



VOORHEES TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT PLAN

Safe Return Plan: December 1, 2021



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****Special acknowledgements to all the committee & community members who contributed to the successful development of the Voorhees Township Safe Return Plan.***

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INTRODUCTION

As the state begins to transition to the new normal, the expectation is that the Voorhees Township School District will operate in-person 5 days a week for full days of instruction. As we transition to full days of in-person instruction, students' health, wellness, and safety will be a primary concern.

PURPOSE

This plan serves as the reopening guidance for the Voorhees Township School District. This plan does not replace or supersede any laws or policies; it simply serves to assist in addressing additional concerns, challenges, and considerations specific to reopening with new guidelines in place.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

In order to effectively plan, the demographics of the Voorhees Township School District must be considered. Currently, there are 2,946 students in the District. Of those students, 555 are eligible for Special Education. There are a total of 97 English Language Learners. The District also has approximately 347 students eligible for either free or reduced meals.

PREPARATION AND FORMULATION OF THE PLAN

Countless hours were put into the preparation and formulation of the Voorhees Township School District's plan to reopen in September. This was a collaborative endeavor that involved many individuals including parents, community members, and staff providing input, guidance, and insight to formulate one comprehensive Plan. All parties involved in the preparation and formulation of the Plan, including, but not limited to, the Superintendent of Schools, School Business Administrator, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Supervisor of Special Education, Supervisor of Special Projects, individual Board Members, District Administrators including building Principals, other Administrative employees, Members of the Building and District Crisis Response Team, School Counselors, School Nurses, Members of the Child Study Team, Teachers, and any other Employees of the District involved shall be considered to have been acting in the course of the performance of the duties of their position when assisting in preparing, creating, and formulating the Voorhees Township School District's plan to return in September of 2021 to the *New Normal*.

It is the intention of those involved in the formulation of the Plan that same would meet the “Anticipated Minimum Standards” set by the New Jersey Department of Education. While the District intends to adhere to the Plan as much as practicable, the District and all parents/students must also recognize that, due to the ever evolving nature of State statutes and executive and administrative guidance, the within Plan is subject to change in the event there is legislation and/or executive guidance that should render any portion of the Plan impracticable and/or impossible. In the event the District finds that any portion of the within Plan is impracticable and/or impossible to effectuate, any such portions of the Plan are also subject to change.

Although every reasonable effort will be made to present current and accurate information within the Plan, there is no guarantee that the information contained within the Plan is either current and/or accurate in light of the fluid and malleable nature school Districts have been required to adopt in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, the Voorhees School District shall not be responsible for any damages, incidental or consequential or otherwise, arising from adherence to and/or necessary deviations from the Plan. Permitting one’s child to physically attend school in the District and/or the entering upon school property by any other individual shall be conditioned upon and done so with the express understanding that all student(s), parent(s) and/or guardian(s), and any other individuals entering upon school property have reviewed this Plan and acknowledges that the Plan is acceptable.

REOPENING CONSIDERATIONS AND RESPONSE

Communication

The Superintendent will work to ensure all information regarding the District’s reopening plan is communicated to the school community. The plan will be posted on the district website, which is ADA compliant. Following the posting of the plan on the District’s website, public comment will take place during the June 14, 2021 Board of Education meeting. Should parents or community members need assistance accessing the plan or need translation services, they should contact the Superintendent. All feedback will be considered before the plan is submitted to the Department of Education on or before June 24, 2021.

Pandemic Response Teams

During the pandemic outbreak, the following teams were created:

- Crisis Response Team (in the event of traumatic loss during the pandemic)
 - Superintendent of Schools
 - School Business Administrator

- o Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
- o Supervisor of Special Education
- o District administration and staff as deemed necessary
- o Members of the Building and District Crisis Response Team
- o School Counselors
- o School Nurses
- o Members of the Child Study Team and Counseling Department
- Curriculum Planning Team
 - o Superintendent of Schools
 - o Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
 - o Supervisors, Assistant Principals, and Principals
 - o Teacher Resource Specialists K – 12
 - o Classroom Teachers
- Special Education Planning Team
 - o Supervisor of Special Education
 - o CST Members
 - o Guidance Counselors
 - o Principals
- Communications Team
 - o Superintendent of Schools
 - o Supervisor of Special Projects
 - o Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent
- Operations Team
 - o Director of Building and Grounds
 - o School Business Administrator
 - o Transportation Coordinator
 - o Food Services/Nutri-serve
 - o Payroll and Accounts Payable
 - o Director of Technology
- Security Team
 - o School Police Officers
 - o Supervisor of Special Projects
 - o Building Principals
- School Pandemic Response Team
 - o School Safety Committee
 - o School Crisis Team
 - o Building Principal
 - o Custodian

The Pandemic Response Team is responsible for:

- Overseeing each school's implementation of the District's reopening plan, particularly health and safety measures, and providing safety and crisis leadership.
- Adjusting or amending school health and safety protocols as needed.
- Providing staff with needed support and training.
- Reviewing school level data regarding health and safety measures and the presence of COVID-19 and reporting that data to the District as required.
- Developing and implementing procedures to foster and maintain safe and supportive school climates as necessitated by the challenges posted by COVID-19.
- Providing necessary communications to the school communities and to the District.
- Creating pathways for community, family, and student voices to continuously inform the Team's decision-making.

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING

Requirements to Reopen

The State of New Jersey has provided guidance to districts to prepare to reopen schools in September for in-person instruction 5 days a week full time. There will not be a provision for students to receive full time remote learning. Students with medical needs who are unable to attend school in-person will be provided homebound instruction in compliance with policies and regulations. Should students need to quarantine due to COVID-19 they will be permitted to receive instruction remotely.

Scheduling

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has mandated that school districts' reopening plans must account for resuming in-person instruction. Scheduling decisions will be informed by careful evaluation of the health and safety standards and the most up-to-date guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), as well the stakeholder input on the needs of all students and the realities of the District.

Building schedules will resume to 5 days a week of in-person instruction. Students will no longer have the option for remote learning. Students will eat lunch in school and CDC guidelines will be followed to ensure students' safety during lunch periods. If social distancing is required, some students will eat lunch in their classrooms and additional staff will be utilized to supervise students in the cafeteria and in the classrooms as needed. Partitions will be used on desks and cafeteria tables.

Currently, the NJDOE is requiring students to return to in-person instruction beginning September of 2021. However, should the NJDOE require school districts to pivot to fully virtual

and hybrid learning models, plans will be in place to accommodate a safe learning environment for students and staff. These three options will serve as the foundation for the development of a strategic plan for delivering instruction to students in alignment with the following core guiding principles:

- Lead with the health, safety, and wellness of students and staff as the top priority.
- Maintain the continuity of learning.
- Facilitate equity and ease of access to communications and resources.
- Flexibly accommodate the needs and varying circumstances of all learners.

The NJDOE has recognized that a one-size fits all plan to accommodate hybrid or remote learning is neither feasible, nor appropriate, and has committed to supporting school leaders in developing their plans to reopen schools.

General Guidelines for Safety, Health, and Wellness

In all stages and phases of pandemic response and recovery, schools must comply with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state, and local guidelines. Schools must also provide reasonable accommodations for staff and students at higher risk for severe illness and promote behaviors that reduce spread, such as social distancing, frequent hand washing, and the use of face coverings.

Basic physical safety needs

- Social and emotional strategies will be incorporated to support student and staff safety, health, and wellness.
- Develop protocols for social distancing on buses and ensure that students understand social distancing best practices while awaiting pickup at bus stops.
- Create contingency plans, as needed, for considering the needs of medically vulnerable students, staff, and learners with special needs when developing plans for in-person instruction.
- Develop plans to pivot to all virtual learning, if required, to ensure a smooth transition and ensure students and staff have everything they need to transition on short notice.
- Adopt procedures for screening students and employees for symptoms of COVID-19.
- Physical distance of 3 feet will be followed when possible.
- Adopt cleaning and disinfecting procedures specifically for COVID-19.
- School staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under two years of age.
- Schools and districts must allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable.

- Students will be required to wear face coverings. Should a mask not be allowed due to a medical concern, a physician's note must be provided. Accommodations will be made, such as the requirement to wear a face shield.

Health and Safety Guidelines for School Settings

Voorhees Township School District will follow social distancing guidelines to the maximum extent possible. Until notified by the NJDOE, face coverings are always required for students, visitors and staff unless it will inhibit the individual's health as supported by a physician's written order. Voorhees Township School District will minimize use of shared objects, ensure indoor facilities have adequate ventilation, prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations, and ensure students and staff wash hands frequently.

The Voorhees Township School District will continue to incorporate the recommended actions from the Center for Disease Control or CDC [School Settings | COVID-19](#) which provides that school districts should incorporate the below considerations into their reopening plans:

- Establishing and maintaining communication with local and state authorities to determine current mitigation levels in the community
- Following CDC's Guidance for Schools and Childcare Programs
- Promoting behaviors that reduce spread:
 - Stay home when appropriate
 - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
 - Face coverings
 - Signs and messages

Health Screening and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms or Diagnosis of COVID

Voorhees Township School District will safely and respectfully screen students and employees for symptoms of and history of exposure to COVID-19. Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. If the District becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for COVID-19, we will immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.

The procedure for screening employees upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure includes the following:

- Staff members must self screen for symptoms of COVID-19 daily and must stay home if they are experiencing any symptoms which include:
 - A fever of 100° F or greater
 - Cough

- o Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- o Chills
- o Repeated shaking with chills
- o Muscle pain
- o Headache
- o Sore throat
- o New loss of taste or smell
- o Fatigue
- o Congestion or runny nose
- o Nausea or vomiting
- o Diarrhea
- If a staff member experiences symptoms of COVID-19, they should report their symptoms to the building principal and consult with their doctor.

The procedure for screening students upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure includes the following:

- Before students leave for school, parents need to screen their children for symptoms of COVID-19. Parents will complete the screening agreement prior to the beginning of the school year.
 - o A fever of 100° F or greater
 - o Cough
 - o Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - o Chills
 - o Repeated shaking with chills
 - o Muscle pain
 - o Headache
 - o Sore throat
 - o New loss of taste or smell
 - o Fatigue
 - o Congestion or runny nose
 - o Nausea or vomiting
 - o Diarrhea
- Students with symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home.
- Parents should report students' symptoms to the school nurse and contact their physician.
- Staff must visually check students for symptoms upon arrival including temperature check.
- If students are showing symptoms of COVID-19, they must report to the school nurse for additional screening.

- Health checks must be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with applicable privacy laws and regulations.
- Results must be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed.
- Accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities during the screening process.

Protocols for Symptomatic Students or Staff

- Each school will have an identified isolation room. Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others.
- Students should remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
- Any student that is sent home for a medical exclusion due to exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will continue their daily education virtually until they are medically cleared for return.
- Should a student or staff member report that he/she is positive for COVID-19, the school nurse or district designee will consult with the County Department of Health.
- If required, the building administrator or school nurse will assist the county health department with contact tracing.
- Re-admittance will be in consultation with the County Department of Health.

Additional Protocols for Students and Staff

- Students or staff must not come into school if they or a member of their immediate household test positive for COVID-19 unless they have been vaccinated.
- Students or staff who travel to a location that requires them to quarantine based on state guidelines must not come into school until the quarantine period has ended unless they have been vaccinated.

Isolate and Transport Those Who are Sick

- Immediately separate staff and children with COVID-19 symptoms at school.
- Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are, and follow CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others who are sick.
- Work with school administrators, nurses, and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive but does not have symptoms. School nurses and other

healthcare providers should use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for sick people.

- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility. If a staff member is calling an ambulance, they should alert them that the person may have COVID-19.

Clean and Disinfect

- Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection, including storing products securely away from children.
- Notify health officials and close contacts.
- In accordance with state and local laws and regulations, school administrators should notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Inform those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms, and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop. [Screening K-12 Students for Symptoms of COVID-19: Limitations and Considerations](#)

Procedures When Student or Staff Diagnosed with COVID-19

- Upon learning of a COVID-19 case in someone who has been in the school, the District will immediately notify local health officials. Local health officials will advise district administrators to determine a course of action.
- Local health officials' recommendations for the scope (i.e., a single school, multiple schools, the full district) and duration of school dismissal will be made on a case-by-case basis using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the community.
- Voorhees Township School District will consider a closure for students and unvaccinated staff for 2-5 days when suspected transmission of COVID-19 has occurred within a building. This initial short-term dismissal will allow time for local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school. Such a closure will allow district administration to work with local health officials to help the school determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

- After coordination with local health officials regarding closure decisions due to possible COVID-19 exposure, the District will communicate with staff, parents, and students.
- In such a circumstance, it is critical to maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.
- The areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 will be closed off and the District will wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential exposure to respiratory droplets. Outside doors and windows will be opened (when possible) to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- Cleaning staff will clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces. CDC guidelines for cleaning [Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces for COVID-19](#)
- If surfaces are dirty, they will be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Based upon the advice of local health officials, the District will make decisions about extending the school closure. Temporarily closing schools is a strategy to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19 in communities.
- In addition, students and staff who are well but are taking care of or share a home with someone with a case of COVID-19 should follow instructions from local health officials to determine when to return to school.

Monitor and plan for absenteeism

- The District will review the usual absenteeism patterns at schools among both students and staff.
- The nurse or designee will alert local health officials about large increases in student and staff absenteeism, particularly if absences appear to be due to respiratory illnesses (e.g., the common cold or the “flu,” which have symptoms similar to COVID-19).
- Administration will encourage students and staff to stay home when sick, even without documentation from doctors. Flexibility, when possible, will be provided to allow staff to stay home to care for sick family members.
- Administration will identify critical job functions and positions, and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff.
- Administration will determine what level of absenteeism will disrupt continuity of teaching and learning.

- Administration will work closely with our staffing substitute provider, ESS, to provide summer training and professional development opportunities for all potential substitute teachers.

Back-Up Staffing Plan

- Monitor absenteeism of students and employees, cross-train staff, and create a roster of trained back-up staff.
- Administration will work closely with ESS to provide substitutes for staff members who are unable to work due to illness.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Voorhees Township School District will provide PPE for all staff members. Additional PPE shall be provided as deemed appropriate. Special consideration will be given to protect staff members in need of additional accommodations, such as school nurses, custodians, and some special education teachers, paraprofessionals and service providers, who will be in close contact with students or will handle waste materials.

Face Coverings and PPE

- A face covering will be available to anyone that does not have their own available.
- All individuals will be required to wear a face covering while on school property unless the individual is medically compromised. Medical documentation must be provided in advance to determine the appropriate accommodation.
- For certain populations, the use of face coverings by teachers during instruction may severely impede the education process. These include students who are deaf or hearing impaired, students receiving speech/language services, young students in early education programs, and English Language Learners. The District will consider permitting additional products (e.g., face coverings with clear panels in the front) to facilitate student learning among these populations.
- Classroom dividers will be provided in all classrooms as well to provide barriers to permit limited relief from wearing a face covering at the direction of the classroom teacher.
- Students and staff must be trained in how to properly wear (cover nose and mouth) a face covering, to maintain hand hygiene when removing face covering for meals and physical activity, and for replacing and maintaining (washing regularly) a face covering.
- School health staff will be trained on the CDC guidance on infection control measures. Asthma treatments using inhalers with spacers are preferred over nebulizer treatments whenever possible.

- If required, while waiting for a student to be picked up to go home or for emergency personnel to arrive, when using nebulizer or a peak flow meter, school health staff should wear gloves, a face covering, and eye protection.
- Staff will be trained on proper donning and doffing procedures and follow the CDC guidance regarding precautions when performing aerosol-generating procedures.
- Voorhees Township School District will follow the CDC recommendations that nebulizer treatments at school should be reserved for children who cannot use or do not have access to an inhaler (with spacer or spacer with mask).
- Communicate with parents and physicians to consider prescribing only MDI inhalers with spacers for students with reactive airways during school hours.
- After certain treatments, the nurse's office may need to undergo additional cleaning and disinfection.

Physical Distancing Measures

- Physical distancing or “social distancing” will be adhered to following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendation that schools "space seating/desks at least three (3) feet apart when feasible."
- Desks or seating will be turned to face the same direction. Social distancing must be encouraged and maintained at all times.
- Face coverings will be required at all times except during an approved designated break. All face covering breaks will be kept to a minimum and only when social distancing can be ensured. Consideration for such a break will be made based on the age and needs of the student(s).
- Visitors, including parents, will not be permitted to enter the school building unless as an approved essential visitor by the district administration.
- Physical barriers, such as plexiglass, will be outfitted in reception areas and employee workspaces where the environment does not accommodate social distancing. Plexiglass barriers will also be provided to each classroom as an additional mitigation tool.
- Voorhees Township School District will reinforce the importance of maintaining social distance between each other in the school regularly through instruction. Each hallway floor will be marked with six feet markers to provide visual aids. Signage will be prevalent within each school building to help reinforce healthy behaviors.

Teach and reinforce healthy hygiene practices

- Train staff on healthy hygiene practices so they can teach these to students.

- Ensure handwashing strategies include washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, students/staff will use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- CDC offers several free handwashing resources that include health promotion materials, information on proper hand washing technique, and tips for families to help children develop good hand washing habits.
- Ensure adequate supplies (e.g., soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissues) to support healthy hygiene practices.
- Teach and reinforce use of face coverings.
- Teach students to not touch the face covering.
- Staff will demonstrate and reinforce these practices through their behavior.
- Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on proper use, removal, and washing of face covering.

Signs and Messages

- Signs will be posted in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures.

Adequate Supplies

- Support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, face coverings, and no-touch trash cans.
- Ensure adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices.

Intensify Cleaning and Disinfection Efforts

- The District has purchased a UVC Light Disinfection System which is installed in every school building. Classrooms will receive daily scheduled cleanings with the UVC System in addition to routine cleaning. Any surface that a typical light fixture can reach in a classroom will be sanitized by the UVC System. Scheduled UVC applications will be done when the buildings are unoccupied. Mobile UVC units are used in remote locations where the room is not outfitted with the fixed equipment (example: restrooms).
- Voorhees Township School District will continue its routine cleaning and disinfecting protocols which have been heightened and aligned with best practice recommendations.
- Clean with the products or protocols typically used.

- Provide EPA-registered disposable wipes to teachers and staff so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down before use.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles, sink handles) within the schools and on school buses at least daily or between use when possible. Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) will be limited when possible, or items will be cleaned between use.
- School buses and transport vehicles will be cleaned and disinfected based on guidance for bus transit operators.
- The Building and Grounds Department will follow the schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection supplies, including storing products securely away from children. Use products that meet EPA disinfection standards.
- Cleaning products will not be used near children. Staff will ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children or themselves from inhaling toxic fumes.

Shared Objects

- Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.
- Each student's belongings will be kept separated from other students and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (e.g., assign each student their own art supplies, equipment) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between uses.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.
- Voorhees Township School District will provide additional materials whenever feasible to provide students with manipulatives that will not be shared with other students, or will not be immediately shared with others to provide time for them to be properly sanitized before next use.

Ventilation/Indoor Air Quality

- Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to children using the facility.

- An outside vendor was contracted to test air quality in all classrooms and buildings, four times a year.
- Ionization and/or UV lighting has been added to all HVAC units.

Water Systems

- To minimize the risk of diseases associated with water, drinking fountains were shut off. The bottle fill function will be used as an alternative to provide safe drinking water. They will be cleaned and sanitized. All staff and students will be asked to bring their own water bottle for filling.
- Bathrooms have touchless faucets and soap dispensers.

Physical Barriers and Guides

- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least three (3) feet apart (e.g., reception desks).
- Provide physical guides, markings on the hallway carpets and signs on walls, to ensure that staff and children remain at least six (6) feet apart in lines and at other times .

Communal Spaces

- Reduce use of the communal spaces such as gymnasiums, cafeterias and playgrounds with shared playground equipment when possible, otherwise stagger use and clean and disinfect between use.

Transportation/Bussing

- Create distance between children on school buses when possible.
- Require students to wear face coverings at all times on buses.
- Encourage all parents who can provide transportation for their child(ren) to do so.

Gatherings, Visitors, and Field Trips

- Limitations will be placed on all non-essential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations.
- Pursue virtual or outdoor group events, gatherings, or meetings, if possible, and promote social distancing of at least three (3) feet between people if events are held. Limit group size to the extent possible.

Extracurricular Activities

- Decisions regarding athletics will be made on a season to season basis and follow NJSIAA recommendations.

- Should any extracurricular activities be allowed for school-related purposes, all participants must comply with applicable social distancing requirements, wear face coverings, practice appropriate hygiene protocols, and comply with health and safety protocols.
- Signage encouraging social distancing and face coverings will be posted, as well as communicated with neighboring schools districts.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING, MENTAL HEALTH, AND WELLNESS

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social emotional learning (SEL) will be critical in re-engaging students, supporting adults, rebuilding relationships, and creating a foundation for academic learning. To this end, the Voorhees Township School District will support the social and emotional well-being and learning needs of the students and staff. We acknowledge the potential trauma that staff and students have faced during the COVID-19 school closures and are prepared to consult with mental health professionals to support staff and students.

As we prepare for the reopening of school we will:

- Consult with the counselors from Center for Emotional Health in Cherry Hill to address potential trauma and anxiety associated with returning to school in September. Additional outside resources will be recommended based on individual need (example: Cooper Health Care).
- Schedule meetings with each building Anxiety Task Force to plan supports and training for students, staff, and parents.
- Facilitate opportunities for connection and reflection among students, families, and staff (i.e., small group online meetings, parent workshops, surveys, etc.). The District will make time for these conversations and ensure that students' and staff's voices are heard.
- Establish systems that promote supportive staff-student relationships to ensure that all students have at least one caring staff member who checks in regularly with them and who their family is able to connect with for any needed support.
- Be proactive in preparing access to mental health and trauma support for adults and students, which may include establishing partnerships with outside entities and agencies.
- Commit to training around topics such as:
 - Potential increases in bullying behavior
 - Grief, loss, and trauma
 - Mental health and supportive behaviors

- o Bias, prejudice, and stigma
- o Preparedness, hope, and resilience
- o Fear and anxiety

Trauma-Informed Social and Emotional Learning

The Voorhees Township School District is organizing and preparing for the next school year acknowledging the potential trauma that staff and students have faced during the COVID-19 school closures. Trauma-informed SEL is an approach to fostering youths’ social-emotional development with practices that support all students, but is particularly inclusive and responsive to the needs of children and youth who have experienced trauma. The Voorhees Township School District Anxiety Task Force has worked to establish reliable learning environments for students who have experienced adversities, trauma, and extreme anxiety.

School Climate

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. The district maintains a school climate team in each school tasked with the following:

- Prioritizing the health and emotional well-being of staff and students
- Assessing the school climate to identify vulnerabilities and plan to implement evidence-based strategies to address identified needs
- Planning to provide and sustain instruction on social norms, relationship building, and behavioral expectations beginning at the start of the school year
- Providing school leaders and teachers with resources on SEL and trauma
- Connecting with students and families to provide any needed support.
- Providing students with opportunities to connect with other students (within learning and socially)
- Being aware of any changes in student behavior and report concerns pursuant to district policy.
- Providing professional development to colleagues in areas of expertise and the opportunity to attend professional development to obtain greater understanding
- Supporting school leaders in establishing protocols for identifying and supporting students’ social-emotional needs and providing training to school staff on utilizing protocols.

Mental Health & Wellness Supports

Feedback from educators, parents, school administrators, mental health professionals, and students suggests that COVID-19 will have significant psychological and emotional impacts on students. Additionally, Voorhees Township School District recognizes the potential negative

social and emotional impact on students and staff in an environment that requires minimized social interactions, face coverings, and significant hygiene/cleaning protocols. Appropriate resources and support will be provided for students and staff to process the range of emotions one may experience as a result of COVID-19.

School Counseling Services

Voorhees Township School District commits considerable resources to the social, emotional, and personal development as well as the intellectual and physical growth of students. A comprehensive school counseling program is an integral component of the District's mission and is based upon standards in academic, career, and personal/social development. District-wide there are school counselors who promote and enhance the learning process for all students in Kindergarten through Grade 8. School guidance counselors are vital members of the educational team. School counselors assist students in the areas of academic achievement, personal/social development, and emotional development. They work with families to help students and their families receive the help and resources needed for improving overall well-being.

Child Study Team

Child Study Team members work collaboratively with district staff, parents, and students to provide a free and appropriate public education to any student with a disability, ages 3 through 21, who is determined to be eligible for special education programs and/or services, per *N.J.A.C. 6A:14*. The Child Study Team provides a wide range of professional staff members and support personnel, including school psychologists, learning consultants, social workers, speech/language specialists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, sign language interpreters, special education teachers, and instructional assistants.

The Voorhees Township School District provides a continuum of special education and related services to eligible students, including out-of-district programs in public and private settings; in-district self-contained classes; resource in-class and pull-out replacement programs; general education programs with appropriate accommodations and modifications; related services; and home instruction. All programs and services are based upon individual student needs as determined by each student's individualized education plan (IEP).

Intervention & Referral Services

All schools in the district have an Intervention & Referral Services Team (I&RS) for the planning and delivery of intervention and referral services that are designed to assist students who are experiencing learning, behavior, or health difficulties and to assist staff who have difficulties in addressing students' learning, behavior, or health needs. I&RS services are part of a larger district Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS), a framework of academic and behavioral supports and interventions to improve student achievement.

Mental Health Screenings

The District has established procedures for identifying students in need of individualized mental health interventions. All counselors and crisis teams are trained on those protocols. Students/staff with mental health concerns, as identified from appropriate health and wellness screenings and/or via parent/staff referrals, will have access to the school's wellness room where appropriate counseling support will be available and additional mental health screening will be provided as necessary.

Self-Care

The District is committed to educating, promoting, and supporting a culture of care for students, families, and staff. [Self-care](#) practices are intentional activities for the purposes of caring for one's mental, emotional, and physical health. The District continues to leverage the partnership with experts from the Center for Emotional Health to support the self-care needs of school and community stakeholders.

Wellness Webpage

As part of the District's commitment to supporting the health and well-being of our school community, the District applied for and was awarded a Wellness Grant from the Schools Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) for 2020-2021. The Wellness Grant offered fitness challenges that were done on an individual basis while also promoting some healthy competition and team building. The District will apply for a continuation of this Wellness Grant for 2021-2022 which will also include online workshops through the SHIF on a variety of wellness topics.

Student and Family COVID-19 Resources

The Voorhees Township School District will continue to update and provide resources to students, families, and staff during COVID-19 pandemic and related school closure.

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is the process used to identify those who come into contact with people who have tested positive for many contagious diseases, including COVID-19. It is a long-standing practice in New Jersey and around the world, and is an integral function of local health departments in keeping communities safe from the spread of disease. Upon notification that a person has tested positive for COVID-19, the local health department will call to determine close contacts to whom they may have spread the virus, where close contact is defined as being within three (3) feet for a period of at least 10 minutes.

All school district administrators, school safety specialists, counselors, and any other staff deemed appropriate by the school district will be provided with information regarding the role of contact tracing in keeping school communities safe from the spread of contagious disease.

Voorhees Township School District will collaborate with the local health department and engage school nurses to develop contact tracing policies and procedures, as well as educate the broader school community on the importance of contact tracing.

OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

Buildings and Grounds

The Buildings and Grounds Department will work to ensure that appropriate cleaning protocols are utilized at all times. Transmission of coronavirus in general occurs most commonly through respiratory droplets. The novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in community settings.

Protocols are in alignment with the guidance provided by the CDC:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

Cleaning and Disinfection

As per the American Association of Pediatrics (AAP), *“The main mode of COVID-19 is spread from person to person, primarily via droplet transmission. For this reason, strategies for infection prevention should center around this form of spread, including physical distancing, face coverings, and hand hygiene. Given the challenges that may exist in children and adolescents in effectively adhering to recommendations, it is critical that staff are setting a good example for students by modeling behaviors around physical distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene.”*

The Voorhees Township School District will maintain the following guidelines:

- Utilize the UVC Light Disinfection System nightly.
- Cleaning will be performed per established protocols followed by disinfection when appropriate.
- Normal cleaning with soap and water decreases the viral load and optimizes the efficacy of disinfectants.
- The use of EPA approved disinfectants against COVID-19 will be used.
- When possible, eliminate high-touch surfaces.
- When elimination is not possible, surfaces that are used frequently, such door handles, sinks and faucet handles, etc, will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily and as often as possible.

- Drinking fountains were turned off and additional bottle filling stations were installed.
- Bathrooms, in particular, will receive frequent cleaning and disinfection throughout the school day and a thorough cleaning will be performed after students and staff leave the building at the end of the day. Bathroom occupancy will be limited to provide space for social distancing.
- Shared equipment including computer equipment, keyboards, art supplies will be disinfected between uses.

Facilities Cleaning Procedures to Reduce the Spread of Contagion

The building principal, in consultation with the Director of Buildings and Grounds, developed a procedure for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection. The procedure includes cleaning/disinfecting schedules, targeted areas to be cleaned, and methods and materials to be used.

Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas

- Voorhees Township School District will establish a process and location for student and staff health screenings.
- Buildings will be outfitted with technology that allows for rapid and discrete contactless temperature assessments.
- Physical guides, such markings on the floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, will be utilized to help ensure that staff and students remain at least three (3) feet apart in lines and at other times (e.g. guides for creating “one-way routes” in hallways).
- Voorhees Township School District will work to minimize interaction between students during arrival and dismissal times.
- Principals will establish separate entrances and exits to school facilities where possible. Students will be assigned an entrance and exit until a time when we return to our regular schedule.

Hallways (All Schools)

- Where possible students will walk in the same direction to reduce close contact
- Place physical guides, such as tape, on floors or sidewalks to create one-way routes. The carpeting in the hallways will be modified to include six foot markers in a different carpet color to assist with distancing while in the hallways.
- Voorhees Township School District will make every effort to minimize movement of students and staff when physically present in buildings.

- Class periods, or movement between classrooms will be staggered to the extent possible. If students must move between classrooms, extra effort will be made to limit the number of students in the hallway during transitions.

Recess/Physical Education

- Teachers will use cones, flags, tape, or other signs to create boundaries between groups.
- Students will be reminded to wash their hands immediately after outdoor playtime.
- To the extent possible teachers will limit and/or eliminate direct contact with equipment (lessons with no equipment) and limit sharing of equipment. If equipment must be shared, clean and disinfect between each use.

Facilities Cleaning Practices

Voorhees Township School District will adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures, as well as new specific requirements of the local health department. Voorhees Township School District will also develop a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfecting, especially of frequently touched surfaces and objects, and sanitize bathrooms daily. The following will occur:

- A schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection will be created by the Director of Buildings and Grounds.
- Maintenance personnel will routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. This may include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily. Examples of frequently touched areas in schools:
 - Classroom desks and chairs
 - Lunchroom tables and chairs
 - Door handles and push plates
 - Handrails
 - Kitchens and bathrooms
 - Light switches
 - Handles on equipment (e.g. athletic equipment)
 - Buttons on vending machines
 - Shared telephones
 - Shared desktops
 - Shared computer keyboards and mice
 - Bottle filling stations (water fountains were turned off)
 - School bus seats and windows
- Maintenance personnel will use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For most cleaning routines common EPA-registered household

disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 will be referred to on the EPA's website. The manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.) will be followed.

- Bathrooms will be sanitized multiple times daily, or between use as much as possible, using protocols outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Regarding bathrooms:
 - Avoid crowds by limiting the number of students who can enter at a time.
 - Non-touch faucets and flushing toilets were installed
 - Doors will be propped open when possible to avoid touching handles.
- Drinking fountains were turned off and the use of bottle filling stations are available. Staff and students will be encouraged to bring their own water to school.
- UVC Light Disinfection System scheduled to run nightly; mobile response units (portable UVC equipment will be mobilized to sanitize additional spaces as needed).
- Prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol):
 - In each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
 - At entrances and exits of buildings.
- For classrooms that have existing handwashing stations, prepare stations with soap, water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol).

School Maintenance

Voorhees Township School District will maintain the following:

- **UVC Light Disinfection System-** Clean all visible surfaces in classrooms equipped with UVC Light Equipment
- **Indoor Air Quality-** Set points for the HVAC and hot water control systems have been modified to reflect a low period and will continue to be monitored daily to make sure they are operating at a low load condition. The HVAC preventive maintenance routine will continue as normal.
- **Plumbing Safety-** Issues may arise where a pipe may break due to age or wear conditions, causing water leaks that could turn into unsafe humidity levels. To prevent and promptly identify such potential issues, staff will inspect all bathroom facilities and mechanical rooms at least once per week.
- **Fire Safety and Emergency Systems-** Regulatory compliance routine inspections and testing for the fire suppression, fire alarm, fire extinguishers,

emergency lighting, elevators and emergency generators will continue as established by Code.

- **Grounds Upkeep-** To meet local ordinances and to prevent future major restoration of our fields, the Grounds team will continue with the normal routine schedule for mowing, trimming and maintaining the sports fields.
- **Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures During Extended Period of Closure-** In the event of an extended closure, schools will be cleaned and sanitized thoroughly immediately after the schools close using a disinfectant cleaner. Cleaning staff will clean and disinfect all areas such as classrooms, offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment (tablets, touch screens, keyboards, door handles and knobs), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces. Cleaning staff will wear disposable gloves and face coverings for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash. Once cleaned the area will be closed. Closed areas visited by any person will be disinfected within 24 hours after such person has left the area(s) and cleaning staff will close it off immediately thereafter.

Air Flow/Ventilation

- Voorhees Township School District will ensure that our indoor facilities have adequate ventilation, including operational heating, and ventilation systems where appropriate.
- Recirculated air must have a fresh air component.
- Filter(s) for A/C units must be maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations.

TRANSPORTATION

The District will collaborate with contracted service providers to develop the following procedures and ensure that they are consistently followed; a checklist will be developed to ensure compliance.

- The District is requiring contracted transportation providers to clean and sanitize seats, rails and highly touched surfaces before each run.
- The District will maintain social distancing practices on buses to the maximum extent practicable.
- Upon reporting for work in the morning, drivers will have their temperature taken if necessary, they will be asked a series of questions, to ensure they are feeling well, and have not been exposed to anyone who has COVID-19.
- Students will be required to wear face coverings on the school buses.
- Drivers will be required to wear a face covering when safe and appropriate.

- If the driver or a student does not have a face covering, a face covering will be made available.
- Assigned seating will be required as appropriate following the guidelines below:
 - Seats will be assigned, and will be clearly marked, indicating where to sit or not sit.
 - Students will be assigned seats in the morning, with the first student onboard loading in the back of the vehicle, and the last one onboard loading in the front of the vehicle. In the afternoon, the opposite practice will be followed; the student(s) who exits the bus last, will sit in the rear of the vehicle, and the student(s) who exit the bus first will sit in the front of the vehicle. This will be implemented with flexibility for younger students.
 - Students from the same household will sit together in a seat.
 - Dedicated vehicles will be utilized for routes to minimize the number of people on the bus at one time within reason.
 - **Note:** Drivers will be assigned a dedicated or consistent set of vehicles in order to limit the number of people sharing vehicles. This will further reduce the need to clean vehicles more often than necessary.
- Windows will be open if the weather allows.
- School buses will be cleaned several times during the day. High touch areas will be wiped down or sprayed in between routes. Buses will be disinfected using an electrostatic sprayer as appropriate.
- Drivers will remind students to reinforce social distancing and hygiene rules.

SCHOOL NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICES

As per FDA guidelines, school meals will be fully funded by the USDA for the 2021-2022 school year. Nurses will provide information to appropriate staff regarding students needing accommodations due to food allergies.

The middle school students will eat lunch in the cafeteria. They will be required to sit 3 feet apart and plexiglass barriers will be placed the length of each table. At the elementary schools, students will also eat lunch in the cafeteria and will be required to sit 3 feet apart and plexiglass barriers will be placed the length of each table. In instances where students can not be socially distanced, students will eat lunch in their classrooms. Additional staff will be assigned to ensure social distancing and to disinfect tables between lunches.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Voorhees Township School District strives to meet the unique needs of all stakeholders by providing comprehensive, innovative, and creative instructional programs that prepare lifelong learners to succeed in an ever-changing global society. This vision for instruction will continue to guide teaching and learning. Instruction regardless of the setting will be guided by the following values:

- Students need to have access to high quality educational experiences that are differentiated and authentic
- Students need to have opportunities to collaborate, problem solve, think critically, and be creative
- Student assessment needs to be informative and valid
- Students need structure and routines
- Students, parents, and teachers need to have relationships based on kindness, caring, respect, empathy, and support
- Students and teachers need access to quality resources

To ensure that students are making appropriate academic progress iReady will be implemented in literacy and math in grades 1-5. Students will take the diagnostic assessment in the Fall and teachers and administrators will analyze the data to determine areas of support that are needed for students. Students demonstrating the need for comprehensive support will receive additional instruction before or after school hours. Additionally, eligible students will receive basic skills support during the school day. Teachers will be trained to use iReady data to provide targeted instruction to their students. Finally, summer enrichment will be provided to students who are not meeting grade level expectations.

Because scheduling should meet the needs of all learners. The following guidelines will be in place:

- Access to small group instruction during school hours, before or after school hours
- At least 20 minutes of recess each day as per NJDOE requirements when implementing a full day schedule.
- Time for social/emotional learning opportunities and community building within the classroom.
- Opportunities for students to develop digital literacy and citizenship skills.
- Instruction in the Fine and Performing Arts, World Language, Media, Reading, Writing, Health/Physical Education, Mathematics, Social Studies, Sciences, Technology.
- Flexibility will be provided to students needing adjustments due to COVID fatigue.

- Time for teachers to collaborate with grade-level and district teams to support their ongoing growth and planning.
- Special programming when appropriate to meet students' diverse needs.
- Special priority will be given to helping our students feel a sense of safety through establishing routines and norms.

Staffing

School reopening plans and decision-making throughout the school year will consider access to technology, physical, social and emotional health, and child care concerns. Staff may be reassigned classes in order to accommodate new health and safety regulations and student enrollment needs. The following needs will be taken into consideration when determining staff assignments, including, but not limited to:

- CDC and Department of Health guidance.
- Federal, State and local law and regulations.
- Board policies and regulations.
- Honoring contractual obligations.
- Support for the medical, social and emotional health and well-being of adults.
- Student enrollment, class size requirements and instructional needs.
- Adjustments as needed to existing roles in order to accommodate new health and safety regulations.
- Staff members' certifications, experience and expertise.

In-person Environments: Roles and Responsibilities

Because the health and safety of our students is paramount, staff schedules will include designated time to support school building logistics required to maintain health and safety requirements, including, but not limited to:

- Reinforcing social distancing protocol with students and co-teacher or support staff.
- Maintaining social distancing guidelines when in classrooms.
- Monitoring student movement and hallway traffic in order to maintain safety
- Supporting school building safety logistics (entering, exiting, restrooms, etc.).
- Schedule permitting, staff will provide assistance with school building and safety logistics as needed.

Cohort Model

When possible, Voorhees Township School District will implement a cohort model at the elementary level by identifying small groups and keeping them together (cohorting) to ensure that student and staff groupings are as static as possible.

- Minimize the number of non-essential interactions between students and staff throughout the school day.
- Create student cohorts as an effective strategy to limit exposure and contact.
- Minimize commingling between classes or other district-set groups of students.
- Minimize large group gatherings.
- Limit the number of students in the hallway at the same time by staggering release from classrooms when possible.
- Most schools have limited entry/exit points for security purposes, but additional entry/exit points may need to be established to ensure a balance of social distancing and security protocols.

Instructional Supports

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) – A Schoolwide Framework for Selecting, Delivering, and Evaluating the Success of Student Supports and Interventions

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a systematic approach to prevention, intervention, and enrichment in grades PK-8 that offers educators and families a mechanism to identify individual students who need extra support. Voorhees Township School District uses a collaborative team approach that allows ALL students to be successful academically, socially and emotionally in the least restrictive environment by making meaningful progress as determined by multiple assessments, data analysis, and research-based interventions.

Our strong core instructional program ensures all students receive the highest quality, equitable educational experience. Teachers, academic and behavior interventionists, parents, and administrators work collaboratively to support students in the learning process and provide targeted student interventions based on individual learning needs. This is done through utilizing a variety of evidence-based practices designed to improve achievement and promote positive student outcomes. Through regular progress monitoring of student performance using a variety of assessment data (including but not limited to universal screening tools, pre-assessments, post-assessments, formative data, and observations), teams will continue to make data-driven decisions to provide a continuum of supports, interventions, and coaching to accelerate student learning when a need is determined.

Instructional Impacts Due to Illness

The impacts of lost instructional time and social emotional development on children and adolescents should be anticipated. Teachers and administrators will work together to adjust curricula and instructional practices accordingly. Plans to make up for lost academic progress because of school closures and distress associated with the pandemic should be balanced by a recognition of the likely continued distress of educators and students that will persist when schools reopen. If the academic expectations are unrealistic, school will likely become a source of further distress for students (and educators) at a time when they need additional support. It is also critical to maintain a balanced curriculum with continued physical education and other learning experiences rather than an exclusive emphasis on core subject areas.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments

Because Voorhees Township School District is committed to providing the highest quality educational experience for all students, the following supports will continue to be in place regardless of the nature of the learning environment:

Curriculum

- Administrators and teachers will monitor the effects of pandemic-era learning environments on the pacing of instructional delivery, and make adjustments as needed to ensure all students meet grade-level and content-specific NJSL standards.
- Administrators will continue to be aware of adjustments being made, and support teachers in making appropriate shifts in teaching and learning.
- Administrators and reading specialists will provide support for teachers in making necessary curriculum and instruction adjustments and improve the quality of instruction.
- All staff will utilize Google Suite, in addition to other district-approved technology, in grades PK-8 to facilitate learning, manage coursework, and communicate with students. The number of online platforms should be minimized to reduce the learning curve for students and teachers and ease transitions to full day in-person instruction.

Instruction

- Teachers will utilize structures that support high levels of student engagement and foster student ownership of learning, include student “voice & choice”, and promote independent learning by designing learning experiences that:
 - Use technology in the service of learning.

- o Build student understanding by linking together concepts within and across grade-levels and content areas.
- o Provide a variety of learning opportunities, including support for struggling learners as well as enrichment activities.
- o Leverage student interest.
- o Address real-world issues.
- Teachers will provide supports that allow students to meet the requirements of grade-level and content-specific learning goals, including a variety of teaching structures such as whole group and small group instruction, individual conferences, adjustment of materials, pacing, and delivery, timely and actionable feedback based on ongoing assessment to support students' progress toward those goals.
- Teachers and administrators will provide regular feedback to students and families on expectations and progress based on a variety of assessment indicators.
- Teachers and administrators will recognize the impact that home and societal environments may have on learning as students re-acclimate to in-person learning and adjust to new instructional models and schedules.
- Teachers may consider implementing project-based learning, learner-centered and student-guided experiences.
- Teachers and administrators will determine regular times to collaborate both within and across buildings in order to ensure consistency of practice, coordination of assignments, cross-curricular learning opportunities, and common lessons and modules.

Assessment

- Review screening tools used at the opening of school
- Utilize a variety of assessment tools (pre-assessments, formative assessment, interim assessment, student self-assessment, summative assessments) to determine students' strengths and readiness for instruction, particularly as it relates to any learning loss that may have been experienced as a result of the pandemic.
- Utilize ongoing formative assessment data (assessments that are administered informally to monitor students' progress toward goals, including student self-assessment) to monitor and adjust instruction. Utilize this information, along with formative, informative, and NJDOE-required assessment data to plan high-impact instruction.
- Continue to monitor the progress of students with IEPs towards learning goals, and adjust instruction based on ongoing formative and summative assessments.

Grading

Recognizing that school closures due to the pandemic may have impacted our students and families, it is critical to engage in clear and open communication to monitor the growth of each student. As in the pre-pandemic learning environment, multiple forms of assessments will be used to gauge student progress. Students' progress will be reported at the end of each marking period using the district created report card that will be posted in Genesis. As always, the purpose of this performance report is to describe students' learning progress based on the district's curriculum aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Data Analysis

- Facilitate opportunities to create structures that support a staff culture committed to collaborative analysis of data.
- Incorporate meaningful and appropriate assessment strategies into the strategic plan in order to evaluate the needs of students, and for the planning of instruction
- Because students will need time to adjust to the school environment, which may look different than what they have previously known, it is imperative to consider the social and emotional elements of learning as a focal point prior to the start of assessments to ensure the conditions for students to demonstrate their proficiency are optimized.

Professional Development Related to Assessments

Educators will require opportunities to collaborate and plan for developing pre-assessments which will complement the initial instructional units that will be covered as schools reopen in the fall.

As Voorhees Township School District works to reopen schools, it is imperative that meaningful and appropriate assessment strategies are incorporated into the reopening plans as the District evaluates the needs of students and plans instruction.

Students will need time to adjust to the school environment, which may look different than what they have previously known. Social and emotional elements of learning will be an important focal point to consider before students are assessed to ensure the conditions for students to receive instruction and demonstrate their proficiency are optimized.

Special Education

Every child and adolescent with a disability is entitled to a free and appropriate education and is entitled to special education services based on their individualized education program (IEP). Students receiving special education services may be more negatively affected by remote

learning and may be disproportionately impacted by interruptions in regular education. It may not be feasible, depending on the needs of the individual child and adolescent, to adhere both to distancing guidelines and the criteria outlined in a specific IEP. Every effort should be made to meet physical distancing guidelines; however, the needs of the individual child may require creative solutions, often on a case-by-case basis.

Ensuring the Delivery of Special Education and Related Services to Students with Disabilities Under the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and New Jersey state special education regulations, students with disabilities are entitled to special education and related services, such as accommodations and modifications to instruction, speech-language services, occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), and counseling.

Consistent with guidance from the United States Department of Education, Voorhees Township School District must continue to meet their obligations to students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible. The NJDOE will continue to update school districts and receiving schools with any additional guidance from the USDE on implementation of IDEA. Specific strategies and considerations for students with disabilities must be critical points of discussion for every return-to-school scenario. The NJDOE recommends that school districts consider the following when addressing the education of students with disabilities:

- Procedures to address the return to school of medically fragile students and students with physical or health impairments who may require accommodations and modifications as part of a 504 Plan. School districts should communicate frequently with the families of students with significant medical risk factors to determine if additional precautions or unique measures are necessary prior to a student's return to school.
- IEP teams should review student data/student progress to determine whether critical skills were lost during the period in which remote instruction was being provided to students and determine the need for additional services to address learning loss.
- IEP teams should consider the impact of missed services on student progress towards meeting IEP goals and objectives, and determine if additional or compensatory services are needed to address regression and recoupment of skills within a reasonable length of time.
- IEP teams should develop procedures to complete overdue and/or incomplete evaluations to determine eligibility for special education services.
- Clear communication to parents/guardians of the procedures for student referrals and evaluations to determine the eligibility for special education and related services or a 504 Plan as required by federal and state law.

English Language Learners

- Meeting with small groups of ELLs to provide ESL-based instruction.
- Meeting with small groups of ELLs to provide additional opportunities for immersion in English through read alouds, shared reading and shared/interactive writing activities.
- Providing time for scaffolded conversations that targets students' specific stages of English language acquisition.
- Meeting with students in partnership with the ESL students' homeroom teachers to provide extra support around academic skills and strategies, especially in the areas of reading, writing and math.
- Meeting with students' entire homeroom classes to model best practices in ELL instruction for homeroom teachers.

ESL Communication

ESL teachers, homeroom teachers of ESL students, and building administrators continue to maintain constant and close contact with caregivers of ESL students through:

- Phone conversations
- Email
- Communication should focus not only on the provision of academic instruction and support, but also on addressing SEL-related concerns.

TECHNOLOGY

The Voorhees Township School District will provide all students in grades PK-8 an iPad for use in school and at home. Interactive boards will be utilized to enhance instruction.

Technology and Connectivity

The District will continue to strive to ensure that every student has access to the Internet and will work with families who do not have access to the Internet at home.

Voorhees Township School District will consider the technological needs of all students, including those with learning disabilities, assistive technology needs, and language barriers. Additionally, the Director of Technology has developed a plan for iPad deployment, parent training and acceptable use policy implementation.

Technology and Safety

In order to prioritize safety, Voorhees Township School District will outfit all buildings with added technology that allows for rapid and discrete contactless temperature assessments.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Among the most critical focus areas are training to address the learning loss for the most vulnerable populations (students with disabilities, English Language Learners, students without proper technology or internet access, etc.), and preparing and supporting our educators in meeting the social, emotional, health, and academic needs of all students.

Professional development will assist staff to:

- Become familiar with high-quality online resources that support student learning.
- Explore instructional methods that maintain high levels of student engagement
- Explore ways in which to deliver instruction focused on the maintenance of good practice in digital citizenship.
- Provide regular time to collaborate with colleagues, both within and across buildings in order to ensure consistency of practice, coordination of assignments, cross-curricular learning opportunities, and common lessons and modules.
- Recognize the impacts that home environments may have on learning as students re-acclimate to in-person learning and adjust to new instructional models and schedules. Consider implementing project-based learning, learner-centered, and student-guided learning.
- Build student understanding by linking together concepts within and across grades.
- Provide direct instruction, student practice, enrichment activities.
- Leverage student interest.
- Address real-world issues.
- Differentiate instruction to accommodate the diverse needs of students.

Mentoring and Induction

- Induction will be provided for all novice provisional teachers and teachers new to Voorhees Township School District.
- One-to-one mentoring will be provided to novice provisional teachers by qualified mentors.
- Mentors and novice provisional teachers should agree upon the scheduling, structure and communication strategies they will use to maintain the mentoring experience.

- Use online collaborative tools to remain connected to other mentors, new teachers and administrators to maintain a sense of communal support.

Teacher Evaluation

Voorhees Township School District will conduct teacher evaluation and training as per state and local guidelines. Administrators will meet with the School Improvement Panel (ScIP) to inform professional learning, mentoring, and other evaluation-related activities which occur in individual schools.

VACCINATIONS

Vaccinations for Staff and Students

Every effort will be made to guarantee students and staff have access to the COVID-19 vaccination. Partnerships with local agencies to create a vaccination site at a district location will be initiated. In May of 2021, the middle school in Voorhees School District served as a vaccination site for students 12 and older. School nurses were employed to support the vaccination effort. This process will continue as needed for students and staff.

SCHOOL FUNDING

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic presents many fiscal challenges for delivery of instruction and related services to students in addition to other basic operational needs. Readying facilities, purchasing supplies, transporting, and feeding students may look drastically different in the upcoming school year. This section will focus on existing and pending federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidance to predict the potential impact on districts and provide targeted assistance to help districts cope. The NJDOE plans to leverage these resources to assist districts.

Voorhees Township School District is currently closing out our FY21 budget year and we have already finalized our FY22 budget. Because of the timing of the budget process, many of the activities listed below have not been, and cannot be, factored into either budget year without additional revenue outside the amount that was anticipated for FY22 in February, and budget transfers that current statute does not authorize at the start of the school year.

Purchasing – As we prepare for a multitude of instructional models it has become necessary to purchase items not needed in the past (e.g., personal protective equipment or thermal scanners) and experience increased demand for previously purchased goods and services. In general,

districts collaborate to create new arrangements that will allow them to purchase items at a lower cost by either purchasing through an established State contract, through a cooperative purchasing consortium, which allows contracts to be awarded without public bidding regardless of bid threshold in the event of a public health emergency.

Use of Reserve Accounts, Transfers, and Cash Flow – To the greatest extent possible, Voorhees Township School District will work to support unanticipated costs and to manage our cash flow. If necessary, Voorhees Township School District will utilize any available funding sources in our emergency reserve accounts to finance unanticipated expenses that arise as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to ensure the health, wellness, and safety of our students and staff.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

The federal “Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security” (CARES) Act established the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to provide direct money to school districts and provide funding to support areas impacted by the disruption and closure of schools from COVID-19.

The CARES Act enumerates 12 allowable uses for these funds. In addition to expenditures that are authorized under various federal laws (e.g., the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), the law authorizes expenditures that are more directly related to the current health emergency, including purchasing educational technology to support remote instruction, supplies for cleaning and sanitizing buildings, and supplemental instructional programs. The District submitted the CARES grant to fund the summer enrichment program for students eligible for special education and literacy and math camps for all other students.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II

The Federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) includes funding sources for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and provides funds for the State to administer, as needed, to address issues related to COVID-19.

Specifically, section 313 of the CRRSA Act provides for supplemental appropriations for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II). The core purpose of the ESSER II Fund is to provide direct monies to LEAs to address the areas most impacted by the disruption and closure of schools caused by COVID-19, and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has designated funds from its State set-aside to establish the Learning Acceleration Grant and \$30 million to establish the Mental Health Grant. The district submitted the CRRSA grant to fund improvements to indoor air quality, staff development relating to

mental health, additional PPE and cleaning supplies, counselling for students and families and summer academies to help address learning loss.

America’s Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

The ARP Act provides an additional \$122 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) to States and school districts to help safely reopen, sustain the safe operation of schools, and address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation’s students. The district submitted the ARP application to fund learning loss programs for at least two years, mental health initiatives, improvements to indoor air quality, lunchroom partitions and additional staffing to ensure safe interactions in cafeteria settings.

Federal Emergency Management Agency – Public Assistance

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the Public Assistance program, which provides financial assistance to eligible applicants for a portion of costs incurred in responding to a declared emergency. The District has compiled the COVID-19 related expenses and submitted them to FEMA for potential reimbursement of up to 100% for eligible expenses.

State School Aid

State School Aid is based on the “School Funding Reform Act of 2008” (SFRA), as modified by P.L.2018, c.67 (frequently referred to as S-2). The District had already received a reduction in State Aid over the past three years as a result of implementation of SFRA P.L. 2018, c67. State aid for fiscal year 2021-2022 decreased by \$316,573.

ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) has established a COVID-19 Medical Advisory Task Force (MATF) responsible for providing guidance to allow New Jersey high school student-athletes to return to athletics as soon and as safely as possible. Although we are not a high school district, we will use this guidance to help us plan for middle school sports and activities.

Should the determination be made to proceed with an athletic program the following procedures must be followed:

- Daily health screenings including temperature checks prior to practices or competitions for athletic staff (coaches, athletic trainers, officials and game workers) and athletes.
- Eliminate the use of shared water containers.

- Increased signage requiring physical distancing and mask wearing at all athletic events.
- Communication with neighboring districts regarding district policies for spectators
- Explore limiting number of spectators at competitions
- Limited access to locker room facilities for both home and away teams to encourage physical distancing.
- Increased cleaning of athletic facilities, equipment and public restrooms.
- Limit the number of students who are traveling to opponents for competitions (travel squad, etc).

Extracurricular Clubs/Activities

All clubs or activities will be offered in-person unless guidelines from the NJDOE are revised.

CHILD CARE/CER

CER is a division of Voorhees Township School District that provides both before and after school programming, and enrichment programming to both children and adults. Community Education may also offer various virtual enrichment programs for families and students.

Child care will be needed, particularly in instances where public school schedules are modified or staggered which may increase the likelihood that families that otherwise would not utilize child care will now require it.

School Age Care Covid-19 Policy Procedures

- Relocate parent check-in outside APR (signage - No parents past this point).
- Daily temperature checks with non-contact thermometers of all students and staff.
- Students or staff with temperature 100.4 + will not be permitted into the SAC.
- Handwashing by all students and staff upon entering the SAC program.
- Whenever possible students will maintain a safe social distance of 3 feet.
- Masks contingent on current CDC guidelines/executive orders.
- Utilize only (1) set of bathrooms while SAC is in session.
- Cafeteria tables will have seating markers 3 feet apart..
- Elimination of “as needed” registration.
- Hours 7:00 am - 9:00 am and 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm.

Daily Routine – SAC Staff

- Daily temperature check of AM students, and staff.
- Maintain a log of any students with a temperature and report to school nurse.
- Students with 100.4 degree or higher temperature will not be permitted into the program.
- Require **ALL** students and staff to utilize hand sanitizing stations prior to entering the program.
- Maintain social distancing whenever possible for students, staff, and parents.
- Sanitize all common areas and supplies each evening.
- Communicate procedures/expectations to all students, staff, and families.

Quantity	Yearly	Monthly	10% discount
35 – Full Time students M-F 7am-9am and 3:30pm-5:30pm	\$3600.00	\$360.00	\$3240.00
15 – Part Time 3 days a week 7am-9am and 3:30pm-5:30pm	\$2200.00	\$220.00	\$2000.00
10 – Part Time students M-F 7am-9am (mornings only)	\$1800.00	\$180.00	\$1620.00
10 – Part Time students M-F 3:30pm to 5:30pm (afternoons only)	\$1800.00	\$180.00	\$1620.00

CONTINUITY OF COMMUNICATION

During a period of pandemic outbreak, the District will heed guidance from (and be in communication) with the NJ Department of Health, the NJ Department of Education, appropriate members from the State and local governments, Township Health Departments and the Mayor of Voorhees. Information will be communicated to the school community directly from the District. As always, any important information will be available on the District’s website, www.voorhees.k12.nj.us

CONCLUSION

In all decision making processes, the safety and wellness of our staff, students, and families is our highest priority. Maintaining the ability to educate students in the event of an infectious disease outbreak requires additional considerations beyond traditional continuity planning. The

plan we have developed will serve as a guide. The power of the guide is in the planning process. We will continue to reassess the plan as necessary.

Signature of Superintendent: _____ **Date:** _____

Date submitted to the Executive County Superintendent: _____