



Hybrid Model of In-Person Instruction and Overview of Restart Plan

August 3, 2020



Overview

[The Road Back](#) (state guidance)

Restart Committee (31 individuals: 3 board members, 6 school administrators, 12 teachers and staff members, 6 parents, school physician, local health official, Watchung Board of Health representative, before/after care representative)

Subcommittees

- Medical response
- Instructional resources
- Special programs
- Social-emotional learning



Overview

Guiding Principles of Restart Committee

- Ensure the health and safety of all students and staff by reducing the risk of infection
- Re-engage all students in academic and social and emotional learning through in-person instruction, to the extent practicable
- Provide resources for staff and families to enhance distance learning instruction
- Involve stakeholders in the planning process
- Maintain the ability to pivot to back-up plans, when necessary



Overview

Timeline

August 3 Board Meeting

- Adopt Hybrid Model for In-Person Instruction
- Revise district calendar to change first day of school to Tuesday, September 8
- Policy 1648 with seven appendices, which outline the district plan and protocols (first reading)

August 24 Board Meeting

- Adopt Restart and Recovery Plan with 16 appendices containing district protocols
- Adopt Policy 1648 (second reading)



Scheduling of Students

District Overview - School Day

Phase One: Hybrid model--early dismissal schedule (anticipated 2-4 weeks, but will depend on the course of the pandemic and feedback on the implementation of the blended learning model)

Phase Two: Hybrid model--full-day schedule (will depend on the course of the pandemic)

Phase Three: Traditional in-person instruction schedule for all students

Full-time remote learning (opt-in basis and if required by the course of the pandemic)



Scheduling of Students

District Overview - School Day

Phase One

No more than 50% of the student population will attend school in person to accommodate the A/B schedule of grades K-8. Cohorts will be created alphabetically.

Cohort A: Mondays and Tuesdays (remote instruction on Thursdays and Fridays)

Cohort B: Thursdays and Fridays (remote instruction on Mondays and Tuesdays)

Wednesdays are reserved for full-time remote learning on a half-day schedule with professional learning and collaboration in the afternoon. All staff will work remotely.



Scheduling of Students

District Overview - School Day

- Additional accommodations will be considered on an individual basis for special populations, including students who are eligible for special education and related services, students who have a 504 plan, students who receive English as a Second Language instruction, and students who receive basic skills instruction.
- Based on enrollment, kindergarten may operate on an expanded in-person schedule of four in-person days per week.
- If the course of the pandemic requires, the district is prepared to move to a fully virtual program for all students.

The Preschool at Bayberry will operate on a five-day schedule, with Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday being in-person and Wednesday being virtual. Because of the unique nature of the preschool, including the age and needs of the learners and the small cohorts, instruction will follow a full-day schedule.

- The Preschool at Bayberry will utilize the Creative Curriculum for Preschool for in-person and virtual instruction.
- In-person instruction will be used to engage students in developmentally appropriate learning activities.
- The preschool teachers will use Google Classroom to communicate all learning activities for virtual instruction.
- Small group and individual virtual instruction as well as enrichment activities will be scheduled.



Scheduling of Students

District Overview - School Day

- Google Classroom to communicate all learning assignments to be completed.
- In-person teaching will be used to deepen understanding and personalize learning levels.
- Following the in-person four-hour instructional day (during Phase One), students will continue independent learning in which they will complete learning activities assigned by their teacher or spend time on adaptive learning platforms.
- Regular attendance will be taken for students who are assigned to that cohort day (with follow-up through counselors and school staff).
- Provide Chromebooks for grades 2-8. Examining options for K-1.



Scheduling of Students

District Overview - Educational Program

- The district is applying a blended learning model across all grade levels and subject areas.
 - New content is presented through recorded sessions of live instruction, prerecorded teacher presentations, or high-quality commercially produced resources.
 - Synchronous (in-person or virtual) time is leveraged to support students deeper understanding of the content and to personalize instruction based on learning needs. A portion of every lesson will be synchronous.
- Lessons will follow consistent three-part approach across the district.
 - Mini-lesson/direct instruction
 - Guided/independent practice or group work
 - Synthesis and assessment
- Whether in-person or remote, students will follow the same schedule of class periods with synchronous instruction available through Google Classroom, Go-Guardian, Zoom, and/or Meet
- Synchronous instruction will be used to teach whole-class lessons, provide extra help to individuals or small groups, and foster the SEL program.
- Grading will follow standard grading policies in place across the district.



Scheduling of Students

Valley View - Hybrid 4-Hour Daily Schedule (Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, Friday)

8:15 - 8:20	Homeroom/Arrival
8:22 - 9:17	Period 1 or 6
9:19 - 10:09	Period 2 or 7
10:11 - 11:01	Period 3 or 8
11:03 - 11:53	Period 4 or 9
11:55 - 12:25	Period 5 or SEL
12:25 - 12:30	Dismissal
<i>1:00 - 2:55</i>	<i>Office Hours /Remote Instruction, Meetings, Prep & PD</i>



Scheduling of Students

Valley View: Wednesday Virtual Learning Day

8:15 - 8:17	Homeroom
8:19 - 8:45	Period 1
8:47 - 9:13	Period 2
9:15 - 9:41	Period 3
9:43 - 10:09	Period 4
10:10 - 10:36	Period 5
10:38 - 11:04	Period 6
11:06 - 11:32	Period 7
11:34 - 12:00	Period 8
12:02 - 12:30	Period 9
<i>1:00 - 2:55</i>	<i>Office Hours/Remote Instruction, Meetings, Prep and PD</i>



Scheduling of Students

Bayberry - Hybrid 4-Hour Tentative Daily Schedule (Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, Friday)

Homeroom/Staggered Arrival	8:40 - 8:55
Period 1	9:00 - 9:20
Period 2	9:23 - 9:43
Period 3	9:46 - 10:06
Period 4	10:09 - 10:29
Period 5	10:32 - 10:52
Period 6	10:55 - 11:15
Period 7	11:18 - 11:38
Period 8	11:41 - 12:01
Period 9	12:04 - 12:24
Homeroom/Staggered Dismissal	12:27 - 1:00
Office Hours /Remote Instruction, Meetings, Prep & PD	1:30 - 3:25



Scheduling of Students

Full-time Remote Program (opt-in basis)

If parents select a full-time remote program, the student will stay in this program for an entire marking period or trimester. Parents will be allowed to modify their selection at the end of a marking period or trimester. All students are eligible for full-time remote learning. Procedures for submitting full-time remote learning requests include the following (the initial request will be done through a survey response by August 14):

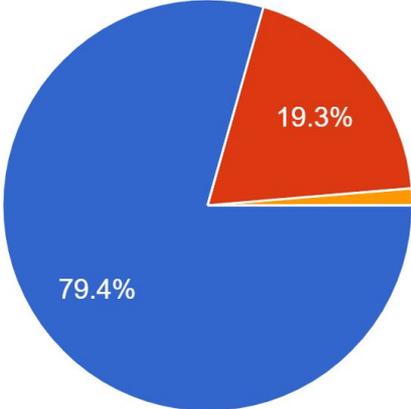
- Requests must be submitted at least three weeks prior to the first day of school or before the end of a marking period or trimester.
- Questions and concerns should be directed to the school principals.
- Documentation that is necessary to accompany the request: an agreement to be signed through the Student Information System by parent and student including the procedure to transition into a hybrid or in-person model.
- For students with disabilities, districts will review existing IEPs to see if changes need to be made.



Survey Results

Will this child be attending school in-person?

529 responses



- Yes
- No, I am requesting a fully virtual option for this child.
- No, I am withdrawing this child from the Watchung Borough School District.



Current Health and Safety Guidelines

Health and safety of students and staff is our top priority. Ways for everyone to help:

- Keep six feet apart
- Wash hands
- Wear a face covering
- Stay home if sick

The district's protocols are based on guidance from state, county, and local departments of health, as well as the CDC, all of which are subject to change.

The Road Back (state guidance) identifies ten critical areas of operation.

The district's tentative plans, which are subject to change, are outlined in the following slides.



Critical Area of Operation #1 - General Health and Safety Guidelines

High Risk Staff Members

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for individuals who have serious underlying medical conditions, as documented by a physician. The district requires staff to complete a medical authorization process to determine eligibility for reasonable accommodations, in accordance with federal and state laws. Medical information will remain confidential in accordance with all applicable laws.

High Risk Students

The district will require families to provide medical documentation for a student who has a serious underlying medical condition. Medical information will remain confidential in accordance with all applicable laws.



Critical Area of Operation #2 - Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms

Social Distancing in Instructional and Non-Instructional Rooms

- 50% capacity
- Face coverings
- Furniture arrangements
- Physical markings for social distancing in gyms and media centers
- Minimize any shared materials and follow disinfecting procedures
- Visitors limited
- Hand sanitizing stations will be set up at entrances, in all classrooms, and outside bathrooms. Students will be asked to bring their own sanitizer.
- Hand sanitizing and handwashing protocols taught and reinforced (instruction and signage)



Critical Area of Operation #3 – Transportation

Student Transportation

The district will encourage alternative ways of getting to school whenever safely possible: walk, bike, parent drop-off.

Transportation is contracted through WHRHS and educational service commissions and jointures

Pursuant to state and current county guidance:

- Reduce bus capacity
- Face coverings worn
- Must complete daily questionnaire to ride bus
- Cleaning and disinfecting is conducted twice per day
- Appropriate training for bus drivers
- Hand sanitizer and proper safety equipment



Critical Area of Operation #4 - Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas

Location of Student and Staff Screening

Each day parents will be required to complete a short health screening checklist through the District's SIS (Genesis) on each of their children. Staff will be doing the same.

Social Distancing in Entrances, Exits, and Common Areas

Staggered release from buses, face coverings worn

- Pathways marked for social distancing
- Multiple, monitored points of entry
- Staggered release from classes to minimize hallway traffic
- Appointments necessary for visitors and masks required



Critical Area of Operation #5 - Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms

Screening Procedures for Students and Staff (based on state, county, and local guidance)

Parents to sign a pledge regarding daily temperature checks, health questionnaires, visual screenings, and exposure history.

Parents of students who will participate in-person at any time will be required to submit a daily questionnaire based on CDC screening guidelines through Genesis. Adults may go through on-site screening process with temperature checks and questionnaires before school each day.

Protocols for Symptomatic Students and Staff

Questionnaires will be reviewed daily by staff. Concerns about questionnaire responses or over visual screenings will be reported directly to the nurse. Individuals of concern will be isolated in a supervised location. Nurse will communicate directly with school physician and parents. See Tables 1 and 2 below.

Protocols for Face Coverings

All staff, students, and visitors will wear face coverings while on the school bus, in common areas, and in the classroom.

Exceptions for face coverings will be addressed according to individual need, pursuant to board policy and all applicable laws and regulations. A doctor's note will be required and will be reviewed by the school nurse and school physician.

Staff and families will be expected to provide their own face coverings.



Critical Area of Operation #5 - Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms

Table 1: Steps to Take in Response to Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Cases and Close Contacts
based on NJDH Guidance as of 7/22/2020

Scenario	Immediate Actions	Communication
Scenario 1: A student of staff member either exhibits symptoms COVID-19 symptoms, answers "yes" to a health screening question, or has a temperature of 100.4 or above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student/staff sent home Student/staff instructed to get tested Class/cohort is evaluated for exposure and possible quarantine. 	No action is needed
Scenario 2: A family member or someone in close contact with a student or staff member (outside of school community) tests positive for COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student/staff sent home Student/staff may be recommended to get tested Student/staff instructed to quarantine, even if they test negative for a full 14 days after (1) date of last exposure to COVID-19 positive non-household contact or (2) COVID-19 positive household member completes their isolation If student/staff test positive, see Scenario 3 (below) School Administration notified 	<p><i>For the involved Student Family or Staff Member:</i> Template letter: Household member or Close Contact with COVID-19 Case</p>
Scenario 3: A student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student/staff sent home if not already quarantined Student/staff instructed to isolate for 10 days after symptom onset and 24 hours after resolution of symptoms, (if never symptomatic, isolate for 14 days after test date) School-based close contacts identified and quarantine for 14 days In stable elementary classroom cohorts: entire cohort In other setting: use seating chart, consult with teacher/staff School administration notified Health Department notified 	<p><i>For Positive Case Student Family/Staff:</i> Template Letter: COVID-19 Case</p> <p><i>For Student Families and Staff Members Identified as Close Contacts:</i> Template Letter: Household Member or Close Contact with COVID-19 Case</p> <p><i>For All Other Student Families and Staff Members:</i> Template Letter: COVID-19 Case in Our Community</p>



Critical Area of Operation #5 - Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms

Table 2. Steps to Take in Response to Negative Test Result

Scenario	Immediate Actions	Communication
A student or staff member tests negative for COVID-19 after Scenario 1 (asymptomatic)	Student/staff may return to school 24 hours after resolution of fever and improvement in other symptoms	Student family/staff to bring evidence of negative COVID-19 test or medical note if testing is not performed
A student or staff member tests negative after Scenario 2 (close contact)	Student/staff must remain in quarantine for a full 14 days after (1) date of last exposure to COVID-19 positive non-household contact or (2) date that COVID-19 positive household member completes their isolation	No action is needed
A student or staff member tests negative after routine surveillance testing (no symptoms and no close contact to a confirmed COVID-19 case)	Can return to school/work immediately	No action needed

Considerations for Closure

NJDOH is working on metrics to monitor transmission levels by region

For a negative test result, the district reserves its right to require a doctor's note with a clear return-to-school date.



Critical Area of Operation #6 - Contact Tracing

The district will cooperate fully and maintain active ongoing communication with the local and county health officials to ensure appropriate contact tracing. The school nurses will be the primary point of contact, but other appropriate staff, including administrators, counselors, and school safety specialists may assist in this process.

The school nurses will inform the local health official of students and employees who are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. Reporting will include information regarding the cohort, suspected close contacts, the status of mask wearing, and the length of interactions. The local health official will conduct the contact tracing to ensure that those individuals affected are notified and appropriate quarantine procedures are followed.

To aid in contact tracing, the district will put procedures in place for students to remain in separate cohorts to the greatest extent possible. The district also will put procedures in place to record daily student attendance and staff presence in each classroom.

In consultation with the local health official and the school physician, the district will take the appropriate action to ensure quarantine procedures and provide the required notices, as outlined in Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix E.



Critical Area of Operation #7 - Facilities Cleaning Practices

The district will follow all existing requirements for cleaning and ensure that procedures are updated according to new directives from state, county, and local health officials. The district is using a consultant for training of custodians.

Personnel shift changes will be made to allow for extra disinfection during the school day and also allow for ample disinfection time after school hours.

The chemicals used to disinfect will be EPA approved.

All items and areas will be cleaned at a minimum of once a day using either a cleaner followed by a disinfectant, or with an electrostatic sprayer. The electrostatic sprayer will be used on surfaces that have areas that may be missed with a wipe-on chemical, such as sink hardware. All other surfaces will be cleaned using a wipe-on chemical.

All bathrooms will be cleaned periodically during the day as occupancy allows.



Critical Area of Operation #8 – Meals

Phase 1: Four-Hour Day Model

- On an early dismissal schedule, only students eligible for free and reduced lunch will be provided with a daily grab-and-go lunch before dismissal, if requested. The school nurse will contact eligible families.
- All snacks will be brought by students from home and eaten in a space where social distancing can be achieved. All snacks are to be nut-free.
- Accommodations for students with severe allergies will be made on a case-by-case basis by the school nurse and school administration.

Phase 2 : Full-Day Model (tentative)

- Use of APR, Gym, outdoor adjacent spaces (when possible) to ensure social distancing
- Families are strongly encouraged to send their own peanut-free lunches, but the district will work with the PTO to set up a grab-and-go style service that will be delivered to students.
- Handwashing protocols will be facilitated by staff. Students will wear face coverings when moving around the cafeteria/lunchroom or using the bathroom.



Critical Area of Operation #9 – Recess/Physical Education

Safety Protocols for Recess/Physical Education

- Gymnasiums will have marked floor space to designate student spacing at 6 feet apart
- At this time, physical education activities will not require/allow the use of gym lockers or changing of clothes.
- Students will engage in class instruction in a socially distant manner (i.e., whole class instruction from the teacher)
- When possible, students will be scheduled for their health education requirement in place of physical education.
- Cohorts will be kept together.
- Recess will be staggered, when practicable.
- Cones, flags, tape, or other signs will be used to create boundaries and zones between cohorts during PE and recess.
- When individual equipment is used, the established disinfecting protocol will be implemented immediately after use.
- All students will wash their hands after outdoor recess or playtime.
- Use of the Bayberry playground will be staggered and disinfected daily. Groups will be kept apart. Basketball area and softball field will be used through a rotation with the playground. Areas will be marked and zoned to keep groups apart and ensure social distancing.
- At Valley View, the blacktop and grass fields will be marked and zoned for social distancing.



Critical Area of Operation #10 - Field Trips, Extra-Curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

The district will not be taking students on physical field trips during the pandemic. Extracurricular activities will be limited to ones that can be accomplished with social distancing in place and no sharing of equipment.

The Board of Education will limit the use of the school facilities by external community organizations. If an organization is permitted to use the facilities, it will be required to provide a certificate of insurance and follow district guidance on health and safety protocols.



Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports

The district will incorporate trauma-informed practices into each school, including practices and training to support mindfulness, self-regulation strategies, and social-emotional wellness. The district will also implement the Second Step, an SEL curriculum, in grades pre-K through 8.

Staff will also participate in Crisis Prevention Institute Verbal Intervention Training, which includes Communication Skills, Safety Interventions, and Disengagement Skills.

Each school will monitor students of concern and discuss how to best meet their needs, both academically and social-emotionally. Additional evidence-based tools will be provided for the school counselors to support social and emotional learning. Parents and students will be provided with resources in the community on our district website and as situations arise.

Multi-tiered system of support

This includes differentiation of instructional strategies and resources inside the classroom, academic support services for students demonstrating difficulty reaching grade-level norms, and I&RS and 504 plans to provide teachers with specific accommodations to apply to classroom instruction. The I&RS Committees in both buildings meet on a regular basis to review students who may be in need of academic interventions.

When necessary, students are referred to the CST for evaluations and additional interventions.



Pandemic Response Teams

The Pandemic response team is established in each school to implement COVID-19 decision-making.

The team consists of the principal, teachers, CST member, school counselor, school nurse, school safety personnel, members of school safety team, custodian, parents. It is designed to be a cross section of the school and district groups to reflect the makeup of the school community. The principal is the liaison to the district administration.

Responsibilities:

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

The Pandemic Response Team will meet regularly and provide the community with timely updates and any changes to protocols.



Staffing

The district is committed to student learning and engagement. The district will ensure that staffing is tailored to the needs of students, during all phases of the return to in-person instruction.

Expanded professional development August 31 - September 3. First day of school on September 8. Staff will be trained and oriented for the new model of instruction, including all health and safety protocols for in-person instruction, online platforms, and the expectations for remote and all-virtual instruction.

The district will continue to follow its professional development and mentoring plans, making needed adjustments based on the evolving circumstances that affect the instructional model. Teacher evaluation will continue as a means to support teacher practice in the classroom pursuant to state guidance.

Staff will continue to be supported by the administration with respect to instructional needs and social and emotional health.

The district has a contracted substitute service, but is attempting to recruit substitutes and student teachers to supplement and improve coverage for teacher absences.

The district is looking into ways to support the staff with childcare and avoid potential leaves pursuant to FFCRA.



Athletics

The district will follow all guidance and health protocols issued by the NJSIAA for its athletics programs.

Valley View Middle School has winter and spring interscholastic teams.

Bayberry Elementary School does not have an interscholastic or intramural sports program.



Summary/Next Steps

The plan is subject to change based on the course of the pandemic and supplementary state guidance.

We will continue to work on the plan, share it with the Restart Committee, submit it to the county superintendent for approval, and have it ready for adoption at the August 24 Board meeting. We will continue to update you on the planning process.

Families will have until August 14 to request a full-time remote option. A follow-up survey confirming your selection will be sent this week.

