

## The Q&A Section from the Special Board of Education Meeting on 7/21/2020

Below, please find the questions asked during the special board meeting. On July 21, 2020. The answers are in Red. All answers are correct as July 24, 2020. All answers are subject change as situations and health information change.

Given the fact that we, teachers, rarely have coverage or substitutes during times when we are not in a pandemic, what is the actionable plan for coverage/substitutes when the likelihood of call-outs will be exponentially higher? How will this impact class numbers, sizes, dispersals, which will absolutely violate the CDC recommendations for group sizing? **We are planning to increase the number of substitutes and assign more to each school.**

I found the link for this Zoom meeting on the New Haven Independent. Was it sent through the school's email? **It is posted on the NHPS Website under Board of Education Public Meetings.**

What is our process should students be directly exposed to a Covid 19 positive employee in school?

- **The Superintendent and Director of Health will make decisions on:**
  - **Contact tracing**
  - **Possible school Closure and length of closure**
  - **Cleaning and Disinfection Needed**
  - **Continuity of education**
  - **Reopening of school**
- **All communications to the school community including staff and families are made through the Central Office.**

What is the actionable plan for students in self-contained/restrictive special education settings where the class sizes are already beyond a reasonable capacity? What happens when a student comes in with an active IEP from out of state and needs to be placed, but it violates the CDC recommendation of group sizing? Is there a level of awareness by the district for the extremely heightened health risks involving other students/staff in these classrooms that typically have little recourse, immediate action or support because of the constraints of IDEA? **There is an awareness and all applicable laws and guidelines will be followed.**

How are you going to ensure spaces aren't shared when sometimes there are 2-3 teachers in one classroom because there isn't available space? **We mapped out each building for every usable space to ensure social distancing.**

What happens if someone doesn't wear a mask? **We hope to work with students to understand the importance of the mask. We plan to engage parents and students in this conversation. While we do not want to jump to disciplinary action, discipline is an option.**

How will these new policies and protocols be enforced? Does everyone have to sign an agreement that they will abide by them? What happens if they don't? Policies will be enforced. **All disciplinary actions necessary will be taken for violations of policies. Protocols will be disseminated and reiterated frequently, to ensure compliance.**

Where will COVID testing happen? Will it happen at the school or does the parent take the child when a nurse has reported symptoms and the parent reports back to the school? **The parent takes the student for testing at a testing site.**

How often will this disinfecting take place? **Daily**

Are teachers expected to clean during prep periods instead? **A determination will be made as to who cleans and when.**

Can you confirm these products are as effective as what the CDC recommends? **All products adhere to guidelines.**

Please speak about building ventilation more, my school has windows that do NOT open. **Building filters are being replaced and systems are being checked and serviced.**

What is the process to allow a child who has either tested positive or who live in a house with relatives who have tested positive, back into school? **A health provider will need to clear the student.**

Will bus drivers get additional aid to ensure that students are following social distancing guidelines? **The bus providers have not added additional staff for this purpose.**

What's the difference between in the hallway and eating in the café. **There are more places to spread out in halls versus the café.**

How are students eating in the “cafeteria maintaining social distancing guidelines”? And how are these meals happening in classrooms when teachers are contractually guaranteed a duty-free lunch? **Cafeteria capacity will be reduced. Schedules will be arranged to give staff their contractual time.**

Regarding transportation: we have (at least one that I know of) schools that are serviced by CT Transit as opposed to First Student. We also have other towns’ buses that transport students to some of our inter-district schools. How do we ensure that these other conveyances follow ideal safety protocols? Is that even possible? **We will receive information from other service providers to ensure compliance with protocols across all buses.**

How will you safely schedule a mask break while also mandating that masks have to be worn? it only takes a second to spread a germ. Are students going to be alone, in their own room? **Masks breaks will take place when students are socially distant and outside whenever possible.**

Have you considered providing groups for gen ed students as this may have been a difficult time for all students? groups may consist of: anxiety, depression, grief and loss, executive functioning or coping strategies. **Yes, there will be social emotional supports available to all students.**

If it is not safe for adults to meet in person as we see by the zoom meetings happening. When the restaurants salons and stores are limiting the number of people then why is the school allowing kids to ride the bus without social distancing and why would this district and state allow children to be put into a poorly ventilated classroom? **Thank you for your concern. We will work closely with health officials to avoid risks and to monitor health indicators to adjust as needed.**

How many staff members have underlying health conditions? The district will adhere to all confidentiality regulations regarding individuals health, while putting protocols in place to have staff disclose information regarding COVID. **That is a personnel matter that cannot be disclosed.**

Will the school hours be the same? **Yes**

Will the LINKSpring distance learning be live or asynchronous? **LINCSpring for teachers is asynchronous.**

Hello! I have a 8th and 7th grader at Beecher! Will parents have access to Google Classroom to monitor student progress and assignment submission to assist the teacher? Thanks! **Yes, parents will have access.**

How will progress be monitored with students who have an IEP who are distant learning? **The student services department will work with students to monitor progress against IEPs.**

The recommendation of the AA BB preference. Will the online days be live instruction? **The online days will have both live, synchronous and asynchronous content.**

I have a couple of questions regarding transportation and accountability in regards to students on school buses. How will the school system hold students accountable that refuse to keep their mask on while on the school bus? **The District will teach and reteach appropriate mask protocols and monitor for proper use daily.** Also, what will the safety protocol be in the event of a sick child on a school bus, and will school bus drivers be job protected and compensated for any mandated quarantine time in that scenario? **This question should be answered by the employer of the drivers.**

Why is NHPS recommending the hybrid model? **The hybrid model allows for the developmental needs of students while allowing social distancing to occur during in person instruction.**

Just to make sure I understand, we are currently in an "intermediate risk" phase -- if that continues into next month, would schools start on a hybrid model? **The Superintendent, in consultation with health officials and the State, will assess risk on an on-going basis and take appropriate action, including activating the moderate level risk plan if appropriate.**

So, from what I am hearing is that it will be teachers' responsibility to clean desks, sharpeners, etc. between classes? I am in a classroom that is shared between 3 people. Teachers often have to change floors, let alone classrooms. How will that work? **A determination will be made as to who cleans and when.**

What about the science that shows that the infection does not remain on surfaces as much as previously thought? **We seek to take as many precautions as possible.**

Will students whose parents/guardians opt for solely remote learning be taught in groups with students and educators from their own schools? **Several factors regarding staffing will be considered before students are assigned to remote learning services, including the number of families requesting remote learning.**

How many kids will be in a classroom? **This will vary by the physical classroom dimensions.**

If we are planning on an AA/BB schedule for grades 4-12, would it be beneficial to have the teacher planning day on Wednesday in order to sanitize in between cohorts? **Thank you for this suggestion. It will be considered.**

What is the plan for van transportation? **See the reopening document on the <https://www.nhps.net/fall2020>**

Rumor has it that the schools will provide masks, can you confirm this? **Families are responsible for supplying masks. Schools will have a limited number on hand for emergencies, such as a mask being lost or breaking during the day.**

A recent study shows kids older than 10 spread the virus as effectively as adults <https://www.baltimoresun.com/coronavirus/ct-nw-nyt-older-children-covid-spread-study-20200718-5q5eo4ylibcwppd2haxwvdp6re-story.html>. **Thank you for information. The health team will analyze.**

Where will kids and staff get water if the fountains are blocked? **Students can bring water bottles and water will be available from food service.**

Aside from the filter, our HVAC system hasn't worked in 25 years. Is it fixed? **HVAC systems, including filters, are being serviced and upgraded where necessary.**

Will teachers clean classroom between classes and after lunches in the room? Will cleaning supplies and trash bins be provided? **A determination will be made as to who cleans and when.**

Is the temp screening walk through devices worth the money since temp is not always present as symptom? How do we ensure students are not given a medication, like Tylenol, to get a child into school for the day that may have a temp. **We are asking families to follow screening protocols that contribute to the health of everyone and to provide honest assessments.**

Are we going to hire more custodial staff? **Yes.** Have we looked into foggers (sounds like that might be what the bus company is using.) **We are investigating the use.**

Are we looking into bus monitors to assist the driver who should be focused on driving. **At this time we are not adding bus monitors.**

I think it would be a good idea to send the LINC Spring training list to teachers again. **All teachers will eventually have access to training before the start of school.**

How long does it take to get testing results? If a teacher has the equivalent of a minor cold, does she go to school, or wait ten days for a test result? What about using all the sick days, and getting subs? Will her students -- and their families -- then have to isolate, if a teacher "might" have COVID-19 without yet getting test results? **Staff will review protocols with their direct supervisors regarding "reporting to work." Supervisors will work with staff to support decisions on a case by case.**

Will we be able to see students during teaching on Google Meet? **Yes.**

Is LINC Spring available now for teachers? **Summer Institutes are taking place now and It will be released to all teachers shortly after the institutes.**

Are students receiving full time special education services going to be entitled to attend 5 days a week because of the specific legal language in an IEP regarding service hours or will they fall under framework

of the hybrid model? What will this mean for teachers? **The District will adhere to service hours for students with IEP to the greatest extent possible without compromising safety. Each IEP will be reviewed on a case by case basis.**

Will there be another session like this before the start of school? **There will be parent meetings and the board will decide whether another special meeting will be held.**

For those students who remain home for distance learning and do not have computers available to them, will they be provided with laptops to work from home with? **Yes.**

Thank you everyone for putting this presentation together. You are all trying very hard to hit a moving target, and the stakes could not be higher--our students' education and community health. I applaud all of you for your exemplary efforts. **Thank you for the recognition we are all working hard to protect our community.**

No question just please remember that asthmatics such as myself can have an attack triggered by hand sanitizer. It is not always the answer. **Thank you for raising the concern.**

Who will be responsible for ensuring students wear their mask on the bus and in school and if they do not what consequences if any are in place for the student or parent. **We will work with students to understand the importance of the mask. We plan to engage parents and students in this conversation. While we do not want to jump to disciplinary action, discipline is an option.**

Other school systems in the state have already decided how they are going to open -- why not New Haven? **Other systems have submitted their preferred plans to the State; the state has yet to approve their preference.**

Is there any part of the BoE that is looking into sustainable packaging for to go food packaging? **We will consider.**

And what of ventilation? Have or will all schools been upgraded in this area? **Filters are being replaced and upgraded.**

How many minutes will classes in high school be? **There will be some variety across the high schools.**

Will preschool teachers be responsible for cleaning and sanitizing all of the different toys and materials that our students use and share throughout the day? **A determination will be made as to who cleans and when.**

What \*else\* can teachers possibly be expected to do? Does everyone realize that every solution given in this meeting is to have teachers do every additional job.... and still teach? **We recognize how difficult every option is for the teaching force. We are trying to prioritize safety for all and advancement for the students.**

In addition, what is NHPS doing to address the issue of lack of technology, especially for families with multiple children in the district? **The district is working to provide every student a device.** Will online learning be available for "Snow Days"? **This is being considered.**

What is the level of infection that would require 100% remote, and 100% in person learning ? There has to be some definitive metrics on this. **The Health department will make recommendations as to trigger points.**

We do need a date as soon as possible for planning. I know it's uncertain and ever changing BUT as a teacher I need some guidance. **We will provide guidance as quickly as we have information.**

Lastly, how will food distribution work as I plan on not sending my child back to school this year. What will the hours be and will we be able to go to the school closest to us as the Grand Avenue Bridge is still closed due to restoration. **Students remain associated with their current school. Food distribution will be similar to the process that it has been during the previous closure.** Will I have to purchase a web cam for live instruction? We have a desktop computer, however, it does not have a built in webcam. **You can reach out to the school for an alternate device to engage with live classes.**

In view of the reality that many young people are not social distancing and/or adhering to masking rules, we begin with either moderate or full distance learning. It seems we should begin acclimating ourselves to distance learning with a creative focus. Perhaps begin to engage parents and Google Meet and Google Classroom training starting now. **Thank you for the suggestion. We will be in contact about parent trainings/meetings regarding Google Classroom.**

Please language for PreK. Close daily contact nature of work there is high exposure risk. I'd like clarity on Testing and Tracking of staff, children? Distancing/space shared materials. Bus monitoring. How are preschool special education teachers keeping students healthy and safe every day when they are unable to socially distance, wear masks, and have a high level of needs. We feed and toilet our students, give hand over hand instruction, and we don't teach from 3-6' away. What safeguards are in place for the staff and students in those classrooms, and what PPE will the district be providing? **The district will provide face shields and gloves as PPE in these instances.**

We will all need mask breaks -- how will these be safe? **Students will take masks breaks away from other students, and when possible outdoors.**

Will multiple schools still be sharing bus routes? **At his time, schools will continue sharing buses.**

This data seems to be a little outdated. 32% of children in Florida are now infected. In Texas 85 children under the age of 1 were infected. Also, I read through the document and I didn't see any reference to art, gym, band, or general music classes. How do we, especially in the high schools handle cleaning and materials between classes? **Cleaning protocols are being established for specific classes. In some cases, students will no longer be sharing certain materials.**

How can you justify a Fall athletic program yet only provide 2 in person instruction days? Seems like a different standards are being applied. The CIAC has issued guidance for sports and how people can participate. **Participation in supports and other after-school activities will be subject to local decisions based on health indicators in addition to guidance from CIAC. Specific guidance regarding students during a hybrid model is forthcoming.**

Can they implement having the kids wipe down their area with soap and water which is a learning tool on hygiene and being clean. **Thank you for the suggestions, student participation will be a big help in keeping everyone safe.**

Worthington Hooker families were told yesterday by the principal that students being taught via the full remote option might not be taught by teachers at our neighborhood school and parents won't be told who will be teaching our students until after we decide whether to start in person or remote. It is frustrating and feels very unfair to hear I will be forced to make a decision for an entire marking period without knowing whether my children will be taught by our local school or not. **Remote learning will be coordinated at the school level, with school-based staff, to the extent possible.**

Is the Ventilation pulling air from outside or recirculating? **Ventilation will be pulling from outside.**

How many students will be in each class? **The number will vary based on the physical dimensions of the classroom.**

For those students who are home for distance learning and do not have computers available to them, will they be provided with laptops? **Yes, arrangements will be made to provide devices.**

Are paraprofessionals being considered for the trainings? **Yes, paraprofessionals will have to be trained on all safety protocols.**

Thus, the rationale for Distance Learning with a creative lens. **Yes, remote learning is being designed with an eye to engagement and creativity.**

Will there be fulltime nurses in all schools? **Yes, we are hiring additional nurses.**

Dr. J made a valid point, we will simply have folks that will not be compliant. Non-compliance can jeopardize our funding. Will there be an increase in school security? **We hope to work with students to understand the importance of the mask. We plan to engage parents and students in this conversation. While we do not want to jump to disciplinary action, discipline is an option.**

Do the classroom doors have to be left open? **This is a distraction and safety concern. We want to circulate as much air as possible, but maintain safety. Schools will determine what is appropriate based on their own schools.**

Will there be further investigations and discussions with teachers about cleaning the high touch areas within classrooms being they may not keep their mask on properly all day...especially the younger children in classes K-3? This is of a great concern to me. **Yes, we will determine how high touch areas will be cleaned regularly.**

Here is the article about the study: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-07-19/covid-19-spread-fastest-by-teens-and-tweens-korea-study-finds>. **Thank you for the link.**

What is the plan for the children with the compromised immune systems? **These concerns will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Parents with concerns must reach out to their school's nurse.**

It concerns me to hear "when social distancing is possible". Will we be able to social distance 6 ft apart at all times? **We are working with the entire community to understand the important role each person plays in maintaining social distance and we will make every effort to keep students and staff a safe distances.**

We did a great job in shutting down schools in March so it would make sense that kids were of a much lower count of testing positive. Schools were out so they had less exposure!

It seems to me that buildings need to be certified as OSHA safe (according to CDC and other guidelines) before ANYONE goes back into buildings. And as a follow up, won't teachers, students, and parents be able to sue the district if they have bad health outcomes due to schools not being in compliance? **This question will be referred to corporation counsel to advise.**

Are the members of the board comfortable with covering classes for teachers? My guess is that most are not. That should inform your understanding of what teachers and staff are experiencing right now.

As a parent who was present in ALL of the meetings. ...this was the first presentation where the information was pretty clear. **Thank you for the recognition and input.**

What about having a meeting with the educators? **Yes, one will be scheduled.**

Is there an option for parents who do not feel comfortable with the plan that is in place for in classroom teaching to continue distance learning. **Yes, parents can opt for remote learning.**

Dr. Ed Joyner. Thanks. The S. Korea tracing study is an important consideration. **Thank you for the recognition.**

I worry about the staff who are joining from rooms at 54 Meadow St. Has the air conditioning system in that building been evaluated for fresh air exchange and filtration? **We will investigate what is being done by the owner.**

But you're sending us back to school????

If you can't have an in person meeting, how do we be open schools?

👋 I'm Claudia Tanya's daughter. I want to say if we did have school at home 🏠 on some days can we have zoom with our class and have 1 lesson with the teacher? On the days we are learning from home. **We are working to have live classes on the remote learning days.**

Yes. And parents are going to hide infections and send their kids to school. You are not comfortable meeting as responsible adults, but you want to send my young, irresponsible children back to group gatherings. **We are relying on the honesty of members of our community to help keep our community safe.**

Questions; Are teachers supposed to clean up after every class? Are you going to get EXTRA TIME to accomplish that? Are they going to provide the materials? Are the materials we use to clean going to be safe for prolonged use and ingestion by people? **A determination will be made as to who will clean and when.**

You better be sure that materials we use to clean are not cancer causing in any way **Thank you for your concern. The materials adhere to guidelines issued for safe cleaning.**

Parents have the choice if they send their child to school, board members have the choice if they meet virtually, but teachers do not have the choice outside of an ADA accommodation. Does that seem fair to you? **Guidance will be coming from the human resources department with more guidance.**

We don't know the long term neurological effects of this virus. Even healthy people who contract this virus are at risk of death and potentially life altering effects. I don't think the board should have to meet

in person and I also don't think students and staff should have to report to schools. If the parents get a choice, shouldn't staff also get a choice? **Thank you for your question. More guidance from Human resources will be forthcoming.**

Are the teachers given the choice do what they WANT? Families get to choose and so do board members. **Thank you for your question. Guidance from Human resources will be forthcoming.**

But, are the teachers getting a choice?!? **Thank you for your question. Guidance from Human resources will be forthcoming.**

WHY IS THERE AN OPTION FOR 100% DISTANCE LEARNING BUT NOT 100% IN PERSON INSTRUCTION?  
**100% in person is for when we are past this pandemic.**

Can teachers request to be distance teachers, depending on the numbers of parents who want it, without needing to fill out a disability form? **Human Resources will be issuing information regarding procedures.**

Regardless of what you decide about how you meet as a group, there is abundant value in this live stream of the meeting. As a teacher, I would appreciate still having the option to "attend" the meeting from my home. I want to be informed but can't always afford the undivided time that attending in person requires. Please consider allowing this virtual meeting attendance. Thank you. **Thank you, we will continue to post the live feed.**

Parents have options, students have options, the board has options but teachers do not have options. **Thank you for your question. Guidance from Human resources will be forthcoming.**

Families have the choice to opt in to in-person or remote learning. Board members have the choice to do in-person meetings or remote. Teachers should ALSO have this right. **Thank you for the suggestion.**

Good evening. I am a specialist and see 500 students. I have a comorbidity and my husband has an autoimmune disease and is on immunosuppressants. I am terrified for my health and that of my family. What options will I have in place to keep me safe while teaching my students? **Human Resources will be issuing information.**

Since the state has not opened up into phase three yet and we are now seeing an increase in COVID cases starting to climb, why are we even considering sending our children back to school. there is so much uncertainty with this virus we should start with distant learning. Why risk putting the students in school as this virus begins to spread to become infected and bring it home to their families and ultimately the staff in our schools. **We recognize the challenge and want to prioritize safety but meet the developmental needs of students by offering in person as well.**

How will you handle not having enough teachers due to their fear of the virus? What about subs, since there is an issue getting subs generally? **We will continue to work with the teachers union to ensure adequate staffing. We are hiring additional substitutes.**

What is the plan regarding assisting students with special needs and/or preschool students that won't or can't wear a mask all day? **We will teach and reteach the use of masks and then monitor student behaviors to ensure safety.**

Why will we be providing instruction to the students who choose the full time distance learning option? **Remote learning is an option for all families under the Low and Moderate Risk plans.**

How do you expect students to follow the mask and distancing guidelines when the staff is not doing it now? I witness staff not wearing masks and not practicing safe distancing while in the schools. This is very disturbing. **Thank you for your comment.**

Teachers also have family members who are at-risk -- so the disability is not theirs **Guidance from Human resources will be forthcoming.**

My school was out of toilet paper, soap, and paper towels for the better part of a year. We were told that there was no money for those necessities. Are we to trust that precautions will be taken to maintain safety? **The custodial staff will be taking precautions to help maintain safety.**

What about Dual Language in schools? How many students will be acceptably allowed in the classroom while following social distance guidelines! **The number will vary based on the physical dimensions of the classroom.**

If schools are opening back up, how do we get buy in from the teachers? WE NEED BUY IN FROM OUR TEACHERS... We need to help alleviate the stress and the fear. How can I feel comfortable with sending my children there and not have that fear and stressed passed off to my children? **Thank you for your comment. We prioritize safety and are working to make the spaces safe for all students and staff.**

If it is decided that we move forward with full distance learning, will teachers be allowed to teach from their physical classroom I know that Google Meets or some form of video instruction will be necessary, so being able to teach from my classroom where I have my necessary materials would make a difference and allow me to be more effective. **If it is authorized from our health department, teaching from the physical classroom would be allowed.**

Would teachers be able to wear scrubs since they are easy to change out of and sanitize? **Yes, if they so choose.**

If we go to strictly distance learning, how will working families survive? How do you choose between feeding your children and keeping a roof over their heads or education? All are important! I hear a lot if teachers on this sounding line they don't want to come back to work! I'm an essential worker and have been working through this whole thing! **We recognize the difficulty of the choices. We want to open fully but we need to open safely for everyone.**

When deciding to distance learning...if levels drop are you able to change your decision to choice in school teaching or vice versa? **Yes.**

I am concerned about the plan for teachers who are given ADA accommodations. What is the plan, and will we know about it ahead of time? Will I be teaching other students, or will I be teaching my students who choose to learn remotely? If we go to all remote learning at some point in time, which everyone seems to believe will happen, will I get my students back, or will I stay with the students who have been assigned to me? I like my job, and my principal, and my colleagues. I do not want to have to choose between my health (my life) and my job. **Human Resources will be issuing guidance, shortly.**

It was said that custodians would not be going into the classroom to clean while the students are in the room. Does this apply to the bathrooms that are in classrooms (PreK/K classrooms)? Will these bathrooms be cleaned on the same schedule as hallway bathrooms? **Each school will develop a schedule for cleaning.**

With the great amount of asymptomatic carriers of COVID, will routine testing be offered and available to public school employees knowing there is a high risk a staff member could spread it to children and others?

How you going to mix kindergarten and 8th graders in the back of the bus? little children are always kept upfront for safety! **This procedure will be reviewed.**

We are curious about how Specials (music, art, etc.) will be handled, if the objective is to keep kids within small classes or cohorts? **Each school will develop their schedule.**