



**TCS D**

Tonawanda City School District

# **FACE-TO-FACE**

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN**

**2020-2021**

**July 31, 2020**

**Revised April 13, 2021**

*\* This plan was developed in consultation with many school and community stakeholders. All areas of this plan address requirements and mandates as defined in the guidance documents from NYSDOH and NYSED. Additionally, this plan includes other recommendations and best practices as described in the guidance. This plan is subject to change based on future guidance and recommendations established by the NYSDOH and NYSED.*



### *Introduction*

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The pandemic has altered the fabric of our nation. The importance of returning to a safe environment with heightened awareness is of utmost significance. The importance of in-person learning is well documented, and continued closures stand to negatively impact the welfare of America's youth. As educators we believe face-to-face learning is best for students' social emotional health, education, and other required/needed services provided by our school district.

Teams have organized and worked together to make the necessary adjustments to open all of our buildings in a manner that allows for three feet of social distancing and incorporates all of the guidelines set forth by the departments of health and education.

This plan will focus on returning students into a safe and emotionally healthy environment while following all mandated guidance including the requirement of having a face covering on his/her person, and being separated from others by three feet or being separated by a barrier.

### *Acronyms Used Throughout the Document*

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CDC -	Center for Disease Control and Prevention
DOH -	Department of Health
PPE -	Personal Protective Equipment
COVID-19 -	2019 Novel Coronavirus
NYSDOH -	New York State Department of Health
NYSED -	New York State Education Department
Sodexo -	Food Service company with whom the District contracts
POS -	Point of Sale (where the student pays for his/her breakfast or lunch)



## FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING PLAN

### ***Preparation for Return:***

#### ***Communication with Families/Staff/Community***

- The District administration researched and worked diligently to create reopening plans. The plans were presented to stakeholder groups for feedback.
- The District reopening plan will be posted on the District website.
- The District will review the plan with faculty, staff, students, and parents/legal guardians.
- The District will create and post a video of the implementation of set procedures for students and families to better understand the new precautions and protocols.
- Staff will be reminded of the mandated procedures for proper cleaning.
- Staff will adhere to CDC/DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically face coverings, and a distance of six feet when not providing essential classroom instruction.
- Signage will be prevalent throughout the building to encourage, instruct, and support the guidelines set forth from the CDC/DOH.
- The District will provide instructions for all students, faculty, and staff on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE.
- The COVID-19 Safety Coordinator is Mary Beth Scullion, Assistant Superintendent. Her responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved.

#### ***Update District Plans and Documents or Meet with Committees***

- District Wellness Committee
- District Safety Committee (Fire/Police)
- District Code of Conduct
- District Attendance Procedures
- Professional Development - The District will instruct staff in health and safety measures, and their responsibilities for monitoring personal and student health.

#### ***Accommodations for High Risk Individuals***

- The District will provide information regarding medical conditions accepted as high risk for contracting/being impacted by COVID-19 and potentially eligible for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations as per the employee's/student's physician.
- All students and staff seeking accommodations for potential high risk medical conditions will follow District procedures, as per district processes for ADA accommodation request.
- Documentation from physicians will be considered and proper PPE will be provided to students and staff to accommodate the documented condition.
- Mary Beth Scullion, Assistant Superintendent, is the designated COVID-19 Safety Coordinator. She can be contacted via email ([msscullion@tonacsd.org](mailto:msscullion@tonacsd.org)) or phone 694-7688 with questions.



## FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING PLAN

Screening and Tracking (See *TCSD Comprehensive Reopening Plan*)

Facilities Preparation (See *TCSD Comprehensive Reopening Plan*)

### ***Monitoring/Maintaining Physical Health and Well Being:***

#### ***Communicating Safe Practices***

- The District will identify and communicate practices enhancing the safety of all students and staff including frequent handwashing, use of face coverings, cough etiquette, and social distancing.
- All students will be provided age-appropriate instruction regarding COVID-19 symptoms, impacts, mitigation strategies, proper use of masking and social distancing, and building expectations/protocols for all.
- The District will post appropriate signage throughout all school facilities promoting everyday protective measures and how to stop the spread of germs/virus via handwashing, social distancing, and face coverings.
  - CDC handwashing posters at each sink and in each classroom
  - Marks on the floor to ensure desks remain in the designated area
  - Signs on the doors for well-checks prior to entering
  - “Cover the cough” signs
  - Identification signs to locate hand sanitizer
  - Signage next to hand sanitizers stating: “If hands are soiled, soap and water must be used”
  - Signage at entrances, restrooms, cafeterias/dining areas, classrooms, auditorium, janitorial staff areas, and administrative office stating:
    - Stay home if sick
    - Cover nose and mouth
    - Wear acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others
    - Properly store and discard PPE
    - Adhere to social distancing instructions
    - Report symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19
    - Follow hand hygiene and cleaning/disinfection guidelines
    - Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette

#### ***Handwashing/Hand Sanitizing***

- Hand sanitizing stations (must contain at least 60% alcohol) will be established at strategic points throughout the building and in shared spaces throughout the school.
- Each classroom will be provided hand sanitizer for student and staff usage. Students will be provided ample opportunities to practice good hand hygiene.
- Each school will develop protocols for all students and staff to engage in consistent hand washing during the school day.

#### ***Staying Home When Sick***



## FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING PLAN

- All employees will be informed about the importance of staying home when sick.
- All students will stay home when sick.

### *Screening of Students/Staff*

- All staff will participate in a daily self-monitoring check for symptoms of COVID-19.
- All staff and students will be instructed on how to recognize possible symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do when they believe an individual is experiencing symptoms.
- Students and staff will be self screened or screened by a parent prior to entering the school each day, as recommended in the guidance. Each family is encouraged to self-monitor each household member.

### *Responding to Symptomatic Students/Staff*

- Instruct staff and students to NOT report to schools if they are exhibiting symptoms.
- All staff and students will follow NYSDOH and CDC guidance related to testing positive for COVID-19.
- If a student comes to school and displays symptoms, he/she will immediately go to the isolation room to be screened. If the student has symptoms, the nurse will quarantine the student in a designated, supervised room until picked up. Parents will be encouraged to arrive as quickly as possible, and the student will not return to any classroom. (See *TCS District Comprehensive Reopening Plan*)

### *Visitors*

- Each school building will prohibit all non-essential visitors to school buildings including volunteers or activities involving outside groups.
- If a visitor must enter the building, he/she will answer the health screening questions (asked by the district monitor) prior to admission. The visitor must have on a face covering.
- Teachers and committees will develop alternative/remote means of providing virtual activities and remote “visits” in lieu of field trips or assemblies.

### *Cleaning/Sanitizing School Facilities*

- The Buildings and Grounds department is committed to providing a clean and safe environment for all staff and students. They will regularly clean and disinfect our buildings throughout the day and at the end of each work day, with special attention to high touch areas.
- The District will follow all cleaning and disinfecting procedures as outlined by the CDC and NYSDOH.

### *Shared Classroom Spaces*

- Students who request to wipe down their personal furniture, will be provided the materials to do so.
- Teachers will sanitize shared high touch areas in their classrooms.

### *Restrooms*

- Restrooms will be “socially distanced” to a maximum of 50% capacity.
- Restrooms will be sanitized/disinfected throughout the day.



## FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING PLAN

### *Water Fountains*

- Students will be encouraged to bring their personal water bottles to fill at the fountain. The district prefers students not to drink from the fountain. Cups or water bottles will be available at the nurse's office.

### *High Touch Locations*

- High touch areas throughout each building that are in shared locations will be thoroughly cleaned by custodial staff.

## *School Configuration/ Social Distancing and Face Coverings:*

### *General Guidelines*

- The District will implement all mandatory provisions established by NYSED, CDC, and the NYSDOH and other recommended guidelines as feasible with the expressed goal of providing all students and staff the opportunity to safely return to school on a daily basis.
- The District will ensure social distancing of at least three feet and a face covering has to be on each person. Individuals must wear acceptable face coverings; excluding students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering. Face coverings must be worn in all common areas: hallways, entrances/exits, lobbies, cafeterias, and traveling around the school.
- All staff will wear face coverings in classrooms whenever teaching. Staff will use a personal face covering or one provided by the district.
- Acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. The District will provide acceptable face coverings to faculty/staff and students who directly interact with others at no cost to them. Students and staff may bring their own acceptable face coverings from home.
- Students must wear face coverings at all times, except for meals and drinking.

### *Classroom Guidelines*

- The District and each school building will manage staffing in order to maintain the lowest class sizes possible.
- Extra/unnecessary furniture will be removed from rooms to create the maximum space possible between individuals.
- Students will be seated at individual desks to the maximum extent possible. All student furniture will be positioned to face in the same direction. If tables must be used, students must be six feet apart, wear a face covering when not eating/drinking, and face the same direction.
- In order to minimize mixing of students, students in grades K-5 will remain in room locations for core academic classes to the greatest extent possible.
- Reconfigure large spaces such as cafeterias, libraries, auditoriums, gymnasiums or large group instructional spaces as additional spaces for instruction.



## FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING PLAN

### *Student Movement/Passing Time Guidelines*

- Each building will make adjustments to student schedules as feasible to allow for reduced or staggered passing times to minimize the number of students in a hallway at any given time.
- Each school building will determine to what extent they can identify cohorts of students and scheduling courses and/or rooms to minimize traffic and congestion in the school.
- Students will not utilize lockers at the secondary level at this time. In most cases, hard copy textbooks will not be assigned; electronic textbooks will be utilized to the maximum extent possible.
- Students in grades 6-12 will carry all other materials in backpacks for transport class to class.
- Students in grades K-5 will move as a cohort led by a teacher or staff member through the hallways to non-core classes maintaining social distancing and wearing face covers.
- Each building will design protocols and signage to guide student movement during passing times to minimize bi-directional traffic.
- Bathroom usage will be reduced both in quantity and by capacity.
- Each school building will establish protocols to determine which bathrooms will be available to students, and how they will be available to students.
- Each school building will develop protocols and procedures to manage usage and capacity to minimize congestion and to maintain social distancing inside the bathroom.

### *Cafeteria Procedures*

- Some student breakfasts and lunches will be consumed in the classroom for grades K-5. Opportunities for students to eat in the cafeteria will be on a staggered schedule to maintain social distancing.
- Students in grades K-12 who eat breakfast at school, will report to the cafeteria, secure their breakfast and then immediately report to their first period classroom. Students who do not eat breakfast at school will report directly to their first period classroom.
- Students grades K-12 will wear face coverings at all times in the cafeteria, except for when they are eating/drinking; including arrivals space, sitting, securing food, when done eating and returning trash.
- All condiments, plasticware, and napkins will be pre-packaged.
- A la carte sales will be purchased at the same time students purchase their lunch.
- Students will not be allowed to share food and there will be no buffet style food stations.
- A standardized menu K-12 with age appropriate portions will be served. Meals will promote fresh healthy menu options that are individually plated, as per the Child Nutrition Program.
- Food service workers will be monitored on a daily basis and self-reporting any COVID-19 type symptoms as per Sodexo requirements.
- Kitchen areas will be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis. Food service workers will wear face coverings at all times. Equipment, including high touch objects will be disinfected daily or more often given the rate of usage.
  - Ensure gloves, masks, disposable aprons, and other supplies are readily available.
  - Disposable trays will be utilized and all food items will be protected with “to go” containers or other appropriate packaging
  - Work stations are reorganized for proper physical distancing during meal preparation and meal service.
  - Physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions at POS and other areas where maintaining a physical distance of six feet is difficult, will be installed, as necessary.



## FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING PLAN

- Cafeteria tables/desks will be disinfected between each lunch period.
- Food Service Provider employees, school hallway and security monitors, in addition to custodial staff will clean and disinfect designated eating areas in between lunch periods. Additional time will be given for cleaning and disinfecting.

### ***Departure Procedures***

- Each building will create protocols for staggered dismissal/departure of students to reduce density. Students will be dismissed and directed to move immediately to their buses.
- Multiple student dismissal locations should be established to minimize potential congregation of students and move students outside as quickly as possible.
- Students will wear face coverings throughout the dismissal process as well as on buses.

### ***Drills***

Modifications to evacuation/fire drill protocols may include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting drills on a “staggered” schedule, where classrooms evacuate separately rather than all at once, and appropriate distance is kept between students to the evacuation site. Staggering by the classroom, minimizes contact of students in hallways, stairwells, and at the evacuation site. If conducting drills using a modified procedure, it is required that the drill be conducted with all students in the school building on that school day, it may be necessary to do so during a class period that is extended for this purpose;

Modifications to lockdown drill protocols may include, but are not limited to:

- Conduct lockdown drills in classroom settings while maintaining social distancing and using masks;
- Conducting lockdown drills on a “staggered” schedule with smaller numbers of students present to maintain social distancing, however schools must be certain that all students are receiving instruction in emergency procedures and participating in drills while they are in attendance in-person; and
- Conduct lockdown drills in the classroom without “hiding”/ “sheltering” but provide an overview of how to shelter or hide in the classroom.

### ***Alternate Configuration Guidelines***

- Transmission of the COVID-19 virus either within a school, district or the community at large may change the level of risk tolerance in school operations. Such shifts may trigger the need to modify the configuration model being utilized.
- If schools are ordered to close due to an uptick in COVID-19 cases, students identified through CSE in a self-contained program, students in UPK, and students identified as ELLs will be prioritized to receive face-to-face instruction following safety guidelines.
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 within a building, the District will follow the written protocol. The District/school plan has a written protocol that complies with CDC guidance for the return to school of students and staff following illness or diagnosis of confirmed case of COVID-19 or following quarantine due to contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Return to school will be coordinated with the Erie County DOH. (See *TCSD Comprehensive Reopening Plan*)





## FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING PLAN

### ***Curriculum and Instruction***

- In order to gauge critical content from the prior year, the following may be used: curriculum-based assessments, teacher observations/notes, existing data, discussions with previous year's teachers, and student work.
- Teachers will work collaboratively to disaggregate data to create plans to close instructional gaps.
- Teachers will provide timely feedback to students and families on their progress in learning.

### ***Continuation of Learning from Face-to-Face to Short-Term Virtual Instruction***

- Teachers will review best instructional practices to provide seamless instruction during transitions from face-to-face to short-term virtual.

### ***Meeting Students Social and Emotional Needs***

Update the Counseling Plan to address the following:

- Home visits for students struggling to attend and/or complete work.
- Providing professional development to classroom teachers and other educators on how to talk to and support children during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Professional Development for Staff
  - Mental Health training
  - Trauma training
  - Information on what to do if students are struggling with their social/emotional health
  - What resources are available for staff who are struggling
- Supports for Parents
  - Provide resources to families for outside services
  - Information about what we are doing to keep their children safe in school
  - Supports in the school and community for them

### ***Large Group/Non-traditional Instruction/Athletics/Extracurricular Activities/Outside Groups:***

#### ***General Guidelines***

- Due to the nature of the coursework, ensure that all spaces allow for students to maintain a six foot distance (athletics, band, chorus, vocal and physical education).
- Require face covering except when students are not doing aerobic activities (six feet apart)

#### ***Performing Music Groups***

- Utilize traditional ensemble music rooms for lesson groups to ensure six feet of social distancing.
- Utilize large communal spaces such as cafeterias and auditoriums to permit larger group performing/rehearsals while maintaining social distancing.
- Maintain at least six feet of space per musician in scheduling rehearsals that require singing or forcible air displacement such as woodwind instruments.
- Elementary music instruction and instrumental lessons will occur. Band and chorus will occur per the music/instrumental teacher's schedule.



## FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING PLAN

- Concerts are on hold until further guidance from NYSED and DOH

*Physical Education - See TCSD Comprehensive Reopening Plan*

### ***Human Resource/ Pupil Personnel Considerations***

- Staff Policies and Protocols
- General Staff Expectations
  - The safety of our staff is our top priority. The following guidelines were designed to safely transition all staff to the workplace. Flexibility will be important. Please discuss concerns and needs as they evolve with your supervisor/building principal.
- Handwashing/Hand Sanitizing and Respiratory Etiquette
  - Staff are expected to wash their hands regularly throughout the work day (wash with soap for at least 20 seconds).
  - Hand sanitizer is available throughout the district. Staff who would like hand sanitizer at their desks/workstations should make requests through their supervisor/building principal.
  - Staff are expected to cover their mouth and nose into their elbow or into a tissue when coughing or sneezing.

### ***Masks and Face Covering***

- For the safety of others and yourself, staff must wear facemasks. All teachers must wear face covering at all times except when eating/drinking. These spaces include, but are not limited to: hallways, bathrooms, faculty rooms, or other areas where social distancing can be compromised. A staff member sitting in an office, classroom, or work space, when no one is present, is not required to wear a face covering. If another employee enters your space, it is required that you both immediately put on your face covering.
- We welcome and encourage staff to utilize comfortable, appropriate masks which meet the requirements based on your job description. In the event that an employee needs a mask or face covering, one can be obtained through your supervisor/building principal.

#### **Social Distancing Considerations:**

- Workspaces should be spread out. Open office spaces require a distance of six feet between staff. It may be possible/necessary to move an individual workspace in shared environments.
- Limit in-person meetings. Use email, virtual meetings, or phone calls to communicate as needed. Where face-to-face meetings are needed, practice proper social distancing protocol (utilize large spaces where people can sit six feet apart from each other, wearing face masks and coverings where appropriate).
- Avoid any physical contact, such as shaking hands and hugging.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel between schools/sites.
- Do **not** congregate in faculty rooms, break rooms, hallways, elevators, copier rooms or other areas where people typically socialize. Keep six feet apart at all times. Avoid visiting other's workspaces unless necessary to conduct business.



## FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING PLAN

- Visits to faculty rooms, break rooms or lunch rooms should be limited or avoided. Staff should consider eating lunch at desks or outside. Limit use of shared refrigerators, coffee makers, etc. When used, practice good hygiene (wash hands, use hand sanitizer) and be respectful of colleagues (wipe down areas you have used).
- Limit visits to your classroom/office/worksites. Instead, encourage email, phone, or virtual conferences.

### *Screening Expectations:*

- Employees must self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 daily.
- Employees must stay home if sick, especially when demonstrating COVID-19 symptoms.
- An employee experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms will follow standard call in procedures for using an employee illness (family or employee) day. Further guidance can be found in the TCSD Comprehensive Reopening Plan.