



Committed to Excellence

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ACTING SUPERINTENDENT

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August 5, 2020

Dear Parents,

As I referenced at Friday's Reopening Forum, the district would be following up with more specifics on the beginning of our school year. The Governor revised his recommendation that all school districts should pursue a live learning experience for their students; however, he then modified that proposal allowing districts themselves to provide a reopening plan that best meets the need of the specific district – with the safety of students and staff the top priority.

Following our Forum, Superintendents participated in a Zoom meeting with the Commissioner of Education, Dr. Miguel Cardona. Dr. Cardona conveyed that Superintendents will decide which option to implement, with the Board of Education's knowledge and input. As such, based on parental input from Friday, staff feedback, and our educational community's suggestions, please be advised that I am recommending Trumbull pursue the Hybrid Learning Model. This document is designed to highlight the key elements of that phase, including how distance learning in the hybrid phase will differ from distance learning in the emergency schooling we experienced in the spring. I still will ask the Board to adopt this choice at our Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, August 11. Because time is of the essence, my subcommittees and I thought it best to announce our plan now so parents, students and staff have more time to prepare for our September 8 opening. (PreK, K, 6 and 9 start on September 4 with an early closing.)

Although our plan of July 24 to the State is still our foundation, we hope the attached condensed version will highlight the key points and/or changes that have evolved. You should also know that I have been in contact with our new Superintendent, Dr. Martin Semmel, on this and other key initiatives and he already has shared his insights with me.

The Reopening of Connecticut school districts is a complicated and monumental task. Please note this plan is an evolving document with changes implemented as needed, particularly modifications issued by the Governor and Commissioner of Education. Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

Thank you,

Ralph M. Iassogna
Acting Superintendent

Trumbull Public Schools Reopening 2020-21
August 5, 2020

Key Definitions

Hybrid Phase = The phase of Trumbull’s Reopening Plan that includes both in-person instruction and distance learning in order to minimize the number of students in the building on any given day.

Distance Learning = When students are learning at home during the days they are not attending school.

Temporary Remote Learning = An alternative to in-person attendance for “parents/guardians voluntarily opting their children into remote learning programming while other students attend in-person instruction.” Further details are provided later in this document.

Homeschooling = An alternative to in-person attendance for which a student is disenrolled from the Trumbull Public Schools. Further details are provided later in this document.

Health & Wellness

By acting responsibly as members of the TPS community, we will implement health and wellness practices that minimize the potential spread of COVID-19.

- All Health & Wellness information in [the full TPS Reopening Plan](#) will apply.
- At each school, the arrival and drop-off of students may be staggered to allow for the orderly movement of students, from both buses and cars, following social distancing requirements. School-specific details will be forthcoming from building principals.
- Masks must be worn at all times by students and adults in each school; parents/guardians should provide masks for their children. Exceptions will be only for scheduled mask breaks, for individuals who have a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face covering, for meal consumption, and for adults working in private offices. Procedures for individuals requesting a medical exemption will be forthcoming. Individuals who receive a medical exemption must remain a minimum of six feet apart from other individuals.
- COVID-19 will be mitigated by these key elements:
 - Training and education
 - Physical distancing
 - Wearing of face coverings/masks
 - Increased hand hygiene
 - Staying home when sick
 - Increased environmental cleaning and disinfection
 - Isolation and containment
 - Illness trend tracking

- Staff or students who have a temperature of 100 degrees or greater are not permitted into the school and must be excluded from school. Mass screening of individuals at school is not planned, as the CDC considers that to be less effective than individual screening done at home.
- Isolation rooms for individuals who exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be utilized in each school building.
- Volunteers and visitors to TPS will be restricted to ensure the safety of students and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Administrators must approve all volunteers and visitors in compliance with existing BOE policy.
- [The TPS website](#) will maintain up-to-date information on health and wellness practices to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19.
- Parents/guardians who have questions related to health & wellness during the Hybrid Phase should contact [Lynn Steinbrick, MSN, RN, Town of Trumbull Director of Nursing](#).

Teaching & Learning: Grades K-12
Teaching and learning in the Hybrid Phase will implement best practices, including for students learning at home.

- In the Hybrid Phase, students will be divided into two cohorts.
 - For grades 6-12 students, cohort will be based on last name:
 - Last Name A-L will be in Cohort A
 - Last Name M-Z will be in Cohort B
 This division based on alphabet is most efficient at the middle and high school levels.
 - For K-5 students, building principals will inform parents/guardians which cohort their child is in; this will allow each principal to maximize social distancing in each classroom.
 - Prior to the start of the school year, if parents/guardians wish their children to attend a cohort different from the one assigned, they should contact [Maria Vaz, the Registrar in the Assistant Superintendent's office](#).

- The basic structure for the Hybrid Phase for grades K-12 is:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A (In-Person)	Cohort A (In-Person)	All students Distance Learning from home	Cohort A (Distance Learning)	Cohort A (Distance Learning)
Cohort B (Distance Learning)	Cohort B (Distance Learning)		Cohort B (In-Person)	Cohort B (In-Person)

- Consistent with federal and state law, some students with identified special education needs, and some English Language Learners, will receive in-school services four days per week. Further information is provided later in this document.
- Unless otherwise announced, all instructional courses and programs will continue to be offered during the Hybrid Phase. State and local guidelines related to instructional minutes will be observed.
- BOE-approved goals and curriculum guides for each course and program will continue to guide each teacher’s planning, instruction, and assessment.
- In-Person Learning
 - Grades K-5
 - Students will sit in assigned seats.
 - Regular mask breaks will be incorporated in the classroom throughout the day provided that students are six feet apart. Masks must be kept on in hallways and in bathrooms.
 - Art, music, and physical education will be taught in each student’s classroom to minimize movement of students throughout the building. Modified instructional practices may be used to support student health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Resources from the Learning Commons will be brought to each student’s classroom as necessary; the Learning Commons space will be closed for drop-in student visits.
 - Students will be provided individual instructional materials; sharing of materials will not occur unless absolutely necessary. Materials that must be shared from student to student will be sanitized each evening as necessary.
 - Recess may include use of the playground, but may not include use of playground equipment or structures.
 - Grades 6-12
 - Students will sit in assigned seats.
 - Each teacher will include a mask break during each instructional period provided that students are six feet apart. Masks must be kept on in hallways and in bathrooms.
 - Resources from the Learning Commons will be brought to each student’s classroom as necessary; the Learning Commons space will be closed for drop-in student visits.
 - Students will be provided individual instructional materials; sharing of materials will not occur unless absolutely necessary. Materials that must be shared from student to student will be sanitized each evening as necessary.
 - Certain courses in art, music, physical education, and career and technical education may use modified instructional practices to support student health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Distance Learning
 - The district is committed to a more rigorous and challenging distance learning program this fall.
 - Each TPS student will be provided a Chromebook for distance learning if the student does not already have a Chromebook, laptop, desktop, or tablet available for him/her to use while at home. Each family without Internet access will be provided Internet connectivity via a voucher program offered by the State. Parents/guardians who wish to request a device or Internet connectivity may [click here for the TPS Request Form](#), or call 203-452-4311.
 - Students in grades 3-12 will use the Google Classroom platform to support instruction.
 - Students in grades K-2 will use a new consistent platform that is developmentally appropriate for these students to receive work, submit work, and receive feedback on work. A team is reviewing options to determine the platform choice and develop communication materials for parents/guardians of students in these grades.
 - Students in all grades K-12 will receive live teacher interaction during each distance learning day.
 - Technology has been purchased to better equip classrooms for live-streaming.
 - Students also will have independent work during each distance learning day.
- Professional development for staff prior to the school year will include sessions on signs and symptoms of COVID-19, critical staff-based health protocols, social and emotional needs of students, and best teaching and learning practices for the Hybrid Phase.
- Parents/guardians who have questions related to teaching & learning during the Hybrid Phase should contact [Christina Hefele, Director of Digital Learning](#), or [Jonathan Budd, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent](#).

Facilities

The TPS Facilities Department will implement best practices to support safe social distancing and health and hygiene practices.

- All Facilities information in [the full TPS Reopening Plan](#) will apply.
- In classrooms, the goal is for students to be a minimum of three feet apart, wearing masks, at all times except for designated mask breaks. Furniture in K-12 classrooms has been rearranged to maximize distance between student workstations.

- To support social distancing, student desks will face in the same direction, and individual student desks will replace tables in many K-2 classrooms. Where tables remain, students will sit on only one side of the table.
- Consistent signage in all schools will establish traffic patterns and safe social distancing. Masks must be kept on in hallways. In K-5 hallways, teachers will supervise students moving so that students are separated by at least three feet.
- Deep cleaning of classrooms will occur daily. Bathrooms will be sanitized at least twice daily. Door handles, sinks, and restroom surfaces will be cleaned regularly throughout the day. On Wednesdays, all buildings will be deep cleaned.
- Consistent signage in all schools will promote protective measures, hand washing, and face coverings. Pump dispensers, and hand-sanitizing products, will be placed in each classroom. Paper towel machines will be installed in bathrooms to replace hand dryers, which will be turned off.
- The only water fountains that will be active are those that are automatic bottle-fillers. Parents/guardians are encouraged to send their children to school with bottled water or a refillable bottle.
- Parents/guardians who have questions related to facilities during the Hybrid Phase should contact [David Erwin & John Morello, Facilities / Maintenance Supervisor](#).

Transportation

The TPS Transportation Department will implement best practices to support safe social distancing and health and hygiene practices.

- All Transportation information in [the full TPS Reopening Plan](#) will apply.
- Bus monitors will be provided on all elementary school routes for a minimum of three weeks. Monitors will ensure that students follow proper boarding and unloading procedures, do not change seats during the bus ride, and keep their masks in place throughout the entire bus ride.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided to each student as he/she boards the bus.
- Bus routes will be published on [the TPS website](#) on or about Wed., Aug. 19.
- Parents/guardians who have questions related to transportation during the Hybrid Phase should contact [Dawn Perkins, Transportation Supervisor](#).

Food Services

The TPS Food Services Department will implement best practices to support safe social distancing and health and hygiene practices consistent with federal and state requirements and guidance for child nutrition.

- All Food Services information in [the full TPS Reopening Plan](#) will apply. Additional health and safety measures, such as staff wearing face coverings and gloves while performing job responsibilities, will be strictly enforced.
- Self-serve and made-to-order salad bars, deli bars, and buffet lines will be removed. All condiments will be served in single packages.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to use [MySchoolBucks](#) to deposit money to their children's meal accounts. This will allow TPS to minimize the use of cash in the food services environment.
- Food prices for 2020-21 will remain unchanged:
 - Elementary School Breakfast: \$2.00 full-price / 30¢ for reduced-price students
 - Elementary School Lunch: \$2.90 full-price / 40¢ for reduced-price students
 - Middle School Breakfast: \$2.00 full-price / 30¢ for reduced-price students
 - Middle School Lunch: \$3.10 full-price / 40¢ for reduced-price students
 - High School Breakfast: \$2.25 full-price / 30¢ for reduced-price students
 - High School Lunch: \$3.25 full-price / 40¢ for reduced-price students
- Information on applying for free or reduced-price meals is available on [the TPS website](#).
- In-Person Learning Days
 - For grades K-8 students, meals will be delivered to and consumed in classrooms.
 - For grades 9-12 students, meals will be delivered to and consumed in classrooms, except for a limited amount of students who will eat in the cafeteria following social distancing guidelines for significantly reduced seating capacity. Students whose classes are permitted to eat in the cafeteria will be seated six feet apart from each other.
 - Further details on the ordering of meals will be provided by school administrators.
- Distance Learning Days
 - Meals may be picked up / purchased in the front of each school between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.
- Parents/guardians who have questions related to food services during the Hybrid Phase should contact [Betty Sinko, Food Services Manager](#).

Special Education: Kindergarten through Age 21

TPS students with special education needs will continue to receive special education services consistent with federal and state requirements, guidance, and recommendations.

- The Connecticut State Department of Education issues regular updates related to students with special education needs. As of the time of this printing, we continue to await guidance related to implementation of IEP hours. As necessary, our plan will be revised based on receipt of this information.
- TPS will make every effort possible to schedule special education services on days when students are in the school building.
- On days when they are participating in distance learning, students with special education needs will be supported by paraeducators and other staff as needed.
- Students with special education needs will receive a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction, including through Google Classroom, recorded video lessons, telephone conferences, live video conferencing, and virtual individual and small-group instruction.
- Communication with parents/guardians of students with special education needs will be weekly, and may include e-mail, telephone calls, and/or Google Meets.
- In accordance with health guidelines, staff working with students with special education needs may wear clear masks, face shields, gowns, and/or disposable gloves.
- Special education resource rooms, service provider spaces, and evaluation rooms will be equipped, as necessary, with desk dividers and room dividers. Related services staff will be encouraged to service students in the students' typical classroom setting.
- Students with special education needs may receive different or additional accommodations/modifications on days they are participating in distance learning. Needs will be determined by school-based teams.
- CSDE has published [“Addendum 3: Fall Reopening Resource Document for Students with High Needs.”](#) TPS will adhere to this document in determining, on a case-by-case basis, which students with identified special education needs may require additional in-school services. Parents/guardians who have questions should contact:
 - [For grades K-8 students receiving special education services: Kim Hapken, Ed.D., Interim PPS Director.](#)
 - [For grades 9-12 students receiving special education services, and ELITE students: Barbara Beaman, Coordinator of Special Education.](#)

- Evaluations that were not completed because of the prior school closure are being scheduled. Moving forward, students will be evaluated in keeping with their regular evaluation timelines. Testing spaces will adhere to all health and safety protocols.
- Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings will be held virtually or telephonically until further notice in order to minimize visitors to the buildings. Extenuating circumstances may require in-person PPT meetings.
- Students in the ELITE program will be provided their services at Trumbull High School, including a variety of vocational opportunities in the building. Until additional guidance is provided from CSDE, job sites in the community are currently on hold.
- Parents/guardians who have questions related to special education during the Hybrid Phase should contact [Kim Hapken, Ed.D., Interim PPS Director](#).

Special Education: Preschool (Trumbull Early Childhood Education Center – TECEC)
 TECEC students will continue to experience a high-quality preschool education in a safe and developmentally appropriate environment.

- In addition to the details of the prior section for all students with special education needs, the following details are specific for students at TECEC. They are consistent with the most recent guidance from CSDE, the Office of Early Childhood Education (ECE), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Department of Public Health (DPH).
- The basic structure for the Hybrid Phase at TECEC is:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
All AM students attend, dismissed at 11:00 a.m.	All AM students attend, dismissed at 11:00 a.m.	All Students Distance Learning from home	All AM students attend, dismissed at 11:00 a.m.	All AM students attend, dismissed at 11:00 a.m.
All PM students attend with regular schedule	All PM students attend with regular schedule		All PM students attend with regular schedule	All PM students attend with regular schedule
All full-day students attend with regular schedule	All full-day students attend with regular schedule		All full-day students attend with regular schedule	All full-day students attend with regular schedule
All part-day Head Start students attend, dismissed at 12:00 p.m.	All part-day Head Start students attend, dismissed at 12:00 p.m.		All part-day Head Start students attend, dismissed at 12:00 p.m.	All part-day Head Start students attend, dismissed at 12:00 p.m.

- Preschool students are encouraged, but not required, to wear masks. Face coverings may not be worn by any student who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, is incapacitated, or is unable to remove a mask without assistance.
- All adults working with students will wear the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Students will be educated in cohorts up to a class size of 14. Consistent staff members will be assigned to each class cohort.
- Students will have access to activity centers and will be able to move about the classroom.
- Daily living skills related to personal health and safety will be modeled, taught, and practiced.
- Parents/guardians who have questions related to TECEC during the Hybrid Phase should contact [Matthew Wheeler, Ed.D., TECEC Principal](#).

English Language Learner (ELL) Students

Identified ELL students will continue to receive services consistent with federal and state requirements, guidance, and recommendations.

- Intake testing for eligible students new to TPS will occur in testing spaces that adhere to all health and safety protocols. Students will be tested in the Long Hill Administration Building if possible.
- ELL teachers will be encouraged to service students in the students' typical classroom setting. They may wear clear masks.
- Selected ELL students will use Rosetta Stone to support their developing English proficiency.
- Consistent with federal and state law, some English Language Learners will receive in-school services four days per week. Additional information will be provided to those parents/guardians. Parents/guardians who have questions should contact [Jonathan Budd, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent](#).

Alternatives to In-Person Attendance

TPS will comply with CSDE guidelines related to alternatives to in-person attendance.

- Temporary Remote Learning
 - This alternative to in-person attendance is designed for “parents/guardians voluntarily opting their children into remote learning programming while other students attend in-

person instruction.” This is an enrollment status handled through the Office of the Assistant Superintendent.

- Parents/guardians exercising this option must provide written notice [to the Assistant Superintendent](#).
 - This option is available only as a full-day option; students cannot attend any part of the school day.
 - Based on the student’s age and planned instructional program, the Assistant Superintendent, in conjunction with building administrators, will issue details related to the student’s temporary remote learning programming. This programming may not equate with the full hours or scope of in-person instruction.
 - The district reserves the right to group students differently from how they would be grouped if they were attending in-person instruction.
 - The student’s family is expected to supervise and support the student’s attendance and engagement in learning.
 - The student may not be allowed to engage in extracurricular activities, including athletics.
 - Once a student begins this option for learning, the student will be able to re-enter in-person instruction only at the beginning of a trimester (for grades K-8) or at the beginning of a marking period (for grades 9-12). One’s week written notice to the Assistant Superintendent is required for the student’s re-entry.
 - Public health data may indicate that there is no longer a need for this temporary option. In that case, parents/guardians will be notified that their students will need to re-enter in-person instruction.
 - Additional guidance related to special education programming, student nutrition, and student discipline will be forthcoming based on guidance from the Connecticut State Department of Education.
- Homeschooling
 - This alternative to in-person attendance is designed for parents/guardians who wish to disenroll their child from the Trumbull Public Schools. The parents/guardians acknowledge full responsibility for the education of their child in accordance with the requirements of State law. TPS does not monitor or provide feedback on the quality of homeschool curriculum or instruction. A child wishing to enter the Trumbull Public Schools after homeschooling will need to enroll in accordance with the regulations of Board of Education Policy 5111, “Eligibility to Attend Trumbull Public Schools.” Parents/guardians interested in homeschooling must provide written notice [to the Assistant Superintendent](#).

Funding

TPS will seek funding mechanisms necessary for the required implementation of this plan.

- As with any initiative of this magnitude, funding is necessary to implement any plan. Although we believe the Hybrid Phase best meets our school and community needs, it is costly (approximately \$3.25 million). Hopefully, money will be forthcoming from the town, state, and federal governments. Officials are aware of the cost implications, but in a situation that COVID-19 presents, additional funding is an unforeseen expenditure. I will keep the

Board of Education and community aware of our costs as we move forward toward the September 8 opening and days after.

Additional Resources

TPS will continue to implement strong methods of parent/guardian communication.

- A Zoom session discussing the details of this plan will be held on Friday, August 7, 2020. Further details will be forthcoming from the Superintendent’s Office.
- Workgroups are continuing to discuss other key aspects of the TPS program during the Hybrid Phase, including interdistrict programs such as Aquaculture and RCA, extracurricular activities, and athletics.
- Answers to additional questions will be posted on the TPS website.