

# THE ROAD BACK: Restart and Recovery Plan



No Re-opening Plan can include or anticipate every issue, challenge or circumstance that may arise; therefore, the plan remains a fluid, working document that will be modified to address the Districts' need, new NJDOE guidelines and updates from the CDC and our local Health Officials.

The information in ***THE ROAD BACK: Restart and Recovery Plan for the Mendham Borough School District*** is subject to change. The District understands that changes in NJ Administrative Code will supersede, modify or eliminate the information summarized in this plan.

***THE ROAD BACK: Restart and Recovery Plan for the Mendham Borough School District*** and any information, policies and, procedures, to which it refers may be modified, altered, or discontinued at any time by the District at the discretion of the Board of Education and/or Superintendent of Schools.

# NJDOE Executive Summary

On June 26, 2020 the New Jersey Department of Education Restart and Recovery Plan was released providing educators and administrators with some guidance to ensure that our schools reopen safely and are prepared to accommodate students' unique needs during this unprecedented time.

The NJDOE Plan presented guidance related to four key subject areas:

1. Conditions for Learning
2. Leadership and Planning
3. Policy and Funding
4. Continuity of Learning

Throughout the document, the term "anticipated minimum standards" is used to refer to items that school districts should incorporate into their reopening plans as definite components related to health, safety, and operations. The term "considerations" is used to refer to components that districts and schools should incorporate into their thinking about reopening, but do not represent necessary components of plans.

## Conditions for Learning

Per the NJDOE Restart and Recovery Plan ***Conditions for Learning*** addresses students' and educators' basic physical safety needs, but also the social and emotional and environmental factors that can impact educators' capacity to teach and students' capacity to learn.

We are currently working with our Department of Health and our District Physician to finalize the district protocols related to the screening of students and employees for symptoms of COVID-19 and their history of exposure. We await for additional guidance regarding contact tracing from the New Jersey Department of Education.

Social distancing within the classroom and on school buses is in place. At times when we are not able to maintain the six foot physical distance, additional modifications will be in place, including physical barriers between desks and turning desks to face the same direction. Our school district has adopted cleaning and disinfecting procedures that will occur daily, between sessions and after and before school.

School staff and visitors will be required to wear face coverings unless doing so would

inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under two years of age.

## **Face Coverings**

On August 3, the NJDOE revised its anticipated minimum standard regarding the use of face coverings to require that all students wear face coverings, except where doing so would inhibit the individual's health or in the exceptions listed below. The amended language will state as an anticipated minimum standard that:

Students are required to wear face coverings, unless doing so would inhibit the student's health. It is necessary to acknowledge that enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities.

The CDC has provided updated [Guidance for K-12 School Administrators on the Use of Cloth Face Coverings in Schools](#). In addition, they have provided updated [Considerations When Wearing Masks](#).

In consultation with our District Physician on August 18, 2020, he has recommended that we do not allow the use of masks with one-way valves or vents, bandanas, gaiters, or knit masks. Therefore the face coverings listed will not be permitted.

Exceptions:

- Doing so would inhibit the student's health.
- The student is in extreme heat outdoors.
- The student is in water.
- A student's documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), precludes the use of face covering.
- The student is under the age of two (2), due to the risk of suffocation.
- During the period that a student is eating or drinking.
- Face coverings should not be placed on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, or anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance (e.g. face coverings should not be worn by Pre-K students during nap time).
- The student is engaged in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities.
- Face coverings may be removed during gym and music classes when individuals are in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet apart.

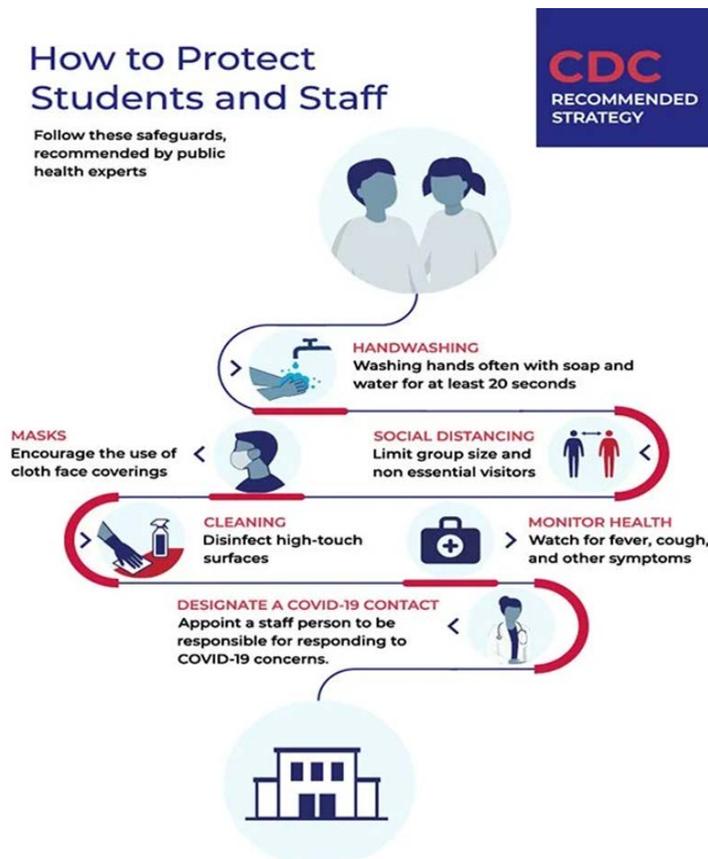
- **When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.**

In addition to these minimum standards, the NJDOE has identified ten Critical Areas of Operation that schools must address in their restart plans:

**General Health and Safety Guidelines**—In all stages and phases of pandemic response and recovery, schools must comply with Center for Disease Control (CDC), state, and local guidelines.

Schools must also provide reasonable accommodations for staff and students at higher risk for severe illness and promote behaviors that reduce spread, such as social distancing, frequent hand washing and the use of face coverings.

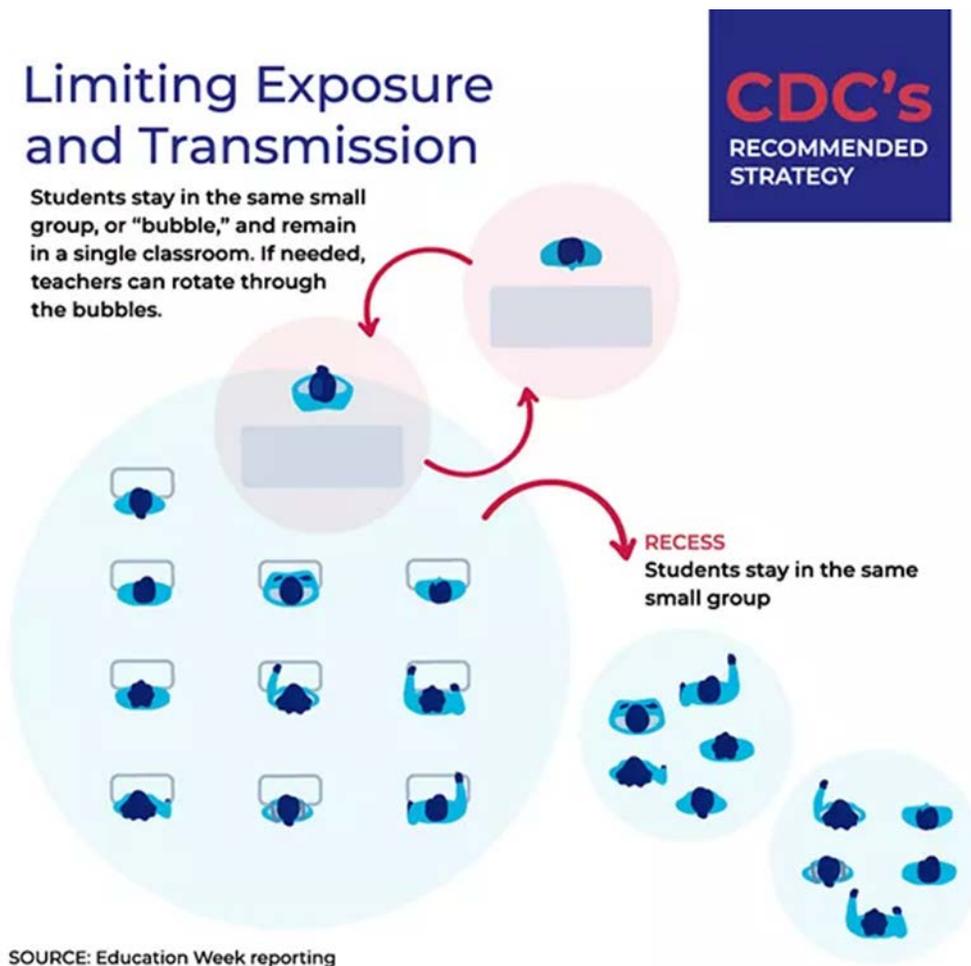
**Reasonable accommodations should be provided for individuals that the Centers for Disease Control identifies as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including older adults (aged 65 years and older) and individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions.** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>



SOURCE: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Education Week reporting

**Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms**— Schools and districts must allow for social distancing to the maximum extent possible. When social distancing is difficult or impossible, face coverings are required, and face coverings are always required for visitors and staff unless it will inhibit the individual’s health.

**The Mendham Borough School District will follow the CDC’s recommended strategy. In the event that social distancing cannot be maintained acrylic barriers will be utilized for example for those staff members providing individualized services, such as counseling, or for teachers to use during conferences.**



**Students will not share classroom supplies, water fountains, lockers and cubbies will not be utilized. Additional information will be provided by the grade-level teachers.**

## Ventilation

All indoor facilities have adequate ventilation, including our newly updated and operational heating/air conditioning and ventilation systems. Our HVAC systems provide recirculated air that includes a fresh air component, specifically the ventilation system design includes flowrate [air exchanges per hour]. Classroom and hallway doors will remain open to allow for greater air circulation. The replacement of filters is a high priority, they have been ordered and a regular schedule of replacement has been devised.

## Handwashing and Hand-sanitizing Stations

The Mendham Borough School District has purchased hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol). Such stations will be located at point of entry and exit of our buildings, common areas, cafeteria, near lavatories and in hallways at the middle school level. All classrooms and offices will also be provided with alcohol based hand sanitizer.

Children ages five and younger will be supervised when using hand sanitizer. For classrooms that have existing handwashing stations, stations will be prepared with soap, water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol).

Signage regarding proper handwashing is already in place throughout our buildings and our school nurses spoke to all of our students back in March regarding the importance of proper handwashing. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html>

Our School Nurses are working on developing a handwashing protocol using age appropriate materials to be shared in very building with all students.

The Mendham Borough School District will follow the CDC guidelines where students are required to wash hands for at least twenty seconds at regular intervals during the school day and always before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing, and/or sneezing. If washing with soap and water is not possible, washing with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) will be used.

The Mendham Borough School District is implementing the following additional measures at this time:

- ✓ Ensure that student and staff groupings are as static as possible by having the same group of children stay with the same staff (all day for young children, and as much as possible for older children).
- ✓ Restrict mixing between groups.
- ✓ Cancel all field trips, inter-group events, and extracurricular activities.
- ✓ Limit gatherings, events, and extracurricular activities to those that can maintain social distancing, support proper hand hygiene, and restrict

- attendance of those from higher transmission areas.
- ✓ Restrict nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving other groups at the same time.
  - ✓ Space seating/desks to at least 6 feet apart during the hybrid model options.
  - ✓ Turn desks to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other), or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart.
  - ✓ Close communal use spaces such as cafeteria, library and playgrounds if possible; otherwise stagger use and disinfect in between use.
  - ✓ Once lunch is incorporated into the daily schedule, meals may be served in the classrooms or gyms and cafeteria to provide for the appropriate social distancing.
  - ✓ Keep each child's belongings separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas and taken home each day and cleaned, if possible.
  - ✓ Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (art supplies, equipment etc. assigned to a single student) in the event that this is not possible limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.

**Transportation** – School districts should maintain social distancing practices on buses to the maximum extent practicable and adopt best practices for cleaning and disinfecting all vehicles used for transporting students. If maintaining social distancing is not possible, all students who are able must wear face coverings while on busses.

**Our school buses are provided through a contract with the Mendham Township School District. Their transportation department has outlined the following protocols for the health and safety of students riding a bus. Busses will maintain social distancing and a face covering must be worn by all students who are able to do so upon entering the bus and throughout the entire trip to and from school.**

**Every school bus will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each bus route. Students' temperatures will be taken prior to entry into the school bus. Should the student's temperature exceed the recommended level, the student will not enter the bus. They will be returned to the parent and our health office will follow up on next steps.**

**Students will board the school bus by filling the back rows first, and then progressing forward. When leaving the bus, students should exit in the opposite order.**

There is an air purification system on each bus to circulate and clean the air. Aides will be on the bus to assist with health screenings and social distance requirements. In the morning and afternoon, Students leaving and entering the bus will be in a single file line.

*\*The Mendham Borough School District sent out a transportation survey to our families to gauge our District needs.*

### **Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas**

The Mendham Borough School District reopening plan includes the reimagining of drop off and pick up procedures that maintain physical distancing. Signage and physical guides have been purchased and received.

These will guide the traffic patterns to be followed when in the building to maximize social distancing. When it is not possible to maintain physical distancing, schools must require the use of face coverings.

Students will be required to wear a face covering during arrival and dismissal.

#### **During Arrival:**

- ✓ Students organize upon arrival by class (signs for each teacher).
- ✓ Students enter the building in a staggered manner by class.

#### **During Dismissal:**

- ✓ Students will be dismissed in a staggered manner by class.
- ✓ Bus students will be called LAST or FIRST depending on school to exit the front doors.

All other students will be escorted out by their teacher. One cohort per grade level at a time.

### **Visitor Plan**

Visitor access will be limited to urgent matters (i.e.: Health office visit, CST meeting).

#### **Visitors will:**

- use the front door intercom system for access.
- will be required to use face coverings, those who refuse will be denied entry.
- use the hand sanitizer station upon entry.

#### **General protocol for parents on campus:**

- Parents should remain in their vehicle during drop off/pick up.
- Parents needing to remove their child from school early must call the office for contactless dismissal.
- Parents whose child will arrive late must contact the office in advance for contactless sign-in.

- Parents will not be permitted to drop off items for their child/children during the school day.
- A bin for emergency items will be left outside of the main entrance for special circumstances.

**Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms**—School districts are required to adopt a policy for safely and respectfully screening students and employees for symptoms of and history of exposure to COVID-19. Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. If a school district becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for COVID-19, district officials must immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.

**The Mendham Borough School District upon consultation with our District Physician, local Health Department Officials and the review of updated CDC Guidelines will not be conducting temperature checks on students upon entering the building.**

The current CDC guidelines state, *“We learn more about COVID-19 every day, and as more information becomes available, the CDC continues to update and share information. As our knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 evolves, this guidance may change. However, based on the best available evidence at this time:*

- a. CDC does not currently recommend universal symptom screenings (screening all students grades K-12) be conducted by schools.
- b. Parents or caregivers should be strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of infectious illness every day.
- c. Students who are sick should not attend school in-person.”

### Health Screenings

Parents will be required to complete a health screening questionnaire for each child daily to ensure that student health conditions have not changed and they are not showing symptoms of concern. Results must be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed.

Staff members will also be required to complete a daily health screening questionnaire.

### Travel Advisory

The Governor as part of his July 7, 2020 revised Travel Advisory noted that if an individual travels to one of the states currently included on the travel advisory they are required to quarantine for a period of fourteen (14) calendar days following their return to New Jersey. While the quarantine is not required, individuals are expected to comply in the interest of protecting public safety and

preventing the increasingly rapid spread of the virus currently experienced in the enumerated states.

Therefore, please be advised that if you choose to travel to any states included on the travel advisory list aware that the list continues to be amended, your student will be required to quarantine and therefore participate in remote learning for the period of the fourteen (14) calendar days after their return to New Jersey that they would be in school. Please contact your school principal to discuss your specific situation. In recognition of the rapidly changing guidance issued by the government regarding these issues, you should also be aware that this practice is subject to change and will be amended as necessary.

### Isolation Rooms

The Mendham Borough has identified isolation rooms in each building. Schools are required to establish an isolation space. Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 will be safely and respectfully isolated from others.

Students will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.

### **GUIDELINES FOR THE SCHOOL ISOLATION AREA FROM THE BERNARDS HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

- Schools should have an isolation room or area that can be used to isolate a sick child.
- Ensure there is enough space for multiple people placed at least 6 feet apart (in the case more than one participant becomes ill).
- Persons should be isolated in a separate room while they wait to be picked up or until they are able to leave the facility on their own. Ensure that they have hygiene supplies available, including a cloth face covering, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand rub.
- Staff who are monitoring the student or staff member with symptoms should wear a cloth face mask and practice social distancing. Close off the space used for isolation after the ill person leaves and follow CDC guidance on how to disinfect your building or facility if someone is sick.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>

In addition the Mendham Borough School District will/has:

- a. Follow current Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting.
- b. Purchased the necessary amount and required type of personal protective equipment (PPE) for our staff.
- c. Created student cohorts (Blue and Gold) and methods to assist in contact tracing including records of groups/cohorts, assigned staff, and daily attendance.

- d. **Continuous monitoring of symptoms.**
- e. **Re-admittance policies consistent with Department of Health guidance and NJDOE information for schools.**

**Contact Tracing-** Contact tracing is the process used to identify those who have come into contact with people who have tested positive for many contagious diseases, including COVID-19. It is a long-standing practice and is an integral function of local health departments.

**The Mendham Borough School District nurses have completed the Contact Tracing Training and will turnkey the information to district administrators, school safety specialists, counselors, and any other staff deemed appropriate by the school district.**

**Staff members will be provided with information regarding the role of contact tracing in keeping school communities safe from the spread of contagious disease.**

**The Mendham Borough School District is working with our local health department to develop contact tracing policies and procedures, as well as educate the broader school community on the importance of contact tracing.**

**If the Mendham Borough School District becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for COVID-19, school officials must immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality. Health officials will help administrators determine the proper course of action for the School/School District.**

[The New Jersey Department of Health COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools](#) were released on August 13, 2020. This guidance document outlines NJDOH COVID-19 public health recommendations for school settings and intended for use by local health departments (LHDs). This guidance is based on what is currently known about the transmission and severity of COVID-19 and is subject to change as additional information is known. Of utmost importance is the guidance regarding school closures due to a presumed or confirmed case of COVID-19.

### ***Closure***

The [COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix](#) is one tool that can inform the decision-making process for school districts when considering when remote learning might be indicated. Local circumstances should be considered when making decisions impacting specific school districts and schools.

Many factors would need to be considered when deciding to close schools such as the distribution of cases within the school. **Closure is a local decision that should be made by school administrators in consultation with local public health. While it is not possible to account for every scenario that schools may encounter over the course of the school year, the following scenarios may help inform the decision for when schools should temporarily close.**

SCENARIO	CLOSURE
1 confirmed case in the school	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive case are excluded from school for 14 days.
2 or more cases in the same classroom (outbreak limited to one cohort)	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive case are excluded from school for 14 days. Recommendations for whether the entire classroom would be considered exposed will be based on public health investigation.
2 or more cases within 14 days, but are linked to a clear alternative exposure that is unrelated to the school setting and unlikely to be a source of exposure for the larger school community (e.g. in same household, exposed at the same event outside of school)	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive cases are excluded from school for 14 days.
2 or more cases within 14 days, linked together by some activity in school, but who are in different classrooms (outbreak involving multiple cohorts)	Recommendations for whether school closure is indicated will be based on investigation by local health department.
A significant community outbreak is occurring or has recently occurred (e.g., large event or large local employer) and is impacting multiple staff, students, and families served by the school community	Consider closing school for 14 days, based on investigation by local health department.
2 or more cases are identified within 14 days that occur across multiple classrooms and a clear connection between cases or to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 cannot be easily identified (outbreak involving multiple cohorts)	Close school for 14 days.
Very high risk of community transmission (refer to <a href="#">COVID-19 Regional Risk Level Matrix</a> )	Close school until COVID-19 transmission decreases.

\*Note: A temporary closure may also be considered for a period of 2-5 days if a student or staff member attended school while potentially infectious, before being confirmed as having COVID-19. This short-term dismissal allows time for local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and perform contact tracing.

Period of closure: After switching to remote learning due to high levels of viral transmission in the school or local geographic community, districts or schools should wait a minimum of 14 days before bringing any students back for in-person learning. This timeframe is sufficient so that most people in the school community who will develop symptoms as a result of a school exposure could be identified and self-isolate, as appropriate.

Whether and when to reopen for in-person instruction during a worldwide pandemic is, first and foremost, a public health decision. To see what is happening elsewhere in the country where, within a few days of opening, schools are having to transition to remote learning following outbreaks of COVID-19 is of concern. The idea that schools have local control in determining when a school closure should occur is untenable. Our District will continue to pursue clarifying guidance from our local health department, District Physician and NJDOE.

**The NJDOE Guidance does not include any “anticipated minimum standards” for contact tracing. However, all school and district administrators, school safety specialists, counselors, and any other staff deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee should be provided information regarding the role of contact tracing conducted by State, county, and local officials.**

**School officials should engage the expertise of their school nurses on the importance of contact tracing.**

**The NJDOE will credit certified School Safety Specialists with three hours of training upon completion of Johns Hopkins University's COVID-19 Contact Tracing course.**

**Our local health department has advised us that a new system for contact tracing called "Commcare" is in place and that the health department is in training. They were awaiting additional guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health at the time of our conversation.**

**The role of our school nurses will include assisting our local health department in the identification of possible staff and students that may have been exposed to a student or staff member who tested positive. Both of our nurses have completed a five hour contact tracing course. In addition our school nurses will be in close contact with our local health department and District Physician with our absentee rate and COVID-19 symptoms/cases.**

**Parents and Guardians will receive specific information on the required online health screening form that will need to be completed prior to the student’s arrival at school. In addition, in the event that a student or staff member presents symptoms associated with COVID-19, our nurses will follow our District Physician’s standing orders regarding return to school protocols and will communicate with our local health department regarding class, grade-level/cohort or school.**

### **Facilities and Cleaning Practices**

**The Mendham Borough School District will continue to adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise.**

The Mendham Borough School District has implemented cleaning and sanitizing guidance per the recommendations of the CDC, NJDOE, and local health departments. Increased, routine cleaning as well as the use of disinfectants are being applied to mitigate exposure. The District has also developed cleaning protocols and procedures for routine cleaning and disinfecting to maintain a safe environment for students and staff.

The custodial staff has a daily and nightly scheduled cleaning routine in addition to frequently disinfecting the shared touched surfaces such as door handles/knobs, desktops/tabletops, countertops, light switches, pencil sharpeners, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, phones, sinks and faucets, railings every hour during the school day.

We are maintaining signed documentation upon the completion of the cleaning/disinfecting protocols for accountability. Increased sanitation of bathrooms with times included will be completed. Assigned bathrooms by class will also be implemented. Water fountains will not be in use.

Our District has purchased disinfectant products and sanitizing agents, including ready-to-use sprays, concentrates, and wipes that have been included on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's list of products that have proven to be effective against COVID-19.

Chromebook Sanitation Cabinets have been purchased to sanitize student's individual devices.

## **Meals**

In order to ensure proper social distancing during lunch, the Mendham Borough School District has identified the cafeteria and the gymnasium as dining areas. Districts must discontinue family-style, self-service, and buffet-style dining and maintain social distancing.

Cafeteria staff must wash their hands immediately after removing gloves and after directly handling used food service items.

- Students will be assigned seats to allow for social distancing.
- Tables will be cleaned between lunches.
- Hand sanitizer will be placed at each dining area entrance.
- Bathrooms are available across from each dining area.
- Two teachers will be assigned to each dining area to monitor and encourage social distancing and proper hygiene.

## **Recess/Physical Education**

The Mendham Borough School District has completed an inventory of outdoor spaces to ensure separation between students and a plan has been developed for each school.

### **Hilltop Elementary School**

#### **Recess**

- Student lunches are split by grade level.
- Students will be assigned to one of two dining areas (Rotating K-3; 4th in Cafeteria).
- Grade levels will have their own 30 minutes of recess.
- Teachers will supervise.
- Allows for 6 feet of open space between groups.
- Classes/cohort will only engage with their class/cohort.
- No equipment will be permitted.
- Students will wear face coverings.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available upon reentering the building.
- Two teachers will be assigned to each recess to monitor and encourage social distancing and proper hygiene.

#### **Physical Education**

Students will attend PE with their class

#### **Curriculum**

- On fair weather days, students will participate in PE outdoors
- Use of the Gym will be decided as weather changes - it is large enough to allow for a minimum of 10 feet social distancing.
- On inclement weather days, students will participate in Health lessons.
- Students will engage in individual activities, such as
  - Cardio exercises
  - Backyard games
  - Skill development (i.e.: dribbling a soccer ball).
  
- Equipment will be divided by grade level to allow time for sanitization between uses, if necessary.

### **Mountain View Middle School**

#### **Recess**

- Student lunches are split by grade level.
- Students will be assigned to one of two dining areas.

### **Designated locations:**

- **Students who eat in the gym will have recess on the blacktop.**
- **Students who eat in the cafeteria will have recess on the field.**
- **Allows for 6 feet of open space between groups.**
- **If practicable, half of the students in any one dining area will eat while the other half has recess, switching half-way through the lunch block.**
- **Use of equipment will not be permitted.**
- **Use of fitness trail will not be permitted.**
- **Students will wear face coverings.**
- **Hand sanitizer will be made available upon reentering the building.**
- **Two teachers will be assigned to each recess to monitor and encourage social distancing and proper hygiene.**

### **Physical Education**

**Students will attend PE with their designated cohort (approximately ¼ of the grade)**

#### **Curriculum**

- **On fair weather days, students will participate in PE outdoors.**
- **The gym will not be used for instruction (satellite dining area).**
- **On inclement weather days, students will participate in Health lessons.**
- **Students will engage in individual activities, such as**
  - **Cardio exercises**
  - **Backyard games**
  - **Skill development (i.e.: dribbling a soccer ball)**
- **Equipment will be divided by grade level to allow time for sanitization between uses, if necessary.**

### **Locker rooms**

- **Students will not change for gym.**
- **Students will be encouraged to dress comfortably and wear proper footwear on PE days.**

### **Extracurricular Activities and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours**

## Hilltop Elementary School

### Field trips

Per CDC guidelines, the Mendham Borough School District will pursue virtual activities in lieu of in-person field trips.

### Extracurricular Activities and Enrichment Clubs

- We will continue to monitor feasibility of other virtual activities or in-person club meetings that adhere to social distancing requirements.
- At this time we will discontinue assemblies to avoid large group gatherings.

## Mountain View Middle School

### Field trips

Per CDC guidelines, the Mendham Borough School District will pursue virtual activities in lieu of in-person field trips.

### Extracurricular Activities

#### *Clubs*

- Virtual Student Council and Yearbook Clubs are approved.
- We will continue to monitor feasibility of other virtual activities or in-person club meetings that adhere to social distancing requirements.
- At this time we will discontinue assemblies to avoid large group gatherings.

#### *Athletics*

We are awaiting guidance from the Morris County Middle School Athletic Director Organization.

### **Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours**

Due to limited group numbers set by the state and the increased cleaning needed between events, until further notice, the Mendham Borough School District will be restricting the use of school/district facilities to district-sponsored extracurricular activities and groups. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html>

In addition to taking these steps to protect students' and educators' physical health, the Mendham Borough School District reiterates and strengthens their commitment to the social and emotional well-being of our school community. This commitment is reflected in the "soft re-opening" of our plan and the thoughtful implementation of additional considerations.

### **Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Climate and Culture**

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) will be critical in re-engaging students, supporting adults, rebuilding relationships, and creating a foundation for academic learning. **SEL has been a continuous focus in the Mendham Borough School District.**

### **Plans to re-engage students**

- **We will maintain the Character Education Committee and long-standing Advisory program.**
- **We will continue with the Responsive Classroom Approach.**
- **We will continue to incorporate activities that address SEL Competencies and Sub competencies.**
- **We will maintain our School Safety Teams.**

### **Supporting adults**

- **We will continue to support our Staff Wellness Committee Initiatives**
- **We will continue activities from *Onward: Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators***

### **Rebuilding relationships**

- **Continued focus on student and staff wellness initiatives**
- **Ensuring that every student is accounted for, receives necessary support, and fosters meaningful relationships with staff in an ongoing and consistent manner**

**Developing connections with every student in the first two weeks to create the foundation for learning.**

- **Building a relationship that endures in the classroom and beyond**
- **Needs of in-school learning structure**
- **Needs of at home learning**
- **Challenges of learning in school and at home**
- **Strategies to support all students socially and emotionally**

***The Mendham Borough School District sent out a survey to all families seeking information that would be beneficial for our counselors and nurses as they plan to meet our student's needs.***

**Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)** – MTSS is a systematic approach to prevention, intervention, and enrichment in grades PK-12 for academics and behavior that offers educators and families a mechanism to identify individual students who need extra support.

**The Mendham Borough School District provides the following at each of their schools.**

### Hilltop Elementary School

Students currently receiving RTI instruction will receive either in-person or virtual instruction with the Intervention Specialist.

- If students attend school on a modified in-person schedule, they will have scheduled times with the Intervention Specialist on days when learning takes place at home. These sessions will be LIVE and targeted directly at the student's area of need.
- On a modified schedule, students will NOT be removed from the classroom to maximize their in-person time with the classroom teacher. The intensive intervention will occur on alternate days.
- If students attend school on a daily schedule, the Intervention Specialist will work with classroom teachers to create a schedule that includes intensive instruction in combination with classroom instruction delivered by the general education teacher.

A combination of screening, remote or in-person, at the beginning of the year with an individual student referral system active throughout the year, offers educators and families a mechanism to identify individual students who need extra support.

### Mountain View Middle School

Components:

#### Universal screening

- Examples include LinkIt!, NJSLA, classroom formative and summative assessments, and WIAT

#### Collaborative problem solving teams

- School-based I&RS committee that meets every month

#### Family engagement

- Communication with parents of students with current plans by September 15
- Initial and follow-up meetings with parents, committee members, and teaching team as needed

#### Data-based decision making and progress monitoring

- Per student plans, a member of the team is designated to track progress and follow up with families
- Plans include specific accommodations, such as scheduled breaks, sentence starters, regular check-ins with counselor, etc.... specific to the academic, social/emotional, and/or behavioral concerns

### Referral system

- Identified students are screened by the LDTC using the WIAT
- Active throughout the year
- Can be referred to the team by parents, teachers, or other support staff

### Staff training

“Refresher” training planned for August 2020

### **Food Service and Distribution**

The Mendham Borough School District uses Pomptonian Food Service for the safe delivery and distribution of student meals. Pomptonian remains committed to feeding Mendham Borough students a nutritious meal that is prepared in a safe environment and follows all the food groups set by the Department of Agriculture.

Pomptonian Food Service states, “Our unwavering dedication to safe food handling through diligent monitoring and staff training during COVID-19 operations is even more stringent than our already impeccable practices that not only meet, but exceed, food safety standards. Pomptonian takes pride in caring for the students of the communities we serve like we would our own children.”

Due to the restructuring of the student lunch areas to allow for safe social distancing and to follow health protocols, lunches will be served in the cafeterias and gymnasiums of Mountain View Middle School and Hilltop Elementary School.

Food services staff members and assistants that will be preparing these student meals will be following all health and safety protocols and will be outfitted with the appropriate PPE, as specified in the health and safety section of the CDC and NJDOE regulations.

### **Free and Reduced Lunch**

- a. Parents can fill out a Free or Reduced Lunch application to see if they qualify. Students receiving Free or Reduced lunch, in addition to getting lunch while they are at school, will also receive lunches during their virtual days. Students who receive a free or reduced lunch will be receiving their virtual day lunches on their last day in school as they leave for the day.
- b. If students are in school Monday and Tuesday- they will be provided a cold bagged lunch that meets the nutritional food groups set by the Department of Agriculture for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
- c. If students are in school Thursday and Friday- they will be provided a cold bagged lunch that meets the nutritional food groups set by

**the Department of Agriculture for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.**

### **Quality Childcare**

**Apollo Aftercare is our District provider for before and after school care. Apollo Aftercare sent out a survey to families that utilized their program last year to see if they would be interested in utilizing their services again this year. In addition, Apollo Aftercare sent out a survey to the parents of all PK-4 students.**

**In addition their survey sought to gain information regarding the need for mid-day childcare services for students during the “soft re-opening” of schools that include an AM and PM session (August 26- September 11).**

# Leadership and Planning

Adjusting the school environment to ensure the health and safety of students and staff will require a great deal of planning. School districts should create Restart Committees to coordinate the overall reopening plan.

## Restart Committee

<b>Kim Kanefke</b> , MBEA President	<b>Dr. Carly Fisher</b> , School Counselor
<b>Denise Magrini</b> , MBEA Secretary	<b>Liz Juliano</b> , Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools
<b>Donna Lau</b> , Staff and Community Member	<b>Nancy Mott</b> , Confidential School Secretary
<b>Denelle Kagan</b> , Parent, Intervention Specialist and Community Member	<b>Danielle Holmes</b> , Director of Special Services
<b>Carol Anne Pagana</b> , School Nurse and Community Member, Chair of Staff Wellness Committee	<b>David Moser</b> , Director of Curriculum and Instruction
<b>Kelly Wilson</b> , District School Psychologist, CST Member	<b>Mary Joy Falcone</b> , Technology Coordinator
<b>Sara Longueira</b> , District Social Worker, CST Member, Anti-bullying Specialist	<b>Aimee Toth</b> , Mountain View Principal
<b>Matt Slattery</b> , District Physical and Health Education, District Coach	<b>David Heller</b> , Hilltop Principal
<b>Dana Thompson</b> , Special Education Teacher	<b>Jon Gesell</b> , Facilities Manager
<b>Felicia Kicinski</b> , Business Administrator	<b>Dr. Mitzi N. Morillo</b> , Superintendent of Schools

## Parent Stakeholder Committee

Beth Paone	Mary Beley
Marie Simonsen	Amy Shammass
Rachael Simpson	Vanessa Cerchio
Scott Cirillo	Steve McLaud
Robert Largman	Evan Frieder
Renee Manno	Tiffany Jurist-Baus
Joshua Pini	Beth Cocuzza, BOE President

## Pandemic Response Teams

*\*Liaise with Parent Council as needed*

<b>Mountain View Middle School</b>	
Staff member	Position
Nicole Ascione	Team Leader/5th grade Mathematics
Heather Keaney	Team Leader/6th grade ELA
Erin Clark	Team Leader/7th grade Science
Denise Magrini	Team Leader/8th grade Science
Jessica Heuer	Team Leader/ICT
Kelly Wilson	Team Leader/School Psychologist
Nicole Lanka	School Counselor
Jim Behre	Class III officer
Jon Gesell	Head Custodian
Marisa Austenberg	School Nurse

<b>Hilltop Elementary School</b>	
Staff member	Position
Wendy Pirozzi	Team Leader/Kindergarten
Courtney Rogers	Team Leader/1st Grade
Alyssa Young	Team Leader/2nd Grade
Carissa Stark	Team Leader/3rd Grade
Kathy McGoldrick	Team Leader/4th Grade
Jean Na	Team Leader/Related Area
Lindsay Finkelstein	Team Leader/SPED
Sara Longueira	School Social Worker
Carly Fisher	School Counselor
Sam Hernandez	Head Custodian
Carol Anne Pagana	School Nurse

**Scheduling-** Districts' reopening plans must account for resuming in-person instruction in some capacity.

**A phased reopening allows the Mendham Borough School District to lead with the health, safety and wellness of students and staff as the top priority.**

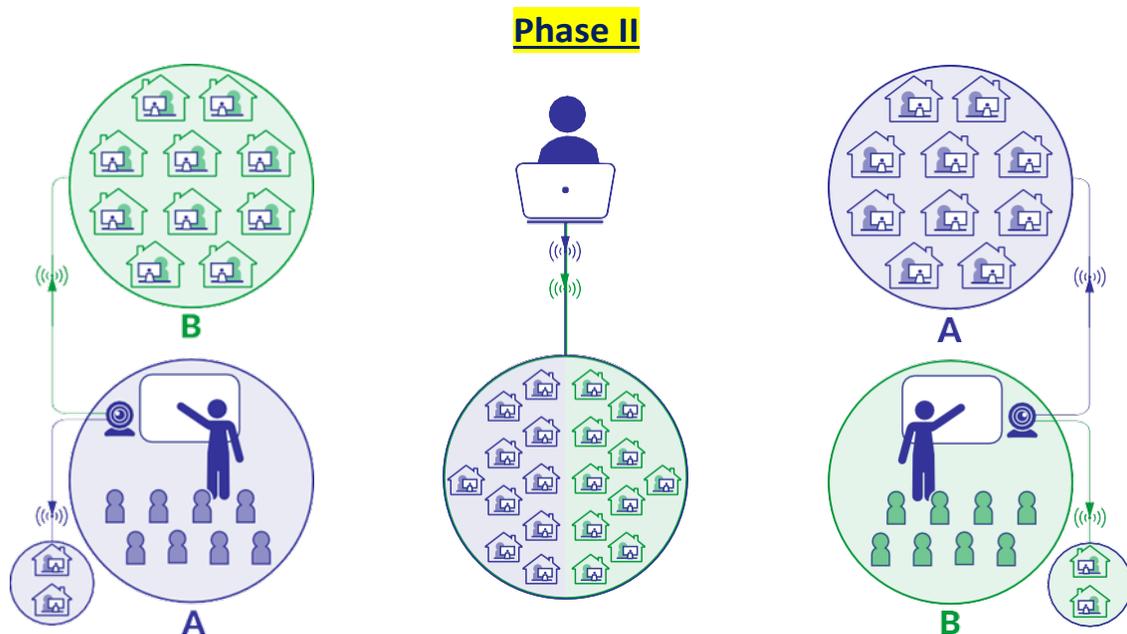
### **Phase I**

**"Soft" Opening AM/PM Sessions**

**Blue/Gold Cohort Model (AM and PM session by Last Name)**

**August 26- Sept 11, 2020**

### **Phase II**



**AA/Virtual/BB- Full Day of Instruction**

**Blue Cohort "in seat" Monday and Tuesday. Gold Cohort attending the classes virtually.**

**All students virtual on Wednesday**

**Building undergoes deep cleaning between cohorts, time for staff to address student questions/misconceptions and reteach as necessary and provide Related Arts staff the ability to utilize their rooms for instruction**

**Gold Cohort "in seat" Thursday and Friday. Blue Cohort attending the classes virtually.**

**Students who are attending virtually will not have to be a part of the Related Arts class to limit their screen time.**

### **Phase III\*\*\***

All students “in seat” Monday- Friday. Dismissal time 1:00 PM, lunch will not be served until full days are in place.

**\*\*\*If conditions and guidelines are such that allow for a full reopening in early September Phase II will not be implemented.**

#### **Staffing**

An updated school calendar was approved by the Board of Education on July 22, 2020. The revised calendar moves the In-service Day originally scheduled for May 28, 2021 to August 24, 2020 to provide our staff an additional day to prepare before the students first day of school.

The Mendham Borough School District will clearly communicate with teachers regarding expectations and support for student learning during In-Service Days, faculty and grade-level meetings.

Staff roles will also have to expand to accommodate new health and safety regulations. The Mendham Borough School District will leverage existing staff to monitor student movement, hallway traffic, and maintain safety according to guidelines. Instructional and non-instructional staff schedules will also include designated time to support school building logistics required to maintain health and safety requirements.

# Policy and Funding

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a variety of fiscal challenges related to the delivery of instruction and related services to students. Readyng facilities, purchasing supplies, and transporting and feeding students will look drastically different in the upcoming school year than in past years. Policy and funding considerations include:

## Purchasing

**The Mendham Borough School District has purchased items not needed in the past (e.g., personal protective equipment or cleaning supplies) and given the increased demand for previously purchased goods and services the cost of the necessary items has also increased. We attempt to purchase items at a lower cost by either purchasing through an established State contract, through a cooperative purchasing consortium or in coordination with larger districts.**

## Costs and Contracting

**We participate in the federal E-rate program, which provides schools and libraries with funding support for high-speed broadband connectivity and internal connections equipment.**

**The Mendham Borough School District also uses cooperative contracts available from the State of New Jersey, New Jersey School Boards Association, County Cooperative Contracts, and County Educational Services Commissions to procure technology and connectivity services.**

**Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund** – The federal “Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security” (CARES) Act established the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to provide direct money to school districts and provide funding to support areas impacted by COVID-19. Under the law, \$310.4 million has been allocated to New Jersey, the majority of which will in turn be provided to school districts through sub grants. **The Mendham Borough School District received \$12,054 that was used for the purchase of Chromebooks.**

**Federal Emergency Management Agency – Public Assistance** – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the Public Assistance program, which reimburses 75 percent of eligible expenses that are a direct result of the declared emergency (in this case, the COVID-19 outbreak).

**The Mendham Borough School District has submitted for reimbursement for the expenses related to COVID-19.**

**State School Aid**—While districts are told to use the most recent State aid figures for planning purposes, that information is not final, but represents a proposal that could be modified by the Legislature when it considers the extended FY20 budget, which must be adopted by July 1, 2020 and the FY21 State budget, which must be adopted by September 30, 2020. The NJDOE will provide more detailed accounting guidance after the appropriations act is adopted. **The financial impact on the Mendham Borough School District will not be known until then.**

# Continuity of Learning

Ensuring continuity of learning is critically important during this time of great stress for families, educators, and students. The degree to which districts will be able to return students to brick and mortar education remains fluid even at the time of the development of this plan.

## **Ensuring the Delivery of Special Education and Related Services to Students with Disabilities**

Districts must continue to meet their obligations to students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible. The NJDOE will continue to update school districts and receiving schools with any additional guidance from the United States Department of Education (USDE) on implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. (IDEA).

**The Mendham Borough School District will continue to meet their obligations under the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and the New Jersey State special education regulations with students to the greatest extent possible. Student Individual Education Plans will be consistent with school scheduling at both Hilltop Elementary and Mountain View Middle School. Additionally, related services will be provided to students either in-person and/or virtually by treating therapists.**

**Extended School Year occurred from June 29, 2020 through July 31, 2020 for students PreK-5. Extended School Year sessions were delivered virtually by special education teachers and related service providers. Parents were informed of student progress through formal progress reports in addition to ongoing staff communication. All students attending ESY were recommended to attend through Individual Education Plans. In addition to ESY services, the Mendham Borough School District provided behavioral consultation to several families receiving academic support.**

In planning for the 2020-2021 school year, several considerations have influenced the implementation of students' Individual Education Plans. Please refer below for greater detail:

Individual parent meetings will occur over the next few weeks specific to accommodations for medically fragile students. The Director of Special Services will be directly involved in this planning in conjunction with the building principals.

Student data shall be reviewed through IEP progress reports, district assessments, curriculum based assessments, and informal teacher review.

Students with individual education plans *may* be provided additional services if they meet the following criteria:

- High frequency of 5 or more related services

- Pull-out Resource Room Instruction

- 1:1 ABA instruction

- Any other unique needs determined by the Child Study Team

If a student meets any of the criteria above, he/she will be permitted to attend school on a full-day schedule during the "soft re-opening" where there will be an AM (Blue Cohort) and a PM (Gold Cohort) session from August 26 to September 11.

At Hilltop Elementary School, these students shall be permitted to stay beyond the abbreviated day schedule in order to receive individual therapies, additional in-person instruction, and any additional support as appropriate. At Mountain View Middle School, these students shall be permitted to attend both the AM and PM and Blue/Gold cohorts of instruction.

Incomplete IEP evaluations will be concluded before the start of the 2020 school year. All IEP Annual Reviews were concluded by June 2020. In-person evaluations will resume in August, 2020 leaving all timelines in compliance with IDEA regulations.

Protocols for referral to Special Education & 504 Accommodation Plans can be found on the Mendham Borough School District website.

**Technology and Connectivity**— Each school district should strive to ensure that every student has access to a device and internet connectivity.

Through school-issued devices, each Mendham Borough student will have access to the necessary technology for success in our hybrid educational plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

In addition, a survey revealed that approximately 99% of our students have internet access at home. For those without, hot spots will be provided to the family at no cost.

Additional devices have been purchased for teachers to use for the delivery of synchronous instruction. New touch Chromebook devices have been purchased for all Pre-K, K and 1st grade students. Additional Chromebook devices have been purchased for all of our 2nd grade students. With these additional purchases we are now 1:1 in all grades Pre-K - 8.

Students will be issued their own device for virtual instruction. The Mendham Borough School District has also purchased GoGuardian, a program that works in conjunction with Google Classroom and allows the teacher to act as a sort of local proxy for the students in the class. The teacher can see what the students are actually doing on their screens at any time, it can also limit sites the students can see while they are enrolled into their class (Google Classroom).

Video cameras have been purchased to allow for synchronous instruction in every classroom.

*Technology Surveys and Remote Instruction Surveys were sent out to staff and parents and feedback received has been incorporated into our reopening plan.*

### **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessments**

In planning curriculum, instruction, and assessment for reopening, districts must focus on building staff capacity to deliver highly effective instruction in hybrid environments as well as preparing them to address any learning gaps that might prevent students from meeting grade-level New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLs).

#### **Guiding Principles of High Quality Teaching and Learning:**

- 1. Instruction must be rigorous and relevant.**
- 2. Purposeful assessment drives instruction and affects learning.**
- 3. Learning is a collaborative responsibility. Teaching and learning are both collaborative processes.**
- 4. Students bring strengths and experiences to learning. Every student learns.**
- 5. Responsive environments engage learners.**

In the Mendham Borough School District all of our ELA and Math teachers worked on identifying priority content by utilizing [Priority Instructional Content Recommendations from Achieve the Core](#) to adjust the scope and sequence of ELA and math courses, grades K-8, this will guide our instruction as well supporting the hybrid learning model.

**Related Arts teachers worked on developing lessons that are supported in a virtual, in person and/or hybrid environment.**

**Key Approaches to Instruction:**

- **Use instructional models that contain innovative approaches to teaching and learning including learner-centered, teacher-centered, and hybrid models.**
- **Delivery of instruction should align with student’s needs and resources.**
- **Utilize materials, resources, learning management systems, and communication platforms that are consistent across grade levels and content areas within a school.**
- **Utilize existing resources that are familiar to students, teachers, and families.**
- **Support assessment of and for student learning consisting of feedback to support continuity for learning.**

**Professional Learning**

Professional learning that will better equip leaders, staff, substitutes, students, and parents/caregivers to adapt to altered educational environments and experiences will be prioritized. Critical focus areas are training to address the learning loss for the most vulnerable populations, and preparing and supporting educators in meeting the social emotional, health, and academic needs of all students.

**The Mendham Borough School District has developed a return to school technology plan, for coherence across the district. Coordination with district leadership has identified staff that can assist with device management and extended technology support.**

**Training and support for teachers to adapt virtual learning skills for the classroom will be a primary focus during the soft reopening of schools. Additionally, the District will provide training in data and cyber security to assist staff in understanding the risks and responsibilities associated with the new learning environment.**

**A key priority to support continuity for learning will be a focus on relationship building and attending to students’ social and emotional learning needs. [CASEL SEL-3-Signature-Practices- A Tool That Supports Systemic SEL](#)**

## **Mentoring**

All school districts must have a district mentoring program to provide non-tenured teachers with an induction to the teaching profession and to the school district community through differentiated supports based on the teachers' individual needs (N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-5.1). As part of the induction, non-tenured novice provisional teachers who hold a Certificate of Eligibility (CE) or Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing (CEAS) must receive one-to-one mentoring.

**The Mendham Borough School District provides mentoring above and beyond the NJDOE minimum requirements and extends mentoring to all new teachers joining our District.**

## All Remote Instruction Option

On July 24, 2020, the New Jersey Governor and the Commissioner of Education published a supplemental guidance document titled “Clarifying Expectations Regarding Fulltime Remote Learning Options for Families 2020-2021” as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure clarity and consistency in implementation of full-time remote learning, the following initial protocols will be followed to address the Unconditional Eligibility for Full-time Remote Learning option of our families

### **A. Procedures for Submitting Full-time Remote Learning Requests**

- 1. A parent may request a student receive full-time remote learning from the school district by submitting a written request to the Principal of the school building their child would attend. The written request shall be provided to the Principal at least 15 calendar days before the student is eligible to commence full-time remote learning in accordance with B.2. below.**
- 2. The student may only begin full-time remote learning at the beginning of the school year or at the beginning of a marking period.**
- 3. The written request for the student to receive full-time remote learning shall include:**
  - a. The student’s name, school, and grade;**
  - b. The student’s connectivity capabilities;**
  - c. A request for any service or combination of services that would otherwise be delivered to the student on an in-person or hybrid schedule, such as instruction, behavioral and support services, special education, and related services;**
  - d. For students with disabilities, the school district staff will determine if an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting or an amendment to a student’s IEP is needed for full-time remote learning; and**
  - e. Any additional information the Principal or designee requests to ensure the student, when receiving remote learning, will receive the same quality and scope of instruction and other educational services as any other student otherwise participating in school district programs.**

**(1) The documentation required by the school district to be provided in the parent's request for full-time remote learning shall not exclude any students from the school district's full-time remote learning option, but rather be limited to the minimum information needed to ensure proper recordkeeping and implementation of successful remote learning.**

**4. Upon receiving the written request, the Principal or designee may request additional information from the parent to assist the Principal or designee in providing the student the same quality and scope of instruction and other educational services as any other student otherwise participating in school district programs.**

**5. The Principal or designee will review the written request and upon satisfaction of the procedures outlined, the Principal or designee will provide written approval of the parent's request for full-time remote learning.**

**6. The Principal or designee will verify completion of the student AUP and the Mendham Borough District Google Apps for Education and Student Chromebook Contract for the technology/device the student will be using to receive full-time remote learning, and provided by the District.**

**7. In the event the request does not satisfy the procedures outlined, the Principal or designee will notify the parent in writing of the issues that need to be addressed by the parent to satisfy the procedures outlined.**

**8. The Principal's written approval of the request shall be provided to the parent within 15 calendar days of receiving the parent's written request.**

**a. The written approval will include the date the remote learning program will commence for the student in accordance with B.2. above.**

**B. Procedures to Transition from Full-Time Remote Learning to In-Person Services**

**1. A parent may request their student transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services, if in-person services are being provided, by submitting a written request to the Principal of the building the student will attend. This request must be submitted at least 15 calendar days before the student is eligible for in-person services.**

- 2. A student is only eligible to transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services commencing at the beginning of the school year or at the beginning of a marking period.**
- 3. The written request from the parent for the student to transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services shall include:**
  - a. The student's name, school, and grade;**
  - b. The in-person program may only commence for a student transitioning from full-time remote learning to in-person services in accordance with D.2. above; and**
  - c. Any additional information the Principal or designee determines would be important on the student's transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services.**
- 4. A student previously approved for remote learning wanting to transition into the school district's in-person program must spend at least one marking period in remote learning before being eligible to transition into the school district's in-person program.**
  - a. This will allow parents to make the arrangements needed to effectively serve students' home learning needs and will support educators in ensuring continuity of instruction for the student.**
- 5. The Principal or designee will review the request for compliance with this procedures, and upon satisfaction of the procedures, will provide the parent of the student a written approval of the student entering the school district's in-person program.**
  - a. In the event the request does not satisfy the procedures outlined, the Principal or designee will notify the parent in writing of the issues that need to be addressed by the parent to satisfy the procedures outlined.**
- 6. Upon approval of the student's transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services, the school district will provide specific student and academic services to better assist parents anticipate their student's learning needs and help educators maintain continuity of services.**

7. School districts that offer Pre-K will consult their Pre-K curriculum providers regarding appropriate measures to assess a Pre-K student's learning progress during the transition from full-time remote learning to in-person learning.

At the time of this submission [Board Policy 1648.02 REMOTE LEARNING OPTIONS FOR FAMILIES](#) was approved by emergency adoption at the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education scheduled for August 18, 2020.