

## **RETURN TO SCHOOL PROTOCOL**

### **For the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District**

### **2020-21 school year**

The events of the past several months have created a new reality for all of us. As we look to return to school under the guidelines from the State of New Hampshire and the Department of Education it is clear that in order to keep everyone as safe as possible, it is going to take efforts from everyone in our school community to make the return to school a reality. The District is working to create options for parents to keep their children safe as they feel appropriate. Families will have three options:

- Returning to school full time five days per week.
- Distance learning model where a student will not come to the school for any reason. Students who choose distance learning will be given a specific schedule and held accountable to be participating during that schedule as if they were in the school building.
- An agreed upon weekly schedule for students to consistently attend part of the school day.

We will be breaking this down into nine-week periods of time. Parents who choose an option, must stay with that option for the full nine-week period. The District will communicate with parents during the seventh week of each period to see if the parent wishes to choose a different option for their family.

**The details on some aspects of this protocol are still being refined, we will keep you updated on any modifications. Feedback from the community can help to shape make this document more effective. Please contact the Superintendent at [b.lane@sau63.org](mailto:b.lane@sau63.org) .**

#### **DISTANCE LEARNING**

Our staff has learned a lot over the past few months and we have listened to feedback from parents about the distance learning process. Once we have information on how many students will want to participate in distance learning we will have more specific information for families. For example, there are 45 first grade students. If we have 10-15 students in the first grade who choose this option, we can assign a teacher to be the “distance learning teacher” for those student. If we have fewer numbers, we are looking at live streaming of lessons with supplementary activities and videos to deliver instruction.

There is also an option for parents to choose to enroll students in VLACS, the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School, for instruction. Detailed information is available at [D](#) .

Prior to the start of school, parents will be given information and that plan will stay in place for the first nine-weeks of school.

If students are struggling in the distance learning model, families should contact the school counselor to develop a plan to get remedial help to bring students to a level of meeting the competencies for all classes.

#### **PARTIAL SCHEDULE**

Parents who choose this option will work with the school counselor and administration to determine what parts of the school day the student will attend in our buildings. Families choosing this model will have to commit to a schedule that works within the parameters of the school schedule for that grade or course selection. Parents will be responsible for providing transportation for students in this model.

**The following are the protocols that will be followed for all of our buildings:**

### **Buildings**

The school district has purchased hydrostatic sanitizing equipment that will create sanitize all hard surfaces in our buildings. The chemical we will be using is a botanical made from thyme oil in order to create the safest environment possible. It is safe to use on cooking surfaces and work spaces and if used on a regular basis will be a guard against contagions spreading. In addition, our custodial staff will be:

- Wiping down surfaces that have high incidents of touching such as door handles
- Desk tops will be sanitized daily
- Bathrooms will be cleaned three times during each school day
- Hand sanitizing stations will be installed at all entrances
- All classrooms Pre-K to 5, special education rooms, and service providers will have a table top Plexiglas shield for one-to-one instruction. Teachers in grades 6-12 who are involved in close instruction may request one.
- All preventative maintenance for air circulation has been done over the summer by our staff
- Water bottle filling stations will be in each building so that members of our school community can fill up their personal water bottles, these should never be shared.
- Daily records will be kept for each bathroom and classroom to ensure cleaning/sanitizing protocols are followed.
- 

Face coverings

**It will be mandatory for all students and staff to wear a face mask or face shields in order to be in our school buildings.**

- These masks should be provided by the family for each member of our school community. If there is difficulty in attaining masks, we ask that families contact the school for assistance. The school will have disposable masks for students who forget.
- Kindergarten and preschool students will not be required to wear masks but may if they wish to.
- There will be fresh air breaks built into the school day for all to remove their masks. During student quiet work time, students may remove their masks. When staff members are alone in their classrooms or offices, they may take off their masks during that time period. By choosing to send students to school, parents are agreeing that their child will have a protective face covering when students are directed to do so.
- Face coverings should fit snugly against the sides of the face and cover the nose and mouth, secured under the chin.

The District realizes that there are some students who may need alternatives to cloth face masks. Parents of those students should contact the school nurse with medical documentation to look at alternatives that make sense for the student.

Students who do not comply will work with the school counselors, nurses and administration to educate students as to the importance of this practice. Students who choose not to comply after working with the staff will be sent home. This is not meant to be a punitive action but the safety of all concerned must take priority in these times.

### **Before coming to school**

The first step in having students return is to ensure that every family of a student or a staff member begin daily routine. We are requesting the following:

- All members of the school community should take their temperature before leaving to come to school. If there is anyone with a fever or 100 degrees or more, that person should not come to school that day.
- If members of the school community have any symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, runny nose, sore throat, body aches, fever, etc.) that person should not come to school that day.
- If a person has come into contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, they should not come to school and it should be reported to the Principal as soon as possible.

### **Upon arrival at school for staff:**

- All staff persons will wear a facial mask or face shield.
- All staff persons will report to the nurse or a designated area to have their temperature taken.
- All staff persons will confirm daily that they have not been exposed to risk factors.
- If a staff person has a fever of 100 degrees or higher or any symptoms of COVID-19, they will be asked to go home.

An arrival schedule for all students will be developed to minimize the time between arrival at school and the time that instruction will begin.

Prior to coming to school, parents should confirm with their students that they do not have any of the factors listed in the process for **Screening for Symptoms and Risk Factors** stated below.

### **Upon arrival at school for students:**

- An arrival schedule will be developed for all students.
- For students who are riding the bus, face coverings will be required.
- For all students above kindergarten, students will arrive at school wearing a face mask or shield unless they have been medically cleared by the school nurse not to do so.
- All students will have their temperature taken upon arrival at school whether they ride the bus, come in a car or walk to school by a staff person.
  - If a student has a temperature of over 100 degrees will be directed to a triage area in each building separate from the nurse's office.

- The student's temperature will be taken a second time by the school nurse, if the temperature is still over 100 degrees, parents will be called and will need to come to pick up their child as soon as possible. Students will be isolated in the triage area until a parent arrives.

It is our intent to minimize the need to isolate students as much as possible. We believe that by parents taking student's temperatures before they leave home, we will have a minimal need to put this part of the protocol into place.

- Upon entering the building without fever symptoms, students will go directly to their classroom. At FRES there will be no morning recess. At WLC students will be directed to their first period class and not to congregate in the hallways.

## **Classrooms**

With few exceptions, every classroom in the district can create a classroom environment where students are five to six feet apart while sitting at their desks. Students who are moving about the classroom will not be six feet apart so we will endeavor to minimize the movement in the classroom. At all levels, we will build movement breaks into the daily schedule that will allow all students to move, for the most part we will do this outside weather permitting. Where we have difficulty in creating the appropriate spacing, we will be looking to move those classrooms to other spaces within the building that allow for the appropriate spacing to take place. We will be supporting those staff members who wish to develop appropriate class plans to bring students outside the building in order to deliver instruction.

Physical Education classes will take place outside daily, weather permitting.

Rugs and other soft items will be removed from classrooms.

Non-essential furniture will be removed from classrooms to allow for social distancing.

## **Special Education**

All students who have been identified with Special Needs will have their IEP implemented as written. The IEP team will work together on an individual basis to determine what, if any, changes need to occur. Until further notice, all meetings for Special Education with parents will be done remotely unless there is an issue with the access of technology.

## **Lunch**

- Students at LCS will be eating lunch by classroom in the multi-purpose room one class at a time and use the playground one class at a time.
- Students at FRES will be eating lunch in their classrooms with meals being brought to each floor for distribution.
- At WLC, the cafeteria is big enough to socially distance students if we modify the schedule:
  - Sixth grade will eat as one grade
  - Seventh and eighth grade will eat together
  - Odd numbered classrooms for high school will eat at one time, even numbered classrooms at a second scheduled time.

## **Passing times and recess**

Students at FRES will be wearing masks as they move through the halls until they get outside for recess. Recess procedures will be developed by the staff at FRES to maximize distancing between students.

- Passing times for middle school will be done by grade in order to minimize interactions and students congregating.
- Passing times for high school will be done as they have been in the past. Students will not be allowed to congregate and must keep moving as they go to their next class.

### **Buses**

The school district will run the regularly scheduled bus routes daily.

- All students riding the bus are required to wear a mask from the moment they step on to the bus and in the afternoon until they get off.
- A student arriving at the bus will be told by the driver that they cannot ride that day.
- Students who refuse to wear their mask will lose the ability to ride the bus; parents will be required to arrange transportation if that occurs.
- Buses will be cleaned daily and sanitized using school district equipment as scheduled.
- Students in the same family will be required to sit in the same seat together up to two to a seat.
- All buses will have assigned seating.

### **Visitors to our schools**

All visitors to the school will be held in the foyer of the building and not allowed further entry while we are dealing with the effects of COVID-19. Parents coming to pick up their child for dismissal or to bring them late to school will not be given access to the buildings beyond the designated foyer area. Visitors will be required to wear protective masks while waiting in the designated foyer area.

### **Field Trips/Assemblies**

There will be no field trips or assemblies until further notice.

### **Activities**

Only those activities approved by the School Board will occur outside the school day.

### **Procedures for students and staff showing symptoms of COVID-19**

The Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will follow the guidelines set out by the New Hampshire Department of Public Health.

- Staff and students who have a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19 will be required to stay home. If symptoms persist, individuals should be tested.
- Students and staff who have come into proximity to the person being tested will be informed that someone they have come into contact with is being tested. We will ask that they monitor themselves for symptoms.

### Screening for Symptoms and Risk Factors:

Before leaving for school all parents should confirm with their children:

- do they have or are they exhibiting ANY symptoms of COVID -19 to include: fever, chills, cough, SOB, fatigue, muscle or body ache, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea?
- Have they had any close contact with someone who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 in the prior 14 days?
- Have they traveled in the prior 14 days outside New England (NH, VT, ME, MA, CT, RI)?

Staff will need to confirm daily that they have not experienced any of these factors.

### Who to Exclude from School:

- Anybody with new or unexplained symptoms, even if only mild symptoms (Nurses will have knowledge of those students who have seasonal allergies and will make a determination as to the best course of action during allergy season.)
- Anybody who reports close contact with a person with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19
- Anybody who has traveled outside of the NE in the prior 14 days

### How Long Does a Person Need to Stay Out of School For:

- Symptomatic and confirmed with COVID-19: See CDC's symptom based strategy (for reference)
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, AND
  - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever (off fever reducing meds), AND
  - symptoms have improved
- symptomatic but person refuses testing for COVID-19: same as if confirmed with COVID-19
- asymptomatic but tests positive: 10 days (assuming person remains asymptomatic, if person develops symptoms see above recommendation)
- exposed to someone suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19: 14 days (assuming person remains asymptomatic)
- **person cannot "test out" of 14-day quarantine**
- travel outside of NE: 14 days (from LAST day of travel)

### What's Needed for Symptomatic Student/Staff to Return to School:

- Negative test results and student feeling better (general return to school rules apply)
- Positive test result or No test results: allow back once student has met CDC's symptom-based criteria for removal from isolation

### We will send students/ staff home when they:

- Present a temperature of over 100 degrees, this person will be excluded and need to be tested
- Present chills and body aches even with no fever, this person will be excluded and need to be tested
- A new runny nose or nasal congestion – exclude and monitor, if symptoms the person should be tested
- Presents a history of headaches who reports he had a headache yesterday and today symptoms have resolved - monitor
- A person with diagnosed allergies who reports typical sore throat, runny nose that has improved with antihistamine – monitor and suggest testing

**What will we do if a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 who attends or works in our school?**

The District will follow the direction of the Department of Public Health. Department of Public Health will determine who and how many people need to be involved in any type of quarantine. It is their guidance that will determine who and how many people need to be quarantined.

Guidance from the Department of Public Health has indicated that it is in the best interest of the community for the District to report known cases of infectious diseases to the state and would not be a HIPPA violation.