

2020-2021

VALLEY CENTRAL
RETURNING TO LEARNING
REOPENING PLAN



Dear Valley Central Families,

I hope this communication finds you and your families well. As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic has required all schools nationwide to develop plans which change the way they operate. As we plan for a year that promises to be unlike any other, I am grateful for the feedback we have received from the Valley Central community and the hard work of the District team tasked with creating a framework that is placing the health, safety and well-being of every member of our school community above all else.

Our reopening plan provides for the following scenarios: in-person instruction, hybrid instruction and online instruction. Since our closure in March, we have been developing a plan utilizing the most current national, state and local information available, with close adherence to all federal and state guidance and mandates. As we know, the guidance and mandates often quickly change. Please know our pledge remains to put our very best efforts into every single aspect of the reopening of schools for this school year. This includes any plan adjustments we may need to make due to pandemic conditions and updated guidance/mandates as the year progresses.

The way Valley Central schools will operate this school year will look and feel different than previous years. Please know that our commitment to your child's academic excellence is a momentous responsibility, especially during these challenging times, and we work hard every day to make Valley Central a district that we remain proud of – a great place for children.

Most importantly, thank you to the entire Valley Central school community for your patience and understanding of the very difficult challenges we have addressed this past spring, and which we will continue to experience this school year. The trust you give to us in the education of your children inspires us every day. We extend our hand to our entire community to once again work together with you for the success of our students this school year and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John P. Xanthis".

John P. Xanthis
Superintendent of Schools

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Introduction

At Valley Central our primary commitment is to the students and families we serve. Our priority must be keeping them safe and healthy. When the 2020-2021 school year begins, on-campus school will look much different than previous years due to COVID-19 and the health and safety measures that continue to evolve. This School Reopening Plan will define clear guidance for the reopening of our six schools and ALC and aligns with the regulations developed in collaboration with NYSDOH and the NYS Education Department.

The areas outlined in this plan represent the myriad of considerations Valley Central will address to reopen schools safely and to sustain their safe operation. It is important to note that our plan retains a strong focus on academic instruction to enhance student performance and address learning loss. An emphasis on the social-emotional needs of our students is a priority and, therefore, we have addressed this within our plan as well.

This plan includes procedures that will be followed in the following schools:

Berea Elementary School

<https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/berea-elementary/>

946 State Route 17K, Montgomery, NY 12549

Phone: (845) 457-2400 ext. 11510

John Solimando, Principal, john.solimando@vcsdny.org

East Coldenham Elementary School

<https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/east-coldenham-elementary/>

286 State Route 17K, Newburgh, NY 12550

Phone: (845) 457-2400 ext. 12510

Dan McDonald, Principal, daniel.mcdonald@vcsdny.org

Montgomery Elementary School

<https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/montgomery-elementary/>

141 Union Street, Montgomery, NY 12549

Phone: (845) 457-2400 ext. 14510

Matthew Canino, Principal, matthew.canino@vcsdny.org

Walden Elementary School

<https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/walden-elementary/>

75 Orchard Street, Walden, NY 12549

Phone: (845) 457-2400 ext. 15510

Gregory Heidemann, Principal, gregory.heidemann@vcsdny.org

ALC at Maybrook

<https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/alc-at-maybrook/>

120 Broadway, Maybrook, NY 12543

Phone: (845) 457-2400 ext. 18138

Georgia Patchen, Administrator, georgia.patchen@vcsdny.org

Valley Central Middle School

<https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/vc-middle-school/>

1189 State Route 17K, Montgomery, NY 12549

Phone: (845) 457-2400 ext. 16510

Russell Burns, Principal, russell.burns@vcsdny.org

Valley Central High School

<https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/vc-high-school/>

1175 State Route 17K, Montgomery, NY 12549

Phone: (845) 457-2400 ext. 17510

Jayne Ginda-Baxter, Principal, jayne.baxter@vcsdny.org

To be clear, the health and safety of our students, our staff, and their families is our top priority. We have developed a plan that intends to ensure that students and employees feel comfortable and safe returning to school campuses. Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#) and the [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\)](#).

It is possible that we may need to alternate between in-person and remote learning throughout the year due to recommendations and guidance from our partnering agencies, and stay-at-home orders from the Governor. The level of infection, the spread of the virus and response to the disease in our community will be at the forefront of decision making as we move to open our schools.

Marianne Serratore, Assistant Superintendent, (marianne.serratore@vcsdny.org) will serve as the District's COVID-19 Coordinator. She will serve as a central contact for schools and stakeholders, families, staff and other school community members and will ensure the District is in compliance and following the best practices per state and federal guidelines.

Of course, as with every plan being developed throughout New York State, this document is fluid and will change as necessary based on guidance from the state, CDC,

and NYSED and in consideration of our families and our staff. We strongly believe the services described throughout this plan are in the best interests of our students, families, staff, and community.

Guiding Principles

The development of this plan was guided by and grounded in the following guiding principles:

1. Safeguarding the health and safety of students and staff
2. Maintaining continuity of learning to all students at all levels
3. Ensuring access and equity for all students
4. Providing effective communication to the school community
5. Addressing social emotional well-being and the mental health needs of our students and staff

Communication/Family and Community Engagement

To help inform our reopening plan, Valley Central has sought feedback and input from stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians of students, school nurses, local health department officials and health care providers, and employee unions. Engagement efforts included online surveys, virtual forums/meetings and one-on-one conversations.

The District remains committed to communicating all elements of this reopening plan to students, parents and guardians, staff and visitors. The plan is available to all stakeholders via the District website at <https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/academics/vc-2020-reopening-plan/> and will be updated throughout the school year, as necessary, to respond to local circumstances.

As part of its planning for the reopening of schools and the new academic year, the District has developed a plan for communicating all necessary information to District staff, students, parents/guardians, visitors, education partners and vendors. The District will use its existing communication modes, including the District website, Google Meets, Facebook and School Messenger– as well as appropriate signage and training opportunities to support the dissemination of consistent messaging regarding new

protocols and procedures, expectations, requirements and options related to school operations throughout the pandemic.

Valley Central's Communication Goals:

- To provide regular updates about health and safety, scheduling, and all other information faculty, staff and families should be aware of.
- To provide information to families through a wide array of platforms including email, telephone calls, text messaging, social media and website postings.
- To provide information on how families can access technology and receive technical support to assist with utilization and maintenance of equipment.

Valley Central developed communication materials accordingly, including the creation of sample messages/letters for COVID-19 cases or potential cases for various school audiences. We will utilize communication methods used by the District to inform the school community. Information will be dispersed in a variety of platforms that include:

- District website
- Call list/ROBO Call
- Email blast
- Online training
- Social media accounts used by District
- Virtual Meetings

Clear messaging will be prepared, in multiple languages as needed, and consistently communicated before re-entry, on the first day, during the first week, throughout the first month, and continuously throughout the year. Minimum monthly communication will provide information on the following topics:

- Who to contact with questions, concerns or suggestions. Empower people to make a positive difference and communicate the expectation for them to do so.
- The facts as we currently know them (NYSDOH, CDC).
- The importance of social distancing, monitoring symptoms of COVID-19 and when to stay home.
- Set protocols for entrance (screening) and the review process for staff calling in sick. Constant reminders for staff to stay home if they feel sick.
- Encourage and implement social distancing in bathrooms, break rooms, hallways, etc. Installing social distancing markers on the floors, etc.
- Practice proper hand hygiene. Staff and students are allowed to use hand sanitizer, but hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is still more effective. Hand sanitizer works best on clean hands.
- Encourage and practice proper respiratory etiquette (i.e., coughing or sneezing into your elbow if a tissue is not available).
- Encouraging personal responsibility for yourself and your work area.

- Educating the school community on district policies/procedures, including how to properly wear and dispose of a face mask/respirator.

Health and Safety

Connie Griffin (constance.griffin@vcsdny.org) is our Head Nurse and oversees the health and safety aspects of our Reopening Plan.

Health Protocols

Hand Washing / Hand Sanitizing

- All entrance areas will have hand sanitizer available to accommodate any staff, visitors, and/ or students as they enter the buildings.
- All nurses' offices will have sinks for hand washing with soap and water and hand sanitizer.
- Students will be given time to use the bathroom and hand wash/hand sanitize throughout the day, in particular when coming to school, before lunch, after lunch, and at the end of day at a minimum.
- All teachers and staff are recommended to use hand washing or use hand sanitizer throughout the day
- Hand washing with soap and water is still the gold standard for prevention of disease. Hand washing should be done with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Any hand sanitizer used in Valley Central Schools will have a minimum of 60% alcohol. When using hand sanitizer, hands should be rubbed together with sanitizer until completely dry. Hand sanitizer will be in areas where students may use it under supervision.

Disinfecting

- All nurses' offices will be cleaned and disinfected regularly with attention to the high traffic areas, including door knobs and handles, by the custodial staff. In addition, nurses will be supplied with an approved disinfectant that they can use between each student visit.
- All classrooms and buildings at large will be cleaned in accordance with NYS Guidelines.
- All high traffic areas will be cleaned and disinfected regularly by the custodial staff.

Social Distancing, Barriers or Sneeze Guards

- Recommendation to maintain six feet social distance if at all possible.

- The nurse's offices have been looked at in detail and accommodations are underway to provide, as much as possible, a segregated space for sick and well children. The nurses will be wearing barriers or PPE when encountering sick children and will be in close contact with these children, therefore a sneeze guard will not be effective.
- Sneeze guards will be used at desk locations in the health office to protect from germs and bacteria.
- Painter's tape/ stickers will be used on floors of health offices to illustrate traffic flow and appropriate spacing to support social distancing.

Use of face coverings/ masks

Pediatricians' Recommendations regarding children wearing masks:

http://www.ny2aap.org/pdf/AAPNY2MaskFAQFlyerAugust2020.pdf?fbclid=IwAR13X-W8vwTF_vvZ88H5ImjbnvQD7M6TcniFU5fSR-QGEwTwdx64mwTO48

- **All staff and students are required to wear a mask while in the school, and maintain the 6 foot social distancing rule.**
- If you do not have a mask, each classroom, main office, and health office will have a supply of masks as needed.
- Masks can be manufactured or home made.
- All nurses will have surgical masks and, if available, medical grade fitted N95 masks available for when they encounter a sick student or staff that are showing signs and symptoms of COVID-19. In addition they will have face shields, gloves, and a gown to protect themselves and the students.
- Fact sheets on proper usage and cleansing of masks will be posted on the district website, in health offices and throughout each building. Cleansing of cloth masks should be done daily. Surgical masks should be discarded daily. If the mask is soiled, wet, or torn, it will be changed.
- **Medically fragile individuals** with special needs, and/or underlying medical conditions requiring special accommodations, such as being **unable to wear a mask**, require a safety plan from their primary care provider that outlines the special needs accommodations and includes safety measures to protect the medically fragile individual from possibly contracting COVID-19, as well as potentially transmitting COVID-19 to others in the school setting.

Mask Breaks

- Mask breaks for students will occur outside when possible and/or in areas with good air flow and where maximum social distancing can be maintained. Windows and doors may be open to maximize air flow.

Signage used to notify visitors and staff at entrance

- Signs will be posted that states everyone must wear a mask and has the school number and nurse's number to call if they need curbside or phone service.
- We will provide signs to encourage best practice use of masks, socially distancing, stay at home if you are sick, stopping the spread of germs, and hand washing, to be posted around each school.
- We will use standardized posters created by CDC or NYSDOH or NYSED for a consistent message.

Glove use

- Gloves will be used by health office staff for all physical contact with students and staff and for all treatments and procedures. Hands will be washed and gloves changed between students and staff.
- Glove usage is only necessary for staff, other than the nurses, when they are cleaning off an area for usage, cleaning equipment after use, and in food service.
- For routine daily work, gloves are not recommended for use.
- Hand washing is the best defense against exposure, and the use of gloves requires hand washing before and after the use of gloves.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Gloves, face coverings/ masks, face shields, safety goggles, N95 Respirators and gowns will be available in every health office and used per CDC, NYSDOH, and SED guidelines.
- All nurses will have proper fit tested N95 masks. Fit testing will be done by Orange Ulster BOCES Risk Management Department.
- If N95 masks are unavailable, a surgical mask and face shield will be worn when needed.
- PPE will be disposed of properly, according to CDC, NYSDOH, and OSHA guidelines.
- Information on use and disposal of PPE will be available to all staff.

Staying home when sick

- Staff will be told to stay home if they are sick. If they have a fever or have signs and symptoms of COVID-19, they will contact their health care provider.
- Parents will be told to keep ill students home.
- Any student or staff with a temperature of 100 or above will be told to stay home.
- If you have a fever, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicines, such as acetaminophen.

Caring for non-sick students or non-COVID-19 suspected illnesses

- Staff will be trained on signs and symptoms of illness and send any students with signs of illness or complaints of illness to the school nurse. Symptoms to be observed, per guidance from the CDC and NYSED, are flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing without recent physical activity, fatigue and/ or irritability, and frequent use of the bathroom.
- Students that require treatment for injury or chronic conditions will be assessed and treated in a separate location from sick students.
- Students that have non-COVID-19 symptoms of illness may be treated in the same area as students receiving treatment or care.
- Students requiring a nebulizer treatment will be treated in a separate room with nursing personnel wearing PPE. Health care providers and parents will be contacted by the school nurse on whether or not a student may use a prescribed metered dose inhaler with spacer in lieu of a nebulizer treatment.
- Diagnostic equipment will be cleansed between students and if available, disposable equipment will be used.
- Areas will be disinfected after each student and staff by custodial staff or health office staff wearing appropriate PPE.
- Confidentiality will be maintained.

Caring for students / staff with symptoms of COVID-19

- Students or staff exhibiting signs of illness or signs of COVID-19 will immediately notify the school nurse and be sent to the school health office for assessment by the Registered Nurse.
- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19, as per the CDC, will be shared with all staff and updated if needed.
- Health office staff will wear appropriate PPE when assessing and caring for students/ staff of suspected COVID-19.
- If staff or students show signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and there is no other explanation for their illness, they will be isolated in a supervised separate area and sent home.
- Health office staff supervising the isolation room will have appropriate PPE as per CDC, NYSDOH, and NYSED.
- The parent/ guardian will be called to pick up the student with suspected symptoms of COVID-19. When they arrive at the school, they will call the health office and the ill student will be brought out to the parent/ guardian.
- The parent/ guardian will be instructed to call their health care provider, local clinic, or urgent care center.
- If any student or staff member exhibits emergency warning signs such as trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to

arouse, or bluish lips or face, 911 will be called and the operator will be informed that the person may have COVID-19.

- The isolation room and any other areas that were used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 will be cleaned and disinfected before it can be reopened for use.
- School staff will be aware of the symptoms of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) associated with COVID-19, which is a serious condition associated with COVID-19 in children and youth. Parents/ guardians will be told to look for symptoms of MIS-C and they will be told to immediately follow-up with their healthcare provider should any of the symptoms be present.
 - fever
 - abdominal pain
 - vomiting
 - diarrhea
 - neck pain
 - rash
 - bloodshot eyes
 - feeling extra tired
- 911 will be called if any student exhibits signs and symptoms of MIS-C.
- Confidentiality will be maintained.

Returning to school after illness

- CDC guidance will be followed for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- **If a person 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 or have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.
- **If a person 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 days since the individual first had symptoms;
 - It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); and
 - It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

Quarantine and Isolation

- The Orange County Health Department will provide guidance on who is to quarantine or isolate.
- QUARANTINE keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others. If you had close contact with a person who has COVID-19:
 - ✓ Stay home until 14 days after your last contact.
 - ✓ Check your temperature twice a day and watch for symptoms of COVID-19.
 - ✓ If possible, stay away from people who are at higher-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.
- ISOLATION keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home.
- Health office staff will communicate with the Orange County Department of Health on positive cases of COVID-19 and will assist in tracing for possible quarantine orders for students or staff that were in contact with a positive COVID-19 person.
- Communication person for the Orange County Department of Health is Heather Boss, RN, Director of Patient Services. Phone number is 845-360-6600

Mandatory temperature checks will be done for all students, staff, vendors, contractors, and visitors to identify who may have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Any person with a temperature greater than 100.0°F will be denied entry into the facility, sent home, or be sent to an isolation room prior to being picked up. All faculty and staff must complete a daily screening questionnaire prior to reporting to school each day. Students will periodically have a screening questionnaire completed. Remote health screening by the parent / guardian is strongly advised prior to the student boarding the bus or being dropped off for school.

Any student or staff member with any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 will be isolated and sent home with directions to be seen by their health care provider or to have testing for COVID-19 at one of the COVID-19 Test Sites.

Signs and symptoms of COVID-19, as listed by the CDC, can include:

- Fever or chills
- 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
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

COVID-19 Test Sites

Please contact your Healthcare Provider or the New York State Department of Health for testing

New York State Department of Health
888-364-3065

Crystal Run Healthcare Urgent Care Center
155 Crystal Run Rd, Middletown, NY 10941
845-703-6999

Orange Urgent Care
75 Crystal Run Rd, Middletown, NY 10941
845-703-2273

Middletown Medical
2 Edgewater Dr., Middletown, NY 10941
845-342-4774

Excel Urgent Care of Goshen, NY
1 Hatfield Lane STE 2B, Goshen, NY 10924
845-360-5530

Emergency One Urgent Care- New Windsor
306 Windsor Highway, New Windsor, NY 12553
845-787-1400

Other testing sites available- Please call NYSDOH for further information

Returning to school after illness

CDC and the Orange County Health Department guidance will be followed for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

- If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school by meeting the following requirements as per the NYSDOH:
 - Health care provider documentation
 - Negative COVID-19 Testing Results
 - No fever over 100.0 F in the last 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
 - Documentation of being diagnosed with another condition.
- **If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:**
 - Release from isolation as per CDC Guidelines and the NYSDOH:
 - It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
 - It has been at least 24 hours since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); and
 - The individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

Quarantine and Isolation

The Orange County Health Department will provide guidance on who is to quarantine or isolate.

QUARANTINE keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others. If you had close contact with a person who has COVID-19:

- Stay home until 14 days after your last contact.
- Check your temperature twice a day and watch for symptoms of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from people who are at higher-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.

ISOLATION keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home.

Health Office staff will communicate with the Orange County Department of Health on positive cases of COVID-19 and will assist in tracing for possible quarantine orders for students or staff that were in contact with a positive COVID-19 infected person.

Communication person for the Orange County Department of Health is Heather Boss, RN, Director of Patient Services. Phone number is 845-360-6600.

Contact Tracing

Public Health Officials assume the task of contact tracing, once notified. VC will cooperate with all state and Orange County Department of Health contact tracing, isolation and quarantine efforts.

Confidentiality will be maintained in tracing all contacts of the individual diagnosed with COVID-19.

To ensure the school district and its employees comply with contact tracing and disinfection requirements, Valley Central will do the following:

- Have a plan for cleaning, disinfection, and notifying Public Health in the event of a positive case. In the case of an employee or student testing positive for COVID-19, CDC guidelines will be followed regarding cleaning and disinfecting of the building or facility if someone is sick.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.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. A vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter will be used, if available.
- Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.

Closure Considerations

When a person has been identified (confirmed) or suspected to be COVID-19 positive; the process in Valley Central could include:

- Having administrators collaborate and coordinate with local health officials to make school closure and large event cancellation decisions.

- Establish a plan to close schools again for physical attendance of students, if necessary, based on public health guidance and in coordination with the local DOH. Establishing a decision-making tree at the District level.
- Develop a plan for continuity of education, medical and social services, meal programs, and establish alternate mechanisms for these to continue.
- Implement as needed short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. If this happens, CDC recommends the following procedures:
 - Closing off areas used by ill person(s) and locking off area(s); signage can also be used to ensure no one enters the area. If possible, wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Do not use the area(s) until cleaning and disinfection has taken place.
 - Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
 - Cleaning staff will clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill person(s), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
 - Communicating as soon as possible with staff, parents and students through written documentation or phone calls.
- Using DOH guidance/procedures for when someone tests positive:
 - In consultation with the local DOH, a school official may consider whether school closure is warranted and period of time (prior to re-opening) based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local DOH.
 - Any room where a COVID-19 positive individual was based will be disinfected.
- Closing of schools could be a regional decision.
 - Seven metrics – NYS Dashboard
 - Schools will reopen if a region is in Phase IV and the daily infection rate remains below 5% using a 14-day average
 - Schools will close if the regional infection rate is greater than 9% using a 7-day average after August 1, 2020.
- Thresholds will be determined on a case-by-case basis dependent on the numbers (school closures may be a response).
- Buildings may consider closing if required cleaning products (bleach and water can be used as a cleaning product) and PPE are not available.

COVID-19 GUIDANCE AND CLARIFICATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

The Orange County Department of Health (OCDOH) released this FAQ for Schools Pre-K through 12th grade. Please note that schools are required to adhere to the NYSDOH guidance.

Q1: When and how should we report positive COVID-19 cases to OCDOH?

A. Immediately notify OCDOH if a student, faculty, staff member or volunteer tests positive for COVID-19 at 845-291-2330, 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week.

The OCDOH will maintain a list with contact information for two point of contact individuals within each school (1 school nurse and 1 administrator) to discuss issues pertaining to COVID-19. Please provide that updated information to epidemiology@orangecountygov.com

Q2. Are schools responsible for contact tracing for students, faculty and staff?

A. Contact tracing is an important component to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Effective contact tracing is a joint collaborative effort which will require the assistance of schools in providing staff and student lists, schedules, and other information to identify exposed individuals. Hence, it is imperative to confidentially maintain sign-in logs with full contact information (name, address, phone number, e-mail address) of all individuals presenting to any of the facilities.

Q3. Will contact tracers release the name of the positive individual to their contacts?

A.No. Contact tracers will tell potentially infected persons that they were exposed. They will not disclose the identity of the person to whom they were exposed.

Q4. How long will contacts to positive COVID-19 cases be required to quarantine?

A.Individuals who are exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be required to quarantine for 14 days from the day they were last exposed. Please note that a negative test does not release an individual from quarantine.

Q5. When should an exposed individual get tested for COVID-19?

A.Testing after exposure is a decision between the individual and their primary care provider (PCP). The exposed individual must contact their PCP to schedule testing. Exposed individuals must remain on quarantine until being tested and must immediately return to quarantine following such testing. If a person tests positive, they will be placed in isolation (for a period determined by the OCDOH). Even if the test is negative, the individual must continue to quarantine for the full 14 days.

Q6. Where can students, faculty and staff get tested for COVID-19?

A. Students, families, faculty and staff are encouraged to contact their primary care provider (PCP) first to schedule testing, in order to preserve the continuity of care.

A list of testing sites can be found on the OCDOH health website found here: <https://www.orangecountygov.com/1949/Anti-Body-Testing> or by calling the Orange County COVID-19 Hotline at 845-291-2330.

Students, families, faculty and staff can also download the Orange County NY Health mobile app available free of charge from the Google Play/ Android and Apple app stores.

Students, families, faculty and staff can also call the NYSDOH COVID Hotline at 1-888-364-3065 for assistance locating a testing site.

Q7. Is there a charge for COVID-19 tests?

A. Insurance information may be requested at some testing facilities including healthcare provider offices and pharmacies. There is no out of pocket charge for COVID-19 tests conducted at state-run facilities. The closest state-run facility is Rockland Anthony Wayne Recreational Area Palisades Parkway located at Palisades Interstate Pkwy Exit 17, Bear Mountain, NY 10911. More information can be found here: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>.

Q8. When can a person who has tested positive return to school? Is it the same process for students, faculty and staff?

A. An individual who tested positive must obtain written clearance from their primary care provider (PCP), that complies with CDC guidance for the return to school of students, faculty, and staff following illness or diagnosis of a confirmed case of COVID-19. Clearance criteria include but may not be limited to the following CDC guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>.

Q9. Can we assume that students with antibodies are safe from contracting COVID-19?

A. No. We do not have enough information about whether antibodies protect individuals from re-infection and how long antibodies may provide protection. Antibody tests also CANNOT diagnose if an individual has active infectious COVID-19. A positive result can mean you had infection with COVID-19 in the past.

Q10. Are rapid tests (Antigen or Molecular) reliable?

A. Rapid tests provide results in under an hour, though they have a high rate of false negatives. Negative rapid antigen tests which are the most commonly performed rapid COVID-19 test cannot rule out COVID- 19 and should be followed up by a molecular test. Please view the FDA Coronavirus Testing Basics fact sheet here: <https://www.fda.gov/media/138094/download>

Q11. Do individuals coming back from vacation from states on Governor Cuomo’s travel advisory need to quarantine?

A. Yes, individuals who are coming to New York from any of the states on the travel advisory need to quarantine for 14 days. The most up-to-date list of states is available here: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>.

Q12. What qualifies as an exposure to COVID-19? How does the DOH define “close or proximate contact? The CDC suggests 6 feet or less for a duration of 15 minutes or more. Does that hold true here?

A. Close contact is defined (by NYSDOH and Johns Hopkins) as being within 6 feet of a person displaying symptoms of or testing positive for COVID-19 for 10 minutes or longer. Close contacts will be required to quarantine. Proximate contact is defined as being in the same enclosed environment such as an office, but greater than 6 feet from a person displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or testing positive for COVID-19. OCDOH will determine if a proximate contact should be under quarantine.

However, bus rides and classrooms are more congregate settings than the general guidelines consider, and it is prudent to consider any individual in the same classroom as a close contact.

Q13. Why is the isolation period for an infected person shorter than the quarantine period of a contact?

A. The time period for incubation is different from the time period of illness and infectiousness. When a person is exposed to COVID-19, it can take anywhere from 2-14 days for the person to develop the disease (incubation), hence the quarantine period is 14 days. Once the disease develops, a person is infectious from 2 days prior to symptoms appearing to, at minimum, 10 days after the symptoms develop, hence the isolation period is at minimum 10 days, but can be longer.

Q14. Can you leave quarantine for a COVID-19 test or does your quarantine start all over after you went out to get that test?

A. Yes, you can leave quarantine for a COVID-19 test; however, during travel to and from testing you should minimize contact with others, wear a mask/ face covering, observe distancing and utilize private means for transportation. No, your quarantine period does not re-start. However, even if you test negative, you must continue to quarantine until the full 14 days from the last exposure to a COVID-19 positive individual.

Q15. In the event there is a large exposure, what is the plan if the DOH gets overwhelmed with the case load once school starts?

A. The Orange County Department of Health has been working in conjunction with the New York State Department of Health on contact tracing, using a joint system for tracking cases and contacts. This system also allows for both the county and state to have increased capacity of contact tracing should it be needed.

Q16. How do those testing positive at sites or who live outside of Orange County or NYS integrate into the NYSDOH systems?

A. Lab reports from ‘out of jurisdiction’ are transferred and reported to the state/county of residence (of record) of the individual. For instance, if an Orange County resident tests at a location in New Jersey, that lab result is reported to the New Jersey Department of Health, who transfers it to New York State Department of Health, and subsequently the Orange County Department of Health. It is imperative to make sure your current phone and address are correct at a testing location, so the results can be reported to the correct jurisdiction and local health department can follow up with communication.

Q17. If a child tests positive and has a sibling in the school, should the school keep the sibling out of school?

A. Yes. Unless the siblings reside in separate households, the sibling must be placed on quarantine which would mean that the sibling should not attend school during the required period for quarantine.

Q18. If a student/staff member is home on quarantine and then develops symptoms, please explain how that impacts attendance to school/work. What does it mean for the siblings that may have been continuing to go to school?

A. If a student or staff tests positive, their household members will likely be considered close contacts and will need to quarantine. Students or staff testing positive will require isolation for a minimum of 10 days.

Q19. If someone has to quarantine and has a family member in isolation is it 10 days + 14 days for the quarantine. Or would it be 4 more days?

A. Determining quarantine periods can vary depending on the particular situation: the specifics will be determined in conversation with the Orange County Department of Health case investigators and contact tracers. Here are some sample scenarios (CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>).

General Scenario 1: Close contact with someone who has COVID-19-will not have further close contact

I had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 and will not have further contact or interactions with the person while they are sick (e.g .. co-worker, neighbor, or friend). Your last day of quarantine is 14 days from the date you had close contact. Date of last close contact with person who has COVID-19 + 14 days= end of quarantine.

General Scenario 2: Close contact with someone who has COVID-19-live with the person but can avoid further close contact

I live with someone who has COVID-19 (e.g., roommate, partner, family member), and that person has isolated by staying in a separate bedroom. I have had no close contact with the person since they isolated. Your last day of quarantine is 14 days from when the person with COVID-19 began home isolation. Date person with COVID-19 began home isolation+ 14 days = end of quarantine .

General Scenario 3. Under quarantine and had additional close contact with someone who has COVID-19 .

I live with someone who has COVID-19 and started my 14-day quarantine period because we had close contact. What if I ended up having close contact with the person who is sick during my quarantine? What if another household member gets sick with COVID-19? Do I need to restart my quarantine?

Yes. You will have to restart your quarantine from the last day you had close contact with anyone in your house who has COVID-19. Any time a new household member gets sick with COVID-19 and you had close contact, you will need to restart your quarantine. Date of additional close contact with person who has COVID-19 + 14 days = end of quarantine.

General Scenario 4: Live with someone who has COVID-19 and cannot avoid continued close contact.

I live in a household where I cannot avoid close contact with the person who has COVID-19. I am providing direct care to the person who is sick, don't have a separate

bedroom to isolate the person who is sick, or live in close quarters where I am unable to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.

You should avoid contact with others outside the home while the person is sick, and quarantine for 14 days after the person who has COVID-19 meets the criteria to end home isolation. Date the person with COVID-19 ends home isolation + 14 days = end of quarantine.

School Scenario 1: A staff member who has no contact with a student but has contact with other staff who had contact with a student that tested positive.

The consideration is whether someone is a direct contact. The staff member with direct contact to a student that tested positive would be a direct contact and would need to go on mandatory quarantine for 14 days. The staff member without direct contact would not need to quarantine.

School Scenario 2: A staff member or a student has a positive case in their household. The staff or student has contact with other staff, faculty or students. The staff member or student should quarantine and monitor symptoms. Testing should be a decision between the exposed individual and their healthcare provider. If the individual becomes positive, contact tracing would identify students or other staff that would be direct contacts and those individuals would be placed on quarantine for 14 days.

School Scenario 3: A student in a class tests positive.

All classmates and teachers or staff of the positive case should be placed on mandatory quarantine for 14 days.

School Scenario 4: An exposed individual has completed their quarantine period following an exposure to a positive case. The individual would like to return to school.

All quarantined individuals should contact their primary care provider (PCP) to discuss their return to school. This will ensure that the individual adequately completed their quarantine without the development of symptoms based on their individual health circumstances.

Q20. If a person travels to a state with a mandatory quarantine upon return to NY, but their child, who lives with them, did not travel, does the child also have to quarantine, or can they attend school?

A.No. The child can attend school as long as the traveler in the household remains asymptomatic and does not test positive for COVID-19.

Q21. Does a student have to quarantine if a family member is quarantining, but does not have symptoms?

A.If a member of the household is quarantining because of either a known exposure to a COVID-19 positive individual or because of travelling, other members of the household can leave the home if that person can quarantine properly away from the household members, remain asymptomatic and does not test positive for COVID-19.

- A quarantined person should:
Separate themselves from other members of the household
- Use a separate bedroom and bathroom
- Do not share linens, towels, eating utensils, cups and plates
- Limit time in common household areas, such as kitchens.

Q22. What is the time frame for contract tracing? Will you work with the school immediately?

A. OCDOH will notify relevant school staff upon learning of a positive test for COVID-19 at the school. OCDOH also verifies that individuals reporting a positive COVID test have a positive lab test result in order to proceed with further measures. Labs are required to report to New York State Department of Health any positive test results immediately, and local health departments aim to contact positive individuals within 24 hours of receiving that lab report. Schools should be conducting daily health screenings, including asking whether the child/staff has been in contact with a person who has tested positive.

Q23. Do schools need parental permission to send COVID-19 related medical information to the Orange Department of Health?

A. COVID-19 is a reportable communicable disease mandated under the New York State Sanitary Code (10 NYCRR 2.10, 2.14), including reporting by schools nurses (10 NYCRR 2.12).

<https://regs.health.ny.gov/volume-title-10/content/reporting-cases-records>

https://health.ny.gov/forms/instructions/doh-389_instructions.pdf

While the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) generally requires parental permission for school personnel to disclose personally identifiable information from a student’s education record (including health information). But the law provides exceptions allowing disclosure without consent. Under the “health or safety emergency” exception, even though a student’s positive COVID-19 test would be considered personal identifiable information, the school may report this information without parental consent to individuals whose knowledge of the information is necessary to

protect the health or safety of students or other individuals. (See 20 U.S.C. § 71232g(b)(1)(I); 34 C.F.R. §§ 99.31(a)(10) and 99.36.) These may include public health officials, school administration, trained medical personnel, school staff, and parents. The “health or safety emergency” exception is limited in time to the period of the emergency and generally does not allow for a blanket release of personal identifiable information from student education records.

(Extracted from <https://www.networkforphl.org/resources/faqs-covid-19-and-health-data-privacy/>)

See also <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/>.

Q24. Should masks be worn on the bus and in schools?

A. Yes. Proper use of masks (see attached CDC guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>) is recommended for all individuals over the age of 2 while on the bus and in school. The gold standard of disease prevention includes social distancing, along with the use of masks and proper hand hygiene. The use of cloth face coverings at work and in other congregate settings, should be used in addition to other control measures, including engineering controls such as implementing social distance practices and physical partitions or barriers; and administrative controls such as frequent cleaning and disinfection protocols. Face coverings worn by students not only protect other students, but also protect teachers, aides, and others who move around the school.

IMPORTANT NOTES REGARDING MASK USAGE:

It is important to properly store, clean, and don and doff masks. Individuals should not touch external, especially contaminated surfaces and then adjust the ties/ loops of the mask. Hand hygiene is an important infection prevention and control measure. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after putting on, touching, or removing respirators, masks, or cloth face coverings. Hand sanitizer, with a minimum of 60% alcohol may be used if soap and water are not available.

Each district/school plan should have written protocols regarding students taking mask breaks. When possible, mask breaks should occur outside or in other areas with good air flow, and where maximum social distancing can be accomplished.

Q25. What conditions would require special accommodation for students/staff?

A. Medically fragile individuals with special needs, and/or underlying medical conditions requiring special accommodations (ex. unable to wear mask, present to school in person, etc.) may be more vulnerable and susceptible to COVID-19 and complications. An outline of the special needs accommodations, as well the safety plan from the primary care provider (licensed medical professional), that include safety

measures to protect the medically fragile individual from possibly contracting COVID-19, as well as potentially transmitting COVID-19 to others in a congregate setting, will be instrumental in assisting with the local impact of this global pandemic.

Q26. What parameters/conditions/metrics should we use as an early warning sign that positive cases or absenteeism are increasing beyond an acceptable rate?

A. Generally, schools in regions in Phase IV (which the Mid-Hudson entered on July 7th) can reopen if daily infection rate remains below 5% using a 14- Day Average. Schools will close if regional infection rate raises over 9% after August 1st. To see the regional rate, go to <https://forward.ny.gov/percentage-positive-results-region-dashboard>

Q27. With regard to screening, should it be prior to entering the building or before they leave their house?

A. School districts are required to have a protocol in place to perform temperature and health screenings for COVID symptoms. Screenings by the parent/guardian prior to school are preferred to help prevent the spread of disease in the school. (See the NYSED Reopening Guidance). Symptomatic individuals should not leave their households. Parents/ guardians/ students should be provided with information explaining the importance of monitoring for symptoms and remaining at home whenever symptoms are recognized.

Q28. Previously, if there was a case, we had to close a building for 24 hours. Is that still the case?

A. Typically a 24-hour time period may be required for disinfection of an area or building. If disinfection can be conducted over night or during a weekend disruption of classes could be minimized. The CDC and NYSDOH recommend the following:

- 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.

Q29. Can assemblies, sports games, and other events take place?

A. No, assemblies, sports games, and other events that create crowded conditions (gathering of more than 50 individuals) are not recommended at this time due to the increased transmission potential.

Q30. Do you have any advice on use of cohorts?

A. Yes. Schools should recognize that as cohorts intermingle, there is inherently greater risk of transmission of COVID-19 to more people. Accordingly, schools are encouraged to use cohort models.

Q31. Can COVID-19 remain in the air?

A. There is growing evidence to suggest that the coronavirus may linger in the air, especially once aerosolized, including several documented cases that linked poor ventilation to spread of the virus. NYSDOH has noted that while masks are the best defense against that, better ventilation can help too, that means masks, and social distancing, and hand-washing – and safer air. Assessment of optimal filtration, air flow into classrooms, restrooms and congregate setting environments is prudent.

Paying particular attention to the possible aerosolization of particles, restrooms pose a concern due to the potential for congregating. Hence social distancing measures, masking requirements, adequate signage for proper hand hygiene, along with an evaluation of frequently touched surfaces and availability of touchless soap/hand sanitizer dispensers, as well as automatic towel dispensers instead of air hand dryers would be ideal.

Schools are required to adhere to the NYSDOH guidance. NYSED also provides guidance which can be found here: <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/reopening-schools/nys-p12-school-reopening-guidance.pdf>

Orange County updates via the Department of Health
website: <https://www.orangecountygov.com/1936/Coronavirus>

Orange County NY Health social media page: www.facebook.com/OCNYDOH/

Orange County NY Health mobile app available free of charge from the Google Play/Android and Apple app stores.

OCDOH call center at 845-291-2330

Other Health Related Information

Facility Entry

To ensure all staff, and students comply with building entry and exit procedures, Valley Central will do the following:

- Where feasible, entry and egress in and out of all buildings will be limited to a single location, except for the arrival and dismissal of students. If applicable, a single point entry and single point egress will be identified to minimize cross traffic. All other visitors entering the buildings will occur through the main entrance to a check-in point at the greeter station.
- A face covering must be worn by all individuals, students, staff, and visitors upon entry to Valley Central property.
- A face covering must be worn by all individuals, students, staff, and visitors when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Proper face covering includes, but is not limited to, a surgical mask, cloth mask, balaclava or bandana and must completely cover the individual's mouth and nose.
- A plastic face shield alone is not an acceptable face covering.
- All individuals may choose to utilize their own face covering, however face coverings can and will be provided by Valley Central.

Daily Health Screening

To ensure all faculty, staff, and students comply with daily screening requirements, Valley Central will do the following:

- Prior to entering all Valley Central locations, individuals must complete a medical screening questionnaire. This questionnaire is accessible through Valley Central website at: <https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/staff-resources/>
- <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScefeM89yIGygq2GXXS89mu7qgPkojlhSccEKRIrjhUMcJBHw/viewform>.
- Staff must complete this screening prior to beginning their work day via the electronic submission form or a paper copy.
- Although filing of the health survey is preferred to be done online, paper copies of the questionnaire for visitors will be available.
- Staff will be required to monitor their own temperatures prior to arrival on campus and throughout the day. Anyone whose symptoms response changes from a NO to YES during the day, must contact their supervisor immediately and await further instruction.
- Parents are encouraged to monitor for temperatures and symptoms prior to sending their student on a bus.
- For multiple individuals entering the building simultaneously, they will be required to stand at the marked out locations on the floor, maintaining social distance until they can be signed in and screened.

- Should a person fail the medical screening, specific procedures will be followed. Please reference the Suspect or Confirmed COVID-19 Case section for guidance.

COVID-19 SCREENING / TESTING

Mandatory temperature checks will be done for all students, staff, vendors, contractors, and visitors to identify who may have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Any person with a temperature greater than 100.0°F will be denied entry into the facility, sent home, or be sent to an isolation room prior to being picked up. All faculty and staff must complete a daily screening questionnaire prior to reporting to school each day. Students will periodically have a screening questionnaire completed. Remote health screening by the parent / guardian is strongly advised prior to the student boarding the bus or being dropped off for school.

Any student or staff member with any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 will be isolated and sent home with directions to be seen by their health care provider or to have testing for COVID-19 at one of the COVID-19 Test Sites.

Signs and symptoms of COVID-19, as listed by the CDC, can include:

- Fever or chills
- 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
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

COVID-19 Test Sites

Please contact your Healthcare Provider or the New York State Department of Health for testing

New York State Department of Health
888-364-3065

Crystal Run Healthcare Urgent Care Center
155 Crystal Run Rd, Middletown, NY 10941
845-703-6999

Orange Urgent Care
75 Crystal Run Rd, Middletown, NY 10941
845-703-2273

Middletown Medical
2 Edgewater Dr., Middletown, NY 10941
845-342-4774

Excel Urgent Care of Goshen, NY
1 Hatfield Lane STE 2B, Goshen, NY 10924
845-360-5530

Emergency One Urgent Care- New Windsor
306 Windsor Highway, New Windsor, NY 12553
845-787-1400

Other testing sites available- Please call NYSDOH for further information

Returning to school after illness

CDC and the Orange County Health Department guidance will be followed for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

- If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school by meeting the following requirements as per the NYSDOH:
 - Health care provider documentation
 - Negative COVID-19 Testing Results
 - No fever over 100.0 F in the last 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
 - Documentation of being diagnosed with another condition.

- **If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay at home until:**
- Release from isolation as per CDC Guidelines and the NYSDOH:
 - It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
 - It has been at least 24 hours since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); and
 - The individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

Quarantine and Isolation

The Orange County Health Department will provide guidance on who is to quarantine or isolate.

QUARANTINE keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others. If you had close contact with a person who has COVID-19:

- Stay home until 14 days after your last contact.
- Check your temperature twice a day and watch for symptoms of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from people who are at higher-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.

ISOLATION keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home.

Health Office staff will communicate with the Orange County Department of Health on positive cases of COVID-19 and will assist in tracing for possible quarantine orders for students or staff that were in contact with a positive COVID-19 infected person.

Communication person for the Orange County Department of Health is Heather Boss, RN, Director of Patient Services. Phone number is 845-360-6600.

Contact Tracing

Public Health Officials assume the task of contact tracing, once notified. VC will cooperate with all state and Orange County Department of Health contact tracing, isolation and quarantine efforts.

Confidentiality will be maintained in tracing all contacts of the individual diagnosed with COVID-19.

To ensure the school district and its employees comply with contact tracing and disinfection requirements, Valley Central will do the following:

- Have a plan for cleaning, disinfection, and notifying Public Health in the event of a positive case. In the case of an employee or student testing positive for COVID-19, CDC guidelines will be followed regarding cleaning and disinfecting of the building or facility if someone is sick.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.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. A vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter will be used, if available.
- Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.

Closure Considerations

When a person has been identified (confirmed) or suspected to be COVID-19 positive; the process in Valley Central could include:

- Having administrators collaborate and coordinate with local health officials to make school closure and large event cancellation decisions.
- Establish a plan to close schools again for physical attendance of students, if necessary, based on public health guidance and in coordination with the local DOH. Establishing a decision-making tree at the District level.
- Develop a plan for continuity of education, medical and social services, meal programs, and establish alternate mechanisms for these to continue.
- Implement as needed short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. If this happens, CDC recommends the following procedures:
 - Closing off areas used by ill person(s) and locking off area(s); signage can also be used to ensure no one enters the area. If possible, wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Do not use the area(s) until cleaning and disinfection has taken place.
 - Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.

- Cleaning staff will clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill person(s), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
- Communicating as soon as possible with staff, parents and students through written documentation or phone calls.
- Using DOH guidance/procedures for when someone tests positive:
 - In consultation with the local DOH, a school official may consider whether school closure is warranted and period of time (prior to re-opening) based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local DOH.
 - Any room where a COVID-19 positive individual was based will be disinfected.
- Closing of schools could be a regional decision.
 - Seven metrics – NYS Dashboard
 - Schools will reopen if a region is in Phase IV and the daily infection rate remains below 5% using a 14-day average
 - Schools will close if the regional infection rate is greater than 9% using a 7-day average after August 1, 2020.
- Thresholds will be determined on a case-by-case basis dependent on the numbers (school closures may be a response).
- Buildings may consider closing if required cleaning products (bleach and water can be used as a cleaning product) and PPE are not available.

Social Distancing

To ensure all faculty, staff, students, and visitors comply with physical distancing requirements, anyone within Valley Central facilities will practice social distancing expectations:

- All individuals on Valley Central premises must maintain social distancing and wear face covering when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Proper social distancing is defined as a six (6) foot separation between individuals. When social distancing is practiced, such as in an isolated office or large meeting space, the individuals may remove their face covering, although it is recommended to keep it on. However in common areas, such as breakrooms, hallways or bathrooms, the face covering must be worn.
- Ensure six (6) foot distance between personnel, unless safety or core function of the work activity requires a shorter distance. Any time personnel are less than six (6) feet apart from one another, personnel must wear acceptable face coverings.

- Tightly confined spaces will be occupied by only one individual at a time, unless all occupants are wearing face coverings.
- Social distance separation will be using tape or signs that denote six (6) feet of spacing in commonly used and other applicable areas on the site (e.g., clock in/out stations, health screening stations, reception areas).
- In-person gatherings will be limited as much as possible and we will use tele- or video-conferencing whenever possible. In-person gatherings, such as meetings, will be held in open, well-ventilated spaces with appropriate social distancing among participants.
- Designated areas for pick-ups and deliveries will be established, limiting contact to the extent possible.

Personal Hygiene

Students and staff must practice good hand hygiene to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Schools will plan time in the school day schedule to allow for hand hygiene. To ensure all faculty, staff, and students comply with daily screening requirements, Valley Central will do the following:

- Hand hygiene includes:
 - Signage encouraging hand washing and correct techniques;
 - Traditional hand washing (with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds), which is the preferred method. This can be accomplished by singing or humming the happy birthday song twice;
 - Adequate facilities and supplies for hand washing including soap and water;
 - Use of paper towels or touch-free paper towel dispensers where feasible (hand dryers are not recommended as they can aerosolize germs);
 - Use of no-touch/foot pedal trash can where feasible;
 - Extra time in the schedule to encourage frequent hand washing/sanitizing.
- Students and staff should wash/sanitize hands as follows:
 - Upon entering the building and classrooms;
 - After sharing objects or surfaces;
 - 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;
 - Anytime hands are visibly soiled;
 - When handwashing is not available use a hand sanitizer
- Hand Sanitizer - At times when hand washing is not available, students and staff may use a hand sanitizer containing a minimum of 60% alcohol. It should be noted the sanitizers are flammable and students must be monitored and supervised when using these. Using hand sanitizers will include:

- Signage placed near sanitizer dispensers indicating soiled hands should be washed with soap and water;
- Placement of sanitizer dispensers located near entrances and throughout common areas.

Visitor Practices

No outside visitors will be allowed on school campuses, except for the health, safety and well-being of a student, and only with permission from administration.

Parents/guardians will report to the greeter's desk and not go beyond unless it is for the safety or well-being of their child, with permission from administration. All visitors must be wearing proper face covering prior to entering any building and it must be worn at all times when a six (6) foot social distance cannot be maintained. All visitors must check in at the greeter's desk for temperature screening and to fill out the COVID-19 Check-In Health Screening. Visitors will have restricted access to the building.

Vendor Practices

All vendors must be wearing proper face covering prior to entering any building and it must be worn at all times when a six (6) foot social distance cannot be maintained.

Vendors will access the entry designated by administration and have restricted access to the building. No vendor should access the building unless it is necessary for the completion of their job.

Training

Valley Central will train all personnel on new protocols and frequently communicate safety guidelines. Training on the precautions listed below will be conducted either remotely or in person. Social distancing and face coverings will be required for all participants if training is conducted in person. Training material is designed to be easy to understand and available in the appropriate language and literacy level for all workers.

Valley Central will ensure all students are taught or trained how to follow new COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene. Additional training will be provided in:

- Prevention of the spread of disease by staying home when they are sick.
- Proper respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- Avoiding the use of communal objects. If communal objects must be used, provide information on proper disinfection procedures between uses. Examples of communal objects include, but are not limited to, other workers' phones, desks, offices, computers or other devices, other work tools and equipment.
- Provide employees and students with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19.

- Risk factors and protective behaviors (i.e., cough etiquette and care of PPE).

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

Training for Screeners

Valley Central will identify individuals familiar with CDC, OSHA protocols, and DOH guidelines in each building who will be a trained screener. Screeners will wear appropriate employer-provided PPE.

Training topics for all staff and substitutes

- Proper hand washing: proper hand hygiene. Promote frequent and thorough hand washing by providing employees, the school community, and visitors with a place to wash their hands. If soap and running water are not immediately available, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol. Provide training on proper handwashing and hand sanitizer use
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
 - [Hand washing video](#)
- Proper cough and sneeze etiquette
- Social distancing
 - Provide training for faculty/staff on how to address close contact interactions with students as part of everyday job tasks.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>
- Operating procedures (various by building)
 - Entrance into the building
 - Cleaning procedures
 - Sick child pick up
 - Staff who are sick or suspected to be sick
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
- Proper cleaning techniques
 - Cleaning and disinfecting
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>
- Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Reopening_America_Guidance.pdf
- Hazard Communication – Right-To-Know
 - Proper use of chemicals and Safety Data sheets
 - <https://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/>
 - No chemicals from home
 - Transfer of hand sanitizer in smaller containers

- List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)
 - <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>
- Exposure Control Plan – with a focus on Pandemic/COVID-19
- Personal Protective Equipment - PPE
 - Proper type, use, and size
 - Cleaning and sanitizing of the face covering (if applicable)
 - Provide training for staff and students on wearing, putting on, removing and discarding PPE, including in the context of their current and potential duties
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>
- Use of face coverings (donning/doffing) (cloth vs. surgical)
 - [Face coverings don/doff video](#)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQxOc13DxvQ>
- Respirator Protection (N95 - required for identified employees per NYS)
 - Inclusive into your existing Respirator Protection Program or can be a separate Respirator Protection Program for medical staff only
 - Training provided for identified personnel only
- <https://oshareview.com/2020/04/osha-requirements-for-occupational-use-of-n95-respirators-in-healthcare/>

Signs and Messages

Signs will be posted in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) in various languages that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to effectively stop the spread of germs by properly washing hands and properly wearing a face covering.

When Students Eat in Classrooms

- We will train all staff on food allergies, including signs and symptoms of allergic reactions.

Space Design and Capacities

General Office Area

- All small offices will be limited to 50% the rated occupancy for the space.
- Where applicable all offices and small spaces will be limited to one (1) individual at a time.
- If in-person meetings are essential, Valley Central will ensure that face coverings are worn, social distancing protocol is followed, and gatherings take place in large open spaces.

Conference Rooms

- Valley Central will limit in-person meetings (refer to NYS guidance) if virtual meetings are not feasible.
- Social distancing and face coverings will be required by participants.
- Lingering and socializing before and after meetings will be discouraged.

Break Rooms and Lunch Rooms

- The number of people in break rooms must be limited to ensure social distancing can take place.
- Staff are advised to take their lunch and breaks in their private offices or classrooms, in their vehicles, or outside.
- Staggered break schedules may be utilized to assist with separation concerns.
- If staff wish to take breaks together, they must do so in a large space or outside, where at minimum six feet of separation can occur.
- Communal meals will not be provided to employees, and food will not be available in common areas where employees may congregate.

Copier Rooms/Areas

- Congregating in copier rooms/areas is discouraged.
- Cleaning supplies will be provided at copier stations.
- Staff are encouraged to wipe down touch surfaces post and prior use.

Elevators

- One person in an elevator at a time, unless a student or staff member is sick or injured, in which case they will be escorted by the nurse in appropriate PPE.
- Personnel must wear acceptable face coverings when in common use areas.
- Elevators will be frequently disinfected.

Restrooms

- The number of people in a bathroom will be limited to ensure social distancing can occur.
- In special circumstances where a student must be assisted in the use of the lavatory, the adult present must be wearing all applicable personal protective equipment including a face covering and when medically applicable, the student will be wearing a proper face covering as well.
- Automatic hand dryer use will be discontinued and replaced with touchless paper towel dispensers.

Hallways/Stairwells

- Face coverings must be worn in hallways and stairwells by all students and staff.
- Where feasible, hallway traffic may be limited to single flow direction.

- Where single flow is not applicable, bi-direction traffic will be permitted.
- Directional flow will be identified by indications on the floor/stairs.
- All individuals must also allow for adequate space between when traveling in the same direction.

Classrooms

- Occupancy in each classroom will be specific and determined based upon the overall square footage of the space.
- Each student, teacher and support staff will receive not less than six feet of separation from others.
- Additional considerations will be taken to account for space utilized for classrooms and teaching material.
- Overall class sizes will be reduced to accommodate all safety parameters.
- Students, teachers and support staff will be required to wear a proper face covering when social distancing cannot be obtained.
- Where possible, special area teachers and PPS staff will travel to the classroom to provide instruction.
- Restrict items in the classroom to that of obvious use.
 - Remove any unnecessary furniture.
 - Remove any soft surfaces that are difficult to disinfect such as:
 - Area rugs
 - Soft fabric chairs

Nurse Stations

- All students and staff are required to wear appropriate face coverings.
 - N95 Respirator use for nurses should be limited to situations of suspected COVID-19
 - Nurses must receive proper training and fitment of N95 Respirators prior to use.
- Where applicable, nurse stations have been reconfigured to:
 - Maintain social distancing of no less than 6ft.
 - Create “sick” and “well” zones.
 - Students that receive daily medication should be treated separately from students presenting with symptoms of illness.
 - Nebulizer treatments should be conducted in a separate isolated space with adequate fresh air circulation.
 - Physical separation will be achieved by utilizing:
 - Individual exam rooms
 - Polycarbonate barriers
 - Retractable dividing curtain walls.
- Isolation Room/s

- Individuals presenting with symptoms representative of COVID-19 will be immediately isolated to reduce risk of transmission.
- A separate room will be utilized where applicable.
- *Reference the Isolation Room/s section for additional information.*

Isolation Rooms

- Where applicable, separate, independent room/s with a door in close proximity to the exterior will be utilized for quarantining individuals who present with symptoms representative of COVID-19.
- Where excess space is not available, nurse's stations will be equipped with dividing curtains allowing for both a physical divide and at minimum six feet of separation.
- These rooms have been identified in each building.

Greeter Stations

Greeter stations will remain at all entrances of each building.

- Greeter stations will serve as the primary location for accounting for all individuals entering and exiting the building.
- Polycarbonate barriers will be installed to protect all individuals.
- Signage will be installed to indicate where visitors shall stand to maintain social distance requirements.
- Reception areas have had seating removed or adequately spaced to provide at minimum of six feet of separation.
- Frequently touched materials have been removed.

Computer Labs

- The use of shared space and equipment use will be limited where feasible.
- Blocks of computers will be sectioned off to ensure social distancing is maintained.
- Tables of computers will be reconfigured so as to not face each other or a polycarbonate barrier will be installed to create a physical barrier.
- Cleaning and disinfection of computer labs and keyboards will be frequent.
 - Keyboards will be wiped and disinfected before and after each use.
 - Keyboard covers may be utilized to aid in the cleaning and disinfection process.
- Students will be instructed to wash/sanitize hands prior to and after touching the keyboards along with other frequently touched surfaces.

Library Spaces

- The use of the library will be significantly limited.
- All soft covered surfaces that cannot be properly cleaned and disinfected have been removed.
 - Bean bag chairs
 - Upholstered couches or chairs
 - Area rugs
- All spaces have been reconfigured to ensure social distancing.
 - Tables will be limited to one individual at a time where applicable.
 - Desks will be arranged so as not to face one another.
- Directional traffic flow patterns will be created to ensure social distancing.

Engineering Controls

- Alcohol based hand sanitizer will be available.
- Water Fountains
 - As required by New York State Code, a potable water supply will be provided per 150 occupants, but not less than one source per floor.
 - Additional bottle filler stations will be installed where necessary.
 - These appliances will be routinely cleaned and disinfected as described in the Cleaning and Disinfection Section.
- Floor Demarcations
 - All entrances or areas of static wait have floor signage installed allotting for a minimum of six (6) feet of separation between all individuals
 - All corridor floors and stairway treads have been fitted with markings to indicate directional traffic flow and social distancing.
- Corridor doors will all be affixed open using electromagnetic hold-open devices to minimize the need to touch doors.

Ventilation

Valley Central will ensure sufficient ventilation and fresh air to all spaces of occupancy by means of:

- More frequent maintenance and inspection of the systems to mitigate extra strain on systems.
- More frequent filter replacement schedules.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Valley Central will ensure adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including “Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19,” and the “STOP THE SPREAD” poster, as applicable. Cleaning and disinfection logs will be maintained that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.

Examples of facilities where cleaning and disinfection frequency will be distinguished include:

- Bathrooms
- Athletic training rooms, locker rooms
- Health offices, isolation rooms
- Administrative offices (main office, reception area)
- Frequently touched surfaces in common areas (door handles, elevator buttons, copy machine keypads, etc.)
- Breakrooms
- Cafeterias/Kitchens
- Computer labs
- Science labs
- Classrooms
- Maintenance offices and work areas
- Buses, school vehicles
- Libraries
- Large meeting areas (auditoriums, gymnasiums, music rooms)
- Playgrounds (cleaning only)
- Outdoor seating areas (plastic or metal)

Students, faculty and staff will be trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, and such information will be provided to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home.

The District will provide and maintain hand hygiene stations around the school, as follows:

- For handwashing: soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.
- For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.
- Accommodations for students who cannot use hand sanitizer will be made.

Regular cleaning and disinfection of the facilities will occur, including more frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-risk and frequently touched surfaces. This will include desks and cafeteria tables, which will be cleaned and disinfected between each individual's use. Cleaning and disinfection will be rigorous and ongoing and will occur at least daily, or more frequently, as needed.

The District will ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use.

Disinfectants must be [products that meet EPA criteria for use against SARS-Cov-2](#), the virus that causes COVID-19, and be appropriate for the surface.

Contact Tracing

Public Health Officials assume the task of contact tracing, once notified.

To ensure the school District and its employees comply with contact tracing and disinfection requirements, Valley Central will do the following:

- Have a plan for cleaning, disinfection, and notifying Public Health in the event of a positive case. 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. A vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter will be used, if available.
- Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.

Closure Considerations

When a person has been identified (confirmed) or suspected to be COVID-19 positive; the process in Valley Central could include:

- Having administrators collaborate and coordinate with local health officials to make school closure and large event cancellation decisions.
- Establish a plan to close schools again for physical attendance of students, if necessary, based on public health guidance and in coordination with the local DOH. Establishing a decision-making tree at the District level.
- Develop a plan for continuity of education, medical and social services, meal programs, and establish alternate mechanisms for these to continue.
- Implement as needed short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. If this happens, CDC recommends the following procedures:
 - Closing off areas used by ill person(s) and locking off area(s); signage can also be used to ensure no one enters the area. If possible, wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Do not use the area(s) until cleaning and disinfection has taken place.
 - Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.

- Cleaning staff will clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill person(s), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
- Communicating as soon as possible with staff, parents and students.
- Using DOH guidance/procedures for when someone tests positive:
 - In consultation with the local DOH, a school official may consider whether school closure is warranted and period of time (prior to re-opening) based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local DOH.
 - Any room where a COVID 19 positive individual was based will be disinfected.
- Closing of schools could be a regional decision.
 - Seven metrics - NYS Dashboard
 - Schools will reopen if a region is in Phase IV and the daily infection rate remains below 5% using a 14-day average
 - Schools will close if the regional infection rate is greater than 9% using a 7-day average after August 1, 2020
- Thresholds will be determined on a case-by-case basis dependent on the numbers (school closures may be a response).
- Buildings may consider closing if required cleaning products (bleach and water can be used as a cleaning product) and PPE are not available.

Facilities

Ryan Schmidt (ryan.schmidt@vcsdny.org) is our Director of Facilities and oversees the facilities operations aspects of our Reopening Plan. In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection in the District, facilities operations will be geared toward meeting social distancing requirements and cleaning frequently touched spaces regularly. In carrying out projects or tasks supporting infection control, requirements will be met for changes associated with building spaces. Plans for changes or additions to facilities that require review by the Office of Facilities Planning (OFP), will be submitted to comply with the requirements of the 2020 New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (BC) and the State Energy Conservation Code.

The function, position and operation of stairs and corridor doors, which have closers with automatic hold opens (and are automatically released by the fire alarm system), will remain unchanged.

Valley Central plans to meet the deadline for submission of Building Condition Survey or Visual Inspections on time. In addition, lead in water sampling will be carried out upon the reopening of school under conditions consistent with when the building is “normally occupied.”

Upon reopening, the District plans to increase ventilation, to the greatest extent possible. Water systems will be flushed in buildings that have been unoccupied.

The following actions will be taken as needed:

- Drinking Water Facilities: Valley Central will reduce the number of drinking fountains available, in order to facilitate frequent cleaning. However, drinking fountains are a code required plumbing fixture.
- When utilizing tents, both temporary and permanent, Valley Central will submit a building permit application.

Emergency Response Protocols & Drills

The 2020-2021 school year will include hybrid models of the traditional school day. Emergency response drills, including evacuation and lockdown drills will be spread across the different student populations dependent on the day each population is present the day the drills are scheduled. Valley Central will partake in all drills that are a requirement of the New York State Education Department. Social distancing and or the use of face coverings will be utilized during all drills. **During any real emergency there will be a violation of the six (6) foot recommendation between people in order to protect life and safety.**

Child Nutrition

Eleanore Mills (eleanore.mills@vcsdny.org) is our School Lunch Manager and oversees all aspects of child nutrition in our Reopening Plan. All schools in Valley Central will follow SFA policies when communicating about school meal services, eligibility, options and changes in operations. All communications will be provided through a variety of communication methods including website, social media, emails, robo calls, newsletters, and regular mail and translated into the languages spoken by families.

Valley Central has identified Eleanore Mills as the contact person to receive and respond to communications from families and to school staff. Families will be reminded through food service communications during the summer and periodically during the school year that they can submit a new application for free and reduced-price meals any time during the school year. Applications are available from each school building, on our website, and in our calendar. Phone-in and in-person support to complete the application is available from our School Lunch Manager, Eleanore Mills.

School meals will continue to be available to all students, including those attending school in-person and those learning remotely. Valley Central will provide more information on how meals will be provided to those learning remotely before the start of the school year.

Meals Onsite

For students onsite, meals will be provided while maintaining appropriate social distancing between students. Students do not need to wear face coverings when seated and eating so long as they are appropriately socially distanced.

Elementary Level

Students will go through the serving line wearing masks and socially distanced. All items that they choose will be handed to them. Their swipe cards will be collected and disinfected at the end of the session and returned to the classroom. Elementary students will eat in their classrooms.

Middle/High Schools

The district will ensure social distancing between individuals while eating in the school cafeteria. If not feasible, meals may be served in alternate areas or in staggered meal periods to ensure social distancing and proper cleaning and disinfection between students.

Students will go through the serving line wearing masks and socially distanced. All items they choose will be handed to them. Lunch will be served in the cafeteria and breakfasts will be taken to the classroom.

The sharing of food and beverages (e.g., buffet-style meals, snacks) is prohibited. Adequate space will be reserved for students, faculty, and staff to observe social distancing while eating meals

Meals served while students are learning online or remotely

Meals will still be available to students who are learning online or remotely. There will be links on every school webpage to place an order. Orders must be received by 9:00 AM. Payment will be made online. Meals will be delivered curbside near the school building's cafeteria.

This same system will be in place in the event that all learning returns to remote or online.

Transportation

Brad Conklin (brad.conklin@vcsdny.org) is our Business Official and oversees the transportation aspects of our Reopening Plan. Valley Central will conduct transportation activities that are consistent with state-issued public transit guidance and NYSED School Reopening guidelines. Students and bus company staff must wear acceptable

face coverings at all times on school buses (e.g., entering, exiting, and seated) and should maintain appropriate social distancing.

Students who are able will be required to wear masks and social distance on the bus to the extent practicable; however, students whose physical or mental health would be impaired are not required to wear a face covering, but must be appropriately socially distanced. Members of the same household may be seated within six feet of each other. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to drop off or walk students to school to reduce density on buses.

All buses that are used every day by districts and contract carriers will be cleaned/disinfected once a day. High contact areas will be wiped down after the morning (AM) and afternoon (PM) run depending upon the disinfection schedule.

School buses shall not be equipped with hand sanitizer due to its combustible composition and potential liability to the carrier or district. School bus drivers, monitors and attendants must not carry personal bottles of hand sanitizer with them on school buses.

Wheelchair school buses will configure wheelchair placement to ensure social distancing of six feet.

Whether school is in session remotely or otherwise, pupil transportation will be provided to nonpublic, parochial, private, charter schools or students with Individualized Education Plans that have placed them out of district whose schools are providing in-person instruction.

All students are entitled to transportation by the District to the extent required by law. Transportation departments do not have the ability or the right to deny transportation for children who are in foster care, homeless or attend private or charter schools. Parents who may have missed the due date to request out of district transportation due to a reasonable excuse may file a Section 310 appeal with the Commissioner of Education.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Refer to the cleaning standard operating procedures guidance for further information.

- Buses and other transportation vehicles will be cleaned and disinfected daily (focus on high touch areas) and in between runs if scheduled for multiple routes. At the end of the day the entire bus will be cleaned and disinfected.
- *Daily Cleaning*
 - All trash removed
 - Floors swept and dust mopped
 - Walls and windows cleaned

- *High Touch Surfaces*
 - Bus seats and seat backs
 - Seat belts
 - Door handles, handrails
 - Driver operator area
- Cleaning and disinfecting products approved by the EPA will be used according to instructions.
- Eating and drinking will be prohibited on the bus.
- Buses will be inspected to ensure cleaning/disinfecting protocols are followed on district owned and contracted buses.
- All cleanings/inspections will be documented (via trackable log).

Bus protocols for a reported case of COVID-19 on a school bus

Brad Conklin, School Business Official, will be notified. The District will then notify building administration and a plan will be implemented to contact parents of students on that bus.

Bus will be taken out of service for 24 hours before the bus can be used again after a report of COVID-19. Bus will be disinfected following CDC guidelines.

Students on Transportation

- As was outlined in the Health and Safety section of this guidance, all parents/guardians will be required to ensure their child/children are not experiencing any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and do not have a fever of 100 degrees or more prior to them boarding their method of transportation to school;
- Students must wear a mask on a school bus if they are physically able. Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering, including students where such covering would impair their physical health or mental health are not subject to the required use of a face covering;
- Students must social distance (six (6) feet separation) on the bus;
- Students who do not have a mask cannot be denied transportation;
- Students who do not have masks must be provided one by the district;
- Students with a disability which would prevent them from wearing a mask will not be compelled to do so or denied transportation.

Training (Office Personnel, Drivers, Mechanics, Aides) – Orange County Transit

- Hazard Communication/Right-To-Know (annual)
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Exposure Control/Bloodborne Pathogen (BBP)
- COVID Awareness

- New cleaning protocols (buses, transportation center)
- Handwashing
- Face Covering (sizing, use, wear and care)
- Personal health and hygiene
- Special working conditions with face coverings (strenuous activity)

Required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – Orange County Transit

- Disposable gloves
- Face Covering/Mask
- Face Shield (if applicable)

Transportation Communication

- Valley Central will emphasize to parents and students prior to reopening schools that the District has thoroughly disinfected all buses and student transportation vehicles.
- Valley Central will communicate with parents and students that student transportation vehicles are included in the District’s COVID-19 plans and what part students and parents will play in ensuring safety and minimizing infection while utilizing District transportation services.
- Advise parents not to send their children to school or board the bus if sick or with an elevated temperature.
- Survey parents regarding transportation including an “opt-out” option.
- Communicate with administration multiple routing scenarios for different instructional scheduling options (split session, alternating days, hybrid option).

Density Reduction, Social Distancing, Bus Capacity

- Seat one student per seat, all students wearing masks. (*Source: National Council on School Facilities and Cooperative Strategies*).
 - This results in approximately 22 students on a 66-passenger bus
- Allow siblings or those that live in the same household to sit together.
- Place floor decals or tape to indicate where students should sit and to mark six (6) foot distances in aisles.
- Sneeze guards to protect the driver.
- Do not seat students directly behind the driver.
- Students shall wear face masks (if required) while in transit when social distancing is not possible.

Routing

- Valley Central has developed multiple routing scenarios for regular schedule and alternating days.
- Limit rotation of substitute drivers and aides if possible.

- Student movement between bus routes will be limited.

Loading/Unloading & Pickup/Drop-off

- Students will be loaded in sequential route order. First student on the bus sits in the back when going to school and the last student off the bus sits in the back when going home from school.
- Dismissal times will be staggered to best suit building needs and to promote social distancing.
- Adjustments will be made by buildings:
 - For unloading and entry, and loading and departure.
 - Route timing which will be affected by delayed loading/unloading processes.
 - Arrival and departure activities shall be supervised to ensure social distancing.
- Will add or modify bus routes to reduce load levels on buses.

Transporting to BOCES

- Valley Central will be transporting to and from BOCES and will follow similar protocols as previously described.
- Valley Central will keep a log of attendees on the trip in both directions from the BOCES building. Upon request, schools may need to supply the log of passengers in addition to cleaning logs in the event BOCES must assist in contact tracing due to exposures either at the BOCES buildings, or during transportation.

Social Emotional Well-Being

Georgia Patchen (georgia.patchen@vcsdny.org) is our Assistant Director of Special Education and oversees the social and emotional aspects of our Reopening Plan. Valley Central is committed to prioritizing social emotional well-being - not at the expense of academics, but in order to create the mental, social and emotional space to access rigorous academic content with confidence. The following supports will be provided to students, families and staff by our school psychologists and our student assistance counselors.

Student Supports

Valley Central school psychologists and student assistance counselors will:

- Assist with facilitation of classroom guidance on social distance practices in school.

- Check in with emotionally fragile students as they return to school to assess level of functioning. Conduct home visits as needed following social distance guidelines and wearing of protective gear such as masks.
- Provide individual counseling to students who express fears, loss, anxiety and/or signs of depression by providing age-appropriate stress management and coping strategies. **FOR SIGNS OF DEPRESSION, SUICIDAL THOUGHTS AND/OR PRESENTING AS DANGER TO OTHERS, PLEASE CONDUCT RISK ASSESSMENT AND FOLLOW NORMAL SCHOOL YEAR PROTOCOLS.**
- Refer students to outside counseling as needed. If a student attends private outpatient counseling, obtain consent to coordinate services with outpatient provider to support students and their families.
- Identify student needs for food and shelter. Provide assistance through community resources and through Valley Central Programs (Backpack Snack Attack, Food Pantry).

Family Supports

Valley Central school psychologists and student assistance counselors will:

- Provide information to families on District and Building Reopening Plans.
- Assist families with fears about allowing their children to return to school. Share resources on signs and symptoms of anxiety and depression. Assist with referrals to community agencies as needed.
- Make contact with identified families that require assistance with obtaining outpatient appointments for their children, food, shelter and clothing.
- Conduct home visits following social distance guidelines and wearing protective gear such as masks.

Staff Supports

Valley Central school psychologists and student assistance counselors will:

- Assist with facilitation of professional development on signs and symptoms of anxiety, depression, and lack of student motivation.
- Assist with supporting readjustment period for new school schedule and social distance guidelines. Provide assistance and guidance with classroom behaviors.
- Visit classrooms to observe signs of stress and anxiety in the adults. Discuss concerns with administration. **ADMINISTRATION SHOULD CONTACT HUMAN RESOURCES FOR REFERRAL TO EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AS NEEDED.**

Additionally, all Valley Central employees have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which offers many free services including face-to-face and virtual counseling. Information about all social-emotional supports will be made widely available to the Valley Central community through our website. We are committed to

developing/making accessible family/caregiver-appropriate social and emotional learning (SEL) content to be used during all phases of our re-entry.

School Schedules

All Valley Central Students will be separated into two teams: Team 1 and Team 2. Hybrid Instruction will be a combination of in-person at 50% capacity, remote learning and online learning.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Team 1	In-person	Remote	On-line	In-person	Remote
Team 2	Remote	In-person	On-line	Remote	In-person

Special Education (12:1:1, 6:1:2, 8:1:2, Life Skills) and ALC will attend five days a week.

Students will also be given the option of All Online Instruction.

Calendar

Our school calendar has been modified this year to allow for three conference days before the start of school. An updated calendar can be found at <https://www.vcsd.k12.ny.us/calendar/>. The District acknowledges the challenges that our teachers and staff have faced delivering remote instruction under stressful circumstances. These three conference days will focus on providing support to staff in the areas of social-emotional health, racial equity and technology integration. The first day of school is Friday, September 4th for all students and will be virtual for all.

Attendance, Attendance Reporting and Chronic Absenteeism

Attendance and Attendance Reporting

The District will continue to follow its established attendance policies. All schools will monitor daily attendance and/or required daily scheduled student contact and engagement regardless of the format of instruction being used throughout the school year. Attendance policies and procedures will be communicated with families and students prior to the start of the school year, or if the instructional model changes during the year, and will be recorded daily in SchoolTool. Reports will be generated to identify students who are absent and/or chronically absent and contact will be made with their

families to determine reasons for absence and needs or barriers the student may have to participate in school.

Chronic Absenteeism

Valley Central is committed to partnering with parents and guardians in addressing attendance issues and providing interventions to prevent chronic absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism, which includes both excused and unexcused absences, is defined as missing 18+ days per school year. While we recognize that many factors will influence student attendance, it is the expectation that parents and guardians will keep the school informed of any circumstances impacting their child's ability to attend and/or participate in school, so that we may work together to develop solutions. It should be noted that the District is obligated to notify and collaborate with outside agencies when students are chronically absent.

Technology and Connectivity

Christopher Mohr (christopher.mohr@vcsdny.org) is our Director of Technology and oversees the technical aspects of our Reopening Plan. Access to technology is essential for the successful roll-out of this plan. Valley Central has been committed to ongoing planning and implementation of District technologies to ensure equitable access for staff and students. Valley Central has increased its total internet bandwidth to continue to support the increased use of remote learning. The team has initiated plans that are mindful of student home access to reliable internet and computers.

1. Valley Central recently gathered data and asked teachers and families to identify their level of access to devices and high-speed broadband from their residence. We provided Chromebooks and/or hotspots to all families that requested such devices. The District will continue to assess the ongoing needs of our families for technology and connectivity (survey, interviews, school outreach, etc.) In the event students and/or teachers do not have access, the District will take the necessary steps to meet their needs where possible.
2. Conduct and/or maintain an inventory of equipment and other assets.
 - a. Identify which students, families, and staff have District assets in their possession.
3. Procure, manage and/or maintain hardware, software, licenses, learning management systems, etc. to support and improve virtual instruction and student engagement.
4. Identify professional learning needs for teachers and continue to support their development of skills and pedagogy in a virtual learning environment.

5. Arrange a “Helpdesk” system for parents/students/teachers to report technical issues that might be experienced during remote learning. Communicate protocols to these stakeholders to inform them in advance of how to gain assistance in such cases.

Valley Central will provide all students with access to learning materials and resources in multiple formats, when possible. Further, the District will support teachers through professional development and coaching on pedagogical methods that enable students to participate in multiple ways, so that they can demonstrate mastery of Learning Standards in remote or blended models through the use of both synchronous (i.e. Google Meet or other web conferencing tool) and asynchronous technologies (i.e. Google Classroom or other learning platforms). The District will also schedule opportunities to connect with families to educate them on how to use the technologies and connect to the instructional activities.

Teaching and Learning

Marianne Serratore (marianne.serratore@vcsdny.org) is our Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. She, along with the building principals, oversees the teaching and learning aspects our Reopening Plan. In an effort to assure high-quality teaching and learning, a continuity of learning plan has been developed for the 2020-2021 school year. This plan considers and plans for teaching and learning in-person, remotely, and through hybrid models of instruction. Our plan assures that instruction is aligned with the New York State Learning Standards and assures equity, as well as quality, for all learners.

Hybrid Learning Model

Valley Central has chosen a hybrid learning model that will include both in-person instruction, remote instruction and online instruction. Although this is not an ideal plan, when compared to a normal school year, it will allow Valley Central to provide for adequate social distancing and also provide in-person instruction during this difficult and complicated time. Students will begin with two days a week of in-person instruction and three days of on-line/remote instruction. If the COVID-19 situation improves, we will move to three days of in-person instruction and then eventually to full time in-person instruction. Alternatively, if the COVID-19 situation worsens, we will move to a full on-line teaching model. It is expected the State will provide benchmarks for making such decisions.

The decision to adopt a hybrid learning plan was made by the Valley Central Reopening Task Force after weighing data collected from the recent Reopening Schools Surveys and reviewing New York State guidance documents.

- All K-12 students will be divided into two teams: Team 1 and Team 2. Families will all be kept together. A-L will be Team 1 and M-Z will be Team 2, with accommodations being made for blended families. Please contact the building principals if you have questions in regard to the teams.
- **Team 1** will attend school in-person on Monday and Thursday. They will be provided with remote learning on Tuesday and Friday.
- **Team 2** will attend school in-person on Tuesday and Friday. They will be provided with remote learning on Monday and Thursday.
- The formulation of these team days will ensure that students will experience in-person, direct instruction from teachers that will be interrupted for not more than four consecutive days, including weekends, while school is in session.
- All students will engage in online learning on Wednesdays following a regular schedule while at home.
- Self-Contained (12:1:1, 8:1:2, 6:1:2, Life Skills, Viking Academy and ALC students) will be provided with five days of in person instruction.
- Students and staff will be grouped together in such a way that cohorts will intermingle as seldom as possible.
- Students and staff will observe standard social distancing, including the wearing of masks throughout the school day, as per State guidelines.
- Families eligible under State guidelines will be provided with the choice of five days a week remote/online learning. If a parent chooses the option for five days a week of remote/online instruction for the first quarter/trimester, they must provide the District with written notice if they would like to make a change in the second quarter/trimester.

A team of K-12 teachers worked collaboratively to create the Valley Central Framework for Hybrid Instruction. This framework will ensure consistency in instruction across the Valley Central School District.

Equity is at the heart of all school instructional decisions. All instruction in our District will be designed so there are clear, comprehensive, and accessible learning opportunities for all students. Such opportunities will be aligned with state standards. Our plan is centered on instruction and academic programming that includes regular and substantive interaction with an appropriately certified teacher regardless of the delivery method.

Our teaching and learning plan includes a clear communication plan for how students and their families/caregivers can contact the school and teachers with questions about their instruction and/or technology. This information will be accessible to all, widely disseminated, and include clear and multiple ways for students and families to contact schools and teachers in an effort to assure learning for all.

As we enter the new school year, teachers will be encouraged to spend time building relationships, supporting students with the transition back to school, and teaching social distancing etiquette at developmentally appropriate levels.

Assessing student learning gaps or areas of need will be critical. Formative assessment before a unit of instruction to assess student understanding of pre-requisite skills will be common practice.

Acknowledging that the typical content in a given grade level or course may need to be adjusted, content will be prioritized to ensure that students receive instruction for the prioritized learning standards, key understandings, and skills necessary for students' success in future study.

In-person Instruction

In-person instruction will occur at school with 50% capacity. The learning experience will be standards-based and will include high quality rigorous instructional opportunities and experiences. Social distancing protocol will be followed.

Remote Instruction

This instruction will include meaningful experiences such as independent work, group work, completing online tasks, conducting research, completing projects and viewing instructional videos. The work assigned will be standards based.

Online Instruction

Online Instruction will be done at home with a greater degree of live instruction, with interactions taking place between the teacher and students. The online instruction will be standards based and will include high quality, rigorous instructional opportunities. Online Instruction will also follow a set schedule, similar to the in-person school day.

Grading

Grading practices will follow a standards-based framework designed to provide direct feedback regarding students' mastery of course content. Teachers will provide students with feedback on all academic work and will provide numerical grades in the secondary schools and standards based/behavior grades in the elementary schools. Progress reports and report cards will be completed and shared with parents/guardians and students, as per the report card schedule.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

While planning for CTE instruction, whether in-person, remote or hybrid models, Valley Central has collaborated with Orange-Ulster BOCES to ensure high school instructional plans are aligned. OU BOCES has developed models that ensure NYS Learning Standards, applicable industry certification requirements, clinical and work based learning hours have been met. In addition, their plans follow all NYSDOH health and safety guidelines and social distancing.

Pre- K

Tammy Coleman (tammy.coleman@vcsdny.org) is the Director of Data/Testing and UPK and oversees our Universal Pre-K program. As a District that provides half-day and full-day UPK, we attest that we have measures in place to ensure the CBOs we contract with will follow health and safety guidelines outlined in the NYSED guidance and required by the NYSDOH. Valley Central will also ensure that the CBOs with full-day classes have provided a Continuity of Learning plan to the District; this Continuity of Learning plan will be aligned to the Prekindergarten standards and will also address in-person, remote and hybrid models of instruction.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

William Miller (william.miller@vcsdny.org) is our Director of Physical Education and Health. He oversees our Reopening Plan in regard to athletics and physical education.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, districts have delayed the fall sports start date until Monday, September 21. With NYS approval for the opening of schools in September and with appropriate social distancing, PPE usage, and cleaning and disinfection of equipment, the following will be implemented:

- Cancel NYS Fall Regional and State Championship events
- Waive seven-day practice rule to enable greater opportunities for local participation
- Maintain current practice requirements
- Encourage geographic scheduling for games and contests
- Schools would have the option, if permitted by state officials, to offer off-season conditioning workouts

Additional guidance can be found in the *Roadmap for Return to Interscholastic Athletics* at: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZG2vP_2hG-PZb5jfYYJfvrK8VgQYhv6Y4AT9Q1Wb42M/edit?usp=sharing

If the fall sports season is interrupted or impacted by COVID-19 crisis (i.e. state official guidance, school closings, cancelation of high-risk sports, etc.) then a condensed

seasons plan will be implemented. This plan takes into consideration the competitive and interactive aspects of each sport and would include the following, with the stipulated dates being tentative.

- **Season I** (Winter Sports)
 - Dates: Jan. 4-Mar. 13 (Week 27-36) Ten Weeks
 - *Note: tentative dates Sports: basketball (girls & boys), bowling (girls & boys), gymnastics, ice hockey (girls & boys), indoor track & field (girls & boys), skiing (girls & boys), swimming (boys), *wrestling, *competitive cheer. * Because of the high risk nature of wrestling and competitive cheer, sports may have to be moved to Season II or Season III.
- **Season II** (Fall Sports)
 - Dates: Mar. 1-May 8 (Week 35-44) Ten Weeks
 - *Note: tentative dates Sports: football, cross country (girls & boys), field hockey, soccer (girls & boys), swimming (girls), volleyball (girls & boys), unified bowling. Note: Weather will have an impact upon outdoor sports in some parts of the State in March and potentially early April. Girls tennis moved to Season III.
- **Season III** (Spring Sports)
 - Dates: Apr. 5-Jun. 12 (Week 40-49) Ten Weeks
 - *Note: tentative dates Sports: baseball, softball, golf (girls & boys), lacrosse (girls & boys), tennis (girls & boys), outdoor track & field (girls & boys), unified basketball.

Extracurricular Activities

All extracurricular activities/clubs will be provided remotely until further notice. There will be no in person assemblies. Google Meet will be used to address large groups of students simultaneously.

Special Education

Barbara Butler (barbara.butler@vcsdny.org) is our Director of Special Education and oversees all aspects of Special Education and ENL in our Reopening Plan. The Valley Central Reopening Plan provides a framework to ensure that all students with disabilities continue to have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living in the least restrictive environment (LRE). In consideration of the health, safety, and well-being of students, families, and staff, our plan is designed to enable transitioning between in-person, remote, and hybrid learning environments to ensure the provision of FAPE consistent with the changing health and safety conditions that exist.

Special education programs and services of Valley Central provide equity and access for students with disabilities to be involved in and to participate and progress in the general education curriculum with access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique disability related needs of students. While not all formats allow for maximum benefit to students, these programs and services can be provided in all formats (live-person, hybrid, or remote). Valley Central will document the programs and services offered and provided to students with disabilities, as well as the communications with parents in their preferred language and mode of communication. The District will ensure access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique disability related needs of students.

Valley Central is committed to providing meaningful parent engagement in the parent's preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of services to his/her child to meet the requirements of the IDEA. Further, we will maintain regular communication with the parents/guardians to ensure that they are engaged in their children's education during the reopening process. Parent counseling and training will continue monthly and will be conducted remotely.

Valley Central will plan and support collaboration between the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) and Committee on Special Education (CSE) and program providers representing the variety of settings where students are served to ensure there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on individualized education programs (IEPs), plans for monitoring and communicating student progress, and commitment to sharing resources.

Valley Central will maintain records to document the implementation of each IEP. The documentation will include, but will not be limited to: progress notes, progress monitoring, formative assessment, standardized assessment, attendance records and the provision of any mandated compensatory services during the 2020-21 school year.

Vulnerable Students with Special Needs:

Some special needs students who are medically fragile may not be able to maintain social distancing, hand or respiratory hygiene, or wear a face covering or mask. It is important for parents/ guardians to work with their child's healthcare providers and the school nurse located at the student's school so that an informed decision can be made on how best to meet the child's needs at school while protecting their health and safety. As these students transition back to the school environment, our school health personnel will plan and coordinate with the following so that a healthy transition is made:

- teaching/related service staff
- special education administration

- building administration

Students who have family members who are in high risk groups may also need to attend school remotely.

Additional PPE for staff caring for such students will be provided on a case-by-case basis. Staffing assignments will be examined to provide the lowest teacher-to-student ratios possible.

ENL and World Languages

Valley Central provides world language instruction in Spanish and French 7-12, Italian 9-12 and English as a New Language (ENL) instruction for ELLs/MLLs K-12.

Support of English Language Learners (ELLs) will be comprehensive, high-quality, and culturally responsive. If we reopen using in-person or hybrid instruction, we will complete the ELL identification process within thirty school days of the start of the school year for all students who enrolled during COVID-19 school closures in 2019-20, as well as all students who enroll during the summer of 2020 and during the first twenty school days of the 2020-21 school year. After this twenty day flexibility period, identification of ELLs will resume for all students within the required ten school days of initial enrollment, as required by Commissioner's Regulations Part 154.

Valley Central is committed to comprehensive, high-quality, and culturally responsive instruction for ENL students. We will provide the required instructional Units of Study to all ELLs based on their most recently measured English language proficiency level during in-person or hybrid instruction. Further, we will maintain regular communication with the parents/guardians of ELLs to ensure that they are engaged in their children's education during the reopening process which includes telephone contact, emails and regular mail in their preferred language. We will provide all communications for parents/guardians of ELLs in their preferred language and mode of communication. We utilize OU BOCES regional translation service to assist with translation services. This service can translate live conversations as well as documents.

Valley Central will provide professional learning opportunities for our District that support best practices and equitable instruction for ELLs as well as general education students to help address learning gaps caused by the COVID-19 school closures. The District also has access to the OU BOCES Professional Learning Catalog to support teachers to ensure ENL and world language instruction is personalized and research-based.

In order to ensure that students have opportunities to study world languages we are prepared to teach Italian, Spanish, and French in the live in-person, hybrid, or remote

format upon reopening. With the support of OUBOCES, we will provide professional learning opportunities to our District that support best practices in all three formats of instruction, and cover equitable instruction for our ELLs, SWDs, and general education students who are studying world languages such as Italian, Spanish, or French to help address learning gaps caused by the COVID-19 school closures.

Our District will support our students as they work towards earning the New York States Seal of Biliteracy. We will collaborate with OUBOCES to provide Seal of Biliteracy professional learning. As well, OUBOCES will support assessment options and provide translators for NYS Seal of Biliteracy presentations.

Through using our District and BOCES resources, we are well prepared to reopen our schools and serve ELLs, MLLs, and students learning world languages as they expand their skills, knowledge, and facilities with languages.

Staffing

Teacher and Principal Evaluation System

All teachers and principals will continue to be evaluated pursuant to the District's approved APPR plan. Valley Central will consider whether their currently approved APPR plans may need to be revised in order to be consistent with their plans for re-opening under an in-person, remote or hybrid instructional model. School leaders will continue to attend annually required Lead Evaluator training.

Certification, Incidental Teaching and Substitute Teaching

All teachers will hold valid and appropriate certificates for teaching assignment, except where otherwise allowable under the Commissioner's regulations (e.g., incidental teaching) or Education Law.

Student Teachers

Student teachers from NYSED registered college or university programs can serve under the supervision of fully certified teachers in Valley Central. Student teachers will follow all of the social distancing, mask wearing, health status reporting, and other COVID-19 procedures that the teachers follow. Student teachers will serve under the supervision of our full-time certified teachers only. At no time will a student teacher be used as a teacher of record.

Vulnerable Populations

The unknown vulnerabilities of our faculty and staff will be handled on a case-by-case basis with support from our Human Resources department. Accommodations, where appropriate, will be provided when and where needed. Faculty and staff will be trained

in vulnerabilities outlined in guidance provided by the State Education Department and are asked to notify their supervisor with questions and concerns.

Key References

- [State Education Department Issues Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 16, 2020)
- [State Education Department Presents Framework of Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 13, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, NYS Department of Health](#) (July 13, 2020)

Additional References

- [Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)
- (June 26, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Food Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.](#)
- (June 26, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Office-Based Work during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.](#)
- (June 26, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Public Transportation Activities during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.](#) (June 26, 2020)
- [New York State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [New York State Education Department Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19 Website](#)