

New Hartford Public Schools
Reopening Committee Meeting
Wednesday, July 22, 2020
1:00 p.m.

In Attendance: Brian Murphy, Amy Ouellette, Heather Mathes, Janet Terenzi, John Pollutro, Linda Fitzgerald, Marie Kitch, Michael Decerbo, Paul Carmen, Sara Gaedeke, Tara Ljubuncic, Tom Buzzi, Amanda Shaw, Jen Harris

Absent: Kelly, Carroll, Jim McMellon, Barbara McLean, Tina Murelli

Brian Murphy began the meeting by stating that Reopening Schools Plans are due to the Connecticut State Department of Education on July 24, 2020.

- 1. Review New Hartford Public Schools Reopening Plan** – The finalized Plan will be sent to the State as a Draft on July 24th. The Board of Education will review and approve this plan at a Special Meeting on August 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Parents and the community will be able to participate during Public Comment at that meeting. Brian understands that there are lots of concern about opening schools in the fall and our number one priority will always be the safety of our students and staff.

After the Board of Educations reviews the plan, the last Reopening Schools Committee meeting will be August 12th. Jennifer Kertainis, Supervisor at the Farmington Valley Health District will be at that meeting to answer any questions.

Brian reiterated that our Plan is for a full in person open at the beginning of the school year. That could change if the State Department of Education states that is not the case. However, at this time the State's Plan is for a full open in the fall. There are three major aspects to the reopening of schools in the fall: masks will be required on the school bus and in school (school officials will review those cases where students have a medical exception); proper social distancing; and, cleaning and sanitizing. We are fortunate here in New Hartford to have small class sizes. Classroom tables have been replaced by individual student desks. for classrooms and student dividers have also been purchased for group tables to ensure proper social distancing. We do have proper social distancing in every classroom. Teachers will not have to wear a mask while at the front of the board, 6-8' apart from students, if they don't have that distance they will have to wear a mask.

Brian stated that there are three main components to the Plan. The First Plan involves a full reopening plan for all students attending school (this will include Distance Learning plans for those students who will not return to school). The Second Plan is a Hybrid Plan. If there is a moderate surge of COVID, students will be in school part of the week and have Distance Learning part of the week. This Hybrid Plan allows for fewer students in the building at one time. If there is a significant surge in the spread of the

virus the Third Plan would close the schools down 100% and all students will participate in Distance Learning.

Brian reviewed the Operations Plan. There will be an isolation room in each school for any student who exhibits symptoms of COVID 19. Each classroom will have a sink with soap dispenser and/or hand sanitizer dispenser. There will be extensive training for student and there will be professional development before school starts with the staff for proper cleaning procedures. Lunch will be served in each individual classroom. It is important that cohorts stay together as much as possible throughout the course of the day to mitigate the risk of spreading the virus. Non-essential visitors and volunteers will be restricted from the building.

At this time, buses transportation can proceed as before COVID 19. Based on the survey, the number of children riding the bus has been reduced by half. Parents are encouraged to drive their students to and from school. Bus drivers and students will be required to wear masks. Bus drivers will clean and sanitize their buses before and after routes. Drivers will self-monitor for fever and/or illness. Buses will load from back to front, however primary students will continue to sit in the front the bus. Bus cohort model is in place.

Water fountains have been replaced at all three schools with bottle filling stations. Ventilation systems have been assessed and maintained. Shared materials will be limited and materials that must be shared will be disinfected between student use.

Processes are in place to monitor the health symptoms of students and staff. Students must bring in masks. However, masks will be provided if lost, broken, etc. Face shields do not replace masks. There will be in-depth training by nurses to students and staff on PPE, hand washing, screening for symptoms, and proper social distancing. Mask breaks will be provided during the school day. School nurses will be responsible for tracking staff and student absenteeism. Nurses will contact parents for the reason for the absence and will look for symptoms and/or trends related to COVID 19.

Protocols are in place for the cancellation of classes, remote learning, and reopening plans for low risk (schools operating up to 100% capacity, moderate risk (hybrid model, blended/remote learning), and high risk (schools are closed 100%).

The CSDE has established the CT Learning Hub. This is a free and interactive webpage that offers digital resources to support online and offline learning. all students will have access to technology in grades K-6.

Assessment practices are in place for 2020-2021 to identify where the gaps are. Interventionists will help to address learning gaps. Social Worker is in place to help work with students to address social-emotional issues and anxiety. Special Education will be working with students to identify needs. Specials will proceed but will focus on more individualized instruction.

Communication will be shared with staff and families using email, School Messenger, the District website and Friday Folders. After school programs will follow the school's safety protocols to ensure safety of students.

Brian thanked the committee for their hard work.

The meeting adjourned at 2:01 p.m.

Janet Terenzi
Recording Secretary

