive input from our educational partners, students, and families and will continue to work toward providing the best opportunities for our greatest resource—the students in the State of Connecticut.

State of Connecticut Guidelines & Expectations

Adopted from ADAPT, ADVANCE, ACHIEVE: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together

Due to positive containment efforts in Connecticut, reopening schools in person can be successfully achieved based upon current data. Connecticut has determined it is appropriate to plan a consistent approach to the operating model (schedule), but be prepared to modify plans as necessary. Maximizing in-person instructional time after the current period of disruption is critical. However, given the uncertainty planning for reopening months from now, schools must be prepared to modify their reopening model to support a partial reopening if the public health data changes.

Schools should plan to have all students, in all districts, return to school for full-time instruction at the beginning of 2020-2021, as 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.

As Connecticut schools plan to reopen, the guidance and considerations outlined in this document are grounded in six guiding principles:

1. Safeguarding the health & safety of students and staff;
2. Allowing **all** students the opportunity to return into the classrooms **full time** starting in the fall;
3. Monitoring the school populations and, when necessary, potentially cancelling classes in the future to appropriately contain COVID-19 spread;
4. Emphasizing equity, access, and support to the students and communities who are emerging from this historic disruption;
5. Fostering strong two-way communication with partners such as families, educators and staff; and
6. Factoring into decisions about reopening the challenges to the physical safety and social-emotional well-being of our students when they are not in school

## Main Operational Considerations



### Cohorting:

Emphasize grouping students by the same class/group of students and teacher (into a cohort) so each team functions independently as much as possible. Consider this methodology by grade levels. Placing students in cohorts is strongly encouraged for grades K-8, and encouraged where feasible for grades 9-12.



### Transportation:

Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) should plan for buses to operate close to capacity with heightened health and safety protocols, including requiring all students and operators wear face coverings. Plans must be developed to activate increased social distancing protocols based upon community spread.



### Physical Distancing and Facilities:

Review building space and reconfigure available classroom space, such as gymnasiums and auditoriums, to maximize physical distancing, consistent with public health guidelines in place at that time.



### **Face Coverings:**

All staff and students will be expected to wear a protective face covering or face mask that completely covers the nose and mouth when inside the school building, except for certain exceptions including when teachers are providing instruction.

## **Safe Reentry!**

### **Keeping our schools open...is everyone's responsibility!**

EASTCONN Schools and Programs will rely on the cooperation of families, students, and staff members to reopen and stay open.

Our planning is to safely bring back students and staff to in-person school settings to reconnect, establish relationships, learning expectations and to grow our students' social and emotional and academic skills. This document plans for a fall return that does outline multiple scenarios, with a focus first and foremost on getting our students back into our school buildings.

There is a clear consensus from both education and medical groups that we must keep in mind not only the risks associated with COVID-19 for in-person school programs, but also the known challenges and consequences of keeping students out of school. While distance learning has provided the best possible alternative during school closures, there is no substitute for in-person instruction when it comes to the quality of students' academic learning. In-person school plays an equally important role in our ability to support students' social-emotional needs, including their mental and physical health, and in mitigating the impacts of trauma. We also recognize how disruptive the school closures have been to families and staff trying to maintain regular work schedules and manage household needs, including childcare, while also facilitating remote learning.

Families play a critical role in supporting the new culture of health and safety that each of our schools and programs will establish. Most importantly, families can help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in our schools and programs 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. Families can also contribute by supporting the use of face coverings or masks in school and on the bus, arranging alternate transportation whenever possible, communicating concerns with teachers and school leaders, and continuing to *follow state guidance on health and safety outside of school*.

With adherence to the State of Connecticut's comprehensive set of critical health and safety requirements along with EASTCONN's commitment to a safe and appropriate education, we can bring our students, staff, and families safely back to school...*and keep them in school!*

# EASTCONN Schools and Programs

## Physical Wellness

### ACT, LEAP, QMC and Adult Education

#### **Stay home if feeling ill**

Students, teachers and staff must stay home if they are feeling sick, have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

#### **Morning health checks required.**

**Parent/Student Check prior to school** - In order to prevent transmission among the school population, parents are instructed to screen students before leaving for school. Check to ensure temperature is below **100.0 degrees** Fahrenheit and observe for symptoms associated with COVID 19 outlined by public health officials.

**Student and Staff Screenings upon school entrance** – In order to prevent transmission among the school population, teachers and staff, a self-screening of a series of questions will be asked to ensure no-one exhibits COVID systems.

#### **Face coverings or masks required.**

**Students** must wear face coverings or masks that completely cover the nose and mouth while inside the school and on the bus, with exceptions only for those students for whom it is not safe to do so due to medical conditions. “Mask Breaks” will be provided during the day. Parents will be responsible for providing students with face coverings or masks. Schools will have backup disposable masks available for students who forget them

**Teachers, Staff and Anyone who enters the building** must wear face coverings or masks that completely cover the nose and mouth while inside the school, with the exception only for those for whom It is not safe to do so due to a medical condition. “Mask Breaks” will be provided during the day. Teachers will be allowed to remove masks during direct instruction using barriers and increased physical distancing. While teachers may wear their own masks, disposable masks will be available to teachers and staff daily.

#### **Physical distancing required.**

**Students** must maintain physical distancing to the greatest extent possible. Students are expected to practice physical distancing when entering and exiting the building, in classrooms, and moving throughout the school. Sharing of school supplies and materials will not be allowed.

**Teachers and Staff** are to maintain physical distancing to the greatest extent possible.

#### **Frequent hand washing or hand sanitizing expected.**

**Students, Teachers and Staff** must engage in frequent hand washing or sanitizing upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, and after coughing or sneezing.

Students may not change buses.

Students will be expected to ride the same bus to school in the morning and the same bus to home in the afternoon every day. Face coverings or masks must be in place prior to entering the bus. ***Where possible parents are encouraged to drive students to school.***

## Special Education Programs (CDT, EVC, EAP)

### Stay home if feeling ill

Students, teachers and staff must stay home if they are feeling sick, have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

### Morning health checks required.

**Parent/Student Check prior to school** - In order to prevent transmission among the school population, parents are instructed to screen students before leaving for school. Check to ensure temperature is below **100.0** degrees Fahrenheit and observe for symptoms associated with COVID 19 outlined by public health officials.

**Student and Staff Screenings upon school entrance** – In order to prevent transmission among the school population, teachers and staff, a self-screening of a series of questions will be asked to ensure no-one exhibits COVID systems.

### Face coverings or masks required.

(This section will be updated once we receive further state guidance on high impact special needs populations)

### Physical distancing required.

(This section will be updated once we receive further state guidance on high impact special needs populations)

### Frequent hand washing or hand sanitizing expected.

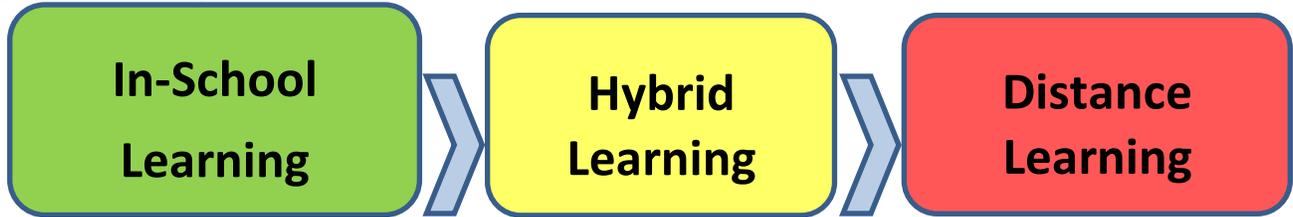
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### Students may not change buses.

Students will be expected to ride the same bus to school in the morning and the same bus to home in the afternoon every day. Face coverings or masks should be in place prior to entering the bus.

# CONTINUUM OF LEARNING MODELS

EASTCONN Schools and Programs are committed to starting the fall with in person learning, meaning welcoming students back into our buildings, following all guidelines and expectations of the State and maintaining health standards in accordance with EASTCONN’s three health districts. However, if there is surge of COVID 19, an increase of local cases, or the occurrence of in-school cases, the learning models may need to be adjusted as a result.



In-School Learning	Hybrid Learning	Distance Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fall 2020 - Model for Learning</li> <li>• Minimal/No Spread of Virus (or Virus Contained)</li> <li>• 100% Student Attendance In School</li> <li>• Based on the current lower levels of transmission of COVID 10, all students return to school in person as part of a full reopening.</li> <li>• Heightened health &amp; safety protocols will be in place, which can be reduced or ramped up as appropriate hroughout the year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternate “Surge” - Model for Learning</li> <li>• Moderate Spread of Virus (requires adjusted schedule)</li> <li>• 50% Student Attendance /</li> <li>• Alternating Attendance</li> <li>• Based on a higher transmission levels of COVID 19, student numbers in the school are reduced by 50%. Students attend on A or B days.</li> <li>• A and B weeks may be utilized as well.</li> <li>• Distance learning takes place on days not in school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternate “Surge” - Model for Learning</li> <li>• High Spread of Virus (requires quarantine)</li> <li>• 0% Student Attendance /All Distance Learning</li> <li>• Based on a widespread increase in transmission levels of COVID 19, learning takes place at home for all students as a result of school or district closure.</li> </ul>

In-School Learning	Hybrid Learning	Distance Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal/No Spread of Virus (or Virus Contained)</li> <li>• 100% Student Attendance In School</li> <li>• Schools operating up to 100% capacity, students/staff with underlying medical conditions may consider remote learning</li> <li>• Buses up to full capacity with face coverings/masks in place during transit, controlled loading/ unloading of riders</li> <li>• Face coverings/masks for students and staff while inside school buildings</li> <li>• Identification/isolation of sick students/staff</li> <li>• Cohorting or family model of students used, particularly in Grades K-8, restrictions on group activities</li> <li>• Maximize spacing of seating as feasible</li> <li>• Increased cleaning and sanitization protocols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate Spread of Virus (requires adjusted schedule)</li> <li>• 50% Student Attendance/ Alternating Attendance Schools operating at reduced capacity (50%), with reliance on hybrid model of A-B day or A-B week</li> <li>• Buses at reduced capacity (50%), face coverings/masks in place during transit, controlled loading/unloading of riders, spaced seating for riders</li> <li>• Face coverings/masks for students and staff while inside school buildings</li> <li>• Identification/isolation of sick students/staff</li> <li>• Cohorting or family model of students used, restrictions on congregating, staggered start/stop times</li> <li>• Maximize spacing of seating up to six feet or more when feasible with reduced class sizes</li> <li>• Specific and increased cleaning and sanitization protocols</li> <li>• Indoor extracurricular activities suspended</li> <li>• Sports and other outdoor activities may continue with restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Spread of Virus (requires quarantine)</li> <li>• 0% Student Attendance / All Distance Learning Schools closed, 100% distance learning</li> <li>• Bus transportation suspended</li> <li>• All extracurricular activities, including sports suspended</li> </ul>

## In-School Learning



The in-person model of learning that will be in place for the reopening of the schools is described below:

A Daily Schedule with Health & Safety Expectations – All students attend every day.

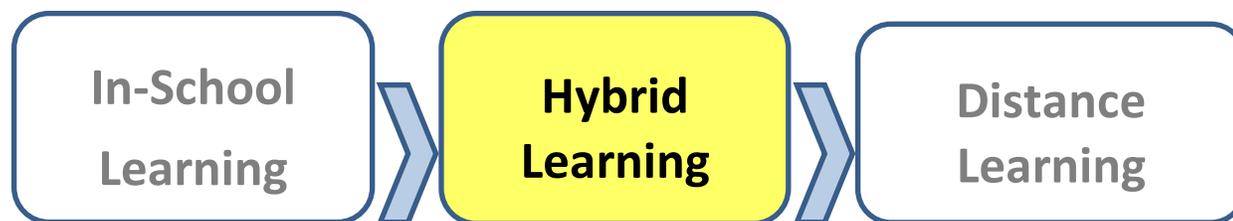
Students and teachers attend every day with all State guidelines and expectations in place. Schedules may vary by school and program from last year to adhere to state requirements. **Once schedules are finalized they will be replaced here.**

\* REMOTE LEARNING PARALLEL TRACK – Some students learn at home due to medical concern, illness, quarantine, or other reasons *with support from the school*.

Students with health concerns, illness, or quarantine order will participate in a **Remote Learning Parallel Track** in which the student learns at home **with parent support in place**. This track aids in a return to school at the appropriate point after illness, quarantine, or when families decide to re-enter. In order to smoothly re-enter school after an extended time out and begin participating in the in person schedule, it is strongly encouraged for students and parents to engage in Remote Learning provided or some other plan approved by the Principal of the school. Students on this track will be allowed to enter school at any point in time.

Students engage in Remote Learning with materials and support from the school (and home).

## Hybrid Learning



In recognition of uncertainty, EASTCONN Schools and Programs are prepared for different scenarios:

**REDUCED SCHOOL POPULATIONS** – As a result of surge in COVID 19, smaller groups of students are returned to school (alternating of 50% of students).

Alternate school schedules that could be used if the State of Connecticut and/or local health officials place limits on student access to schools/busses due to surge of COVID 19 are listed below. When students are not in school, they are working at home with materials provided from the teacher and school.

### A-B Days (Students go to school on alternate days)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Student Group A 50% of students in school	Student Group B 50% of students in school	Student Group A 50% of students in school	Students Group B 50% of students in school	A&B Group Distance Learning with teachers

### A-B Weeks (Students go to school on alternate weeks)

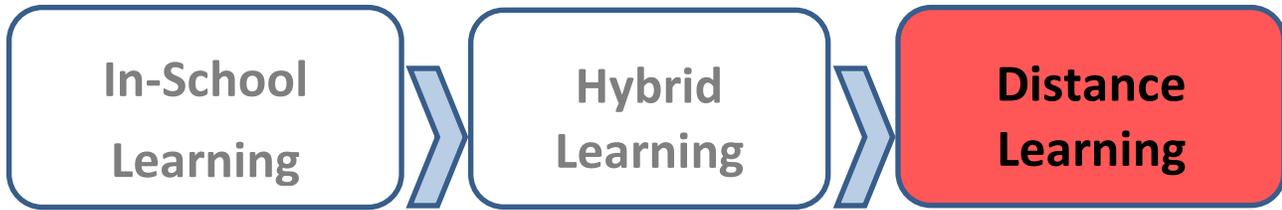
#### Week 1 – Group A

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Student Group A 50% of Students in school				

#### Week 2 – Group B

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Student Group B 50% of Students in school				

## Distance Learning



Short Term Closure (2-5 days, 2 weeks, etc.) or Long Term Closure

Students engage in Distance Learning with materials and support from the school. Classroom learning and instructional activities are shared through contact with Teacher. This is the Distance Learning model from the spring of 2020 with a blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Distance Learning 100% of students	Half day of Distance Learning (Teacher Prep)			

## Monitoring COVID 19

The EASTCONN Schools and Programs will offer the opportunity for all students to return for learning in our buildings. Ideally, EASTCONN Schools and Programs will remain in the “green” level with little or no community transmission. School schedules and/or protocols may be adjusted if the community enters a “yellow” level with minimal or moderate community transmission. If there is a substantial surge in local cases, based on guidance from the State of Connecticut and/or regions Health Districts, the schools or programs will likely revert to a Distance Learning Model.

LITTLE or NO COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION	MINIMAL OR MODERATE COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION	SUBSTANTIAL COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction is 100% in-person</li> <li>• Daily attendance rates monitored</li> <li>• Teaching and reinforcing of healthy hygiene</li> <li>• Prevention measures in place</li> <li>• Social distancing in place</li> <li>• Group gatherings/events limited; all events require approval</li> <li>• Remain prepared for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction is 100% in-person or a possible 50/50% Hybrid</li> <li>• Daily attendance rates monitored and shared with local health officials</li> <li>• Concentrated reinforcement of healthy hygiene</li> <li>• Heightened prevention measures in place</li> <li>• Heightened social distancing in place with limitations in activities/events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction is 100% Distance Learning</li> <li>• Attendance for Distance Learning is monitored based on participation from home</li> <li>• Communication to home on healthy hygiene practices</li> <li>• Strict prevention measures in place for essential personnel</li> <li>• Quarantine measures in place</li> <li>• All group gatherings/events canceled</li> </ul>

LITTLE or NO COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION	MINIMAL OR MODERATE COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION	SUBSTANTIAL COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distance Learning while learning is in-person at school</li> <li>Clearing and disinfecting in place</li> <li>Regular communication with local health officials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group gatherings/events postponed</li> <li>Active Preparation for Distance Learning and/or short-term school dismissals resulting in possible Distance learning for two-week periods</li> <li>Intensified cleaning and sanitizing in place</li> <li>Coordination of closure with local health officials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued engagement in Distance Learning during extended school dismissals and/or closures for long periods</li> <li>Classroom and buildings sanitized and shut down</li> <li>Order of closure from local health officials and/or Executive Order for closure from Governor's Office</li> </ul>

**Note:** All plans are subject to change/adjustment as appropriate.

## EASTCONN School and Programs Social Emotional Wellness

EASTCONN Schools and programs place students, staff and families social emotional needs as a high priority. The unprecedented events of COVID 19 have exemplified the need to address the whole child and assist students and adults in navigating their emotional well-being. While we remain in this pandemic the nature of uncertainty, stress and trauma must be addressed as we adjust to a new normal. The following focus areas for social emotional learning and wellness are a continuation of implementation expectations identified by the agency in 2018 and focused upon in our schools and program since. They serve as a focus for deepening implementation practice. Through these practices each school, program and classroom will create environments that build connections and positive relationships.

- **Classroom Agreements**
  - Each teacher develop classroom agreements with students. Co-created and agreed upon expectations will guide the learning environment.
- **Explicitly and Consistently Creating, Teaching and Reinforcing Standard Operating Practices (Routines, Procedures and Expectations).**
  - SOP's are co-created with students identifying and understanding the explicit steps in routines, procedures and expectations of various components of the day. They are visually accessible, explicitly taught and utilized to guide expectations.
  - Affective language is used to reinforce and support students
- **The Three Signature Practices**
  - Routine and Ritual Welcoming – Routine and ritual openings establish safety and predictability, support contribution by all voices, set norms for respectful listening, allow students to connect with one another and create a sense of belonging.
    - Brain and Mask Breaks - Routine breaks will be broken into the schedule

- Optimistic Closure - Allows students to end their day by reflecting on, and then naming something positive from the day
- **Explicit Instruction of Social Skills and Connections to Instruction**
  - Intentional design and delivery of curriculum and instruction will embed strategies to support student learning SEL competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making skills
- **Use of Restorative Practices**
  - Implementation of restorative practices that help prevent harm and conflict, build a sense of belonging, safety, and social responsibility in the school community, creating a caring environment will continue.
- **Implementation of Student Learning Plans**
  - Student learning plans help students understand their own learning needs, set goals and develop self-advocacy skills.
- **Daily Morning Meetings or Advisories**
  - Implementation of an on-going and consistent time within the daily schedule to provide a structure for community building, reflection, listening, discussion, explicit teaching of SEL skills.

The first 6-8 weeks of reentry will focus heavily on social-emotional learning in person as we prepare for potential closures during the year.

## Academics

EASTCONN Schools and programs will continue to apply a personalized, competency based approach to learning, adapting and modifying curriculum and instruction to maintain high levels of learning and access to scaffolds and supports for **all** learners whether in school or virtual.

### Curriculum & Instruction

- School and Program Directors will work with all building administrators and staff to provide modifications to the curriculum to ensure student and staff safety.
- Schools will continue to implement rigorous, high quality curriculum with appropriate instructional benchmarks for all students. EASTCONN will work with staff to integrate resources from the [Connecticut Learning Hub](#) and the Smarter Balanced [Tools for Teachers](#).
- Leadership and staff within each school and program will review and revise curriculum documents to promote essential standards from the CT Core Standards Framework, as well as the 21<sup>st</sup> Century pre-requisite skills and knowledge for students to be college and career ready.
- Best practice lends itself to instructional practices that promote cooperative, small group inquiry, students will engage in practice via technology.
- Student Assistance Team (SAT) meetings will continue to meet commencing at the start of the school year to develop Individual Goals and Success Plans for students requiring responsive and immediate academic acceleration and/or behavioral support in consultation with appropriate staff.
- Schools will continue to leverage resources and support for universal screening, progress monitoring, and reporting of data to classroom teachers.
- Off-site experiential learning will require Director permission.

## Physical Education

- All CDC, state and local guidelines related to physical distancing and disinfecting areas and equipment used for physical education and physical activity including recess will be followed.
- Physical education curriculum will be modified in consultation with the Connecticut Association for Physical Education, Health, and Dance to limit high energy activities that promote physical contact or dissipation of respiratory droplets.

## Arts, and Extracurricular Activities

- Students participating in art courses will be required to have their own supply bags with no common supply access in classrooms.
- Music classes will be expected to maintain 12-foot social distancing when signing or utilizing wind instruments.
  - Large ensembles will need to be broken up into smaller groupings that can be scheduled throughout the school day.
- Any after school activities including student clubs must seek use of a pre-approved space within the building by the school principal. Students are expected to adhere to hygiene and distancing protocols.

(This section will be expanded to address specific needs related to our ACT Performing Arts Magnet School)

## Special Education

- EASTCONN Schools and Programs will comply with all federal and state mandates and statutes.
- EASTCONN Schools and Programs will survey the special education case managers to determine if students with disabilities are unable to access the reopening plan.
- Staff will facilitate individualized and alternative means of re-entry based upon individualized student needs, present level of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input.
- Students unable to wear protective personal equipment will be identified with alternative protocols put into place such as the use of alternative face coverings.
- The district will identify high-risk students that may require remote instruction and/ or blended learning due to underlying health conditions or family members at risk.
- Programming decisions will not be based on a student's disability category but the student's developmental level and skills should be considered when required to follow district protocols.
- Special education programs may be allowed some flexibility with guidelines as long as the programs follow standards and public health strategies (hygiene, social distancing, and cleaning/sanitizing.)
- Communication will occur with families of students with a high level of need to develop transition plans to assist them in their return to the school building. The use of social stories, visual cues, and other developmentally appropriate strategies can be used to reinforce these new concepts and protocols.
- For students who need physical assistance with feeding, toileting or activities of daily living, protocols will be established and staff training will occur around safety and PPE.
- For students who exhibit significant behaviors that require de-escalation strategies and emergency safety procedures, protocols will be established and staff training will occur around safety and PPE.

- If the district shifts to a hybrid model, special consideration will be given to high need students to continue to receive in-person instruction on an every week basis.
- Every effort will be made for students involved in transition programs that require direct time at work sites off campus to be scheduled either first thing in the morning prior to the start of school or in the afternoon near the end of school to minimize multiple comings and goings to the school. All required health and safety protocols will be adhered to on any job site.

### **English Learners (EL's)**

- All language instruction education programs for English Learners will resume as well as support to allow them to access academic content.
- Communication with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in English will occur in the language they understand through translation and/or interpretation services.
- Students who are dually identified as ELs and students with a disability will continue to receive support for their ELs needs as well as support for their disabilities.
- Communication will be ongoing with families of ELs regarding remote learning and returning to their school building in their native language.
- All established processes for identification, parental notifications, assessment requirements, and provision of services will be followed.

### **Technology**

As EASTCONN Schools and programs apply a personalized model of instruction, technology plays a key role in continuing to provide connectivity for collaboration, communication and access to learning.

- Access to technology will be 1-to-1 for all students in grades 9-12
- Special Education programs will plan according to IEP's and special education programming needs.
- Funding has been used to purchase Chromebooks, carry cases and technology tagging. Our goal is have one Chromebook for each student to transport to and from school daily, to connect, communicate and learn anytime, from anywhere.
- In addition to Chromebooks for students, technologies required to move to a hybrid model of instruction have been identified and ordered for teachers, including such tools as document cameras.
- Equitable and universal technology access will continue to be ensured. Funds have been secured to provide Wi-Fi access to students in need.
- To deliver instruction via technology a suite of tools were identified at the close of the school year through a staff survey that include: Google Suite, Zoom, Screen Casetify, and Padlet. Professional learning for all staff will be implemented for the use of these tools.

## **Monitoring Student Mastery of Learning**

EASTCONN Schools and Programs will utilize a formative process to monitor and plan for the advancement of identified essential learning standards. Where applicable Tiered interventions will be put in to place to accelerate learning.

## **Sensible Assessment Practices in 2020-21 and Beyond**

### **1. SUMMER 2020**

#### Review Available Information

In lieu of a separate assessment, what can we already know about our students from existing data/information?

Vertical Teams for Teachers, Interventionists, Instructional Specialists, and Related Service Providers

- What standards were taught in-person pre-COVID and. During distance learning?
- How does the previous teacher describe the student's strengths and weaknesses?
- How well did the student engage in distance learning?

#### Longitudinal Data (Non-Assessment)

- Early Indication Tool support level (Low-Medium-High), attendance, discipline, mobility, course failures, etc.

#### Longitudinal Data (Assessment)

- K-Inventory, Smarter Balanced, NGSS, Alt. Assessments, LAS Links, IAB, F-IAB, Fall/Winter Benchmark, IEP Progress Reports

#### Plan the First Unit and Support Professional Learning

The first unit should not only engage students but also ensure that students will have a high probability of success. Teachers will need professional learning on topics such as assessment/data literacy, formative assessment practices, differentiated instruction, learning progressions, blended learning approaches/tools.

Students new to CT public schools will likely need a screening and/or overall assessment such as the ICA or a local benchmark assessment.

### **2. START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**

#### \* Build Community with New Class While Delivering the First Unit

Acknowledge and address social-emotional learning needs and family/health/trauma issues due to pandemic. Start with a unit that is engaging and has a high probability of success. Review key prior grade content if necessary.

- Deliver differentiated instruction by starting with engaging on-grade unit with high probability of success; review if necessary.
- Use formative assessment practices to gauge impact and adjust instruction.
- Embed Tier 2 supports in the classroom based on review of available information in the summer.

### **3. REST OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**

#### Shift Fully to On-Grade Instruction with Scaffolds and Supports

If the first unit incorporates review, then the shift fully to on-grade instruction should occur within 2-3 weeks. Districts should identify prerequisite content for each instructional unit and the corresponding diagnostic assessment.

- Use diagnostic assessments to identify strengths/weaknesses, especially in the prerequisite skills for on-grade content
- Deliver differentiated instruction covering grade-level content and personalized to needs and interests of students
- Use formative assessment practices to gauge impact and adjust instruction
- Offer Tier 2 supports based on formative assessment info that are either embedded in the classroom or provided separately
- Optional: Administer aligned, on-grade IAB or district-determined assessment to evaluate mastery of learning

#### **4. END**

Administer End-of-Year Summative Assessment

Administer an on-grade summative assessment (which may be the state assessment for students in Grades 3-8 and 11) to evaluate overall achievement on state standards.

# **Operations Plan**

## **Facilities**

EASTCONN Director of Facilities in collaboration with members of the EASTCONN Schools and Programs Reentry Committee have developed operational plans to structure learning in a safe and organized manner for all students and staff upon the return to buildings. We will continue to monitor health data to modify the plan to enhance or relax restrictions throughout the school year.

### **Classroom Layout**

- School and Program Administrators will oversee the organization of classroom spaces to ensure instructional spaces are organized to maximize physical distancing between student workplaces, achieving 6 foot (defined as shoulder to shoulder) physical distancing when feasible.
  - Desks will be arranged in directions to permit maximum engagement and interaction with classroom instruction.
  - A single teacher work station in each classroom space will be organized to allow for optimal physical distancing to occur.
  - Available spaces in each school building will be repurposed for instruction to the greatest extent possible.
  - Non-essential school and/or personal property will be labeled, removed from instructional spaces, and placed into storage to maximize available space in classrooms and to permit custodial staff opportunities for adequate sanitizing and disinfecting
  - Procedures will be developed to familiarize staff who travel between instructional spaces as to appropriate hygiene procedures prior to transition to a different location within the school building.

### **Foot Traffic, Hallways, and Shared Areas**

- All schools and programs will designate patterns for directional foot-traffic within corridors through clearly labeled markings on the floors to minimize face-to-face contact of students.

- If hallways are too narrow for two-way flow, one-way traffic designations will be identified and marked.
- Schools and programs will develop plans to minimize the number of students in hallways during passing periods.
- Use of lockers will be suspended indefinitely to minimize student contact with surfaces and congregation of students in corridors.

### **Visitor Access**

- To the greatest extent possible, visitors to EASTCONN buildings will need to schedule appointments with the main office and will be limited. Visitors will be reminded to cancel and reschedule appointments by phone should they be symptomatic (cough, fever, respiratory distress).
- The Director of Leading and Learning, Director of Pupil Services, maintenance, technology and any other EASTCONN personnel that interact with schools/programs will provide the school office with advanced notice of scheduled meetings and follow the designated school procedures identified for entry.
- Visitors entering must sign in and remain in the identified designated area.
- Visitors entering EASTCONN buildings must wear facial coverings at all times.
- Posted protocols for appropriate hygiene techniques and physical distancing will be expected to be followed by all school visitors.
- The Director of Facilities will provide each school with an exterior drop box for delivery and retrieval of documents to limit in-person contact.
- An identified process for school deliveries will be created at each site.

### **Signs and Messages**

Schools will display signs within visible locations throughout school buildings to help mitigate the spread of the virus. EASTCONN Marketing Division will provide all signage for consistency and continuity.

- Signs will be provided by EASTCONN Marketing division to all school and program buildings to be displayed in specific locations, as follows:
  - Handwashing procedures will be displayed in all public and student restrooms.
  - Pictorial signs will be displayed depicting the proper application of facial coverings.
  - Entryways of all buildings will display protocols for the use of facial coverings, physical distancing compliance, application of hand sanitizers, and hand washing reminders for everyone.
  - Signs visible in high traffic areas will be displayed illustrating the signs/symptoms of COVID-19 and instructions for when to stay at home if feeling ill.
  - Signs will be placed on copiers and multiple use items regarding sanitizing expectations after each use.
- Signs will be formatted in languages appropriate for the school populations.

### **Professional Training Related to Facilities**

- Recorded training sessions will be developed to facilitate training with all staff, including substitutes, on protocols around proper use, removal, and care or disposal of face masks, social distancing, cleaning, and effective hygiene practices. Staff will engage in mandatory training prior

to the opening of schools with time allotted for staff to practice applicable safety and health measures.

- Each school will prepare a video of the necessary steps for staff and student safety in order to maintain health protocols specific to the building. These links will be made available to families through the district website. (Virtual tours from bus ride to school, bus disembarkment, entering each school, exiting each school at the end of school day and bus loading.)

## **Ventilation**

- The Director of Facilities will ensure that all school ventilation systems are in proper functioning order (in alignment with [Guidance for School Systems for the Operation of Central and non-Central Ventilation Systems during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#))
- At full capacity prior to the opening of schools for staff in August and that:
  - All ventilation systems will be operated at full capacity one week prior to the reopening of school
  - The air flow is flushed for two hours prior to building occupancy
  - Ventilation systems are operational during school hours
  - Routine inspections and maintenance are performed on a regular basis.
  - HEPA Filers will be used and replaced according to recommended replacement

## **Restroom Protocols**

The Director of Facilities will publish universal protocols for the cleaning and disinfection of restrooms to all schools and Programs. All plans will be in alignment with the guidelines set forth through the [Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Schools](#) during COVID-19.

## **Cleaning and Disinfection**

- To the greatest extent possible, schools will designate restroom facilities by use for certain areas of the building or establish times for various classrooms to utilize the restroom facilities.
- Twice daily, the cleaning and disinfection of restrooms will occur when the building is occupied.
- Cleaning and disinfection of restroom surfaces will also occur after conclusion of the school day.
- Custodial staff will complete a checklist to document regular daily cleanings of high touch surfaces in restrooms.
- All cleaning products utilized on surfaces should follow [Connecticut School Green Cleaning Law](#).
- Cleaning products should be utilized in well ventilated areas and should follow the manufacturer's stated instructions for use (contact time, dilution quantities, and surface application).
- Custodial staffing will be put into place during the school day at each site to address the above safety needs.

## **Restroom Usage Procedures**

- Staff will use tracking procedures (sign-in sheets) to track and limit the number of students accessing restrooms at any one time.

- Multi-stall bathrooms will be reviewed to determine if stalls need to be removed from service to ensure maximized physical distancing during restroom use.
- Touch-free paper towel dispensers will be considered in all restrooms throughout the district.
- Trash cans without lids will be available in restrooms to minimize contact with surfaces.
- Where possible restroom entrance doors will remain ajar to avoid handling of door handles/knobs.

### **Class Groups and Family (cohort) Teams**

- To ensure the maintenance of health and safety guidelines to mitigate further spread of infection, EASTCONN Magnets and Alternative High School will be organized in families (also known as cohorts).
- EASTCONN Special Education Programs due to size and nature of the programs are already considered a cohort model
- EASTCONN Schools and Programs will maximize student groupings to the greatest extent possible during various components of the school day (lunches).
- Students will be provided 1-to-1 technology to access teachers and peers during the course of the day who are not in their cohort.
- Academic support specialists push in or pull out depending on the program to support student learning and provide related services. Staff will follow appropriate hygiene measures (hand washing, use of facial coverings, hand sanitizers) prior to entering instructional spaces.
- Art, Music, Library, and Technology teachers vary by school and program due to the nature of our magnets and special education programs
- Physical education classes will occur within classroom spaces or outdoors (weather permitting).
- All Schools and programs will develop a structure for transitions to reduce the number of students in school corridors at any one time.
  - Student desks must be disinfected during classroom transitions prior to the seating of the students.
- Students will be provided “mask breaks” during the school day for approximately fifteen minutes in duration.

### **Building Usage Guidelines**

- Building use will be restricted.
- Currently, all activities and events that involve guests will be held virtually.

### **Child Nutrition**

#### **Compliance Assurances with NSLP, SBP, and After School Snacks**

- The Director of Food Services will continue to follow National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- The Director of Food Services will continue to determine eligibility for students needing free and reduced price meals and milk maintaining relevant documentation for claiming methods.
- The Director of Food Services will continue to adhere to guidelines for the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) policies for school meals and milk including meal pattern requirements.

### **On-Site Meal Distribution Services**

- Food service staff will be provided with relevant PPE including but not limited to gloves, facial coverings, and physical barriers at serving stations.
- In collaboration with building principals, the Director of Food Service will outline protocols for student meal delivery and access at each site.
  - Students, when possible will eat outdoors in cohorts.
  - At most sites students will eat within their classrooms. This will permit students to maintain cohort groupings. Trash cans for disposal of trays and other discarded items will be made available in each classroom space.
  - Breakfast will available upon student entry to buildings. Time will be provided at the start of each day for students to eat.

Details for lunch at each site are continuing to be developed.

### **Off-Site Meal Distribution Services**

The Director of Food Services in collaboration with each School and Program Principal/Supervisor will identify a process to be communicated to families regarding breakfast and lunch pickup for students who are virtual, when we are experiencing the hybrid or shut down model of instruction

# Transportation

## Connecticut Transportation Designations



### Safe Status

Bus transportation can operate with no restrictions.



### Low Status

Bus transportation can operate up to full status with mask requirements and loading and unloading restrictions.



### Moderate Status

Bus transportation can operate with seating and spacing restrictions, mask requirements, and loading and unloading restrictions.

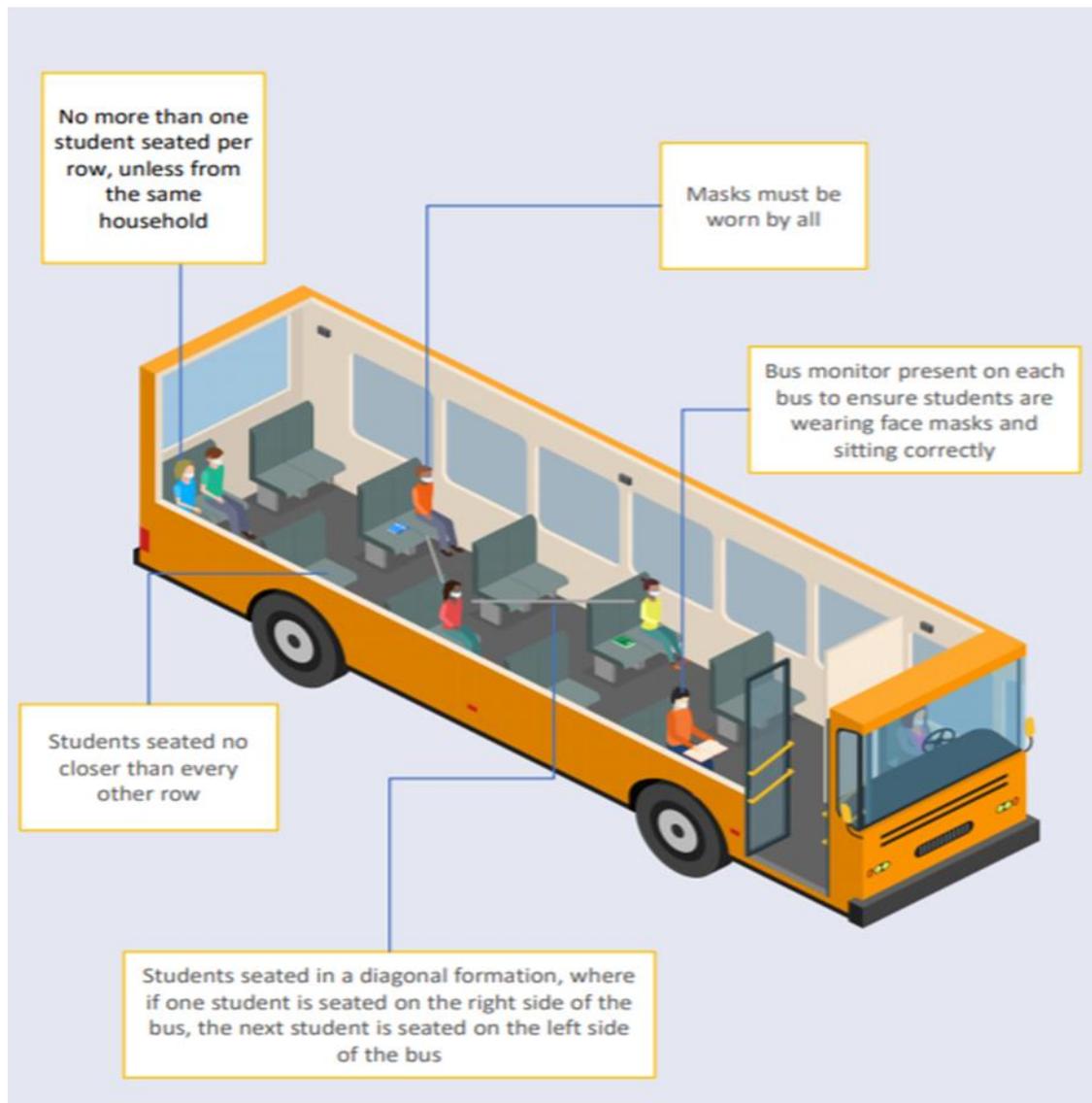
## General Expectations

EASTCONN Schools and Programs collaborate with a variety of transportation companies and districts. In collaboration with each we have been assured the following:

- Staff will be instructed to self-screen for symptoms prior to arriving at work in the morning.
- Transportation companies will ensure that a supply of disposable masks are provided to each school transportation vehicle for students in need of a mask. Masks must be applied to the nose and mouth region prior to entering the transportation vehicle.
- Transportation vehicles (if identified and needed) will have a driver and monitor assigned to each vehicle from the start of the school year through the winter recess to assist with student seating, use of facial coverings, and ensuring disinfection of surfaces. All vehicle staff will utilize facial coverings and sanitize hands.
- Drivers will ensure that surfaces are cleaned in between routes. The driver should maintain a daily log indicating the times that the bus was sanitized.

## Possible School Bus Configuration

- No more than one student seated per row, unless from the same household
- Students seated no closer than every other row
- Students seated in a diagonal formation, where if one student is seated on the right side of the bus, the next student is seated on the left side of the bus
- Masks must be worn at all times
- Bus monitor present on each bus to ensure students are wearing masks and sitting correctly



### Student Pick Up and Drop Off

- Survey instruments will be distributed to all families during the summer of 2020 to determine families preferring to transport their students to school.
- Students arriving or departing on school transportation will be loaded or unloaded on buses in a systematic manner. Students will not be permitted to ride a bus that is not their assigned bus.
- Principals will designate a traffic flow pattern for families to drop off students at school in the morning. A staff member will direct students into the school building.
- Staff will ensure that students are complying with health and safety procedures upon entry to the school building.
- Students will be dismissed according to a staggered schedule.
- Families will not be permitted to access school buildings while dropping off or picking up students.

# Health Practices and Protocols

## Standard Public Health Practices

- The Director Leading and Director of Pupil Services in collaboration with the EASTCONN's Head Nurse will review staff training needs and resources to prepare educational materials for training staff and students.
- Each school administration will utilize a video presentation during the first **three days** of school to discuss how COVID-19 is spread and actions students should undertake to mitigate virus spread to include:
  - Effective handwashing procedures
  - Application of hand sanitizer
  - Cough and sneeze etiquette
  - Safe donning and removal of facial coverings
  - Effective social distancing
- To continue to reinforce expectations, EASTCONN's Head Nurse in collaboration the nursing staff will prepare public service announcements (verbal and video) that will be incorporated into daily morning announcements to remind students of common practices.

## Supplies

- All schools will be provided with appropriate PPE (including masks and gloves) for staff use.
- Due to the varying needs of our EASTCONN Programs appropriate PPE for each site has been identified. To ensure appropriate PPE all purchases are being handled through our Cooperating Purchasing Division in collaboration with our head nurse and administration.
- Students arriving to school and in need of a mask will be provided a disposable mask.
- Classrooms will be provided with access to facial tissues.
- All schools will be provided with a supply of chemicals for disinfection and sanitization in accordance with CDC, DPH, and CSDE guidelines. Approved chemicals for application will be indicated within the cleaning protocols developed by the Director of Facilities.
- School health offices will be provided with no-touch scan thermometers to conduct screenings for staff and students indicating potential symptoms.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed at points of entry, stairwells, and into high traffic regions in corridors in the event that students are unable to wash hands regularly.
- All restroom spaces will contain supplies of hand soap and disposable paper towels that are refilled throughout the school day.

## Immunizations and Health Assessments

**Immunizations:** The District Head Nurse will continue to update staff with changes to immunizations to CSDE guidance in accordance with [guidelines](#) from the Department of Public Health issued on June 17, 2020, emphasizing the importance of protecting students by staying up to date on immunizations.

**Health Assessments:** The District Head Nurse will continue to update staff with changes to guidance from the CSDE issued on June 26, 2020 outlining the [requirements for Health Assessments](#) prior to students enrolling in school.

## Reporting Illnesses and Addressing Vulnerable Populations

EASTCONN Schools and Programs have developed protocols for the monitoring and reporting of student and staff illness. The goal of such plans is to reduce the risk of spreading or contracting COVID-19 while ensuring adherence to privacy and health protection laws.

### Illness Monitoring Guidelines

- Families will receive communication based upon protocols established consistent across EASTCONN sites outlining appropriate procedures to follow for determining when to avoid sending students to school. Parents should observe and screen their children prior to releasing them to board the school bus or enter a school building for temperatures that are **100°F or higher**. Students, staff, and visitors exhibiting a temperature of **100°F or higher** will not be permitted to enter any campus building for any reason. Staff may return after 24 hours after a fever has dissipated or with documentation from a healthcare provider or documentation of a negative COVID-19 test.
  - Families may refer to CDC guidelines titled, [“When You Can Be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19”](#) or the [CDC Symptom-Checker](#) for additional information.
- Staff or students showing symptoms will be required to remain home and/or be released immediately from the school building. These will include but are not limited to:
  - [HIGH-RISK Symptoms](#) associated with COVID-19 according to CDC Guidelines and other infectious diseases in children
  - Fever (above **100°F** or per clinical judgement with OR without fatigue/body aches/chills)
  - New unexplained loss of taste or smell
  - Respiratory symptoms (cough, lung congestion, persistent shortness of breath)
  - Gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea or vomiting)
- Recommended dismissal will occur when a student or staff member exhibits at least 3 or more complaints or at the Nurses discretion.
  - Runny nose
  - Sore throat
  - Body aches
  - Headaches

### Illness Reporting Protocols

- The school nurse in each building will be the contact person for reporting staff and student illness.
- Parents (and staff) are to inform the school nurse if their child (or the staff member) 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.
- If students or staff receive a diagnosis of COVID-19 infection, the School Nurse and Principal will notify the Director of Leading and Learning and the Director of Pupil Services immediately. The Director associated with the school or program will notify all three health districts immediately, ensuring that all privacy and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) confidentiality has been maintained.
- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has provided [guidance](#) that the district is permitted to ask employees if they are experiencing symptoms of the pandemic virus.
- Screening for **all** students or staff entering the school building will consist of a series of questions and may require temperature checks at some sites.

- Any staff member or student that travels to [CT DPH current list of COVID-19](#) advisory states will be required to quarantine for **14 days prior to returning to school/work.**
- Schools will maintain a template document to be located in the school health office to report and track cases at each school site for staff and students. The documentation will be submitted at the conclusion of each school week to the school principal's office.
- The district will maintain all information about the employee or student illness as part of medical records while maintaining all relevant privacy laws and regulations.

## Material Sharing

- Schools and programs will encourage families to provide essential school supplies identified by each site.
- In grade levels that utilize instructional manipulatives for student practice or reinforcement of key concepts, teachers will provide individualized bags containing student sets to eliminate the need to have common supplies. If individual sets are not possible, sanitizing protocols will be followed prior to another students use.
- Classroom use of previous congregation areas within a classroom space will not be permitted.
- Any such equipment used by students such as cameras, sewing machines, etc. must be wiped down after each use by students using appropriately provided cleaning materials.
- Sets of classroom textbooks will be removed from service and classroom teachers will utilize virtual textbook formats with students where possible.

## Physical Distancing

In conjunction with the guidelines and protocols concerning classroom and hallway physical distancing rules, staff and students will maintain physical distancing between individuals to reduce the transmission of the virus following the current public health guidelines. These guidelines are subject to change if guidance from the DCD or DPH changes due to shifting public health data or evolving understanding of the COVID-19 disease, including transmission.

- Students and staff will maintain the recommended physical distancing to the maximum extent possible
- Accommodating students with special health care needs or disabilities whose learning (direct instruction) or other needs (e.g. assisting with toileting, feeding, or ambulation) may require closer proximity and/or direct contact. Additional information will be provided once the State Department of Education releases further guidance on special populations.
- Conducting health assessment or screening by the school nurse when there is a suspicion that symptoms exist or there was exposure (e.g. the school nurse listening to lung sounds.)

## Foot Traffic, Hallways, and Shared Areas

- All schools will designate patterns for directional foot-traffic within corridors through clearly labeled markings on the floors to minimize face-to-face contact of students.
  - If hallways are too narrow for two-way flow, one-way traffic designations will be identified and marked
- Schools will develop plans to minimize the number of students in hallways during passing periods.

Use of lockers will be suspended indefinitely to minimize student contact with surfaces and congregation of students in corridors.

## Use of Face Coverings, Masks, and Face Shields

Connecticut State Department of Education Approved Facial Coverings



### Face Covering

A cloth, paper, or disposable face covering that covers the nose and mouth; may or may not be medical grade



### Face Shield

A clear plastic shield that covers the forehead, extends below the chin, and wraps around the sides of the face



### Clear Plastic Barrier

A clear plastic or solid surface that can be cleaned and sanitized often

- All students, staff, and visitors entering an EASTCONN Schools and Programs are required to wear a mask or other suitable face covering that covers the entirety of the nose and mouth as required by State of Connecticut guidelines for reopening.
- Educators and staff may remove facial coverings when engaged in instruction with students so long as the staff member can maintain physical distancing requirements or can remain static behind a physical barrier throughout the instructional period.
- Exceptions for the use of facial coverings are as follows:
  - 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 will not be required, per [CDC guidance](#).
  - For anyone that has a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face covering, masks will not be required.
- Students may remove facial coverings to consume meals, using the restroom, or when students are outside of the school building as long as appropriate physical distancing guidelines continue to be met.
  - Modifications to these plans may be made for students with disabilities or other special populations as well as to staff when it is necessary for students to view the face/mouth of the staff for instruction/evaluation purposes.
  - School principals are establishing pre-arrange scheduled “mask breaks” during the school day. Physical distancing guidelines must be followed during these scheduled breaks.
- Students and staff arriving at the school building or boarding a school bus without a mask will be issued one and expected to apply the covering immediately.
- Additional personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, gowns) will be provided to school nurses or custodial staff for use in screenings and disinfection.

# Health Monitoring Plan

EASTCONN Schools and Programs have created written protocols for monitoring symptoms that could be related to COVID-19 in alignment to CDC guidelines in order to decrease the risk of spreading or contracting the virus.

## Dismissal From School or Work

- Staff or students showing symptoms will be dismissed immediately from the school building. These will include but are not limited to:
  - [HIGH-RISK Symptoms](#) associated with COVID-19 according to CDC Guidelines and other infectious diseases in children
  - Fever (above **100°F** or per clinical judgement with OR without fatigue/body aches/chills)
  - New unexplained loss of taste or smell
  - Respiratory symptoms (cough, lung congestion, persistent shortness of breath)
  - Gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea or vomiting)
- The student or staff member will be sent home until guidelines for returning to school and work are met.
- Students will remain in an “isolation room” until they can be released to a parent or guardian. Each school has identified an isolation area.
- Parents/guardians/staff must call their physician and encourage tele visits for documentation clearing to return to campus.
- Communication must be provided for filing with the school nurse and include two emergency contacts with working phone numbers and accessible transportation.
- Immediate coordination with the appropriate Health Department, including being ready to comply with requests for information from the local health department to assist with contact tracing while maintaining relevant privacy and health laws.

## Return to School or Work

The ability for students or staff to return to campus will be determined based upon research-based guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

1. [Symptom-based Strategy](#): “At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed *since recovery* defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and** 10 days have passed since symptoms *first* appeared.”
2. [Test-Based Strategy](#) (per CDC “contingent on the availability of ample testing supplies and laboratory capacity as well as convenient access to testing”). This strategy can be utilized for those who tested positive but are asymptomatic.
  - “Resolution of fever **without** the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
  - Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), **and**
  - Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (total of two negative specimens)”
3. [Time-Based Strategy](#) (for those asymptomatic but tested positive)
  - At least **10 days** have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.

- If they develop symptoms, then the symptom-based or test-based strategy should be used.
- Note, because symptoms cannot be used to gauge where these individuals are in the course of their illness, it is possible that the duration of viral shedding could be longer or shorter than 10 days after their first positive test.
- All students and staff returning to campus will immediately report to the school nurse for a health screening before returning to work/classes.
- OTHER Diagnosed Conditions:
  - After the first 24 hours of various antibiotic treatments (ex: strep throat) etc.
  - As directed per provider's note with or without restriction.

## Containment Plan

To ensure that EASTCONN Schools and Programs have relevant protocols for containing and responding to individuals exhibiting symptoms compatible to COVID-19, a local containment plan has been established to mitigate potential spread of the virus.

- Students entering their school or program building that are exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be immediately sequestered to a designated isolation room within each school building that is monitored by a school staff member. **This room will not be confined to the school health office.**
  - Each isolation room will have a specific restroom space assigned to it for student use during isolation.
  - If multiple students are confined to the space at any one time, all students will continue to maintain physical distancing requirements of six feet.
  - The school nurse or building principal will maintain a log of information including student name, date, time of entry, time of dismissal, and time for completion of room disinfection and sanitation.
- Staff or students showing symptoms will be dismissed immediately from the school building. These will include but are not limited to:
  - [\*HIGH-RISK Symptoms\*](#) associated with COVID-19 according to CDC Guidelines and other infectious diseases in children
  - Fever (above **100°F** or per clinical judgement with OR without fatigue/body aches/chills)
  - New unexplained loss of taste or smell
  - Respiratory symptoms (cough, lung congestion, persistent shortness of breath)
  - Gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea or vomiting)
- The student will remain in this location until a parent or guardian arrives to sign the student out of school for the day.
- The Director who serves as the District Liaison will be contacted by the School Liaison immediately upon diagnosis of a positive COVID-19 case. The Director will provide the context of this information to the local health department representative.
- Disinfection and cleaning procedures will be initiated following student release from an isolation room in compliance with [CDC guidelines](#). These guidelines include:
  - Close off areas and allow a period of time to occur before entering the area to enact disinfection. Open any windows or turn on ventilation systems to assist in the process.
  - If surfaces are soiled, they should be cleaned with soap or detergent prior to disinfection.

- All disinfection chemicals should be utilized in compliance from the approved list of agents provided by the Director of Facilities.
- The use of the school health office will continue to be utilized to treat and consult with students exhibiting other illnesses or injuries.
- Each School/Program is in the process of identifying and preparing isolation spaces.

**COVID-19 School Isolation Room Locations**

School	Isolation Room Location	Restroom Location
ACT Magnet School	Currently space is under construction to facilitate an adequate nursing and isolation space	
LEAP Alternative High School	Conference Room	There is only one bathroom in the facility
QMC Magnet High School	TBD	
EAP	TBD	
NRP	TBD	
CDT	TBD	

**Centers for Disease Control (CDC) School Decision Tree**

**Should you consider opening?**

- Will reopening be consistent with applicable state and local orders?
- Is the school ready to protect children and employees at higher risk for severe illness?
- Are you able to screen students and employees upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure?

**IF ANY NO - DO NOT OPEN**

**IF ALL YES - CONTINUE**

**Are recommended health and safety actions in place?**

- Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing and employees wearing a cloth face covering, as feasible
- Intensify cleaning, disinfection and ventilation
- Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups and limited mixing between groups, if feasible
- Train all employees on health and safety protocols

**IF ANY NO - MEET SAFEGUARDS FIRST**

**IF ALL YES - CONTINUE**

**Is ongoing monitoring in place?**

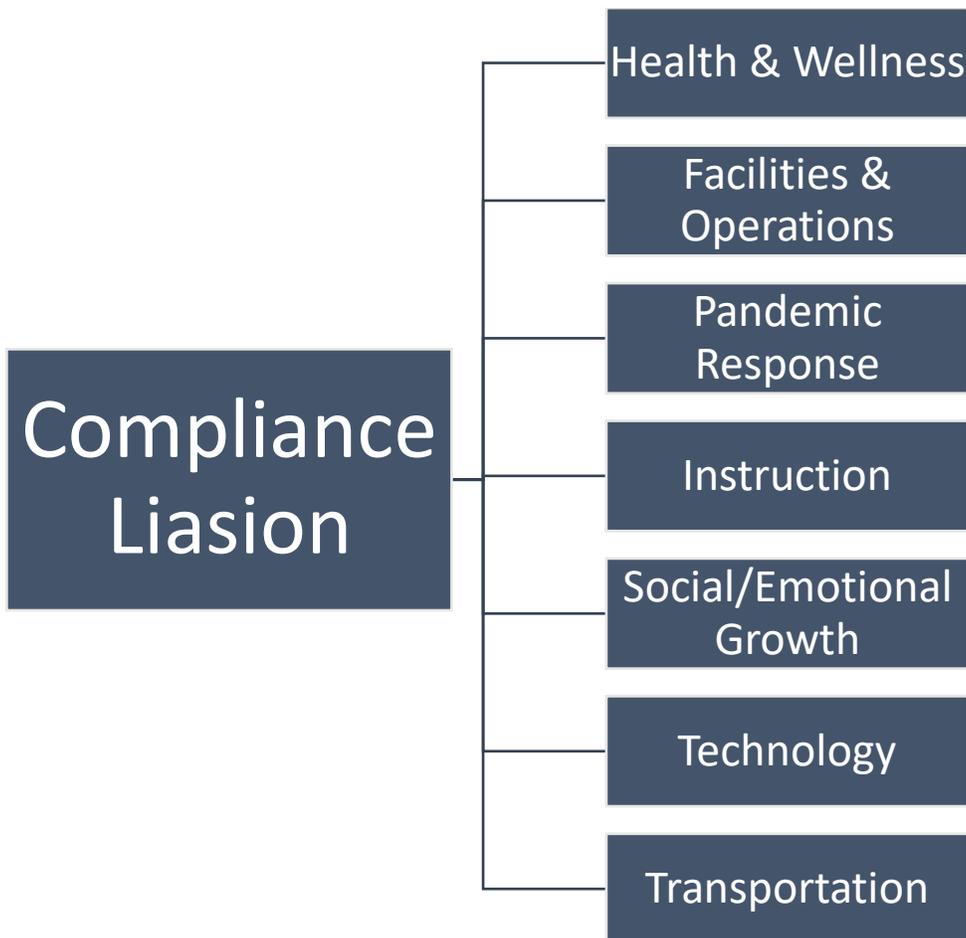
- Develop and implement procedures to check for signs and symptoms of students and employees daily upon arrival, as feasible
- Encourage anyone who is sick to stay home
- Plan for if students or employees get sick
- Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and practices

**IF ANY NO - MEET SAFEGUARDS FIRST**

**IF ALL YES - OPEN & MONITOR**

Adapted from CT Reopening Plan: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

## SCHOOL LIAISON, COMMUNICATION PLAN AND DATA COLLECTIONS



Ensuring effective communication across our EASTCONN Schools and Programs is essential to an effective and safe reopening. Communicating points of contact across our agency, between schools and programs and with our regional partners will assist us in establishing two-way communication to answer questions, discuss potential concerns, successes and receive timely updates in a quick and efficient manner.

**District Compliance Liason:** EASTCONN has identified the following to serve as COVID-19 Health & Safety Compliance Liaisons for engagement with our various schools and programs.

- EASTCONN’s Compliance Liaisons will engage with students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to answer questions about the health & safety requirements set out in this document and address questions about compliance.
- The Liaison, along with building level leaders, will support the implementation of these requirements, as well as the implementation of other school health & safety measures relating to COVID-19 and any additional guidance provided by the State of Connecticut and our Regional Health Districts

## EASTCONN COVID-19 LIASONS

### **Diane Dugas**

Director of Leading and Learning  
 376 Hartford Turnpike  
 Hampton, CT  
 860-324-9491

### **Amy Margelony**

Director Pupil Services  
 376 Hartford Turnpike  
 Hampton, CT.  
 860-377-7650

### **Katrina Cote**

Head Nurse

Will support communication between all EASTCONN Directors and the 3 regional Health Districts our Schools and Programs operate under.

### **School and Program Building Liaisons**

Program	Address	Phone Number	Principal
ACT	896 Main Street Willimantic, CT 06226	860-465-5636	Sarah Mallory <a href="mailto:smallory@eastconn.org">smallory@eastconn.org</a>
QMC	742 Upper Maple Street Danielson, CT 06239	860-932-4040	David Howes (Interim) <a href="mailto:dhowes@eastconn.org">dhowes@eastconn.org</a>
LEAP	729 Main Street Willimantic, CT 06226	860-931-0250	David Howes <a href="mailto:dhowes@eastconn.org">dhowes@eastconn.org</a>
NRP	79 Westfield Avenue Danielson, CT 06239	860-779-6794	Kurt Mias <a href="mailto:kmias@eastconn.org">kmias@eastconn.org</a>
EVC	14 Route 66 Columbia, CT 06237	860-228-4317	Greg Biggs <a href="mailto:gbiggs@eastconn.org">gbiggs@eastconn.org</a>
EAP	10 Commerce Drive Columbia, CT 06237	860-228-3240	Ravit Stein <a href="mailto:rstein@eastconn.org">rstein@eastconn.org</a>

# Communication

EASTCONN Schools and Programs are committed to establishing a multi-modal approach for communication of policies and protocols with staff, students, and families.

## **EASTCONN Schools and Programs Communication Strategies:**

Communication of policies, protocols, and relevant information will be shared utilizing the School Messenger Notification System (phone, text and email), EASTCONN Website, each EASTCONN schools and programs website, and social media. Communications will be made available in both English and Spanish as well as for those with visual and/or hearing impairments meeting ADA compliance.

### **Data Collection Methods:**

Families will be surveyed in the early stages of plan development through Google Forms to determine preferences for in-person school attendance, access to bus transportation, and the availability of Internet access and technology for student learning. Additional surveys will be developed as needed to guide the direction for planning both our fall reopening and gathering feedback and input throughout the year.

## **Communication Frequency Expectations:**

- Weekly notifications will be provided by Directors and/or the building principals regarding updates on the execution of the School Access Plan.
- As Schools and Programs are made aware of critical information that needs to be disseminated to the community regarding policies or changes to the health data, this information will be disseminated from Directors utilizing the methods detailed above.
- Should significant changes occur to transmission levels and the determination is made to close schools, notifications will be sent to the community through the use of School Messenger (voice/email), social media, and main page of the EASTCONN and school and program websites.

## **Data Collection**

EASTCONN Schools and Programs will continue to utilize staff and parent/guardian surveys and questionnaires to gather information to guide district planning. The following surveys will be conducted during the summer of 2020:

- ***Distance Learning Feedback Survey:*** Questionnaire through Google Forms for staff and family perspective on areas of success and areas needed for continual growth of the distance learning model.
- ***School Reopening Survey:*** Questionnaire through Google Forms to collect information for use in development of School Access Plan including intent to return to in building instruction, utilization of district transportation, and areas for the school district to support families with the transition.
- ***School Reopening Employee Count:*** In order for the EASTCONN Schools and Programs it is essential to know which staff are unable to return to work for approved COVID related reasons. Directors will work with EASTCONN's Human Resource Division to gather this information to plan for virtual delivery of instruction, substitutes or other means of coverage.

# Staffing and Personnel

## Certification and Personnel Planning

- EASTCONN Schools and Programs will continue to employ appropriately certified, authorized and/or permitted educators.
- We will consult with legal counsel as necessary to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements related to personnel, including but not limited to the EEOC guidance related to the ADA and the COVID pandemic.
- Communication and collaboration with Human Resources will be utilized to assess the need for additional staffing/substitutes.
- EASTCONN schools and programs will continue to work closely with union leadership in these matters.
- EASTCONN Human Resources department will provide clear guidance regarding policies and practices as they relate to COVID-19 pandemic and staff issues.

## Professional Learning

- EASTCONN Schools and Programs will receive professional learning beginning on August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 for 6 days to orient and prepare staff to the newly implemented mandated guidelines, protocols and procedures for the reopening of our learning environments.
- During August professional learning, all district staff will receive professional learning in the following areas:
  - Health Protocols
  - Use and proper application of facial coverings
  - Hygiene practices; cough and sneeze etiquette, handwashing
  - Health data reporting and confidentiality
  - Supporting students social emotional and mental health (see items previously listed under SEL)
  - Instructional design including effective online tools and strategies

## Reopening Our Schools: Sources

Please note that sections of this document have been taken from or based on the following sources:

- “Adapt, Advance, Achieve” Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together - Connecticut State Department of Education
- “**Reopen Connecticut**” - Rules for operating Summer School during COVID 19 - State of Connecticut
- “Preparing for a Safe Return to Classroom Learning” - State of Connecticut
- **K-12 Schools and Childcare Programs** - FAQs for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents - CDC.gov/coronavirus
- Recommendations for Protections and Procedures Regrading Education and Connecticut’s Public Schools – Connecticut Education Association, CEA
- **Leveraging the Power of Social and Emotional Learning** - Available at [CASEL Leveraging Reopen and Renew Plan](#)

Please note that all plans and items included in this document are in draft form and subject to change based on requirements and/or advice from the Governor Ted Lamont, the Connecticut State Department of Education and our regions 3 Health Districts.

Parents, guardians and students will have the opportunity to attend scheduled meetings over the next few weeks in which this plan and further details will be shared and discussed. For ongoing information go to [www.eastconn.org](http://www.eastconn.org) or your school or program specific website.

With gratitude to the EASTCONN Schools and Programs Reentry Committee for their insight, creative planning and passion to reunite students, staff and families in the fall of 2020, and to successfully as a team prepare for whatever comes our way during the 20-21 school year.

### **Co-Chairs**

Diane Dugas, Director of Leading and Learning

Amy Margelony, Director Pupil Services

### **Committee**

Gary Mala, EASTCONN Executive Director

Michael Akana, Facilities Director

Kim Busch, Director of Transportation

Katrina Cote, Head Nurse

Andy DePalma, Director of Technology

Kerri Dexter, Cooperative Purchasing

Keri Geer,

Jane Glenn, ACT Teacher and Union President

Diane Gozemba, Early Childhood Director

Faith Grist, Leading and Learning Administrative Assistant

Kristen Hempel, Assistant Director Adult Education

Sarah Mallory, ACT Magnet Principal

Melanie Marcaccio, Director Human Resources

Kurt Mias, NRP Principal

Trevor Ouellette,

Heather Plourde, Director of Food Services

Heidi Radcliffe, Cooperative Purchasing

Teddie Sleight, Director of Marketing

Susan Starkey, Northeast Regional Health District

Laura Vagnini, QMC Teacher and Union Teacher union Representative

Joni Weglein, Director of Finance