

Howland Local Schools - 2020-2021 Restart Plan

Questions and Answers

Once the Howland Board of Education approves a specific reopening plan, the district will release its formal Return to School Plan where even more detailed information will be provided.

Howland Local Schools has extended its deadline for the full-time online remote learning program to Monday, August 17, 2020. Families will have until the 17th to make their final decision regarding the online learning program.

PROTECTION MEASURES AT SCHOOL

Q: What is the plan if a teacher, staff member or student tests positive for Covid?

COVID RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Protocols for assessing, reporting, and tracing COVID-19 positives have been developed in collaboration with the Trumbull County Health Department, Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Department of Education. We anticipate a number of modifications to these protocols during the school year as COVID conditions and information becomes available.

EXHIBITING COVID SYMPTOMS

If a student or staff member presents with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the individual will be sent home and presumed to have COVID until such documentation is provided that states otherwise. Without a healthcare or provider's documentation, the individual exhibiting symptoms will be required to remain at home for 14 calendar days without exhibiting a fever for 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

CONTACT TRACING

Protocols provide for immediate contact of the Trumbull County Health Department when a COVID case is confirmed for any student or staff member. The Trumbull County Health Department will also notify the school system of any confirmed COVID cases as well as appropriate contact tracing measures that need to be conducted. The Ohio Department of Health will initiate contact tracing and case investigation in consultation with the Trumbull County Health Department.

SCHOOL/BUILDING CLOSURE

Decisions regarding building or school district closures will be made in consultation with the Trumbull County Health Department as part of the contact tracing and case investigation protocols. Decisions are based on student/staff grouping and movements during a school day. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), schools MAY need to close for two to five days, but the case investigation results will determine the decisions to and school actions to follow.

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Q: What is the district's plan to disinfect and sanitize all buildings? Will the district be using approved disinfectants?

In collaboration with the Trumbull County Health Department guidelines, Howland Local Schools purchased approved sanitizing devices and safe cleaning formulas. Electrostatic devices and disinfectants will be used for increased post-school cleaning of all building areas where students and staff have been located. Protocols for cleaning and disinfecting practices on campus and inside facilities are being instituted, notably in frequently touched surfaces in high traffic areas which include but are not limited to:

- Classrooms, office areas, clinic, desks, chairs, tables
- Hand-rails and walls
- Door surfaces, door knobs, push, pull handles
- Restrooms/Locker rooms(if used),
- Restrooms
- Lockers (if used)
- School building technology

The district has been using hospital-grade, EPA approved disinfectants since last school year. We will continue the use of those products in our school buildings and school buses. Our school buses will be disinfected after every route and high touch areas will be cleaned throughout the route. Our teachers and staff will clean their classrooms between all classes as prescribed by the local health department.

CLEAR PLEXIGLASS BARRIERS

Protection barriers have been purchased and are being installed in all classrooms on teacher desks, office desks, and other high traffic communication areas. There will not be clear plexiglass barriers on student desks as they are likely to become contaminated and would require more frequent disinfecting to ensure student safety.

HAND SANITIZER STATIONS

Hand sanitizer will be available to students and staff in all classrooms. Additionally, all buildings are being equipped with hand sanitizer stations at entrances, halls, and other areas where deemed appropriate.

Q: What is the protocol for entering the buildings?

TEMPERATURE SCANNING STATIONS

All staff/students will have their body temperature scanned with an automatic contactless temperature system. These will be located at different entrances to each building upon entry to reduce the amount of time to check temperatures and limit the number of students gathering in one entrance. These systems will be monitored by staff and any student who has a temperature above 100.4F will be immediately sent to an isolation room to be evaluated by nursing personnel. Per protocol, if a student's temperature does not decrease WITHOUT the

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use of fever reducing medication, the student's family will be contacted to send the student home.

In most instances parents/guardians dropping off student books and belongings or picking up their child (ill or not) are not permitted in buildings beyond security vestibules at the main entrance of each building.

Q: What is the mask policy? Can students wear shields instead?

FACE COVERINGS

All staff and other adults entering buildings are required to wear a face covering (this precludes those individuals meeting the criteria for exemption). Howland Schools expects that all children entering buildings will wear face coverings as an added measure of caution for all students and staff. Families should provide their own child with his/her own face covering each day of school (limited numbers of paper masks will be available in instances when a student does not have a mask upon entering a bus or building). Face covering should cover the nose and mouth are expected to be in place:

- Entering, riding and exiting buses / Exiting vehicles
- Entering and exiting school buildings
- During class changes in the halls
- In restrooms
- In classrooms, except when given permission by teacher to remove
- Class is being held outside and physical distance is not maintained
- Students are not able to be physically distant from each other
- Required for appropriate learning activities when physical distancing can't be maintained
- In small groups where physical distancing can't be maintained
- Eating breakfast or lunch (in designated areas where physical distancing can't be maintained)

General Face Covering Considerations

- COVID-19 can be spread to others even if you do not feel sick. A cloth face covering helps prevent a person who is sick from spreading the virus to others. Appropriate and consistent use of face coverings is most important when students, teachers, and staff are indoors and when social distancing of at least 6 feet is difficult to implement or maintain.
- Face coverings should not be placed on:
 - Children younger than 2 years old.
 - Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious.
 - Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

Appropriate and consistent use of face coverings may be challenging for some students, teachers, and staff, including:

- Younger students, such as those in early elementary school.

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- Students, teachers, and staff with severe asthma or other breathing difficulties.
- Students, teachers, and staff with special educational or healthcare needs, including intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, and sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.

While face coverings are strongly encouraged to reduce the spread of COVID-19, CDC recognizes there are specific instances when wearing a cloth face covering may not be feasible. In these instances, parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers, and school administrators should consider adaptations or alternatives whenever possible. Consultation with family health care providers may be appropriate.

Consider the use of clear face coverings that cover the nose and wrap securely around the face by some teachers and staff. Clear face coverings should be determined not to cause any breathing difficulties or overheating for the wearer. Teachers and staff who may consider using clear face coverings include;

- Those who interact with students or staff who are deaf or hard of hearing, in response to individuals with disabilities needs or accommodations.
- Teachers of young students learning to read
- Teachers of students in English as a second language classes
- Teachers of students with disabilities

Clear face coverings are not face shields. Face shields are not recommended in most instances without the use of a face covering (mask). Face shields will be made available to all staff members and may be necessary for some individuals.

All cloth face coverings should be washed and dried daily.

Q: If my child develops a fever, how long before they can return to school? Will a doctor's note be required for them to return? How will you trace if there is a positive case? Who will have to quarantine if there is a positive case?

COVID RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

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Q: If a child develops COVID, can they switch to full-time online remote learning? If they cannot switch, how does the absence affect their ability to continue onto the next grade level?

If a child develops COVID they will not be able to switch to our online learning program. Please note, the district will work with each child, on a case by case basis, to address absenteeism in the event a student tests positive for COVID. The district's goal is to never penalize a child's access to education.

Q: If a vaccine is procured will you require students to get it?

You would have to contact the Trumbull County Department of Health for more information on this question.

Q: For the attendance policy, will there be zero tolerance for someone to send their child with a cold?

Prior to the start of the school year, families will complete a waiver indicating they will NOT send their child to school throughout the year, if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100.4 or greater to be taken prior to leaving home
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Sore Throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Cough
- Rash
- Nausea

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- Diarrhea
- Muscle Pain
- Congestion or Runny Nose

If your child has chronic conditions such as allergies or asthma that can mimic COVID-like symptoms, we encourage you to consult with your physician for recommendations when exhibiting these symptoms. We are asking anyone who is exhibiting symptoms that are similar, they keep their child at home.

EDUCATIONAL QUESTIONS

At this point, the Howland Board of Education has not approved a return to school plan. The district is currently considering a hybrid learning model and a traditional learning model. A decision is expected to be made in the coming days.

Q: When will cohorts be announced? Can we choose what days our children go to school? Can I request my children attend school on different days?

Regardless of what educational model the board of education approves, the district is moving ahead to develop cohort groups should the hybrid model be chosen. The cohort groups will be determined by the district. Considerations will be given to ensure siblings/families are grouped together. The cohorts will be announced by August 14, 2020.

Q: How will attendance be managed?

Attendance will be taken daily. Attendance on hybrid remote learning days will be shared by individual teachers on a student's first physical day of school.

Q: Under the hybrid plan, how would remote learning operate? Will my child be sitting at a device the entire day or will it be paperwork? Does my child have to be available for live meetings or is it self-paced?

On hybrid remote learning days, students will be expected to work at their own pace on assignments and projects that teachers have discussed and assigned on in-person instruction days. On Wednesdays, teachers will be conducting online meetings with students throughout the school day. On this day, students may be required to join live meetings.

Q: Will teachers be teaching only two lessons a week with the same lesson being taught on Monday to group A and on Tuesday to group B?

Because of the limited amount of students on in-person instruction days, teachers will be able to offer more individual instruction that will allow them to stay close to the pace of traditional instruction.

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Q: Will K-4 students need a Chromebook/tablet/computer for hybrid remote learning days?

In the event a K-4 student would need a device on the hybrid remote learning days, the district will make every attempt to provide a device. Chromebooks have been ordered and the district will make every attempt to have them in the hands of our students during the first week of school.

Q: Will there be accommodations for students with dyslexia, ADHD, behavioral, etc?

All students who are on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will receive proper modifications.

Q: Will students get recess and specials (gym, art, music)?

ELEMENTARY RECESS

Classroom groups will likely be permitted to play in identified playground areas with face coverings if social distancing cannot be maintained. Students would be heavily monitored to ensure compliance.

SPECIALS

- Currently, it is planned that students will attend specials and performing courses.
- Each building will create a schedule to allow for cleaning of Arts facilities between classes.
- Building principals are responsible for doing everything possible to create a safe learning environment in these classes. This will include adhering to pod teaching, social distancing, wearing face coverings, and following recommendations made by ODE and fine and performing arts organizations.
- Physical education class will be administered outdoors whenever possible. Pod teaching, social distancing, wearing face coverings, and following recommendations made by ODE and OHSAA guidelines and mandates.

Q: Will students be using lockers?

In order to comply with social distancing guidelines, the district is looking to limit locker use or completely eliminate it.

Q: Are all clubs and activities cancelled this year?

At this time, all in-person club/activities have been cancelled. However, clubs/activities will be able to submit virtual event plans to the principals for approval..

Q: When are school supply lists being posted?

School supply lists will be posted by Wednesday, August 5, 2020.

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Q: What's the deadline to decide to send my kids to school in-person?

The deadline to determine if your child will attend school under the traditional or hybrid models or receive their education through the full-time remote learning program is the end of business on August 10, 2020.

Howland Local Schools has extended its deadline for the full-time online remote learning program to Monday, August 17, 2020. Families will have until the 17th to make their final decision regarding the online learning program.

Q: Will there be orientation/meet the teacher?

There will be no in-person orientation/meet the teacher. However, the district is putting plans in place for a virtual introduction of its teachers.

Q: Do you expect the school calendar to change with the modifications or will school remain according to the published calendar now?

There will not be changes made to the school calendar. However, there may be adjustments made to the start and end times at each school building.

Q: What is the deadline for K registration/new student registration?

There is no deadline to register but the sooner registration is complete the school district will be able to complete your student's schedule and transportation arrangements.

FULL-TIME REMOTE LEARNING PROGRAM

Q: If on August 10, I decided to send my child in-person, but change my mind prior to the first day of school on September 8, can they still participate in the full-time online program? What is the deadline to register for the full-time remote learning program?

No. All decisions regarding the full-time remote learning program must be made by the end of business on August 10, 2020. Students may switch learning models (I.E. in-person model to full-time online model or vice versa) at the end of the semester.

Howland Local Schools has extended its deadline for the full-time online remote learning program to Monday, August 17, 2020. Families will have until the 17th to make their final decision regarding the online learning program.

Q: Is there limited capacity for the full-time online remote program?

No, there is no limit to how many students can enroll in the full-time online remote program.

Q: What will the full-time remote learning program look like?

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The full-time remote learning program will combine independent online work and educator-led online work. Students will have the opportunity to participate in some online teacher led lessons, teacher office hours, and also student led lessons.

Q: Is there going to be set times that they must log on?

Yes, there may be scheduled times throughout the school day that students must log on to complete their school work.

Q: What program is being used? Will it be the same as the spring?

Calvert Learning will be one of the resources used for the online learning programming for the K-5 model. The 6-12 model will be utilizing courses through the Edmentum suite that the district adopted last year. The full-time remote learning program will operate quite differently than the learning model that was put in place in the spring. At this time, the plan for full-time remote learning will involve online learning modules that are paced at the learning development of the student. Students will have an educator who will collaborate and assist teaching explanations of assignments as well as grade assignments and assessments. Content, learning activities, assignments and assessments are located in this singular learning option. Adjustments are made for students with special needs.

Q: If you choose the full-time online remote option, are items supplied to families or will they need to gather materials/devices?

Technology for the online program will be supplied by the district.

Q: Is the full-time online remote option the same for all students or can it be modified if students are advanced/falling behind?

The online remote learning program is a standard program, but there is the opportunity for some individualized learning that is tailored to the individual student's learning abilities.

Q: Will AP and CCP classes be available to students who choose to do full-time remote learning?

Some AP courses will be available to students who complete the full-time online remote program. CCP courses will not be made available through this program.

Q: If students are enrolled in full-time online remote can they participate in activities and athletics?

Yes

Q: Will the full-time online option include things such as music and art?

No, specials will not be offered. The full-time online program only includes the core curriculum.

Q: If schools are shut down by the state will the students in the online remote

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learning program be able to receive the same education as students who are participating in the traditional/hybrid plan?

No, regardless of any state mandates, students enrolled in the full-time online remote learning program will have to complete the semester before being able to switch to the traditional/hybrid model.

TRANSPORTATION/FOOD SERVICE

Q: Can I send my students on the bus?

Yes, our district is still providing transportation services. We have a number of safety measures in place for our school buses.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

- Students are expected to wear a face covering upon school bus pickup. Students not wearing a face covering will not be picked up by the bus, unless prior arrangements have been made with building administration.
- Students must present a note to the driver verifying a temperature of 100.4 degrees or lower upon pickup.
- Drivers will monitor students (as safely as possible) to ensure all students are wearing a face covering while riding the bus.

SEATING ON THE BUS

- Students will have assigned seats according to the student/family AM bus stop. Siblings will be seated together.
- Students will load the bus in the morning from back to front to reduce close proximity.
- Students will be required to go directly to their assigned seat when leaving school and entering the bus.

BUS DROP-OFF

Building administrators may use multiple entry points into the building from the bus drop-off area to reduce time and limit contact exposure. Students will be monitored to ensure physical distancing is being practiced.

BUS SANITIZATION

- Protocols are in place to clean and disinfect buses with electrostatic disinfectants prior to the start of the school year, and continued disinfecting measures will occur after AM and PM routes to ensure buses are clean.
- High-touch areas in the bus will be cleaned throughout the day
- All roof vents in buses will be open at all times to increase ventilation. Windows will be open (weather permitting).

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Q: Are the pick up/drop off protocols for non-bus riders changing?

CAR DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

- We anticipate an increase in traffic for drop-off/pick-up. Traffic patterns are the same as previous years for each building; however, any changes will be shared by building principals by Friday, August 28, 2020.
- Administration and monitors will be supervising, but we ask for patience and courtesy to other drivers and children as this will inevitably be a hectic part of the school day. School resource officers will continue to monitor and assist in any traffic flow changes needed.
- Students are expected to wear a face covering when exiting vehicles and entering and exiting the building.

Q: Will breakfast/lunch be available to students? Will students be eating in the classroom?

FOOD SERVICE

Regardless of the school-start scenario instituted, breakfast and lunch will be challenging and is being evaluated to determine the best solution to comply with the Governor's directive on mass gatherings, and the fact that face coverings will be removed to eat. The following options are being assessed:

- Students may be provided meals in the classroom in a grab-and-go bag for breakfast and lunch
- Students may eat in a combination of classrooms and large rooms to promote physical distancing.
- Our food services supervisor and administrators will continue to work through problems to find the best solutions in maintaining a safe eating environment for kids and staff.

Under the hybrid plan, the district plans to offer students grab and go breakfasts and lunches.

Students who attend school on campus on Monday will receive their meals for Tuesday and Wednesday prior to leaving school on Monday. That same cohort of students will receive their grab and go meals prior to leaving school on Thursday for Friday.

Students who attend school on campus on Tuesday will receive their meals for Wednesday and Thursday prior to leaving school on Tuesday. That same cohort of students will receive their grab and go meals prior to leaving school on Friday for Monday.