

## Health and Safety

### 1. Assurance #1 - Enrollment and Staffing

- RSCSD has reviewed and determined the number of students allowed to return for in-person instruction in each of its buildings. The capacity level was determined using the following factors:
  - Required six (6) foot distance between Students during instruction
  - PPE & Face Coverings availability
  - Availability and capacity of transportation options
  - Local hospital capacity
  
- Each building was in the building canvassed to identify existing and potential additional instructional spaces to maintain room occupancy that meets social distancing requirements.
  
- RSCSD is making available PPE and face coverings to its students, faculty, and staff. It is estimating the amount needed during in-person instruction using the NYS Education Department's "PPE Burn Rate Calculator." The calculator recommends one (1) disposable mask per week per Student.
  
- Transportation capacity was addressed by determining that 28 students could be safely transported on each 44-passenger bus, while wearing masks. Buses will be loaded from the back to the front and unloaded in reverse. While on the bus, one student will sit in each seat, unless students live in the same house together.
  
- RSCSD has maintained a direct line of communication with Otsego County DoH to monitor the capacity of local and regional hospitals.
  
- The RSCSD reopening plan has been developed to support all students in grades P-6 with in-person instruction on a daily basis. The number of class sections have been increased to reduce class size significantly. Due to the higher number of course offerings, larger class sizes and limited classroom square footage, students in grades 7-12 will attend on alternating days, with distance learning taking place on days that students receive off campus instruction. All school staff that are able to serve will be in on campus attendance daily.

### 2. Assurance #2 - Community Engagement:

- Mandatory elements were broken down and regional workgroups were created, from the BOCES components to plan and collaborate as a region. Workgroups were comprised of administrators, teachers and support staff. This information was to inform the planning around the mandatory elements in the individual school district.

- Richfield Springs Central School District (RSCSD) reopening planning included numerous stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, families, local Department of Health (DoH) and community organizations throughout the process and will continue to work together throughout the school year.
3. Assurance #3 - Communication Plan
- RSCSD will communicate the importance of adhering to guidelines from the CDC and the DoH, as well as applicable protocols to students, parents, legal guardians of students, staff, and potential visitors. The communications will be sent prior to the first day of school and periodically throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Specific messages related to potential changes to protocols/requirements will be sent as needed and added to the district's website. The communications will be sent prior to the first day of school and periodically throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Specific messages related to potential changes to protocols/requirements will be sent as needed and added to the district's website.
  - Signage has been placed at the entrances to each of the district's buildings regarding COVID-19 and face covering requirements. The district has also placed posters in various, conspicuous locations in its buildings regarding; social distancing requirements, hand hygiene, face coverings, and COVID-19 symptoms.
  - This information will be shared in variety of ways, including letters sent home, emails, social media posts, and through the use of the district's "all call" messenger system. RSCSD has also developed a COVID-19 Information website the topics covered in the communications and on the website will include:
    - Face Covering and Social Distancing requirements
    - Trainings the district will be providing related to COVID-19
4. Assurances #4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 - Observing for Signs of Illness – Screening/Temperature Checks/Questionnaire
- Staff must self-screen for the most common symptoms of COVID-19 prior to coming to school. Staff should stay home if they are sick. Any staff that is unable to self-screen will be screened upon arrival to the school campus by the main entrance greeter or at the District Office, except transportation staff that will be screened at the bus garage by the Transportation Director.
  - Students must be screened for the most common symptoms of COVID-19 by parents/guardians at home, prior to coming to school. Students should be kept home if they are sick.
  - Students will receive a follow-up screening upon arrival to school by trained staff that have been provided appropriate PPE. This screening will include temperature checks prior to first period classes.

- Most Common COVID-19 Symptoms:
  - **Fever or chills (100.0°F or greater);**
  - Cough;
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing;
  - Fatigue;
  - Muscle or body aches;
  - Headache;
  - New loss of taste or smell;
  - Sore throat;
  - Congestion or runny nose;
  - Nausea or vomiting; and/or
  - Diarrhea.
  
- In addition to the symptoms above, parents and school staff should watch for additional signs of potential infection, including
  - Flushed cheeks;
  - Rapid or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity);
  - Fatigue and/or irritability;
  - Frequent use of the bathroom.
  
- Staff, visitors, guests, contractors and periodically students will be required to answer the daily screening questionnaire verbally or electronically. The four questions in the questionnaire are
  1. Have you been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19?
  2. Have you tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
  3. Have you experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F in the past 14 days?
  4. Have you traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the NYS Travel Advisory in the past 14 days?
  
- Any person(s) coming to the school, including visitors, guests, contractors will receive a temperature screening and be observed for COVID-19 symptoms, in addition to the questionnaire.
  
- Any and all symptomatic students will be seen by the school nurse for further evaluation. If the nurse is not available, symptomatic students will be sent home for follow up with their healthcare provider.

- If a staff member or student becomes symptomatic during the school day, the school nurse will work to isolate the patient and will gather information to share with the DoH. Room 101 has been designated as the isolation room, as it has a dedicated outside entrance and is in a relatively isolated area of the campus. The DoH will offer direction regarding next steps, contact tracing and further medical intervention. If the staff member can safely drive home, they will be permitted to do so; however, if they are unable to drive home, a contact will be made and after being advised of the situation, the contact will be encouraged to pick up the staff member.  
The staff member will be encouraged to follow up with their medical provider to determine next steps. The staff member may be asked to remain at home for up to 14 days. A negative test for the virus would allow the staff member to return to work.
  - In the event that the staff member or student who is determined to be symptomatic must wait for transportation, they will be asked to remain in the isolation room. When the isolation room is used, a staff member, protected by mask, shield and gloves will be asked to monitor the occupant(s). After use, the isolation room must be cleaned and disinfected by cleaning staff.
5. Assurance #10 - Correct Hand Washing and Respiratory Hygiene
- All students and staff should wash hands, as follows:
    - Upon entering the building and each classroom;
    - After using shared objects or surfaces (e.g. electronic devices, musical instruments, writing utensils, tools, toys, desks or table tops);
    - Before and after snacks and lunch;
    - After using the bathroom;
    - After helping a student with toileting;
    - After sneezing, wiping or blowing nose, or coughing into hands;
    - Upon coming in from outdoors; and
    - Anytime hands are visibly soiled.
  - Hand Washing Protocols
    - **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
    - **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
    - **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
    - **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
    - **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.
    - If you can’t wash with soap and water, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Using a dime-sized amount in

your palm, rubbing hands together making sure to cover all parts of your hand and rub until they feel dry.

- [CDC Handwashing Instructions](#)
- [CDC Handwashing Video](#)
  
- Respiratory Hygiene Protocol
  - **Cover** your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
  - **Throw** used tissue in the trash.
  - If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands
  - **Immediately** wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
  
- The hand and respiratory hygiene signage and videos are in the resources section of the website. This signage has been posted in all of the locations listed in the Communications section of the Reopening Plan and were in the Welcome Back District Newsletter that was sent directly to all households in the District.
  - [CDC Cover Your Cough Poster](#)

#### 6. Assurance #11 - Social Distancing of Six Feet

- Students will stay as static as possible by having the same groups of students stay together when possible, moving as little as possible throughout the building. Use of the elevator will be limited to one occupant at a time.
  
- Demarcate 6-foot spacing using floor markings (stickers) throughout the campus. PE and wind instrument usage will require 12-foot spacing. Arrow stickers will be utilized throughout the campus to control and guide appropriate traffic flow.
  
- Common areas:
  - Enforce increased space between individuals in classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, offices, as well as in lines and waiting areas such as nurse's office (e.g. remove every other chair in a waiting area)
  
- Classrooms
  - Desks are arranged to maintain 6-foot distance. Desks will face the same direction
  - Classroom capacity is determined by square footage with social distancing implementation
  - When possible classroom windows and doors will be open to improve airflow.
  
- Arrival and Dismissal

- Exiting the bus will be appropriately paced to allow 6-foot spacing of students.
  - Students arriving and departing the school will be evenly distributed between the 5 front entrances to the building.
  - RSCSD will continue the use of the card system. Parents will be appropriately spaced outside of the building at dismissal and show their yellow card to pick up their student(s).
- Recreation:
    - Choose recreation spaces where individuals can spread out
    - Stagger time in recreation spaces
    - Restrict recreation space usage to a single group at a time
  - Meals:
    - Stagger meals; consider grab and go meals
    - Rearrange/reconfigure seating in the cafeteria, so that there is more space between students
  - Group activities:
    - Limit the size of group activities
    - Increase space between individuals during group activities
    - Suspend group programs where students and staff are likely to be in closer contact than they are in the classroom or instructional space
    - Create alternatives to existing group activities in outdoor areas or other areas where students and staff can spread out
  - [CDC Social Distancing Signage](#)

#### 7. Assurance #12 – High Risk Accommodations

- RSCSD has developed a written protocol detailing how the district will provide accommodation to all students and staff who are at high-risk or live with a person at high risk. Currently, the CDC considers the following to indicators of being at high risk for COVID-19:
  - Individuals age 65 or older
  - Individuals with the following health conditions:
    - Cancer
    - Chronic kidney disease
    - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
    - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
    - Obesity (body mass index of 30 or higher)
    - Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies

- Sickle cell disease
  - Type 2 diabetes mellitus
  - Children who are medically complex, who have neurologic, genetic, metabolic conditions, or who have congenital heart disease are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 than other children.
- Alternate plans will be created in consultation with school health personnel on how to meet the needs of the child at higher risk, while keeping social distancing which may include:
    - Additional PPE for Staff caring for such students
    - Assigning only one staff member to care for the student
    - Decreased students in a classroom, alternating schedules, and provision of related services to an individual instead of group setting
    - Add district specific actions
8. Assurance #13 – Staff/Visitors/Students Face Covering
- RSCSD has developed a written protocol requiring all employees, adult visitors, and students to wear a cloth face covering whenever social distancing cannot be maintained. An acceptable face covering is defined by CDC as:
    - Fitting snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
    - Completely covering the **nose and mouth**
    - Is secured with ties or ear loops
    - Includes multiple layers of fabric
    - Allows for breathing without restriction
    - Can be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape
  - All individuals in school facilities and on school grounds must be prepared to put on a face covering if another person unexpectedly cannot socially distance. According to the NYS DoH face shields worn without other face coverings are not considered adequate protection against COVID-19 and should not be used alone. All Students and Staff at RSCSD must wear cloth face coverings:
    - Whenever they are within 6 feet of someone
    - In hallways
    - In restrooms
    - Add district-specific common areas
    - In other congregate settings, *including buses*.
  - The district will schedule “mask breaks” for students as needed throughout the day. The District will provide acceptable face covering to all staff (and students if they forget their own) and have an adequate supply on hand to replace staff and student face covering as needed.
  - As per NYS DoH guidelines, face coverings will not be placed on:

- Children younger than 2 years old
  - Students where such covering would impair their health or mental health, or where such covering would present a challenge, distraction, or obstruction to education services and instruction
  - Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious; or
  - Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.
- The district will instruct Students, Parents/Guardians and Staff, Contractors and Vendors on:
    - The proper way to wear face coverings
    - Washing hands before putting on and after removing their face covering
    - Proper way to discard disposable face coverings
    - [CDC How to wear cloth face coverings](#)
  - Students and staff may use alternate PPE (face coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth) for instruction or interventions that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouths (like speech therapy). These alternate coverings may also be used for certain students (hearing impaired) who benefit from being able to see more of the face of the staff member.
9. Assurance #14 – Supply of Cloth Face Coverings
- RSCSD has a plan for ensuring that an appropriate supply of face coverings is available for its students, faculty, and staff. The District is estimating the amount needed during in-person instruction using the NYS Education Department’s “PPE Burn Rate Calculator”. The calculator recommends one (1) disposable mask per week per Student. The district is working with both NYS and HFHO BOCES to obtain an appropriate supply of face coverings at the best price possible.
10. Assurance #15 – Protocol for Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case
- *Emergency Response* – Students and staff with symptoms of illness must be sent to the health office. A school nurse (Registered Professional Nurse, RN) is available to assess individuals as chronic conditions such as asthma and allergies or chronic gastrointestinal conditions may present the same symptoms as COVID-19 but are neither contagious nor pose a public health threat. Proper PPE will be required anytime a nurse may be in contact with a potential COVID-19 patient.
  - *Isolation* – Students suspected of having COVID-19 awaiting transport home by the parent/guardian will be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult present utilizing appropriate PPE. Multiple students suspected of COVID-19 may also be in this isolation room if they can be separated by at least 6 feet. If they cannot be isolated in a separate room from



others, facemasks (e.g., cloth or surgical mask) will be provided to the student if the ill person can tolerate wearing it and does not have difficulty breathing, to prevent the possible transmission of the virus to others while waiting for transportation home. Students should be escorted from the isolation area to the parent/guardian. The parent or guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider, or if they do not have a health care provider, to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center. Other considerations include:

- Closing off areas used by a sick person and not using these areas until after cleaning and disinfection has occurred;
  - Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area
  - Waiting at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfection. If waiting 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible;
  - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas.
  - Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected it can be reopened for use.
  - Individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
- *Notification* – the NYS and local health departments will be notified immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual in school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff and visitors.
  - **Testing**
    - In the event of a suspected COVID-19 case, the individual identified will be instructed to call their health care provider, or if they do not have a health care provider, to follow up with a local clinic or urgent care center, for testing. Plans to share safety measures taken by the school during containment (positive or presumed positive cases) will be in conjunction with guidance from the local Herkimer County Health Department and the New York State Department of Health. In the event that a large-scale testing will need to be conducted at the school, the district administration will work with Bassett Healthcare and local health officials.
  - **Contact Tracing**
    - The district will ensure compliance with the [New York State Contact Tracing Program](#).  
To assist the local health department with tracing the transmission of COVID-19, the district has developed and maintained a plan to trace all contacts of exposed individuals in accordance with protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.  
The district will notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual within

school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the district.

The district may assist with contact tracing by:

1. Keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members
2. Ensuring student schedules are up to date
3. Keeping a log of any visitor which includes date and time, and where in the school they visited
4. Assisting the local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program

If/when COVID-19 cases are discovered in the school, the Herkimer Central School District will consult with the local Herkimer County Health Department and the New York State Department of Health. The process for closing school and/or classrooms will be dependent upon many variables such as the nature and size of the outbreak, as well as the number of positive cases, but the following protocols will be considered:

- In the case of an employee testing positive for COVID-19, CDC guidelines will be followed regarding cleaning and disinfecting your building or facility if someone is sick: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
  - Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
  - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
  - Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
  - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and copier machines.
  - Vacuum the space if needed. Use a vacuum equipped with a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available.
  - Consider temporarily turning off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.
  - Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.
- Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. School staff should not try to determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the local health department.

For more information about how COVID-19 containment efforts will be communicated to students, families and staff members, [visit the Communication/Family and Community Engagement section](#) of our reopening plan.

#### 11. Assurance #16 – Return to School/Work Protocol

- RSCSD has a written protocol, that complies with CDC and NYS DOH guidance, for the return to school/work for Students and Staff following a positive screen for COVID-19 symptoms, illness, or diagnosis of confirmed case of COVID-19, and following a quarantine due to contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case.
  - The duration of any quarantine will be determined by the local health department and the district will follow the local health department's guidance.
- If a student/staff is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school:
  - Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours.
  - If they have been diagnosed with another condition and has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.
- If a student/staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test, or their symptoms, or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:
  - It has been at least ten (10) days since the individual first had symptoms.
  - It has been at least three (3) days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine).
  - It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.
- Prior to being sent home, any ill Students or Staff will be assessed by the School Nurse. Staff will be instructed to follow-up with their healthcare provider.

#### 12. Assurance #17- Cleaning & Disinfecting Protocol

- RSCSD has developed a written protocol to clean and disinfect schools following CDC guidance. The protocol reflects the CDC principles that:
  - Normal routine cleaning with soap and water will decrease how much of the virus is on surfaces and objects, which reduces the risk of exposure.
  - Disinfection using EPA-approved disinfectants against COVID-19 can also help reduce the risk. Frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people is important.
  - When EPA-approved disinfectants are not available, alternative disinfectants can be used (for example, 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water, or 70% alcohol solutions).
  - Staff will always wear gloves appropriate for the chemicals being used when cleaning and disinfecting. Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) may be needed based on setting and product.

- Most surfaces and objects in school buildings will just need normal routine cleaning. Frequently touched surfaces and objects like light switches, doorknobs, (add district specific high touch areas) will need to be cleaned and then disinfected to further reduce the risk of germs on surfaces and objects. Students will not be present when disinfectants are in use and will not participate in cleaning and/or disinfection activities.
- RSCSD has identified cleaning and disinfection frequency for each facility and area type in the district:
  - Classrooms: Daily
  - Identified High Touch Areas: Minimum twice daily
  - Offices: Daily
  - Common Areas: Several times each day
- The district will follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection of electronic devices, such as devices, keyboards and computer mice between use.
- School Health Office cleaning will occur after each use of:
  - Cots
  - Bathrooms
  - Health office equipment (e.g. blood pressure cuffs, otoscopes, stethoscopes, etc.) should be cleaned following manufacturer's directions.
- District outdoor areas, like playgrounds in schools and parks generally require normal routine cleaning, do not require disinfection, but will be cleaned on a regular, established basis. Shared athletic/gym equipment (e.g., balls, protective gear) will be cleaned between use per manufacturer's directions.
- Custodial Staff will maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection in a facility or area. In order to disinfect areas frequently, additional staff may need to be trained in cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

### 13. Assurance #18 -Safety Drills

- RSCSD has developed a written protocol to conduct required safety drills with modifications that will ensure social distancing and appropriate face coverings. NYS Education Department requires that schools conduct eight (8) evacuation and four (4) lockdown drills each school year. This regulation has not been modified during the current Public Health Emergency.

- The district will modify the ways drills are conducted. Modifications to evacuation drills will include:
  - 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 classroom, minimizes contact of students in hallways, stairwells, and at the evacuation site.
- Modifications to Lockdown Drills will include:
  - Conducting lockdown drills in classroom setting while maintaining social distancing and using masks.
  - Conducting lockdown drills on a “staggered” schedule with smaller numbers of students present to maintain social distancing.
  - Conduct lockdown drill in classroom without “hiding”/ “sheltering,” but provide an overview of how to shelter or hide in the classroom.
- All drills conducted using a modified procedure, will be completed on that same school day and will include all students in the school building on that school day.

#### 14. Assurance 19 – District/School Run Before & Aftercare Programs

- RSCSD does not operate any before or aftercare programs.

#### 15. Assurance #20 – COVID-19 Safety Coordinator

- RSCSD has designated the Superintendent of School as the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator with identified responsibilities that include:
  - Continuous compliance with all activities of RSCSD’s reopening plans
  - Phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or “new normal” levels.
- The COVID-19 Safety Coordinator is a district administrator. The COVID-19 Safety Coordinator will coordinate activities with the local DoH and the Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES Safety Service to insure consistency across the region. The COVID-19 Safety Coordinator will also be:
  - The main point of contact upon identification of positive COVID-19 cases and responsible for subsequent communication.
  - Responsible for answering questions from students, faculty, staff, and parents/legal guardians regarding the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency and plans implemented by the school.