
MILLBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

RETURN TO LEARNING PLAN



a comprehensive plan for safely reopening our schools this fall



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

In the following pages, you will find a comprehensive plan for the reopening of our schools this fall for all students, PK through grade 12. Our Return to Learning Plan is based on current medical research and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In addition, it was developed collaboratively with the help of a wide variety of stakeholders and reflects the considerable and thoughtful input of parents, medical professionals, local and regional health officials, and school personnel, including classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators. This plan does not attempt to answer every question; rather, it serves as an overarching framework for how we will return to learning this fall. Much work is still ahead and additional details, including school-specific information, will be provided in the coming days.

The decision to implement a hybrid reopening for school was not made lightly or in isolation. The risk of COVID-19 transmission is very real, despite the steadily declining infection rates across the Commonwealth. However, the risks associated with keeping children at home are also significant and detrimental.¹ We feel that this plan represents the best way to mitigate both of these risks this fall.

Our Return to Learning Plan is based on our school community's commitments to safeguard the health and safety of our students and the adults who care for them; to engage children academically and enhance their social and emotional well-being; to ensure that special education services and other critical supports are provided; and to help staff members and families address barriers to learning and teaching. We are also committed to improving this plan as we receive feedback from members of our school community in the coming weeks and months.

Please keep in mind that conditions will likely remain fluid throughout the year. If there is a spike in COVID-19 cases in the area, or if there is a COVID-19 positive diagnosis in the school system, we may close schools temporarily. This decision will be made in collaboration with our Board of Health and school physician. Unfortunately, this decision will likely be made at a moment's notice. On the other hand, if COVID-19 illnesses continue to decline and remain very low in our region, we will reassess our plan and consider gradually phasing out the hybrid model in favor of full in-person instruction with considerable health and safety precautions.

Sincerely,

Gregory Myers,
Superintendent of Schools

¹ "The importance of in-person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impacts on children because of school closures in the spring of 2020. Lengthy time away from school and associated interruption of supportive services often results in social isolation, making it difficult for schools to identify and address important learning deficits as well as child and adolescent physical or sexual abuse, substance use, depression, and suicidal ideation. This, in turn, places children and adolescents at considerable risk of morbidity and, in some cases, mortality....Policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within schools must be balanced with the known harms to children, adolescents, families, and the community by keeping children at home." American Academy of Pediatrics *Guidance for School Re-entry*.

RETURN TO LEARNING PLAN SUMMARY

1. Millbury Public Schools will use a hybrid model to reopen our schools and return to teaching and learning this fall. This option provides PK-12 students and staff with a combination of in-person and remote teaching and learning experiences. The hybrid model will reduce the number of students in school at any given time, which allows for six feet of physical distancing in every classroom and prevents large groupings during passing times and in common areas.
2. Students with last names beginning with the letters A-K will attend school in person on Mondays and Tuesdays and receive remote instruction on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Students with last names beginning with the letters L-Z will receive remote instruction on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays and attend school in person on Thursdays and Fridays. With the exception of high needs students, all schools will be closed to students on Wednesdays for a thorough “deep cleaning” regimen. The same deep cleaning protocol will be implemented every Friday evening / Saturday as well.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A (A-K) In Person	Cohort A (A-K) In Person	½ Day of Remote Instruction ½ Day of Staff planning, professional development, office hours, student help	Cohort B (L-Z) In Person	Cohort B (L-Z) In Person
Cohort B (L-Z) Remote	Cohort B (L-Z) Remote		Cohort A (A-K) Remote	Cohort A (A-K) Remote

3. The start date for classes will be delayed this year to allow for additional preparations, including staff training and modifications to classrooms and common areas. Teachers will return to school on August 28 and classes will begin for students during the week of September 14. Students will return based on a staggered start schedule. Please see the first week schedule on page 8.
4. The health, safety, and well-being of our students and staff is our top priority and the Millbury Public Schools will meet all public health and safety expectations from the state and our local board of health. Whenever possible, all students and staff will practice six (6) feet of physical distancing and wear face-masks in grades PK-12. These expectations will be posted on signs throughout our schools and markers will be placed on floors to indicate traffic flow and distancing.
5. We have updated and expanded our cleaning and disinfecting protocols, obtained additional cleaning supplies, and provided training to staff. Cleaning and disinfecting will take place continually throughout

the school day, especially in high traffic areas and on high-touch surfaces. A comprehensive “deep clean” will take place every Wednesday and Friday evening / Saturday morning.

6. Based on guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), students will have mask breaks each day (in addition to lunch and recess). Mask breaks will be provided under the following conditions: students will be at least six feet apart, hand washing facilities or hand sanitizer will be available, and paper napkins or paper towels will be available for masks to be set on (inside face up) when removed. Additional signage on how to properly put on and take off masks will be posted.
7. Because the cafeterias at Elmwood Street Elementary and the R.E. Shaw School are large enough to accommodate appropriate distancing, students in grades PK-6 will have lunch in their cafeterias. Unfortunately, the Jr./Sr. High School’s cafeterias are not as large and would not provide sufficient distancing for groups of students. Therefore, some students in grades 7-12 will eat lunch in the cafeterias and others will eat in the gymnasium. Precautions will be in place to protect students with food allergies. The gymnasium will receive additional clearing in accordance with our pest management protocols.
8. Just as we did during the emergency school closure period, we will offer “grab and go” lunches to all students on their remote learning days.
9. Our vulnerable and high-needs students will attend school four days per week (Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays). In the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [Guidance on Fall 2020 Special Education Services](#)” document, students with complex and significant needs include:
 - Students already identified as “high needs” through the IEP process on the IEP form entitled [“Primary Disability/Level of Need-PL3.”](#)

Such students must meet at least two of these criteria:

- Services provided outside of the general education classroom;
 - Service providers are special education teachers and related service providers;
 - Special education services constitute more than 75% of the student’s school day;
 - Students who cannot engage in remote learning due to their disability-related needs;
 - Students who primarily use aided and augmentative communication;
 - Students who are homeless;
 - Students in foster care or congregate care; and/or
 - Students who have been dually identified as English Learners.
10. All staff and students will be required to wear masks on the bus at all times. There will be no more than one student per bench with alternating sides for each row. Children from the same household may sit together and in closer proximity (e.g., two students per bench). Diagrams are provided later in this guidance document. School bus windows will remain open at all times during operation unless not possible due to extreme weather conditions. Parents will be responsible for providing their children with face coverings or masks. MPS will have backup disposable masks available for students who need them.

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11. We understand that some students and/or family members may be immunocompromised or may simply not feel comfortable returning to school under these conditions this fall. Parents in these situations have the option of using a fully remote teaching and learning model. Any student in grades K-12 can participate in remote learning, doctor's notes will not be required, and families will not be locked into either learning model for the entire school year. If your family circumstances change or you have a change of heart, any parent/caregiver may complete a Learning Model Change Request. Because of the difficulty of accommodating enrollment changes in this model, we ask that parents commit to staying with a specific model for a full semester.
 12. Families who opt to keep their children home this fall can access a standards-based online learning platform from Millbury Public Schools at no cost. Families who enroll in the district's online learning platform are not required to submit homeschooling plans for approval. Students in grades 7-12 who choose the fully-remote option will use a self-paced, online program called Edgenuity. Our instructional coaches will provide frequent check-ins.
 13. Students in grades K-6 who choose the fully-remote option will receive synchronous (live) virtual instruction from Millbury teachers two days each week and asynchronous, independent work three days each week.
 14. We have increased our capacity to address students' needs in a remote learning environment. Our teachers will engage in ongoing professional learning designed to enhance hybrid instruction, we have updated existing and purchased new Chromebooks for student use, and have partnered with Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services and Children's Friend to provide additional support to students and their families during these trying times.
 15. Some epidemiologists anticipate a resurgence of COVID-19 cases this fall. We must be prepared to return to fully remote learning if necessary and, unfortunately, the decision to temporarily close one or more of our schools may be made at a moment's notice. We will work closely with our Board of Health to monitor COVID-19 trends in the area and will make these decisions collaboratively. We must be ready for the possibility that all of our classes will be fully remote at some point.
 16. The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to STAY HOME. The health of our school community depends on each of us. Please monitor your children daily for the following symptoms and, when in doubt, keep them home:
 - ☐ Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
 - ☐ Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
 - ☐ Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - ☐ New loss of taste or smell
 - ☐ Sore throat
 - ☐ Headache when in combination with other symptoms
 - ☐ Muscle aches or body aches
 - ☐ Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
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- ☐ Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
 - ☐ Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

If staff or students have any of these symptoms, they must get a test for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to school per DESE requirements and provide test results to the school nurse. A [list of test sites is available here](#), and Massachusetts also has an [interactive testing map](#). Staff and students who have symptoms should also contact their primary care physician for further instructions. More information related to the availability of testing will be provided later this summer. Students and/or staff who are not able to access testing, but are symptomatic, must quarantine at home for 14 days from symptom onset.

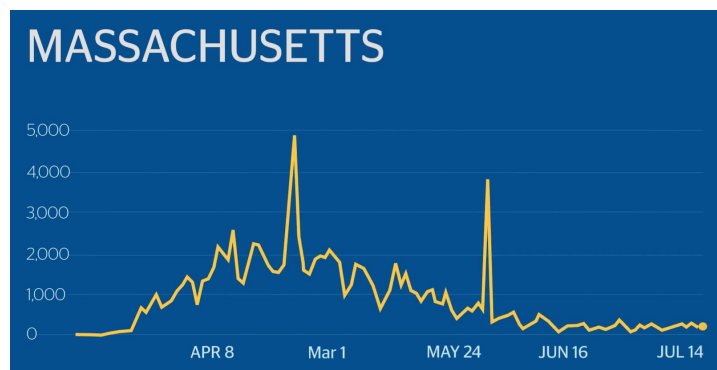
17. We acknowledge that the precautions we are taking to protect against COVID-19 transmission will greatly mitigate, but not entirely eliminate, risk. No single precaution or set of precautions will completely eliminate all possibility of transmission, but by implementing coordinated interventions outlined by the CDC and state officials and reflected in this plan, we will reduce that risk significantly.
18. Planning for this fall is still fluid. We reserve the right to make changes to any and all aspects of this plan as circumstances evolve and especially as we receive additional guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, our Board of Health, and State officials.

SCHOOL REOPENING

Considering the current situation, why are schools opening at all?

The decision to reopen schools was not made lightly or in isolation and was based on two factors: the sharp decline in COVID-19 cases in our area and across the Commonwealth and the very real risks posed to students by keeping them home.

The American Academy of Pediatrics outlines the reasons why returning to school this fall is critical. From their [Guidance for School Re-entry](#): “The importance of in-person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impacts on children because of school closures in the spring of 2020. Lengthy time away from school and associated interruption of supportive services often results in social isolation, making it difficult for schools to identify and address important learning deficits as well as child and adolescent physical or sexual abuse, substance use, depression, and suicidal ideation. This, in turn, places children and



adolescents at considerable risk of morbidity and, in some cases, mortality. Beyond the educational impact and social impact of school closures, there has been substantial impact on food security and physical activity for children and families. ...Policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within schools must be balanced with the known harms to children, adolescents, families, and the community by keeping children at home.”

Thanks to ongoing mitigation efforts across New England, New Jersey, and New York, the number of people becoming ill from COVID-19 in our area has declined sharply and remains quite low. With the precautions outlined in this plan, we are confident that we can greatly reduce the chance of transmission in our schools and keep our students and staff safe.

Considering the improved COVID-19 trends in our area, why aren't you opening schools for full, in-person instruction this fall?

The national conversation about opening schools for full in-person instruction this fall has sometimes been divisive and unhealthy, especially for the young people who look to adults for guidance. Some members of the community urged us to consider a full return to school, while others feel that remote learning is the only safe option. There are no simple solutions or easy answers. The Governor's decision to close schools and businesses in March helped to control and eventually reduce the number of COVID-19 infections in the Commonwealth. However, risk of transmission still exists.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and DESE have provided extensive guidance for mitigating transmission in school, including protocols for physical distancing. While DESE recommends that students and adults maintain six feet of distance during the school day, they also assert that children *can* be as close as 3' apart as long as they never remove their masks. Asking children to go an entire school day without a mask break is unrealistic.



A typical classroom with student desks set three feet apart (left) and six feet apart (right). The classroom on the left can fit 22 desks without blocking entrance/egress. The classroom on the right can fit 12 desks without blocking entrance/egress.

The CDC recommends 6' of distance between individuals and states that the more closely you interact with others and the longer the interaction time, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. Based on this guidance, we adopted the 6' distancing rule. Our facilities personnel conducted a feasibility study for each of our buildings using the six-foot rule. It quickly became evident that we cannot bring the entire student body back to our classrooms at the same time this fall while also maintaining safe physical distancing.

Our classrooms are not large enough to accommodate sufficient space between 20+ student desks, even with every other piece of furniture removed.

Before the School Year Begins...

If you have not already done so, please notify your child's school of your daily transportation plans (either school bus or parent transportation). If you decide to opt out of school bus transportation at the beginning of the year, but change your mind at some point, you have the option of requesting school transportation again. Please know that this process may take up to 72 hrs to complete since it may affect physical distancing on the bus. Please contact your child's school to request this change. If you have multiple children in separate buildings, please contact each individual building with this request.

Begin the daily practice of screening for symptoms every morning. The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to **STAY HOME**.

- ☐ Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- ☐ Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- ☐ Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- ☐ New loss of taste or smell
- ☐ Sore throat
- ☐ Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- ☐ Muscle aches or body aches
- ☐ Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- ☐ Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- ☐ Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

If staff or students have any of these symptoms, they must get a test for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to school per [DESE requirements](#). Those who choose not to be tested should remain home in self-quarantine for 14 days. A [list of test sites is available here](#), and Massachusetts also has an [interactive testing map](#). Staff and students who have symptoms should also contact their primary care physician for further instructions. More information related to the availability of testing will be provided later this summer.

**** Staff and families who intend to travel outside of New England, New York, and New Jersey should immediately report their plans to the building principal since they may be subject to a 14-day quarantine based on recent guidance from the Governor's office.**

To Start the Year...

Returning to school will look very different this year, and we are preparing a comprehensive orientation for students at all levels. This orientation will include:

- Review of safety expectations and new routines
- Technology overview (How do I use the tools and apps needed for remote learning?)
- Digital citizenship (How do I engage safely and responsibly in online learning?)
- Strategies for remote learning success (this includes organizational skills, what to do when there's a problem, monitoring and mitigating distraction, how to reflect on learning and advocate for support when needed, etc.).

The start date for classes will be delayed this year to allow for additional preparations, including staff training and modifications to classrooms and common areas. Teachers will return to school on August 28. Students will return based on a staggered half-day start beginning the week of September 14. This staggered reentry schedule allows us to introduce students to our new protocols and expectations in small groups and provide individual supports and guidance.

****For the First Week of School Only****

Monday Sept. 14	Tuesday Sept. 15	Wednesday Sept. 16	Thursday Sept. 17	Friday Sept. 18
Cohort A (A-K) Even Grades (K, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12)	Cohort A (A-K) Odd Grades (PK, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11)	½ day of remote instruction for all students	Cohort B (L-Z) Even Grades (K, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12)	Cohort B (L-Z) Odd Grades (PK, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11)

Since the Jr./Sr. High School is the Town's exclusive polling location, there will be no school on November 3, 2020. Our past practice has been to hold elections during the school day; however, given the current restrictions on large group gatherings and the additional potential exposure to students and staff, we will not have school on November 3 and the polling spaces in the school will undergo a deep cleaning regimen before school opens for classes on November 5.

****After the First Week of School****

Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
Cohort A (A-K) In Person	Cohort A (A-K) In Person	½ Day Remote Instruction for all Students	Cohort B (L-Z) In Person	Cohort B (L-Z) In Person
Cohort B (L-Z) Remote	Cohort B (L-Z) Remote		Cohort A (A-K) Remote	Cohort A (A-K) Remote

SAFETY AND WELLNESS

Training on Physical Distancing and Safety Protocols

All students and staff will be provided with age appropriate instruction and training on COVID-19 related physical distancing expectations and hygiene practices. This training is mandatory for all. Such training will include clear guidelines for school routines including but not limited to school entry and dismissal, riding the school bus, movement through the hallways, school meals, and accessing the bathroom. The school community will be reminded frequently of these routines and expectations; signage in multiple languages will be used to support and reinforce physical distancing and personal hygiene practices that help reduce the spread of COVID and other infectious diseases.

Visitors and Volunteers

All visitors to the schools, including volunteers, will be minimized as much as possible. MPS will limit any nonessential visitors or volunteers - especially individuals who are not from the local geographic area. Visitors to schools must make an appointment in advance. Visitors will be held to the same standards as staff and will be required to wear masks/ face coverings (which may be provided by MPS) and follow hand sanitizing and physical distancing requirements. Visitors will be encouraged to leave personal belongings in the car or to keep such items with them during their visit. Visitors who must enter the building will check in and out at the entrance. Check-in will require that the individual record their full name, event attending, and the location that the visit will be occurring. For example, Principal's Conference Room, Junior High Assistant Principal's Office, room number, or auditorium. This record will aid in both cleaning and contact tracing efforts. Visitors will not share pens when logging their presence into a site. Substitute teachers will be assigned to a designated building whenever possible to prevent exposure to multiple sites. Itinerant staff who travel between buildings will be expected to wash their hands upon leaving and arriving at any school. The proper use of masks/face coverings and physical distancing protocols will be followed at all times. Itinerant staff will be required to sign in and out of any building they visit.

Visitors and guardians dropping off items for student-use will be asked by the office staff to leave the item in a designated area at the entrance vestibule. This will prevent unnecessary contact.

Meetings

It is essential that schools are able to conduct business as needed. This includes co-planning, collaboration, professional development, student support team meetings, faculty meetings, parent meetings, and other essential functions. Whenever feasible, such meetings should be held through virtual means. If a meeting must occur in person, clearly delineated protocols for screening, physical distancing, hand washing/hand sanitizer use, and use of masks/face coverings will be fully enforced. Regardless of whether meetings are held in person or remotely, interpreters will still be provided as needed to ensure multilingual families are able to participate in their native language. As of this writing, Special Education and Section 504 Plan meetings will be held virtually. In addition, Back-to-School nights and

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held virtually. Other in-person meetings may be held under special circumstances and will depend on the size and configuration of available space. Any meetings conducted in-person can only occur provided protocols for screening, physical distancing, hand washing/hand sanitizer use, and use of masks/face coverings guidelines are followed.

Events/ Building & Facilities Use

The School Committee's policy allows for the use of school facilities by outside and community organizations or individuals. Unfortunately, the logistical and cleaning challenges associated with allowing additional groups of people in schools are significant and the School Committee may elect to restrict such usage until further notice.

Face Coverings and Masks

All students and all staff must wear face coverings or masks that cover both the mouth and nose in order to board school busses and/or enter Millbury Public School buildings, with exceptions only for those students or staff for whom it is not safe to do so due to a documented medical condition or physical



Face Covering

A cloth, paper, or disposable face covering that covers the nose and mouth; may or may not be medical grade

impairment. In cases in which face coverings or masks are not possible, social distancing of six feet will be required, unless not feasible due to the personal situation. Staff working with students who are not wearing a face covering or mask will be encouraged to wear a face shield (or alternatively safety goggles) for additional protection from droplet transmission. The Centers for Disease Control recommends all people two years of age and older wear a cloth face covering in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Parents will be responsible for providing students with face coverings or masks. MPS will have backup disposable masks available

for students who need them. Backup masks will also be provided to bus drivers for dispersal at student pickup. Staff may choose to wear their own mask or one provided by the school. [Guidance on Required Safety Supplies for Reopening Schools](#).

The CDC recognizes that wearing cloth face coverings may not be possible in every situation or for some people. In some situations, wearing a cloth face covering may exacerbate a physical or mental health condition, lead to a medical emergency, or introduce significant safety concerns. [Adaptations and alternatives](#) should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading if it is not possible to wear one.

Some people, such as people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions or other sensory sensitivities, may have challenges wearing a cloth face covering. They should consult with their healthcare provider for advice about wearing cloth face coverings.

Cloth face coverings are a critical preventive measure and are most essential in times when social distancing is difficult. If cloth face coverings cannot be used, make sure to take other measures to

reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread, including social distancing, frequent hand washing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.



Face Shield

A clear plastic shield that covers the forehead, extends below the chin, and wraps around the sides of the face

Based on guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), students will have mask breaks each day (in addition to lunch and recess). Mask breaks will be provided under the following conditions: students will be at least six feet apart, hand washing facilities or hand sanitizer will be available, and paper napkins or paper towels will be available for masks to be set on (inside face up) when removed. Additional signage on how to properly put on and take off masks will be posted.

CDC does not recommend the use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for wearing cloth face coverings, but rather as a secondary protection in addition to wearing a mask or cloth face covering. Millbury Public School staff may choose to use a face shield when sustained close contact with other people is expected.

The Millbury Public Schools may require certain staff who are expected to have repeated, sustained close contact with a specific student or population to wear a face shield. In these instances, the staff member may choose to bring in their own face shields or one will be provided to them by the district. The staff member will then be responsible for the daily cleaning and disinfection of their issued facemask. Approved safety goggles may be worn in lieu of a face shield.

The Millbury Public Schools District will not provide N95 masks to non-healthcare personnel, as critical supplies should continue to be reserved for [healthcare workers and other medical first responders](#), as recommended by current CDC guidance. N95 masks also require respirator fit testing to identify the right model, style, and size respirator for each worker. The district does not have access to approved OSHA fit testing equipment and test administrators. Therefore, the district will provide KN95 masks to any staff member that feels they require additional protection due to either their own immunocompromised state or that of a household member.

The Federal Drug Administration (FDA) lists KN95 masks as a suitable alternative to an N95. The Nurse Leader will reach out to all MPS staff to obtain a preliminary district KN95 needs count. Thereafter, staff may contact the Nurse Leader to request a KN95 mask. Medical and personal information shared with the nurse for this purpose will be kept confidential and not be shared with administrators.

All Millbury Public School Employees will receive mandatory training on the proper use of PPE, including facemasks. Additional PPE and training will be provided for staff who engage in 1:1 activities requiring that they perform hands-on activities with high probability of coming into contact with bodily fluids, such as completing Activities of Daily Living. These staff will be provided with a smock, scrub jacket, or gown, depending on the specific situation.



Handwashing and Hand Sanitizing Procedures

All students and staff must engage in frequent hand washing/sanitizing, including upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, before putting on and taking off masks, after coughing or sneezing, and before dismissal. Effective handwashing, in which individuals use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with an individual disposable towel will be modeled and taught to all students. Handwashing hygiene training will also be included in mandatory staff training.

If handwashing is not available, an approved hand sanitizer can be used. Hand sanitizer stations will be set up at school entrances and throughout our schools, in addition to increased hand hygiene signage, reminding students and staff to frequently wash and sanitize.

Physical Distancing Protocols

The [CDC recommends](#) six feet of physical distance between individuals. Per the CDC, the more closely you interact with others and the longer the interaction time, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. Physical distancing education will be provided to all MPS employees during our opening days orientation. Family education will be ongoing and will begin prior to the start of school. Student education will be ongoing and include visual cues, such as posters and infographics placed around the school to remind students to stay healthy and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Arriving/ Departing School

Each school will communicate arrival and dismissal routines to parents. Students will go straight to their classroom or designated area in the morning. Dedicated doors will be utilized for entry into schools to allow for physical distancing. Entry/dismissal doors will be assigned by each school. Individuals and signage will be stationed to direct students. Buses will disembark in a staggered manner. Walkers and parent drop offs will be assigned staggered arrival and dismissal times. Visitors / guardians picking up and dropping off students will not be allowed into the school.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures and Lockdowns

The physical safety of our students and staff is our first priority. In an emergency situation, our primary responsibility is to ensure everyone in the school is kept safe from any immediate danger. The emergency evacuation and lockdown plans for each school will be reviewed to identify if there are ways to allow for

cannot be used to maintain the six-foot guideline. Also, any furniture that is an obstacle to the six-foot guidelines will be removed and placed in storage. The number of students assigned to classrooms will be reduced to approximately 50% capacity. All student desks will face the same direction to avoid face to face contact. A distance of six feet or more and plexiglass dividers will be used, when feasible, to allow for teaching staff to face their students during instruction. Wherever possible, seats will be assigned (including classrooms and meals). Assigned seating is important because it effectively creates even smaller groups within cohorts which minimize transmission. Assigned seats can also assist with contact tracing.

Classroom Sanitation

Cleaning and disinfecting will be done in accordance with [DESE guidelines \(pg.15\)](#). Daily cleaning for shared spaces and furniture will take place. For high-touch surfaces (e.g. door handles, light switches, etc.), cleaning and disinfecting will occur three to four times per day and/or between uses.

Age-appropriate classroom cleaning routines will be developed, taught on opening days, and reinforced within the classroom. Students who are able to participate in these cleaning routines will be encouraged to do so. For example, students at the Junior Senior High School will assist with the disinfection of their own learning space prior to transitioning to the next class.



Desks: Desks will be cleaned at least daily. For situations when cohorts of students move between classrooms or where meals are eaten at desks, cleaning of desks will take place between classes and before and after meals.

Electronics: Electronics will be disinfected following the manufacturer's instructions regarding how to properly clean and disinfect (e.g. alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 60 percent ethanol or 70 percent isopropanol). When shared, electronics will be cleaned between use by staff, students, or custodial staff.

Facilities Sanitation

Hallways

Each school has specific transition protocols that are age appropriate. Social distancing will be enforced in all hallways by available staff and visual cue signage will be hung as reminders.

Cafeterias

Each school will have specific cafeteria protocols for lunch and/or other usage that are age appropriate with accommodations for students with food allergies.

Recess

Students and staff may remove their masks during outdoor recess as long as they maintain at least six feet of physical distance. Otherwise, adherence to masking requirements and at least three feet of distancing will be monitored.

Outdoor Play Structures

Outdoor play structures (e.g. playgrounds, swings, etc.) will be closed pending additional guidance.

Physical Education

When PE classes are held outdoors, activities can occur without masks as long as at least 10 feet of distance is maintained between individuals. With masks, outdoor activities can occur when 6 feet of distance is maintained between individuals. When PE classes are held indoors, masks will be required and 6 feet of distance will be maintained between individuals. Physical education activities cannot occur indoors without a mask. At no time will physical education classes have activities with close physical contact.

Protocols For Responding To Covid-19

A minimum of 10 days of self-isolation for COVID-19 positive cases is required. Most people who test positive and have a relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days.

People who test positive can resume public activities after 10 days and once they have:

- gone for 3 days without a fever (and without taking fever-reducing medications like Tylenol); and
- experienced improvement in other symptoms (for example, their cough has gotten much better); and
- received clearance from public health authority contact tracers (the local board of health or Community Tracing Collaborative).

Repeated testing prior to return is not recommended. Return to school should be based on isolation time and symptom resolution. Close contacts of a positive COVID-19 case should be tested. DPH defines close contact as:

- Being within 6 feet of COVID-19 case for at least 10-15 minutes. Close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case while the case was symptomatic or within the 48 hours before symptom onset, OR
- Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on) while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment.

Close contacts include other students and staff who were within 6 feet of the student or staff for at least 10-15 minutes in a classroom, in other school spaces, on the bus, or at an extracurricular activity.

If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, then self-isolation is for a minimum of 10 days **and** until at least three days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms as noted. If the test is negative, the student/ staff can return to school if asymptomatic and wearing a mask. ALL close contacts should be tested but MUST self-quarantine for 14 days after the last exposure to the person who tested positive, regardless of test result.

The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to STAY HOME. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; please do not assume it is another condition. When in doubt, stay home. Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves:

- Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

If staff or students have any of these symptoms, they must get a test for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to school. Alternatively, if the individual is unable to access testing, they may self-quarantine for 14 days from symptom onset. The clinic/ nurses will have a list of available test sites. A [list of test sites is available here](#), and Massachusetts also has an [interactive testing map](#). Staff and students who have symptoms should also contact their primary care physician for further instructions.

Comfort Rooms

Each school will have a separate, specially arranged room in which to isolate students and staff with COVID-like symptoms. Symptomatic individuals will be separated from other students and staff, as well as other immunocompromised students in the clinic, by staying in the isolation room until they leave the building. Comfort rooms and clinics will be equipped with air purifiers. All teachers and staff will call the clinic prior to sending any student to the nurse, except in the case of urgent or emergent medical instances or prearranged clinic appointments, in order to facilitate this process. Nurses will don PPE for droplet precautions (including N95 masks) to evaluate and assess individuals in the isolation room. Guardians will be called and instructed to pick up students as soon as possible from the comfort room so the room may be cleaned and sanitized and available for use again in a timely manner.

See [Protocols for responding to COVID-19 scenarios in school, on the bus, or in community settings](#) for further clarification on specific scenarios.

DESE-Required Protocols for COVID related Scenarios

The Millbury Public Schools will use the DESE-required protocols to assess students' health and safety to be at school.

What will happen if a student or staff member feels sick at school?

- The individual needs to ensure that their mask is fully and tightly covering the nose and mouth area;
- The nurse will be notified immediately;
- The nurse will escort the individual to the isolation area to assess symptoms
 - If symptomatic, the individual must leave school. The parent/guardian will be called to pick up the child immediately.
- It is recommended that individuals with symptoms get tested for COVID. If an individual does not wish to be tested, then that person must isolate for 14 days from the onset of symptoms.
 - IF NEGATIVE: If the individual does not have COVID-19, the individual may return to school-based upon guidance from their clinician and the necessary management of another diagnosis. The individual must stay home until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
 - IF POSITIVE: The individual remains at home (except to get medical care), monitors their symptoms, notifies the school, notifies personal close contacts, assists the school in contact tracing efforts, and answers the call from the local board of health or Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative. Most people who have a relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days and until at least 3 days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.

What will happen if multiple people are symptomatic at school?

- The school and district administration will consult with the Board of Health to determine if the transmission of COVID is happening at school and if a school closure needs to take place. When there is suspected in-school transmission beyond one cohort or a small number of cohorts, school and district leaders must consult with the local board of health as to proposed next steps. These steps could include, for example, deciding to a) close part of the school or the entire school for a short time (e.g. 1-3 days) for an extensive cleaning or other facility mitigation, or b) close the school partially or fully for the longer duration of a 14-day quarantine period. Before a school closure can take place, DESE needs to approve this action.
- If the decision is made to close for some number of days, we will communicate the following information to you:
 - Informing the community that it is possible COVID-19 is being transmitted in the school and/or district
 - Noting that there may be more potential cases that are not yet symptomatic
 - Recommending students quarantine and not have contact with others
 - Reminding families of the importance of not having contact with higher-risk individuals (e.g., grandparents)
 - Reminding families of the list of COVID-19 symptoms for which to monitor
 - Ensuring that remote learning is immediately provided to all students

What if I get COVID-19?

- Self-isolation for COVID-19 positive cases is a minimum of 10 days.
 - Most people who test positive and have a relatively mild illness will need to stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days. People who test positive can resume public activities after 10 days and once they have:
 - gone for 3 days without a fever; and
 - experienced improvement in other symptoms; and
 - received clearance from public health authority contact tracers.
 - Repeat testing before returning to school is not recommended. Return to school should be based on time's passing and symptom resolution.

What happens if someone that I am close to gets COVID-19?

- Close contacts of a positive COVID-19 case should be tested. For general guidance, the Department of Public Health (DPH) defines close contact as:
 - Being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for at least 10-15 minutes. Close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case while the case is symptomatic or within the 48 hours before symptom onset, OR
 - Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on) while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment.
- In school settings, close contacts include other students and staff who are within 6 feet of the student or staff for at least 10-15 minutes in a classroom, in other school spaces, on the bus, or at an extracurricular activity. Possible close contacts must self-quarantine for 14 days, regardless of test results, if tested. If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, then self-isolation is for a minimum of 10 days and until at least three days have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms as noted. Any area of the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual must be closed off and/or cleaned and disinfected. The area can be used 12 hours after cleaning/disinfecting has occurred.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

Hybrid Instruction

All students in grades PK-12 will be divided into cohorts: Cohort A (students with last names that begin with A-K), Cohort B (L-Z), Cohort C (high needs students), and Cohort D (students engaged in 100% remote learning). Cohort A and B siblings with different last names will be placed in the same cohort.

Cohort A and B students will experience alternating cycles of in-person learning and remote learning. Remote learning includes engaging in structured activities to preview content and practice skills, reading or preparation for classes, team/school spirit activities, academic support from math and literacy coaches,

special education, and English Language Learner (ELL) support, all as appropriate. In-person learning instruction includes activities students typically engage in when in school, including core and specialist subject areas and all formal assessments. A general outline of the day for both remote and in-person sessions follows. In-person activities will include both core and specialist subject areas. Cohort C students who have been identified as “high needs” based on DESE criteria will attend school in person Monday/Tuesday **and** Thursday/Friday.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A In Person	Cohort A In Person	Cohorts A & B Remote all day	Cohort A Remote	Cohort A Remote
Cohort B Remote	Cohort B Remote	Staff will provide synchronous learning opportunities to students for half of this day and use the second half for planning, professional development, and office hours to support students	Cohort B In Person	Cohort B In Person

Curriculum

Standards for each grade level will be reviewed by instructional coaches along with the Curriculum Director and grade-level teachers to identify the priority skills each student at that level needs to be successful. Learning targets will be created based on this skill analysis so that students have a clear understanding of their learning goals. The curriculum scope and sequence at each grade level will be adjusted to prioritize these essential skills and maximize the learning for students. Teachers will universally design lessons to provide students with a variety of ways to access these skills and represent their understanding of them. These curriculum adjustments will allow us to utilize in-person and remote learning environments to focus on the skills all students need to be successful.

Instructional Practices

Students in grades PK-2 will use [Class Dojo](#) to share work with their teachers and families. In grades 3-12, students will use [Google Classroom](#) and the G-Suite of tools to access assignments, share/submit work, and engage in learning activities. These technologies will be used not just for remote learning, but for in-person instruction as well when appropriate. In-person instructional practices will be delivered in compliance with our safety protocols and, whenever possible, classes will be broken into smaller groups for more focused instruction and skill development. A critical focus of our instructional practices will be to support students in becoming expert learners who create goals and use teacher feedback to reflect on their progress. Some of the key practices our district will be implementing are listed below:

- [Synchronous and Asynchronous](#) activities

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- Synchronous learning refers to all types of learning in which learner(s) and teacher(s) are in the same place, at the same time, while learning takes place. This includes in-person classes, live online meetings when the whole class or smaller groups get together. In synchronous learning, students usually go through the lesson together, accompanied by their teacher who is able to provide support while students are completing tasks and activities.
 - Asynchronous learning is a student-centered teaching method widely used in online learning. Its basic premise is that learning can occur in different times and spaces specific to each learner, as opposed to synchronous learning at a same time and place with groups of learners and their teacher, or one learner and their teacher. In asynchronous learning, teachers usually set up a lesson, which students engage with at their own pace.
- Digital learning platforms (i.e.: Class Dojo, Google Classroom)
 - [Zoom/Google Meet](#) sessions
 - [Universal Design for Learning](#) (UDL) Lesson Planning
 - Web 2.0 Tools that allow for Room and Zoom/Google Meet structure
 - [Kahoot](#)
 - [Quizlet](#)
 - [Peardeck](#)
 - [Flipgrid](#)
 - [Screencastify](#)
 - Flipped Classroom Models for PK-12
 - Centers based Instruction

Assessment

Students will be assessed in the fall using benchmark assessments that will identify each learner's current strengths and needs. This data will allow us to identify and target students' specific learning gaps and monitor each student's mastery of standards-based, grade-level skills. A strong emphasis on dialogue and feedback between teachers, students, and parents will help make these learning targets clear. Students in grades 3-12 will follow specific protocols for accessing and turning in assignments as well as how to respond to their teacher's comments. Parents will also be given a way to access their child's assignments and will be made aware of how they are progressing. We will continue to adjust our in-person and remote teaching practices to best meet the needs of students and help students demonstrate their learning authentically. Teachers at all levels embraced the idea of utilizing a variety of methods for students to show their work during our school closure last spring and we will continue this universally-designed approach to assessment. The curriculum learning targets and benchmark assessments will also be used to assist students in creating learning goals for themselves and reflect on progress in meeting these goals. The grading process for all students will follow the same guidelines as when we are fully in person.

Engagement

Student participation and meaningful engagement during remote instruction is critically important for students' academic success. This is especially important since remote instruction will require students to take an active and more independent role. As a result, our academic programming will place special emphasis on establishing and maintaining high levels of student engagement. This will be done through continuous back-and-forth dialogue and feedback between teachers, students, and their parents. Further, providing students with options for how they will learn and how they will demonstrate understanding will also encourage greater engagement. The choices we have highlighted in curriculum, instructional practices, and assessment provide options for students to set meaningful goals for how they will meet the standards, determine the methods and materials they need to reach their goal, and express how they met their goal in authentic ways; ultimately, teaching students how to guide their own learning experiences and setting them on the path towards expert learning. Teachers will utilize Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies to promote this process and will work with students both in-person and remotely to develop the skills they need to tackle their independent work and set goals for themselves. As we support students to be independent learners, we will also build relationships with and among students so that they know that they are not alone in their learning. Protocols will be set at each building for reaching out to students who are having a hard time engaging in their work.

The following table provides an overview of the practices at the Elmwood Street Elementary School that families can expect their students to participate in. Detailed schedules for specific grades will be provided by schools before the start of the year.

ELMWOOD STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HYBRID MODEL	
MAROON: REMOTE LEARNING	GOLD: IN-PERSON LEARNING
<p><i>Starting the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students (remote and in-person) attend synchronous sessions, starting with a Daily Morning Meeting. 	
<p><i>During the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students participate in asynchronous and synchronous activities at a pace that works for students and families. Students will be provided schedules to participate in Zoom/Google Meet based small group instruction in both math and reading throughout their remote learning day. All remote assignments in the core content areas will have video instructions and modeling for students by a teacher at their grade level. Students at all grade levels will also be provided with an opportunity throughout their remote learning day to get support in math and ELA via a set Zoom/Google Meet session. Students will be challenged on remote days but not frustrated. As appropriate, students may also be supported and taught by various educators (e.g. special educators, teachers of English Language Learners, specialists, counselors, math coaches, and literacy specialists). 	<p><i>During the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are in school for the regular school day (8:38 a.m. - 3:24 p.m.). Students follow their regular schedule for both academic and specialist classes. Recess and lunch times remain the same.
<p><i>Ending the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students attend a synchronous session for Daily Closing Activities for 15-20 minutes at the end of each day scheduled by individual teachers (eg. read aloud, preview for tomorrow.) 	

The following table provides an overview of the practices at the Raymond E. Shaw School that families can expect their students to participate in. Detailed schedules for specific grades will be provided by schools before the start of the year.

RAYMOND E. SHAW SCHOOL HYBRID MODEL	
MAROON: REMOTE LEARNING	GOLD: IN-PERSON LEARNING
<p><i>Starting the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students (remote and in-person) attend synchronous sessions for Daily Homeroom/Team Meetings 	
<p><i>During the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students participate in asynchronous and synchronous activities at a pace that works for students and families. Students will be provided schedules to participate in Zoom/Google Meet based small group instruction in both math and reading throughout their remote learning day. Students at all grade levels will also be provided with an opportunity throughout their remote learning day to get support in math and ELA via a set Zoom/Google Meet session. Students will be challenged on remote days but not frustrated. As appropriate, students may also be supported and taught by various educators (e.g. special educators, teachers of English Language Learners, specialists, counselors, math coaches, and literacy specialists). All work assigned to students will be required and graded. Expectations for this work will be set by the teacher. 	<p><i>During the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are in school for the regular school day (7:57 a.m. - 2:28 p.m.). As appropriate, students attend approximately four to five hours of classes each day, including academics, specials, and support classes (e.g., academic support, counseling, social and emotional learning, support for English Language Learner, and other activities).
<p><i>Ending the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom Teacher/Team/Advisory Group Leader meets with all their students together (in-person and remote groups) every afternoon to do an end of day group activity for 15 - 20 minutes (eg. preview for tomorrow, school spirit). 	

The following table provides an overview of the practices at the Jr./Sr. High School that families can expect their students to participate in. Detailed schedules for specific grades will be provided by schools before the start of the year.

JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL HYBRID MODEL	
MAROON WEEK: REMOTE LEARNING	GOLD WEEK: IN-PERSON LEARNING
<p><i>Starting the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “In-Person” students go directly to their first class to begin their day 	
<p><i>During the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will engage in synchronous and asynchronous learning activities that are designed to allow students to work independently, but with support as needed. Teachers will set expectations in regards to work assignments to help guide students and families. This work will be required. Daily attendance will be kept for all synchronous sessions. Grades will be kept for school records and/or transcripts. Classroom teachers will provide support during the remote learning week as needed, with appropriate availability by e-mail and/or video. As appropriate, students may also be supported by a variety of educators (e.g., special educators, teachers of English Language Learners, librarians, counselors, etc.) as appropriate 	<p><i>During the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are in school for the regular school day (7:40 a.m. - 1:57 p.m.).
<p><i>Ending the Day</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dismissal time for in-person students will be staggered to avoid overcrowding in the hallways and to facilitate maintaining social distances. 	

Cohort D Explained

The hybrid model divides students into four cohorts:

Cohort A: Mondays & Tuesdays: In-person instruction

Cohort B: Thursdays & Fridays: In-person instruction

Cohort C: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday: In-person instruction for high needs students

Cohort D: Fully-remote instruction (by parent choice)

Most teachers will work with Cohort A students in person on Mondays and Tuesdays and Cohort B students in person on Thursdays and Fridays. All students will engage in remote learning on Wednesdays regardless of cohort.

Cohort D students will engage in a fully-remote learning model. *For grades 7-12*, Cohort D students will use a self-paced, online program and instructional coaches will provide frequent check-ins. Cohort D students in *grades K-6* will receive synchronous virtual instruction from Millbury teachers two days each week.

A typical weekly schedule in grades K-6 might consist of in-person instruction for Cohort A students on Mondays and Tuesdays and synchronous virtual instruction for Cohort D students on Thursdays and Fridays. All students will engage in remote learning on Wednesdays regardless of cohort.

Example Schedule: Cohort D (grades K-6 only)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort D: asynchronous remote learning	Cohort D: asynchronous remote learning	All students: remote ½ day synchronous learning opportunities	Cohort D: synchronous (live) remote learning	Cohort D: synchronous (live) remote learning

Fully Remote Model

If state and local data suggest moving to a fully remote model of teaching and learning, the district will use the Maroon Week: Remote Learning Models detailed above. A specific schedule for students will be provided by each student's school and/or teacher and will include both synchronous and asynchronous remote learning activities.

Furthermore, we understand that some students and/or family members may be immunocompromised or may simply not feel comfortable returning to school under these conditions this fall. Parents in these

situations have the option of using a fully remote teaching and learning model. Any student in grades PK-12 can participate in remote learning, doctor's notes will not be required, and families will not be locked into either learning model for the entire school year. If your family circumstances change or you have a change of heart, any parent/caregiver may complete a [Learning Model Change Request](#). Because of the difficulty of accommodating enrollment changes in this model, we ask that parents avoid making multiple changes or making two changes within the same six-week period.

Special Education Services

Students with disabilities have been greatly impacted by the school closure caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Though all students on IEPs and 504 plans were offered Individualized Remote Learning Plans, there were students for whom remote learning was neither an effective nor an efficient method of providing specialized academic and support services. The Massachusetts (MA) Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) "[Guidance on Fall 2020 Special Education Services](#)" states:

"These students should receive as much in-person instruction as is feasible within the health and safety parameters in effect at each particular time."

As we move toward resuming normal operations, we will need to make sure that all students with disabilities are:

1. Working with their teachers and service providers to the greatest extent possible, and
2. Assessed to determine progress and current levels of performance in the event that additional services are needed while also maintaining current health and safety protocols.

Students will receive all services documented in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) through in-person instruction, remote instruction, or a combination of both, with a strong emphasis on providing in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible, while abiding by the current necessary health and safety requirements.

Per the MA DESE's [Guidance on Fall 2020 Special Education Services](#), "even if the rest of the school has entered into a hybrid or remote model of instruction, schools and districts must make every effort to maintain in-person instruction for students with disabilities, particularly those with complex and significant needs and preschool-aged children." This guidance further states "students with complex and significant needs include:

- Students already identified as "high needs" through the IEP process on the IEP form entitled "[Primary Disability/Level of Need-PL3](#)."

Such students must meet at least two of these criteria:

- Services provided outside of the general education classroom;
- Service providers are special education teachers and related service providers;
- Special education services constitute more than 75% of the student's school day;
- Students who cannot engage in remote learning due to their disability-related needs;

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- Students who primarily use aided and augmentative communication;
 - Students who are homeless;
 - Students in foster care or congregate care; and/or
 - Students who have been dually identified as English Learners.

A detailed plan for delivering special education instruction and services remotely will be developed for each student, based on their services, as outlined in their Individual Education Program (IEP). Planning will focus on delivering services through an “Instruction and Services” mode of delivery. Per MA DESE guidance, the “Resources and Supports” delivery model can only be used on a temporary basis for a limited period of time (no more than two weeks), until which time the District has overcome the hurdles preventing service delivery through an “Instruction and Services” delivery model.

In addition to recovering from the loss of academic instruction and related services, students with disabilities (SWD) may also need social emotional support when transitioning back to school. To address this, building principals are open to scheduling physical distancing visitation opportunities before school starts where SWD in specialized programs and their families will have an opportunity to meet educators, see classrooms and ask questions. Other Social Emotional Learning recommendations (as well as information on School Counseling) can be found later in this document.

INSTRUCTION AND SERVICES

The following practices and guidelines represent our most current plans for implementing special education processes, including services, for students with disabilities. As clarity regarding building availability is determined (e.g. in-person with social distancing practices, or remote), each of these practices will be further specified as necessary.

IEP Service Delivery

Students will receive all services documented in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) through in-person instruction, remote instruction, or a combination of both, with a strong emphasis on providing in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible, while abiding by the current necessary health and safety requirements. Any necessary adjustments to the delivery of services due to the health and safety guidelines will be communicated to the parents and guardians.

In addition to the provisions listed above the following measures will also be implemented:

1. **Full-time In-person Learning** (while meeting current health and safety requirements)
 - a. Principals will develop schedules which provide IEP services and minimize mixing of student groups each day.

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- b. Students with disabilities must receive specialized instruction and supports from qualified professionals.
 - c. Considerations for providing students with disabilities with inclusive learning and placement of students with disabilities in groupings or cohorts that support learning goals in the least restrictive environment should be prioritized.
 - d. To provide IEP services which will support the inclusion of students with disabilities, and minimize the number of adults in a classroom, special education teachers and related service providers (speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.), may provide special education services in the general education setting (“B Grid”) services remotely from within the school building via video conference, instead of coming into the classroom to provide services.
 - e. If educators or related service providers cannot provide services remotely, every attempt will be made to schedule services in a manner that maintains physical distancing requirements and avoids overlapping with other staff in the classroom. For example, if special educators or related service providers are not able to provide special education services in a manner that maintains physical distancing requirements and avoids overlapping with other staff in the classroom or physical setting, those educators or related service providers may schedule services remotely within the school building via video conference. Parents must receive written notification describing this different mode of delivering services.
 - Examples of this written notification include the use of DESE’s suggested Documentation of Modified In-Person, Remote or Hybrid Services template (forthcoming), Notice of Proposed School District Action (N1), letter or other written documentation. Such documentation should describe the school’s and district’s efforts to provide services as closely aligned to the way they are described in the IEP as possible.
 - f. Liaisons will work together with parents to discuss how their child is doing emotionally and behaviorally and support a smooth transition for individual students. Service providers will continue to document their communication with parents.
 - g. Additional considerations regarding how anxiety and/or trauma may impact the reintegration into normal school life should be considered, including providing Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 supports available to students under a multi-tiered system of support
 - h. In light of the Department’s guidance that students at the elementary level remain in one classroom for the majority of the day, the school will consider whether pull-out services can be offered in accordance with the health and safety guidelines or, instead, if services should be pushed into the classroom

2. Hybrid Learning

- a. The district will maximize in-person learning when appropriate for preschool-aged students with disabilities and students with significant and complex needs. These students will be
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considered for continuous in-person learning as long as it can be done safely for students and staff. The district will consider small groups of students with significant and complex disabilities for daily in-person instruction.

- b. Learning and services provided remotely via a hybrid learning model will follow the guidance provided in the section on Remote Learning. Similarly, learning and services provided in-person must follow guidance provided in the section on Full-time In-person Learning.
- c. Students who receive most of their instruction in a substantially separate classroom will attend school four days per week when schools reopen in the fall and during any hybrid learning time. Students who learn in substantially separate classrooms for over 75% of their day will be in attendance four and one half days. In addition, students in the Integrated Preschool (Pre-K) Program will have in school programming when schools reopen in the fall and during any hybrid learning time. Please note that if conditions require us to close all buildings again, remote learning is likely to apply to all students.
- d. Students whose Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) indicate they are in and out of the general education classroom between 0-75% of their day and students on 504 Plans will attend school as their typical classmates do; meaning, if their classmates are in “hybrid learning,” these students will also shift to a hybrid model. These students will continue to receive the specialized instruction, modifications, accommodations and support that is documented on their IEPs or 504 plans.
- e. Service providers or IEP liaisons should contact the parents of their students as soon as possible to discuss how a given student’s IEP services will be delivered if different than described in a student’s IEP, including how and where special education services will be provided. Using input from that discussion, teachers or liaisons must provide parents with written notification containing specific information about how IEP services will be provided.
 - Examples of this written notification include the use of DESE’s suggested Documentation of Modified In-Person, Remote or Hybrid Services template (forthcoming), Notice of Proposed School District Action (N1), letter or other written documentation.

3. Remote Learning

- a. Remote learning services will be provided through the “Instruction and Services” mode of delivery (e.g., structured learning time, teletherapy, and video conferencing). The “Resources and Supports” delivery model (sending home packets and communicating with families) can only be used, if needed, on a temporary basis for a limited period of time (no more than two weeks), while the district shifts to “Instruction and Services” delivery model.
- b. For school year 2020-2021 “Instruction and Services” must include the following components:
 - i. A regular and consistent schedule of classes, interventions, services and therapies as required by the student’s IEP, offered synchronously or asynchronously;
 - ii. Structured learning time designed so that the student can access state standards;

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- iii. Frequent interactions with teachers and other staff members to ensure participation
 - c. All students will participate in remote learning, and each school will maintain a system for tracking attendance and participation;
 - d. A consistent schedule of classes, interventions, services, and therapies must include time spent interacting directly with teachers and related service providers on a regular basis, as well as some independent work time, as appropriate, and opportunities for interacting with classmates.
 - e. Synchronous remote lessons or teletherapy sessions can be provided via telephone or video conferencing.
 - f. Students might also benefit from asynchronous pre-recorded videos of lessons to follow at home.
 - g. Teachers and administrators shall regularly communicate with students' parents and guardians, including providing interpretation and translation services to limited English proficient parents and guardians.
 - h. Schools will make available computer devices and internet access if needed, as well as educator and parent training. The district will provide translations of the trainings if needed.
 - i. The possibility of in-home services will be explored for students determined to meet the criteria of "high needs" if the circumstances dictate no in-building service delivery can be provided.

Health and Safety Considerations for Supporting Students with Severe Disabilities

Staff will be prepared to provide hands-on assistance, with PPE, for activities of daily living for those students whose IEPs or Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) indicate support is needed in Activities of Daily Living Skills (ADLS) (e.g. feeding, toileting, changing of clothes and transitions) as well as

- a. Using de-escalation techniques, escorting a student or the use of emergency protective hold (i.e. Use of de-escalation and physical intervention techniques - Applied Non-Violence (ANV))
- b. Utilizing hand over hand/hand under hand or physical guidance for academic purposes (discrete trial training, etc.)
 - i. Providing support to students who need to be within 3 feet of an adult for any other reason (students with mobility issues, distractibility during transitions, etc.)
- c. Student profiles for whom this includes are those with a history of exhibiting the following behaviors:
 - i. Drooling
 - ii. Aggression (e.g. scratching, pinching, hitting,, biting, kicking, head butting, spitting, etc.)
 - iii. Bolting
 - iv. Mouthing
 - v. Self injurious behavior

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- vi. Smearing of bodily fluids (feces, urine, saliva, nasal mucus, etc.)
 - d. For these reasons, PPE will be worn by staff throughout the school day in specialized programs. This includes:
 - i. Facial mask and/or face shield
 - ii. Protective jacket and/or smock
 - iii. Gloves
 - iv. Staff will be encouraged to tie up, cover or pull back long hair; refrain from dangling jewelry; consider rubber-soled flat shoes.
 - v. Staff will change outer clothing if body fluids from the child get on it. Staff will change the child's clothing if body fluids get on it. Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child to be washed. Parents of students in the Pre-K, Kindergarten and others as identified are asked to make sure that their child has access to at least one change of clothes at school.

Data Collection, Progress Monitoring, and Progress Reports

Special educators and service providers will continue to issue Special Education Progress Reports at least as often as report cards are provided for students without disabilities, in accordance with 603 CMR 28.07(3). Progress reports will be sent to families, guardians and state agencies involved with the student through mail, email, student information systems, or online communication platforms. Special educators and service providers will collect data and use this data to monitor the student's progress to develop Progress Reports. If there are periods of remote learning, special educators, service providers, parents, and students should review a student's IEP and identify the types of data that can be collected from the learning environment(s).

Initial Evaluations, Reevaluations and IEP Team Meetings

The closure of public schools due to COVID-19 had a significant impact on the district's ability to conduct assessments related to the Special Education process. As a result, the Team Chairpersons spoke with individual families to revisit the evaluation timelines and agreed upon how this would be adjusted.

Upon the start of the school year, the Special Education process will resume in accordance with 603 CMR 28.04.

In accordance with 603 CMR 28.04(3), IEP Teams will continue to conduct annual review Team meetings as they are due. Per DESE guidance, the IEP will be developed as though the student will be attending school full time in-person.

It is important to note that a change in the delivery of services due to a school's change in learning model, in-person, hybrid, or remote, as a result of COVID-19 **does not result in a change of placement**. The services outlined in the IEP remain and are considered "stay put."

As of this writing, Special Education IEP meetings will be held virtually. If a meeting must occur in person, clearly delineated protocols for screening, physical distancing, hand washing/hand sanitizer use, and use of masks/face coverings will be fully enforced. Regardless of whether meetings are held in person

or remotely, interpreters will still be provided as needed to ensure multilingual families are able to participate in their native language.

Early Childhood Special Education and Preschool

Preschool children with and without disabilities are particularly in need of in-person services in order to develop the socialization, motor, and communication skills that are especially important at this age. The Millbury Public Schools will prioritize in-person instruction for this age group, but there may be a need to shift to remote services.

Pre-COVID, the class size of an integrated preschool classroom was 15-18 students with one certified teacher and one instructional assistant. In order to adhere to current health and safety requirements, class sizes and/or preschool sessions will be adjusted.

Transition from Early Intervention (EI)

An extension of EI services has been made available for children who turned 3 between March 15, 2020 and August 31, 2020.

- Per State guidance, EI services have been continued until October 15, 2020, or until an eligibility determination can be completed.
- The District has worked with, and continues to coordinate with EI liaisons to develop a plan that addresses the transition process based on referral information.
- When eligibility determination cannot be made based upon referral information, parents will collaborate to develop remote learning opportunities until the reopening of the school building allows for an in-person evaluation to be conducted

Natural Environments and Least Restrictive Environment for Preschool Children

The MPS Integrated Preschool Program has expanded its ability to provide various inclusive opportunities for children ages 2.9 - 5 years old. DESE recognizes that schools and districts face unique challenges related to preschool programming for children without disabilities and, therefore, providing in-district inclusive education may be impacted. An updated process for seeking an alternative compliance waiver under 603 CMR 28.03(5) for inclusionary programs for young children during the COVID-19 pandemic is forthcoming.

In-person Instruction and Physical Distancing for Preschool

- Preschool classrooms will be reconfigured to discourage prolonged close contact and instead encourage activities that allow for children to spread out. This may require the removal of furniture and toys with multiple pieces (e.g., doll houses).
- For tabletop activities, preschool children will not be forced to work at individual desks. Strategies will be implemented to meet the physical distancing requirements. These may include: spacing chairs at tables, using tabletop sneeze guards, use of individual yoga mats to support

students in their understanding of personal space and distancing, and/or individual bins with activities and materials that still foster social interactions.

- Teachers will ensure that daily schedules and activities are designed to foster physical distancing in the most effective way to mitigate virus spread while continuing to help children enjoy their day, support the development of social-emotional competencies, and foster learning.
- The balancing of health and safety requirements with child development needs is something that will continue to evolve during this time.

Hybrid/Remote Learning for Preschool Children

Per the MA DESE guidance, MPS will prioritize in-person learning for young children. However, should remote instruction be necessary, teachers will support families in balancing screen time and non-screen time.

- Teachers may hold short virtual sessions, provide flexible offerings of live, recorded, small group instruction.
- Pre-recorded enrichment activities aimed at providing practice and/or generalization opportunities can be provided outside of live learning at home.
- Learning opportunities will be interactive and similar to the routine of what children already were familiar with (e.g. circle songs) and when appropriate, pair new learning with familiar activities.
- Teachers will be mindful of wait time to maximize opportunities for as many children to be engaged as possible.
- Teachers and related service providers will hold office hours to offer support to parents/guardians.

English Learner Programming

Engaging our multilingual students during distance learning is of the utmost priority. All teachers are responsible for promoting and advancing language acquisition and achievement in the content areas of their students. Just as English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers bring their expertise in language development, general education teachers provide English learners with opportunities to practice and refine their developing language skills, specifically in the content areas. Collaboration is encouraged at all levels among ESL and general education content teachers with sharing of resources to facilitate student interaction and academic achievement. Integrating language and content in lesson planning during remote learning is essential to students' success. Teachers should utilize all available resources to promote student interaction and support students in making content accessible and comprehensible to them.

Communicating to multilingual families in their native language(s) is a key to this success. Supporting our families with technology needs leads to meaningful interaction among teachers, families and students. Educators may reach out to their building principals and/or the ESL Department Head to arrange for translator/interpreter services to support this work.

While instructing in a variety of program service models, English as a Second Language (ESL) educators will continue to implement research-based best practices. Language learning occurs through authentic, meaningful student-to-student interactions. Students at English proficiency levels 1 and 2 will be prioritized for in person learning as well as ELs who are also identified as a student with a disability. Our students will maintain their connection to their teachers, their classmates, and work towards meeting content and language learning targets. The federal and state legal mandates for English language instruction continue to be in place.

In a full remote learning environment, ESL teachers will be utilizing District platforms to support students' language acquisition. In addition to their content area classes, all English learners in a remote learning environment will be scheduled for stand alone ESL instruction. Access to technology and the internet will be essential in order to engage all students. Greater outreach will be necessary to involve and encourage families and students to participate in remote lessons. Translators and interpreters will be made available to provide additional support.

1. Masks
 - a. ESL teachers will be provided with a “smile mask” so students can view facial expressions and how to pronounce new vocabulary words.
2. Identification and Assessment
 - a. All new English learners (Grades 1-12) will be assessed with the WIDA screener or the Provisional Identification Interview Questions if we are in a remote learning period. Pre-K and K students will be assessed with the Pre-Las for identification purposes. For the Students with Limited and Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) an interview within two weeks of completing and submitting enrollment forms will be conducted.
 - b. During in-person and hybrid models, common formative and summative assessments will be embedded in instruction.
 - c. Benchmark assessments/data will be collected by ESL teachers throughout the year using the WIDA MODEL, teacher-created assessments and/or an online ELD program component.
3. Instruction: All instruction for English Learners will align with Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and WIDA Standards.
 - a. Students who have limited or interrupted formal instruction (SLIFE) have specific goals that require accelerating their language and content acquisition. Teachers will match pair peer models with newcomers to promote social interaction. During all models of instruction, academic conversations will be modeled and implemented.
 - b. Students who are WIDA levels 1 and 2 will be prioritized for full-time in-person instruction as articulated above and in DESE Guidance. For students with WIDA levels 3-5, SEI teachers will collaborate with ESL teachers to modify instruction/assignments/assessments at those particular proficiency levels.

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- c. Differentiated instruction and activities to accommodate various English language proficiency levels will continue to be delivered during both in-person and remote learning environments by content area teachers/specialists by way of scaffold supports, modified tasks, SEI (Sheltered English Immersion) strategies and culturally relevant materials and teaching techniques.
 - d. Direct ELD instruction will be delivered during both in-person and remote learning by the ESL teacher(s) to target language skills and academic language advancement. This will be delivered via small group and individual instruction as deemed appropriate.
 - e. Student workload will be modified during in person and remote instruction to match each student's current ELP (English Language Proficiency) level and independent work completion expectations.
 - f. During remote instruction, English learners will be offered both offline and online opportunities for work completion.
 - g. ESL and Content Area teachers will continue to follow DESE's [Guidance on Remote Learning for English Learners](#) released in April 2020. This guidance includes recommended strategies and resources to help educators continue to provide ELE services and to keep English learners engaged while they learn remotely during this period of hybrid/remote instruction.
4. Technology/Internet Access: will be offered to all families who do not currently have access to an internet connection to ensure that all learners have access to online learning platforms.
- a. Students who do not currently have access to a device will be provided one during the hybrid/remote learning period.
 - b. Any students/family members who require additional training to utilize the device or access online platforms will be provided with such training (via online or in a socially distant in-person opportunity).
5. Family Engagement/Communication
- a. Any district communication sent out to families via email or mail will be translated and sent to families who require translated documentation as indicated on their Home Language Survey (HLS) form. Any district all calls will be communicated with families who require interpreters, as indicated on their HLS, via in-district and/or out of district interpreters or through an outside service provider such as [One Call Now](#).
 - b. The ESL department will continue to communicate with families via email, text, and social media to provide important updates.
 - c. All staff will continue to utilize translation apps to communicate with families that allow for translated messages/communication between school and home. This includes but is not limited to: Google Translate, Google Docs/Tools Translation, Microsoft Translator,
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Talking Points, Class Dojo, Remind and other suggestions provided by the ESL department.

Social Emotional Supports

The Millbury Public Schools is committed to supporting students, staff, and families social and emotional needs during the reopening of schools. We know that this time away from our buildings as well as the return has caused our students, staff, and families increased anxiety. We also know that there will be lasting effects for students due to the period of social isolation and lack of engagement with teachers and peers that they faced in the Spring. The following supports are just some of the practices we will be implementing as a part of our reopening plan.

1. The district Guidance and Counseling departments will develop and distribute a Needs Assessment to students within MPS in the fall to more accurately define social/emotional supports needed.
2. Based on responses from the Needs Assessment, the Guidance and School Counseling departments will create a Tiered System of support for COVID-19 that supports students, staff and families. There will be general support and interventions available to all students, staff and families with additional tiered support as necessary.
3. We will prioritize and utilize our already existing Social Emotional Learning supports particularly during the initial phase of school reopening and create and update a central COVID-19 Resource Document both for staff and the MPS community that will be shared online.
4. We will provide training for staff on trauma informed practices so that they can best meet the needs of their students and families.
5. We will explore additional mental health support for staff during this difficult time as an educator through our [EAP resource](#).
6. We will engage in a continuous reassessment of community needs and supports during this unprecedented time.

We acknowledge that the precautions we are taking to protect against COVID-19 transmission will greatly mitigate, but not entirely eliminate, risk. No single precaution or set of precautions will completely eliminate all possibility of transmission, but by implementing coordinated interventions outlined by the CDC and state officials and reflected in this plan, we will reduce that risk significantly.

Planning for this fall is still fluid. We reserve the right to make changes to any and all aspects of this plan as circumstances evolve and especially as we receive additional guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, our Board of Health, and State officials.