

# Consideration of Alternatives for Re-design of Education

Alton Central School Re-Entry Plan  
Fall, 2020



## Introduction

The CARE Plan, designed to assess and address all components of education, takes into account the changing nature of Covid-19 and the restrictions related to it that impact teaching and learning. The Plan incorporates precautionary measures to minimize risk where possible.

While a return to school will look very different than past years, Alton Central School strives to offer children a meaningful and enriching learning experience no matter what service delivery is used. The priority of protecting the health of Alton students, staff and families may require the school to operate in various modes at different times with minimum advance notice.

## Objective

To design academic, social, emotional and physical opportunities that will meet all student needs during a pandemic.

## Goals

1. Minimize educational and social disruptions
2. Minimize academic losses
3. Preserve continuity of essential school functions
4. Establish protocols to ensure health and wellness
5. Provide mental health support

## Guiding Factors

- Due to the unpredictable nature of the virus, this Plan will and must be fluid.
- The health and well-being of our staff and students is our highest priority.
- Decisions will be based on medical data from local, state, and national public health officials.
- Recognition that learning and needs are not "one size fits all".
- Recognition that family circumstances are not "one size fits all".



## Recognizing the Need for Choice

Classroom attendance is important and conducive to learning. However, in the current pandemic environment, a focus on student on-site attendance must be balanced with the priority for keeping students and employees safe and healthy. Some parents/guardians may not feel comfortable sending children to school and will require ACS to consider alternative delivery systems of instruction.

Families will have a choice between on-site learning and remote, real time. Additionally, for those who need a more flexible schedule, the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS) will allow students the option of taking 100% of their classwork with them and still remain an enrolled ACS student (VLACS registration is the responsibility of the family). Families must communicate their desired platform to the ACS office no later than August 7. Each mid-trimester, families will have the option of re-assessing their decision and must contact the office regarding any change in their form of attendance for the following trimester. Parents can opt “out” of in-school learning at any time during a trimester, but cannot opt “in” during a trimester.

### Considerations of the Plan

The following pages outline the practices and protocols that will be in place in the following areas:

- ◆ The School Day
- ◆ Breakfast, Lunch, Snack
- ◆ Educational Outcomes
- ◆ Safety and Wellness
- ◆ Recess
- ◆ Athletics
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Hygiene
- ◆ Disinfecting

## The Three Choices

The levels of comfort and confidence from family to family will vary. To address and support circumstances, ACS is offering the following choices to students:

1. On-site Learning—children will receive their instruction at the Alton Central School building while following required and recommended restrictions.
2. Remote Learning in Real Time (Synchronous)—children will live stream with an ACS teacher either from the classroom or their home. When remoting into the classroom, the at-home student will be part of the class, monitored by a staff member. If working with a teacher who is at home, a daily schedule will be followed. This option is ideal for the family that wishes to continue with remote instruction and prefers a structured schedule.
3. Remote Learning: Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS) (Asynchronous)—classroom instruction will be provided by a VLACS teacher with a flexible schedule. The student will remain enrolled at ACS. It is the family’s responsibility to contact VLACS to register.

## The School Day

### Protocols

#### Hygiene/Disinfecting

##### Entering School in the Morning

- Entry doors propped open to limit contact with door handles. Doorways will be monitored by a staff member.
- Temperature check
- Hand sanitizing

##### Classroom in the Morning

- Hand washing before and after snack
- Touchless hand sanitizer after sneezing, coughing, blowing nose
- Touchless hand sanitizer when coming in from recess
- Touchless hand sanitizer any time entering/exiting classroom
- Desks will be properly cleaned after eating as needed.
- All classrooms have either air exchangers or air conditioners to provide continual circulation

##### Bathroom

- Students use red post-it to place on bathroom stall door
- Students will not use if red post it on door
- Facilities crew will clean
- Touchless hand sanitizer returning from bathroom
- Bathrooms electrostatically sanitized twice a day

##### Classroom in the Afternoon

- Hand washing before and after lunch
- Touchless hand sanitizer when coming in from recess
- Desks will be properly cleaned after eating as needed.
- Hand sanitizer any time entering/exiting classroom

##### After Hours

- Each night custodian will clean as usual, but finish off each room spraying all surfaces with the electrostatic spraying device with the approved CDC recommended disinfectant.
- To reduce contamination, the custodian will be the last person in the room and the door will be locked with no re-entry until the following morning.

- All students will be required to wear a mask at all times during the school day. However, teachers will be strongly encouraged to schedule “mask free time” throughout the day and design “mask free activities” when deemed appropriate.

- All students will have their own individual box with items (pencils, crayons, paper, etc) they will need to be successful throughout the day. Students will not share materials or items and will have their own tools assigned to them in order to access the curriculum.

- Students will be scheduled for hand sanitizing several times throughout the day.

- All desks (no group tables) will be placed at least 6’ apart.

- Students will use the bathroom protocol and will practice a hand washing routine.

- No lockers.

- Move staff, not students.

- The school will restrict accessibility. Items dropped off by parents after the start of school will be retrieved by the office staff from the vestibule and delivered to the student. Early dismissal students will be picked up from the vestibule. The office staff will escort students in/out.

## Breakfast and Lunch, Snack Milk

For Now:

- Students will eat breakfast, snack and lunch in their classroom or outside (weather permitting).
- Hot lunch may be purchased. It will be brought to the classroom.
- Parents are encouraged to put money on their “My School Bucks” account instead of sending in a check or money. The District has waived the fee for depositing money in the system. A credit will come back in the form of a meal.
- Students will wash their hands before and after meals and snack.
- Snack milk will be discontinued until further notice.



## After School Activities

Until further notice, after-school activities for large, multi-age groups will be cancelled. However, ACS recognizes that maintaining strong, positive social interactions is essential especially during these unusual times.

ACS is in the process of arranging classroom activities that will take place after school during which time children can play together and enjoy each other's company in a safe and responsible manner. Modeled after the "Summer Fun in Alton" Program this summer—



which was very successful— children will be invited to take part in

games, art projects, movement and dance, and other fun "social time".



All students in the classroom—those who receive instruction in the building and those who are remote—will be welcome to attend.

More information will be forwarded to families as details are finalized.



And, if the school is required

to move back to a fully remote platform, there will be a continuation of these "Drop Ins" so that children can stay connected.



## Recess

It will be important for students to have as much outdoor time as possible.

Teachers will be encouraged to take outside breaks, supervise activities and get fresh air.

Scheduled recess will take place during the day following these protocols:

- ♣ Students will wear a mask at recess.
- ♣ Students should not bring items from home to play with at recess.
- ♣ The playground will be open.
- ♣ Hand sanitizing stations will be set up near the playground.

## Athletics



Sports that require frequent closeness between players may make it more difficult to maintain social distancing compared to sports where players are not close to each other.

ACS will encourage students to continue with athletics, done in a safe and enjoyable manner. Players and Coaches can focus on individual skill building versus competition and put players into small groups that remain together and work through stations, rather than switching groups or mixing groups.

Athletics must incorporate:

- ◆ Minimal sharing of equipment
- ◆ Social distancing, wear a mask
- ◆ Limit any nonessential visitors, spectators, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations.
- ◆ Sports teams will consider competing only against teams in our local area
- ◆ Prioritize outdoor, as opposed to indoor, practice and play as much as possible.
- ◆ Encourage players to wait in their cars with guardians until just before the beginning of a practice, warm-up, or game, instead of forming a group.



## *What happens when my child is not feeling well?*

There are times when a child does not feel well but can still come to school. For example, students with diagnosed allergy symptoms (with no fever) that causes coughing with a clear runny nose or those with well-controlled asthma may be able to manage their symptoms, are not contagious, and have a working relationship with the school nurse.

Students and Staff must remain at home if they:

- Show symptoms of Covid-19 such as a fever higher than 100.4, a cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, muscle pain, sore throat, difficulty breathing, chills, congestion, headache or a loss of taste or smell.
- Have been in close contact with someone with Covid-19 or with a suspected case in the last 14 days.
- Contact April Elliott, the ACS Nurse, at 875-7500 to discuss symptoms and re-entry decisions.

If the above symptoms begin while at school, the student (or staff member) will be sent home immediately. A designated isolation room, separate from the nurse's office, will hold symptomatic students until a parent/guardian can take them home. While in the room, they must wear a mask and will not be left alone. Parents must arrange for pick up within one hour. The room will be disinfected after it is occupied.

Parents/Guardians must notify ACS if they have been exposed to Covid-19 and are quarantined, or if a family member has been diagnosed with or presumed to have Covid-19 and/or is being isolated.

Students and staff will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days if they have:

- Recently had contact with a person with a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19;
- Has someone in their home being tested for Covid-19; or
- Has recently traveled from somewhere considered to be a "hot spot" by the CDC.



## *What if my child needs to see the nurse during the day for a minor injury or to get medication?*

Beyond very basic first aid, students will report to the nurse as they have done in the past. Children who see the nurse for medication, will continue to do so. The nurse's office will be kept separate from those who have symptoms requiring isolation.

## Disinfecting the Classroom

### Updating Families

If Covid-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member:

Areas used by the symptomatic person will be closed off.

Outside doors and windows will be opened to increase air circulation in the area.

Wait up to 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting to allow respiratory droplets to settle to reduce the risk to individuals cleaning.

All shared areas such as bathrooms and common areas used by the symptomatic person will be cleaned and disinfected.



Age-appropriate learning about Covid-19 will be ongoing.

ACS will display posters throughout the school with reminders about cough/sneeze etiquette, proper handwashing, physical distancing and the importance of staying home when sick.

## Return to School After Exclusion

Once a student or staff member is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC and school. The school nurse must be notified the day before a child/staff member returns to discuss the re-entry plan. Currently the guidelines are:

### Showing Symptoms: Not Tested, Negative Test or Positive Test-

Those who are showing symptoms may return when **all** of the following conditions are met:

- They have not had a fever for a least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers; **and,**
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when a cough or shortness of breath has improved); **and,**
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since the symptoms first appeared; **and,**
- Has contacted the school nurse the day before the child/staff member plans to return to school to discuss the re-entry plan.

### Tests Positive: No Symptoms-

- The individual has received two negative tests at least 24 hours apart; **and,**
- Has contacted the school nurse the day before the child/staff member plans to return to school to discuss the re-entry plan.

### Protocols if ACS has a confirmed case on school property

The school will contact the health department immediately. The NH Department of Health and Human Services will assess factors such as the likelihood of exposure to others in the building, the number of cases in the community, and other factors that will determine building closure. The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the health department. Working in conjunction with the health department, a “Close and Clean” determination will be made as to if and how long, part or all of the school, must be closed.



## Mask or No Mask?

All students will be required to wear a mask\* at all times during the school day. However, teachers will be strongly encouraged to schedule “mask free time” throughout the day and design “mask free activities” when deemed appropriate.

Areas around the school have been identified as outside work space. Staff will be required to wear a mask\*. Masks must be worn on the school bus.

Children/Staff are encouraged to bring a mask from home (school appropriate) however the school will provide a mask when needed.

*\*unless physically unable to wear one because of a medical issue.*



ACS will offer opportunities for students to socially connect both on-site and during remote learning. We will be reaching out to the community to help facilitate social groups, activities and create “drop ins”. The emotional well-being of our students is a high priority; mental well-being is as important as physical well-being.



(SST) will identify individuals who need targeted supports and/or community services.

- Encourage students to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling.
  - ACS will coordinate with families to assist with the psychological needs of students.
  - The school’s Student Support Team
- Extra time with the guidance counselors and social worker has been included in the schedule for students in grades 5-8, whether instruction is live or remote.
  - Collaborate with ACS student groups and the community to promote socializing for all age groups during all stages of the pandemic.
  - ACS will be flexible with time that students need to meet with counselors or the school social worker.
  - Work with families to identify those who may need assistance with food, clothing and other basic needs.
  - If 100% remote instruction is brought back, “drop in” times will be created during which students can come to the school and engage in fun, safe, appropriate activities with their classmates.

## Educational Outcomes

The importance of in-person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impact there has been on children because of school closures this past spring.

ACS is committed to minimizing the potential health impact of Covid-19 while engaging children in learning during the school day in the building.

With the beginning of the new school year, ACS will:

- Focus on content areas.
  - Maximize learning in reading and math
  - Establish Anchor Standards—more information regarding report cards will be sent out in the future.
- Specialists such as music, art, guidance, Spanish, etc. will give in-person instruction in the classroom.
- Assess students academically to determine where they are starting from and determine the best path forward for each student.
- Consistency with reading and writing will take place in grades K-8.
- Enlist the help of additional tutors to help “fill the gap” which occurred due to a loss of learning during the last trimester of the 2019-20 school year.
- Prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable students including students with disabilities.
- Educators, children and families may experience stress, confusion, fear, anger, sadness, or anxiety during the return to school. For students to be successful, ACS will address and support students’ safety, social-emotional health and wellness needs. ACS staff will continually assess the individual needs of children and assist in providing them with supports that meet universal and individual student needs.

### Consistency Clarity Quality

Whether your child attends school at ACS or streams in remotely, the staff is committed to providing an education that:

Is **Consistent**— there will be a schedule to follow and regular communication about assignments and missing work;

Has **Clarity**- there will be an understanding of expectations, when assignments are due, and how to receive help from the teacher(s); and,

Is of a high **Quality**- all work will have purpose; it will help to prepare for new skills, provide practice, or allow for demonstration of mastery.



Although there is uncertainty regarding the impact of Covid-19, we cannot be uncertain as to the level of education Alton children receive.

**Prioritize Outcomes:** Grades K-4

**Balanced Literacy:** Read aloud; shared reading; reading workshop (with direct instruction and independent reading); write aloud; shared writing; writing workshop (with direct instruction and independent writing); word study

**Balanced Math Instruction:** Modeled, shared, guided, independent

**Scheduling/Trimester:**

Assessment/set up schedule/teach routines, expectations, technology

Small, flexible groups based on assessment results

- Target standards
- Leverage paras, Title I, and Special Education to create silos with “co-teachers”; utilize other rooms in the building or with students who are receiving instruction at home
- Teachers provide mini-lessons (live streamed and recorded); “co-teacher” provide support to online students. If in school full time, co-teacher alternates with classroom teacher.
- Grade-levels can divide responsibilities for reading, writing, and math
- Can livestream lessons to other rooms in the building with smaller groups

Reassess and rework groups

**Prioritize Outcomes:** Grades 5-8

Reading, writing, and math

- Use science to support math skills; social studies to support reading and writing. (Increase writing across the curriculum expectations)
- ELA/SS teachers work and plan together; math/science teachers work and plan together
- Use assessment data to create small intervention groups

Consistency with Google Classroom

- Leverage paras and Special Education to create silos with “co-teachers”; utilize other rooms in the building or with students who are receiving instruction at home
- Teachers provide mini-lessons (live streamed and recorded); “co-teacher” provide support to online students. If in school full time, co-teacher alternates with classroom teacher.
- Format: Google Slides
- Embed livestream links/videos. Work, links to subscriptions
- Can livestream lessons to other rooms in the building with smaller groups

## Remote Instruction and the “Pivot”

It's understood and expected that some staff and students will need to work from home. Feedback from the parent and staff surveys served as the guiding documents when considering how remote instruction should be delivered in the fall. Teachers will work to provide consistency with schedules, clarity of expectations, and quality assignments. Class lists will be determined by the number of students who elect to work remotely. Students will “live stream” with their teacher(s) during the day; instruction may be seen from the classroom or from a teacher working from home. Each classroom teacher in the building will have an assigned support staff member who will monitor and manage the remote students.

Students will be able to “opt out” of in-person instruction at any time but will only be allowed to “opt in” to in-person instruction at the beginning of a trimester.

The structure for remote learning will include:

- ◆ A consistent schedule with a morning meeting, class times and assignments.
- ◆ Students in grades 6-8 will have larger Chromebooks to make research and online lessons easier to manage.
- ◆ Students in grades K-2 will each have a Chromebook.
- ◆ Students in grades 3-4 will each have a Chromebook and will be given a wired mouse.
- ◆ Students in grade 5 will continue with their Chromebook.
- ◆ Student growth will be regularly assessed and monitored by classroom teachers.
- ◆ Children in Grades K-2 will be assigned longer breaks within the day to enhance attention and recognize their need for movement during the day.
- ◆ The majority of instruction will be done through live, face-to-face teaching.
- ◆ Students will charge their Chromebook at home every night.

### Pivoting to Remote Instruction

Due to the unknown nature of Covid-19, students will be asked to bring their Chromebook home every afternoon.

If it becomes necessary for students to engage in remote instruction 100% of the time, families will be provided with schedules and tools to assist with the transition.

Attendance will continue to be taken and all students will be expected to attend class and complete assignments.

Notification of a complete remote change could come with short notice due to the ever changing pandemic environment.

Attendance will continue to be taken and all students will be expected to attend class and complete assignments.



## Special Education

Ensuring the academic, physical, emotional and psychological safety of every student is a priority for all reopening plans. This means considering the heightened risks facing our most vulnerable students and the staff who support them, including but not limited to those with compromised immune systems, impulse control issues, or other behavioral issues or disabilities who cannot follow public health guidelines. The plan for these students will be developed on a case by case basis.

### Morning— Students with complex needs will:

- be met by a staff member at the bus/parent vehicle.
- have a staff member to guide them to the main entrance.
- be guided through the hand washing process by a staff member upon arrival and will have a schedule of hand washing throughout the day.
- be escorted by the staff member directly to their assigned classroom.

### Related Services

- Whenever possible, special education services will be provided in the classroom.
- When working in small groups, staff will wear PPE shields and protective clothing.
- Students and staff will sanitize or wash hands prior to group work as well as after group work.
- No materials will be shared. Each student will have their own set of tools and equipment.

### Lunch for students with complex needs

- Students who need assistance with eating will be helped by an education provider who may protect themselves by wearing appropriate PPE and protective clothing.
- Students will be asked to have multiple changes of clothes on hand.

### Preschool

- Preschool will continue to be held remotely.
- Preschool teachers will present programming from their classroom to their students.

### End of the Day:

- Students will be escorted by the staff member directly to their bus/car, etc.

## Transportation

- ▽ Buses have a high back seat (29”).
- ▽ Students must wear a mask on the bus.
- ▽ One student to a seat, marked where to sit.
- ▽ Students must wear their mask from the bus into the school and to their classroom.
- ▽ At the end of the day, students will be dismissed to their bus one grade at a time, one bus at a time.



The maximum ridership with one student to a seat is 26. In the morning, the bus will pick up those who live furthest from the school and work their way in. The first 26 will be dropped off at school and then the remainder of the children will be picked up. When students arrive, they will report directly to their homeroom.

In the afternoon, the 26 students who live closest to the school will be dropped off first. The bus will then return to the school and transport the remaining students. Students who are waiting will be supervised with social distancing.

### Bus Company Responsibility

- Daily disinfection of all surfaces after each bus run.
- Bus drivers will wear facial coverings while transporting students.
- Bus drivers will use an alcohol based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Buses will be cleaned using Zoono Z71 Microbe Shield Disinfectant: kills pathogens, destroys viruses.



Students being picked up at the end of the day will be called down to the dismissal area (back parking lot) using a personal, individual notification system provided by Pick Up Patrol that calls directly into the child’s classroom. This will ensure that students will not congregate at the end of the day. The individual process will take a little longer, so the school anticipates starting dismissal for those being picked up at 2:30 instead of 2:50.

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## The ACS Before School Check



Before heading off to school, check for the following:

Do you have any of these symptoms? ←

Have you had a positive COVID-19 test in the past 14 days?

Have you traveled to a state where COVID-19 is spreading or is on the rise?



If you answered "yes" to any of these, keep your child at home and contact the ACS school nurse (875-7500)

ACS- Looking Out For Each Other



**Decisions  
Needed  
By  
August 7**

**(watch  
the mail)**

### If choosing to attend school in the building:

- Families asked to pre-check their child before coming to school—use magnet (above) being sent home.
- Must follow all of the safety and health protocols.
- May "opt out" of coming to the building before the end of the trimester, but cannot "opt in" until the following trimester.

### If choosing to do remote instruction:

- Must attend classes everyday.
- Complete all assignments.
- Remember that the availability of teachers is from 7:30-3:15
- Be available to pick up materials as needed or watch the lesson if materials are not available.

## First Student Day

To allow teachers and staff the time to prepare for the challenges of presenting instruction under the conditions of social distancing, safety precautions, and new expectations —

- The first student day be **September 8** instead of September 2. This will provide staff with 6 preparation days instead of 4.
- Every Friday will be an early release at 12:30. This will be in lieu of already scheduled early release days.

### Resources

- ⇒ American Academy of Pediatrics
- ⇒ Center for Disease Control
- ⇒ Illinois Department of Education
- ⇒ Massachusetts State Re-Entry Plan
- ⇒ NH Department of Education
- ⇒ NH Department of Human Services
- ⇒ North Carolina State Re-entry Plan
- ⇒ Primex
- ⇒ Safe Work Playbook, Lear Corp.
- ⇒ Strong Schools Public Health Toolkit
- ⇒ US Department of Health and Human Services
- ⇒ Vermont State Re-Entry Plan
- ⇒ Wisconsin Returning to School Plan