

**Chester School District Reopening Plan  
Report from Reopening Group  
August 5, 2020**



**Accepted by the Chester School Board on August 5, 2020**

**Version 1.0**

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# Introduction

With the 2019 – 2020 school year behind us, the Chester School Board and Superintendent began the work necessary to develop and implement the plans required to begin the 2020 – 2021 school year. That entailed information gathering from our stakeholders, subject matter experts in both education and health services, conducting planning meetings and taking part in strategy sessions. As we had experienced over the last several months, the situation and the guidance that we received continued to evolve throughout the summer.

In June, Superintendent Dr. Darrell Lockwood formed a Chester Academy School Reopening Committee to develop detailed plans for the 2020 – 2021 academic year. This group is composed of Chester Academy Administrators; instructional staff and support staff members; parents; and School Board members.

The Board and the Superintendent closely followed the efforts of the New Hampshire Department of Education School Transition Reopening and Redesign Taskforce (STRRT). Each of the STRRT recommendations and guidance for reopening schools in New Hampshire were considered and incorporated in the overall plan for Chester Academy.

In addition, we have worked collaboratively with our peers in School Districts throughout the state to review their plans for the coming year and testing our ideas against their conclusions and recommendations.

The Superintendent and the Administration also developed two Parent Surveys and two Staff Surveys sent out in June and July for input and feedback on the concerns of the community as well as our teachers and paraprofessionals.

In addition, many parents reached out to the School Board, the Superintendent and our Administrators over the last several months to share their thoughts on how the 2020 – 2021 academic year should take place. This information was very helpful in developing our plans for reopening Chester Academy and we appreciate the participation and feedback of all who responded or reached out to us.

The guiding principle of the Reopening Committee was that we focus on both academics and safety. As such, we have developed a solution that will ensure that our students advance at least one grade level in one year during this current, extraordinary situation.

Likewise, we know that we must fulfill our requirements to our Special Education Services-eligible students by developing both innovative and effective programs for them. Under each instruction model, the Administration will be providing onsite instruction and services for these students or developing the necessary accommodations in conjunction with their parents or guardians to address the requirements of the student's Individualized Education Plan.

On July 23<sup>rd</sup> the Reopening Group presented an overview for our Chester Academy Families of the plan as well as the three proposed instructional models: Adapted-In-Person; Hybrid Remote; and Remote. This plan for Chester is designed to provide effective education for all of our students while also ensuring the safety of our students, staff and our community. These

sessions also generated some very helpful feedback from the community, which we have considered and incorporated in our plan.

In summary, the Superintendent and the Chester School Board are committed to delivering a comprehensive plan for the 2020 – 2021 academic year based on sound guidance from Federal Agencies, the State of New Hampshire’s Department of Education and Health and Human Services, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and practical experience provided by our staff, peers and colleagues as well as feedback from the Chester community.

## **Guiding Principles S.A.F.E**

**Secure:** The Chester School Board has prioritized the safety of the Academic Community in Chester (Students, Staff, Faculty, and Families).

**Actionable:** Resources are limited and must be used in the most cost effective way possible within the prudent guidelines of appropriately credentialed bodies (NH DOE, NH HHS, AAP, CDC). For a list of resources used by the School Board, please see the [References and Resources](#) section of this document.

**Flexible:** In the present environment, information changes frequently as new research is received. The SAU has considered a multi-faceted approach which allows for quickly adapted plans based on criteria established by the appropriately credentialed entities.

**Effective:** Many courses of action will have positive impacts and some may have negative impacts on the Chester Learning community. A guiding principle that the School Board has adopted is that risk is not going to be eliminated but no unnecessary risk will be taken. This will allow for the widest dissemination of educational opportunity in accordance with State and Federal regulations.

## **Committee Membership**

Royal Richardson, School Board Chair  
Jonathan Eckerman, School Board Vice Chair and Parent  
Heather Harrington, Parent and Past President of PTA  
Rebecca Kozura, Parent and PTA Member  
Deena Haggart, Teacher and CEA President  
Cindy McLaughlin, Para and CESPAs President  
Becky Leone, School Nurse  
Karen Lacroix, Principal  
Dr. Ann Gaffney, Assistant Principal  
Sheryl Rich, Business Administrator  
Jana Ruiz, Special Services Director  
Lauren Mercier, Director of Student Affairs  
Ben Kilar, Technology Director  
Martin McFarland, Facilities and Maintenance Director  
Leanne Sullivan, Food Services Director  
Jane Grimm, Special Services and Guidance Secretary  
Dr. Darrell Lockwood, Superintendent

# **School Calendar**

The Planning Committee is recommending changes to the Chester School District calendar. We are proposing a new first day for students, Tuesday, September 8, 2020. The Chester School District has historically been based upon 180 student instructional days. The NH Department of Education and the Governor have provided the district the opportunity to utilize 3 of those instructional days as Professional Development days in order to prepare staff in the myriad of changes that will take place in the fall. This recommendation would not change the calendar in any other way for students.

We are recommending that new staff begin work on Tuesday, August 25, 2020, teaching staff return on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 and paraeducators return on Thursday, August 27, 2020. Staff will be involved in Professional Development activities from August 26th - September 3rd.

Parent/Teacher Conference Day will be held remotely - November 10th.

In addition, the Committee is recommending that the following weeks be planned weeks of Full Remote Instruction for all students:

- November 18 - 24 (includes a weekend)
- January 19-22 (4 days due to holiday)
- February 15-19

This planned move to Full Remote Instruction provides time for deep cleaning of the school and allows for a scheduled window of time out of the school building where typically the school experiences a high level of student and staff illnesses.

## **Professional Development**

As mentioned above, we are recommending that new staff begin work on Tuesday, August 25, 2020, teaching staff return on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 and paraeducators return on Thursday, August 27, 2020. This recommendation provides three additional days of professional development for staff as they prepare for school to resume. Staff will be involved in Professional Development activities from August 26th - September 3rd. The administration will develop a schedule for these professional development activities.

## **Return to School Models**

### **Traditional In Person**

This is the model we normally use. No adaptations are made to account for COVID-19. Students and groups are allowed to mix and be in close proximity. Masks are not required to be worn and may not have been permitted in some cases. Students are expected to be present and those that are not present are considered absent and eventually truant. No remote instruction is generally available.

This model is not described here in detail. Significant deviations from this model are noted in the descriptions of other models below.

### **Overview**

- No enforced social distancing
- Classroom activities as normal
- Lunch as planned in cafeteria
- Rotated IA classes

Broadly, this is the school year as envisioned in September-November, 2019 when the budget was developed.

Were we to return to this model we would probably see an increase in disinfection procedures and optional mask wearing. At this time, we do not anticipate a full return to this model at least during the first half of the 2020-2021 school year.

### **Adapted In Person**

This model meets the goal of providing an opportunity for all students and staff to return to school while implementing a number of safety procedures.

### **Seat for Each Child**

In this model Chester Academy has a seat for every child whose family chooses to send the child to school in the building. Spacing and mobility restrictions imposed in this model will heavily impact the school day. IEP team meetings will be scheduled to determine the most appropriate way to deliver IEP services and supports.

In order to limit crossing between cohort groups of students, there are several key differences in the school day as compared to a traditional school day:

- K-5 Students will work in one classroom "all day" with their homeroom teacher. All core subjects will be taught by this teacher.
- 6-8 Students will work in one classroom "all day" and their subject area teachers will move between classrooms.
- Students at all grade levels will maintain a physical distance of 3-6 feet with effort made to maximize this distance to the extent possible.
- Students will have an IA class daily. Daily IA will be taught by the same teacher each day and will include a combination of activities in the IA teacher's specialty area and of other designated activities.
- Students will complete and turn in work via Google Classroom or other online tools
- School lunch will be served in each classroom.

### **Telepresence Option**

Students unable to attend classes in person will be permitted to join classes via telepresence. Each classroom will be equipped with a computer able to view and broadcast certain classroom happenings. Teachers will be equipped with a wireless microphone to ensure clear audio.

- Teachers with telepresent students will establish a schedule and will broadcast classroom content at specified times via Google Meet. **Meets will not be recorded by the district or by parents due to privacy and legal<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> requirements.**
- Students will be able to interact with their teachers and classmates during the meet/broadcast.
- Students may be given independent work to do after a video session.
- Telepresent students are expected to be supervised by a parent or other appropriate caregiver.
- Students will complete and turn in work via Google Classroom or other online tools.
- Telepresence is limited to synchronous<sup>3</sup> activities.

## Hybrid Remote

Due to the circumstances or trends that move us to hybrid remote, we need to enhance our safety procedures including increasing our physical distancing of students and staff. This requires limiting the number of individuals in the building. In order to limit our numbers within the building, this model utilizes Remote instruction for all students 1-8. Grades K and PreK would occur at school using the Adapted In-Person Model described above. A small number of students with specific learning needs will also be afforded an opportunity to attend the school and be supervised by school staff while participating in remote instruction; most students would participate from home.

The selection process of students with specific learning needs will be completed by a multidisciplinary team and be reviewed on a regular basis. The team will focus on students who have Individualized Education Programs and 504 plans, as we have a legal obligation to provide specialized support and services to these students. If additional students can be accommodated in this model, the multidisciplinary team would then consider students who have social-emotional or academic needs that can be addressed better in person, and consideration for those families who experience limited access to the internet.

The focus on remote instruction will allow teachers to more fully optimize their curriculum for remote delivery and to better accommodate asynchronous<sup>4</sup> students.

The ability to have some students in the school supervised by school staff allows us to provide the best options to meet student needs. IEP team meetings will be scheduled to determine the most appropriate way to deliver IEP services and supports.

## **Remote @ Home**

The vast majority of students will attend classes from home. Remote @ home students do not attend the school in person and are expected to be supervised by a parent or other appropriate caregiver. Students will complete and turn in work via Google Classroom or other online tools. Students will join video classes remotely. Some of these classes will be synchronous and

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<sup>1</sup> NH RSA 570-A:2 <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/lviii/570-a/570-a-mrg.htm>

<sup>2</sup> 18 U.S. Code Chapter 119 § 2511 <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/2511>

<sup>3</sup> Synchronous - At the same time. Students would attend classes and receive instruction at the same time as their peers in the school

<sup>4</sup> Asynchronous - students who need to work and receive instruction at a time not coordinated with their peers.

attendance will be required for school attendance. IEP team meetings will be scheduled to determine the most appropriate way to deliver IEP services and supports.

Remote learning would look different from Spring of 2020. Differences would include:

- Improved software and hardware tools
- Synchronous activities to provide greater structure
- Mandatory attendance in some synchronous classes to count as school attendance
- Students will have scheduled individual or small group time with a teacher at least once a week in groups of no larger than five and preferably smaller
- Clear communication tools for parents to determine what work is expected, what has been completed, and what is missing or incomplete

### **Remote @ School**

Students in the Pre-K program and in Kindergarten will be at school and operate substantially the same as in the Adapted In Person model. Adjustments will be made to take advantage of the additional open space. Also, since IA staff will be teaching remotely, there will be increased opportunities to work with different IA teachers throughout the week.

Up to 80 students in grades 1-8 can be accommodated in designated large spaces maintaining 6+ ft of physical distance.

Students in grades 1-8 will participate in classes remotely in the same manner as the Remote@Home students. Students in school will be supervised by school staff at all times. Students in school will be able to receive IEP services from paraprofessionals, case managers, and specialists.

### **Full Remote**

In full remote, students do not attend the school in person and are expected to be supervised by a parent or other appropriate caregiver. Students will complete and turn in work via Google Classroom or other online tools. Students will join video classes remotely. Some of these classes will be synchronous and attendance will be required for school attendance. IEP team meetings will be scheduled to determine the most appropriate way to deliver IEP services and supports.

Remote learning would look different from Spring of 2020. Differences would include:

- Improved software and hardware tools
- Synchronous activities to provide greater structure
- Mandatory attendance in some synchronous classes to count as school attendance
- Students will have scheduled individual or small group time with a teacher at least once a week in groups of no larger than five and preferably smaller
- Clear communication tools for parents to determine what work is expected, what has been completed, and what is missing or incomplete

# Model Selection & Decision Points

**Selecting a Model**  
Risk Analysis

**GREEN** - No Risk = **Traditional School** -  
Few or no adaptations related to COVID-19

**YELLOW** - Low Risk = **Adapted in Person** -  
Campus is open to all students, with required  
protocols and substantial modification.  
Home-based telepresence available to students.

**ORANGE** - Medium Risk = **Hybrid Remote** -  
Campus is open to select students, with  
enhanced safety protocols, all others remote.

**RED** - High Risk = **Full Remote** -  
All Students and most staff are off campus.

When determining levels of risk, it is important to consider that the virus does not follow municipal and county borders. We know many educators and educational support staff do not live and work in the same county, and many parents and community members work and/or regularly travel outside of our region as well. Hence, looking solely at the number of COVID-19 cases in Chester would not provide an accurate measure of risk.

## Conditions

1. We will adopt one of the three non-traditional models (Adapted In Person, Hybrid Remote, or Full Remote) described in this plan for so long as:
  - a. the COVID-19 pandemic persists; **and**
  - b. there is no widely available, safe and effective vaccine; **and**
  - c. there are active cases in NH.
2. If conditions permit, Chester Academy will adopt the **Adapted In Person** model (**Yellow**).
3. Chester Academy would automatically shift to the **Hybrid Remote** instruction delivery model (**Orange**) if:
  - a. NH DHHS reports that Rockingham county has a case rate of over 40 cases per 100,000 people (5 school day average)<sup>5</sup>; **or**
  - b. the state has a greater than 5 % positivity rate<sup>6</sup>; **or**

<sup>5</sup> The case count will be obtained daily by school staff from <https://www.nh.gov/covid19/dashboard/active-cases.htm>. This along with the estimated Rockingham County population of 310,258 will be used to determine this condition.

<sup>6</sup> This data is directly reported by <https://www.covidexitstrategy.org/>. This data is reported as a 7 day rolling average.

- c. proper substitute staffing and/or bus drivers were unavailable<sup>7</sup> for a period of 3 out of the last 6 school days; **or**
  - d. the Chester Academy educational staff<sup>8</sup> have an absentee rate greater than 20% for a period of 3 out of the last 6 school days as this compromises the quality of the education; **or**
  - e. state or federal authorities direct the use of a model with fewer persons in the building.
4. Chester Academy will shift to a **Full Remote** instruction delivery model (**Red**) if:
- a. told to close by state or federal authorities; **or**
  - b. there are five (5) or more diagnosed active cases amongst on-site students and staff.

## Transitioning between models

Chester Academy may have periodic closures or remote days due to isolated incidents of COVID-19 in the building that would necessitate a short-term (i.e., 1-2 days) closure for cleaning. This would not, in and of itself, cause or be a shift in models.

In the event that a transition to a more restrictive model is necessary, we will attempt to complete this in a single school day with no down-time. We will encourage students and staff to bring school computers and needed materials home each night and will develop plans to quickly distribute materials if needed.

To avoid rapid back and forth transitions,

- Any transition **to** a more restrictive model would last a minimum of 3 weeks; **and**
- any transition **from** a more restrictive model to a less restrictive model (e.g., from Orange to Yellow) would take place at the midpoint or end of a trimester

## Health and Safety Practices and Protocols

The health and safety of students and staff are our top priority when making the decision of how to reopen schools in fall. Our process has included a thorough review of guidelines from the NH Division of Public Health Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the NH School Nurse Association as well as available medical literature on COVID-19 related to children and school settings.

## Creating a Positive Culture Supporting Health and Safety

In order to ensure that all members of the Chester Academy community are developing and encouraging a positive culture around health and safety, the following practices will be put into place.

- Staff and students will practice enhanced hygiene at school (e.g., increased hand washing).

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<sup>7</sup> If staffing is unavailable, Chester Academy may be closed on these days or may utilize Remote Instruction

<sup>8</sup> This includes all teachers, paraprofessionals, school administrators, counselors, and special education service providers. This does not include SAU staff, office staff, custodial or lunch staff.

- Staff will monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and report any concerns to the school nurse and administration.
- Staff will talk frequently with students about the importance of cleanliness/hygiene as it relates to being around others.
- Staff will monitor mask use and provide for appropriate mask breaks with enhanced physical distancing.

## **Attestation Form**

Parents will complete a daily online attestation form each morning including answering questions regarding their exposure to COVID-19 and related symptoms for each Chester Academy student in their family prior to their arrival at school. It is crucial that parents complete the form each morning and not the previous night. Parents whose child arrives at school on the bus without the necessary documentation or documentation form from the previous night will receive a phone call home and be required to complete the online form prior to their child entering the classroom. Parents who provide transportation and arrive at school without the necessary documentation or documentation from the previous night, will be required to complete the online form on site prior to their child entering the building.

All staff will also complete a daily online attestation form each morning prior to entering the building similar to the student form. Attestation Forms will be reviewed daily to prevent exposure.

## **Personal Protective Equipment**

All staff are required to wear a cloth mask when leaving their vehicle and preparing to enter the building and while in the building. Some staff members may be delivering services wearing clear masks. There may be circumstances when staff will also use gloves when working with students.

All members of the public will be required to wear a face mask when leaving their vehicle and preparing to enter the building and while in the building.

For students in preschool mask wearing will be taught, practiced and students will be encouraged to wear them. Students in Kindergarten through 8th grade will be required to wear face masks. Mask breaks combined with appropriate physical distancing measures and extra recess outdoors will be scheduled throughout the day. Parents should provide their child(ren) with cloth face masks. Reusable masks should be washed daily. Based on guidance from health authorities neck gaiters, open-chin triangle bandanas and face covering containing valves, mesh material or holes of any kind will not be considered appropriate face coverings.

Chester Academy is also developing outdoor learning environments for opportunities for education to take place outside weather permitting.

## **Cleaning and Sanitizing**

Our custodial team will clean our facility on a daily basis using industry-standard COVID-19 cleaning procedures. In addition, the spaces being utilized within the facility will undergo a disinfection process daily during the school year while face to face operations are underway.

Areas that will be used for food service including student desks will undergo an additional sanitization process consistent with food safety requirements.

#### Specialized Cleaning Routines:

The District has identified touchpoints (listed below) that will be disinfected at least once each day. The special weekly disinfecting process will continue throughout the school year. All custodial and maintenance staff have been trained on the use of the electro-static sprayers being deployed.

#### Touchpoints:

- Door handles, push bars & push plates
- Light Switches
- Classroom Door Windows
- Classroom sinks, faucet handles and counters
- Classroom tables and chairs
- Elevator push buttons
- Water bottle filling stations
- Restroom doors, handles and push plates
- ADA bars
- Toilet and urinal handles
- Sanitary napkin dispensers
- Sink and faucet handles
- Toilet paper, soap, and paper towel dispensers and handles

### **Physical Distancing/Cohorts**

Students will be placed in cohorts where they will remain throughout the day. Cohorts are groups of students and staff who remain together and, when necessary, move together. Students receiving special services, and the staff who need to work with them may move through more than one cohort in a single day. Desks and work areas will be distanced 3 to 6 ft apart. Hallway travel will be minimized.

### **Student Medication**

All student medication that can be given to children at home prior to arriving at school should be given by parents. A medication cart will be utilized with a confidential protocol for midday administration of medication by nursing staff.

### **Addressing High Risk Populations**

According to the CDC, individuals who are considered at high risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 include:

- People 65 years and older;
- Those who live in long-term care facilities;
- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma;
- Those with serious heart disease; and/or
- Individuals who are immunocompromised, severely obese, have diabetes or some other underlying medical conditions, particularly if they are not well controlled.

Students/families who self-identify as high risk should contact the school principal with the specifics and be prepared to provide documentation from their medical provider. The School District will then work with the family to provide an alternative learning arrangement. Considerations of a reasonable accommodation will be made for staff members who self-identify as high risk and who provide documentation from their medical provider. NH DHHS guidance on medical documentation will be followed.

## **Social Health and Wellness of Students and Staff**

Chester Academy recognizes that some students will require additional support for dealing with emotions related to COVID-19. Teachers will continue to offer support and guidance through the *Choose Love* and *Responsive Classroom* curriculums. The school counselors will be available to support students individually and/or in small groups with cohorts of students using all safety procedures previously listed. In addition, supports and services can also be delivered remotely to the student and parent if appropriate. For any students who may require mental health support or therapy, referrals will be made to the parent by providing a list of providers.

Staff who require emotional support will be referred to their health care provider or the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

## **Parents, Visitors, Volunteers and Vendors/Contractors**

Access to Chester Academy during the school day will be limited to employees and students. Parents are asked to stay in their vehicles when delivering or picking up their student. A process for notifying the front office of your arrival is being developed. Vendors/contractors (e.g., electrician, plumber, food deliveries) will be escorted by an employee at all times while they are in the building and will follow all safety protocols (e.g., distancing, masks). School Board meetings will be open to the public with safety protocols including mask wearing in place.

## **Public Communication**

A webpage has been created for School Reopening information. It may be found at <https://sau82.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=22666903&pageId=27273965> . This page will serve as an archive for School Reopening notices and letters from the School District, for presentations and for suggested resources.

The District will continue to utilize the School Messenger notification system to apprise parents and guardians of School Reopening updates. The system allows for both telephone and email messages to be sent. If you are having trouble accessing or receiving these communications, please contact the Principal.

School Board meeting agendas and minutes may be found online at <https://sau82.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=22666903&pageId=22696200>. School Board meetings continue to be broadcast live on CETV, Channel 22.

The Chester School Board produces monthly updates for Chester residents on items of interest related to the activities of the Board and legislative issues that impact our community. These documents can be found at: [https://sau82.org/school\\_board/school\\_board\\_highlights](https://sau82.org/school_board/school_board_highlights)

# School Structure and Schedules

(Adapted In Person and Hybrid Remote)

Students will arrive at school either by bus or as a commuter and enter the building at 8:20 AM when the doors open. Prior to entering the building, confirmation of the daily attestation will take place. Once admitted, students will walk to their designated classrooms. A breakfast cart will be available as students enter the building.

<b>Adapted In Person</b>	<b>Hybrid Remote Remote @ School Students</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will have assigned seats in the classroom and will remain in cohorts throughout the day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will have assigned seats in the classroom and will remain in cohorts throughout the day</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will remain in the same classroom throughout the day. In grades 6-8, core teachers will travel to the students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will remain in the same classroom throughout the day and be supervised by paraprofessionals. Core instruction will be delivered remotely.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support services will be delivered to students either remotely, in the classroom, or in small groups outside the classroom with enhanced safety precautions and cleaning between groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support services will be delivered to students either remotely, in the classroom, or in small groups outside the classroom with enhanced safety precautions and cleaning between groups.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One IA teacher will be assigned per grade level per trimester and will hold class in the students' classroom. The IA teacher will be with each class for 75 minutes each day allowing for enhanced IA opportunities including movement breaks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All students will participate in their IA classes remotely from their assigned classroom space.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All lunches will take place in the classroom. Lunch items will be brought to the students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All lunches will take place in the classroom. Lunch items will be brought to the students.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mask breaks will be given throughout the day along with scheduled daily recess.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mask breaks will be given throughout the day along with scheduled daily recess.</li> </ul>

Our school building will be closed to any member of the public from 2:30 - 3:30 PM daily so that we can focus on the safe dismissal of our students. The parking lot will be closed during these times as well. If parents wish to dismiss their child(ren) early, they must do so before 2:30 PM or wait until the dismissal process begins at 3:00 PM and pick their child up as a commuter.

# School Facilities

## Facility Improvements

We have made and/or will be making upgrades and modifications to the facility in the interest of improved safety prior to school opening.

### Classrooms

We will be removing unnecessary furniture to allow for maximum physical distancing between students. We will also be providing barriers between students where needed to support safe distancing where physical distancing approaches 3 ft.

A touchless hand sanitizer dispenser has been added in each classroom for use by students and staff.

### Air Handling and Filtration

We will adjust the fresh air intake of our HVAC system to its maximum level per CDC guidance. In addition, we are evaluating multiple solutions to better filter the air within our classrooms.

- We have evaluated in-room HEPA filters and are satisfied that they could work but have decided to move forward with a full system upgrade of the HVAC system. We may still obtain HEPA filtering devices if spaces are found with insufficient ventilation.
- We will be upgrading the filters in our existing HVAC units from MERV 6-8 to MERV 11.
- We will be installing an iWave<sup>9</sup> ionic air purification system into our existing HVAC system. This system kills airborne mold, viruses, and other pathogens and drastically improves the effectiveness of filtration by causing pollutants to clump together. This system will cover all classrooms and common areas.

### Water Fountains and Bottle Fillers

Water fountains will not be utilized during any model. The bottle filling stations will be available. Parents are encouraged to send students to school with a refillable water bottle.

### Outdoor Spaces

We have identified several outdoor spaces that can be used by students and classes for mask breaks and some classroom activities particularly in fair weather. We are in the process of evaluating the feasibility of erecting one or more large tents capable of hosting a classroom group during inclement weather.

## Clean and Disinfect

Our custodial team will clean our facility on a daily basis using industry-standard COVID-19 cleaning procedures. In addition, the spaces being utilized within the facility will undergo a

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<sup>9</sup> Per the manufacturer, when the ions come in contact with viruses, bacteria or mold, they remove the hydrogen molecules – without them, the pathogens have no source of energy and will die. The ions also attach to allergens like pollen and other particles, causing them to band together until they are large enough to be caught by your ventilation system's air filter. <https://www.iwaveair.com/> and <http://gsphinc.com/> for more information.

disinfection process daily during the school year while face to face operations are underway. Areas that will be used for food service including student desks will undergo an additional sanitization process consistent with food safety requirements.

Because the disinfect and sanitization routines must be done in addition to regular classroom cleaning, we will propose an additional custodial staff position in the event we begin the year in the Adapted In Person model.

## **Child Nutrition Program/Food Service**

School meals will continue to meet federal guidelines. In order to accommodate classroom serving of lunch and breakfast, we will move from an “offer” to a “serve” approach. This allows meals to be prepackaged. Where possible food will be pre-packaged or individually wrapped. All containers and utensils will be disposable. All condiments provided will be pre-packaged. Snacks and lunches served by Chester Academy will be consumed either in the classrooms or outdoors.

Both breakfast and lunch will be available for pick-up for students who are learning remotely. In order to provide this offsite meals the District will need approvals by both the federal and state government. An ordering process and pick up plans will be developed and shared with parents/guardians.

Students will be asked to remain seated at their desks while eating lunch and face forward away from other students. Students and staff will remove their masks to eat and will put masks back on immediately after eating. All persons will wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after eating and removing/redonning their masks.

## **Transportation**

The Chester School District will provide busing to school for any Chester Academy or Pinkerton Academy student who needs it. Parents are welcome and encouraged to provide their own transportation in order to allow for more social distancing on the bus.

### **School Bus Transportation**

Families will be asked to tell the District if they plan on having their child(ren) ride the bus. Bus routes will be redone in order to equalize the number of children per bus to allow for more distancing and to ensure that we have a spot for every child.

Children will be assigned to one bus that goes to a designated bus stop based on their home address. Families where children reside at different homes on different days and need transportation to two different addresses may reach out to the school. These requests will be accommodated if possible. The District will not be able to accommodate sporadic busing to locations other than the student's home.

If families tell the school that they will be providing their own transportation for their children and then change their minds, it may take some time (up to a week) in order for rearrangements

to be made to routes and seating in order to accommodate these changes. Last minute changes or special arrangements (e.g., going to a friends house, etc.) cannot be accommodated.

#### Expectations of Families/Caregivers:

- Families will practice enhanced hygiene at home (e.g., increased hand washing)
- Families will monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and complete a daily attestation before their child(ren) leave for the bus stop
- Families will talk frequently with students about the importance of cleanliness/hygiene as it relates to being around others
- Students should wash/sanitize hands immediately prior to going to the bus stop
- Families will make sure students have a mask before leaving to go to the bus stop
- Sharing items will not be allowed (e.g., toys, school supplies, educational materials)

#### Bus Stop Etiquette:

- Please do not bring ill children/family members to the bus stop
- Maintain social distancing at the bus stop (when there are multiple families)
- Sharing items will not be allowed (e.g., toys, school supplies, educational materials)
- When appropriate (i.e., when social distancing cannot be maintained) wear a mask
- Masks will be required to be worn on the bus

#### Boarding & Exiting the Bus:

- As the bus approaches, form a line with adequate space between children to allow orderly boarding
- Put on a mask when lining up (if it is not on already)
- On the bus students will be assigned a seat (no more than two students per seat)
- Sharing items will not be allowed (e.g., toys, school supplies, educational materials)
- At the school, buses will be assigned a drop off door to allow social distancing while entering the building
- Upon arrival students will file off the bus from front to back and walk directly to class
- These procedures will be followed in reverse for dismissal

#### Bus Safety:

In addition to the typical safety measures in place when riding buses, the following additional safety precautions will be in place due to COVID-19.

- The bus company will follow a regular schedule to disinfect the school bus. In addition, high-touch surfaces will be disinfected by the bus company before each bus run.
- Windows on the bus will be opened to the first detent to facilitate air exchange (in both warm and cold weather, but not in driving rain).
- Families of students who are disruptive or not following the guidelines above or who are behaving inappropriately may be asked to provide their own transportation to/from school (the intention is not to deny families access to busing, but safe transportation for all is the priority).

## **Parent Drop Off and Pick Up - “Commuters”**

Any student who is not riding the bus to or from school is called a commuter. We anticipate that commuter traffic will increase and have made some changes to our drop off and pick up process

to accommodate this increased traffic. We ask for the cooperation of families as we work to maintain proper distancing during the dismissal process.

During the drop-off and pickup process we ask that all family members who are not Chester Academy students remain in their vehicle at all times. Chester Academy does not allow students to walk or bike to school due to safety reasons and this year we are not allowing students to arrive at school on foot even when accompanied by a parent or guardian. *In order to maintain proper distancing and to keep people from congregating or interrupting the flow of students, we ask that all student drop-offs and pick-ups happen from a vehicle.*

### **Morning Drop Off**

Morning drop off begins at 8:20 AM and lasts until students are in the building. The school day officially begins at 8:35 AM at which time students should be in their classrooms. We expect that, especially at the beginning of the year, this process may take longer than in the past and we may adjust our attendance procedures as needed to accommodate the entry process.

The parking lot will be closed to families during drop off and pick up time. Students cannot be dropped off in the parking lot or any location other than the drop-off area. Families should enter the Chester Academy roadway and form two lines of traffic up to the main crosswalk area. At 8:20 AM families will be invited to drive forward to the drop off area in front of the school building and playground.

Family members should remain in the vehicle. Students should remain in the vehicle until the attestation form verification happens. If the student does not have a completed attestation, families will need to submit that before the child can exit the vehicle. Families will be asked to park in the parking lot while they complete this process so as not to hold up the line and to reenter the commuter line when the attestation is completed. Only when the attestation has been verified by a staff member will students be invited to exit the vehicle and enter the school building.

### **Afternoon Pick Up**

Our school building will be closed to any member of the public from 2:30 - 3:30 PM daily so that we can focus on the safe dismissal of our students. The parking lot will be closed during these times as well. If parents wish to dismiss their child(ren) early, they must do so before 2:30 PM or wait until the dismissal process begins at 3:00 PM and pick their child up as a commuter.

When entering the property to pick up a child at the end of the day, families should form two lines of traffic up to the main crosswalk area. While lined up, parents will be asked for their children's names so that we can call students down in small groups as their ride arrives. Although dismissal technically begins at 3:00 PM, there may be times when we begin dismissal a bit earlier in order to accommodate the anticipated increase in traffic flow. Parents will then be invited to move forward into the enlarged pick up area to gather their children.

Due to enlarging our pick up area, which extends from the front door area all the way down to the end of the softball field, the crosswalk between the playground and the parking lot will be closed. The parking lot and school building will also be closed to non-staff. All families picking up students must go through the dismissal line. Children will be called down for dismissal as

their vehicle arrives and should go directly to their vehicle once outside. For their safety, children must enter the vehicle on the passenger side.

When exiting the pickup area, parents are asked to drive slowly and be aware of others exiting around them. Parents whose children have not arrived from their classroom may be asked to pull up while waiting for their child so that others may gather their children.

## Resources and References

The Chester School Board along with the leadership team referred to many documents when developing this plan. The following documents were particularly helpful due to the specific guidance they provided.

- Governor's/NHDOE Back to School Guidance <https://www.covidguidance.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt381/files/inline-documents/sonh/k-12-back-to-school.pdf>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
- American Academy of Pediatrics <https://www.aappublications.org/news/2020/06/26/schoolreopening062620>
- NH Division of Public Health Services <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/>

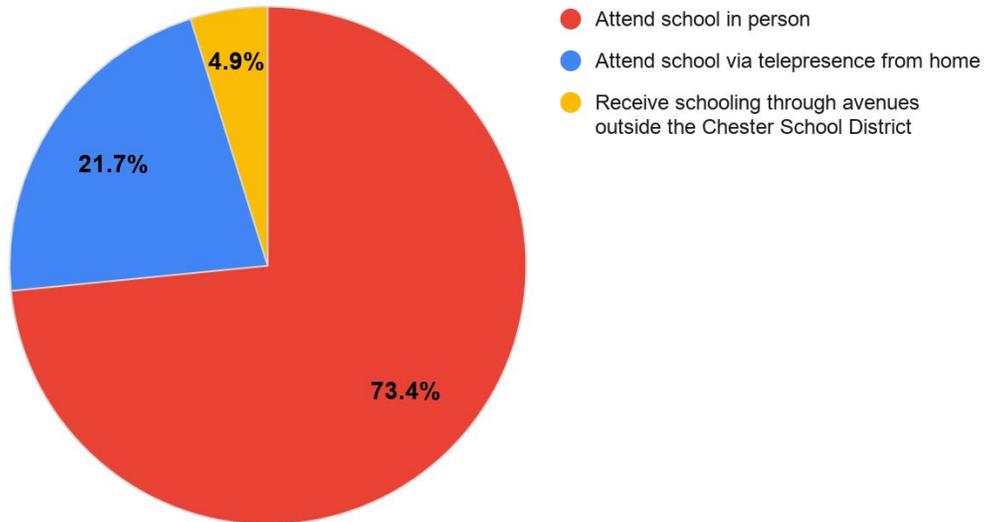
## Timeline/Action Steps

- Initial Draft Reopening Presentation to Chester Academy Staff - July 22nd
- Afternoon and Evening Presentation of Initial Draft Reopening Plan for Parents - July 23rd (afternoon and evening)
- Staff Survey Completed the week of July 27th
- Chester School Board Workshop to Discuss Initial Draft Reopening Plan - July 29th
- Parent Survey Completed the week of August 3rd
- Draft Reopening Plan Presented to the Chester School Board for Review and Action - August 5th
- Update Letter on School Reopening Prepared and Sent to Parents - August 10th
- Approved Revisions to School Calendar - Document Prepared and Distributed (including updating website) - August 10th
- Parents must notify school of their decision for each of their children - August 14th
- Chester School Board Meeting - August 19th
- Chester School Board Meeting - September 2nd

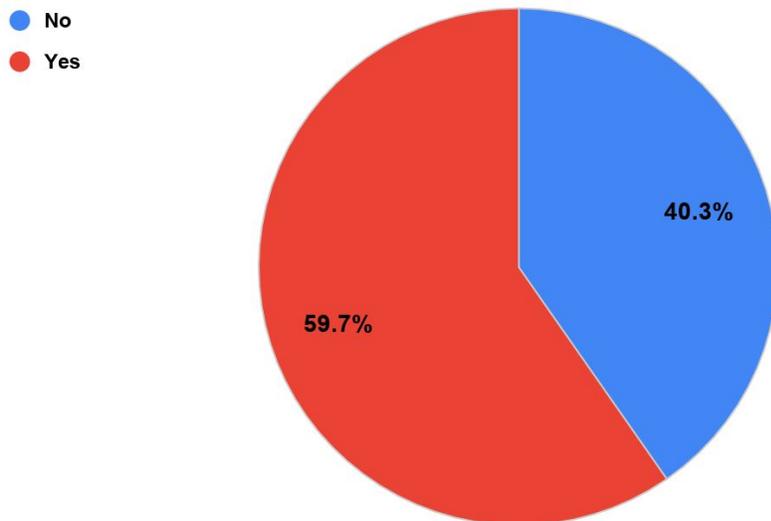
# Appendix A - Parent Survey Summary

Beginning on July 29, parents were surveyed as to their intentions should Chester Academy open under the models described in this document. These responses were not a commitment - children will not be required to attend or not based on these responses - but this information was used in further developing plans.

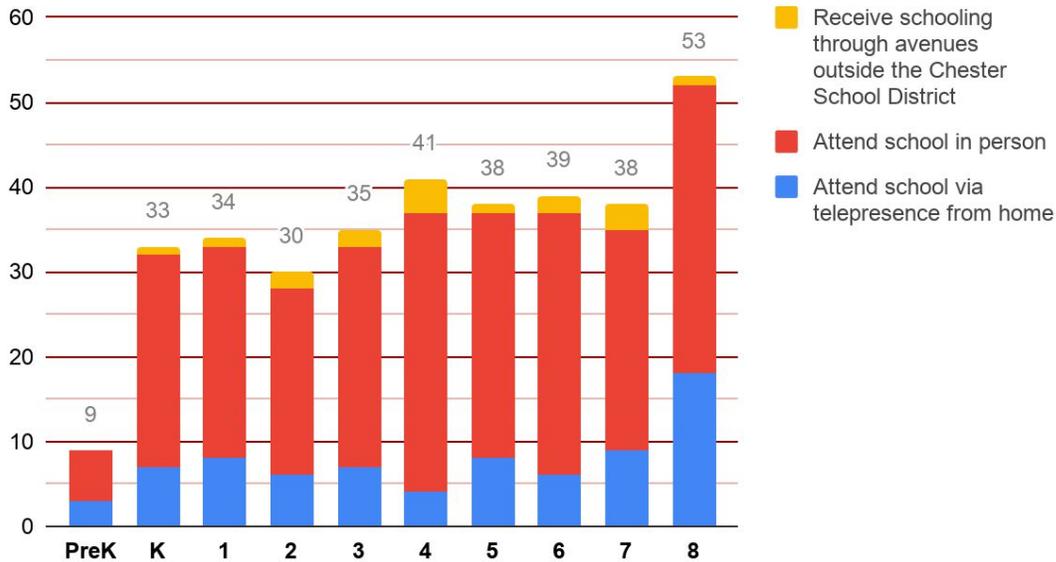
## Adapted In Person - Attendance Choice Overall



## I plan to have my child ride the bus...



## Attendance Choice - Adapted In Person by Grade



## Adapted In Person Attendance Preference - Breakdown

Grade Level	PreK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	School
<b>Attend school in person</b>	6	25	25	22	26	33	29	31	26	34	<b>257</b>
<b>Attend school via telepresence from home</b>	3	7	8	6	7	4	8	6	9	18	<b>76</b>
<b>Receive schooling through avenues outside the Chester School District</b>		1	1	2	2	4	1	2	3	1	<b>17</b>
<b>Total Responses</b>	9	33	34	30	35	41	38	39	38	53	<b>350</b>
<b>Estimated Enrollment as of 8/4</b>	15	46	48	46	47	50	57	60	56	68	<b>493</b>

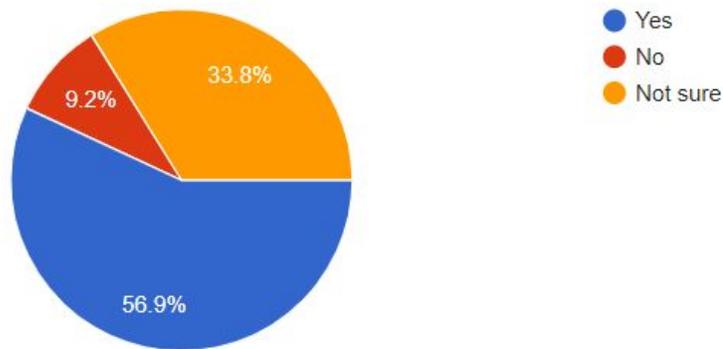
**Comment Summary** - Overall, parents voiced many positive comments and had some concerns. Concerns centered on mask wearing and safety protocols, bus transportation and questions about the decision making process when changing models. Many parents voiced their opinion of what model we should start in and many others thanked the leadership team for all their hard work throughout the process.

## Appendix B - Staff Survey Summary

In late July, teachers and paraprofessionals were surveyed as to their needed accommodations and intentions should Chester Academy open under the models described in this document. These responses were used to assess staff availability and to engage in conversations with staff regarding reopening.

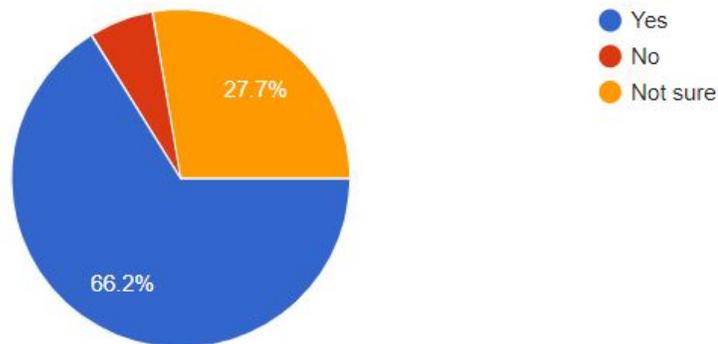
1. Based upon the draft plans as presented to you on July 22, to mitigate COVID-19 risk, would you be able to return to your position in the Adapted In Person option without any accommodations?

65 responses



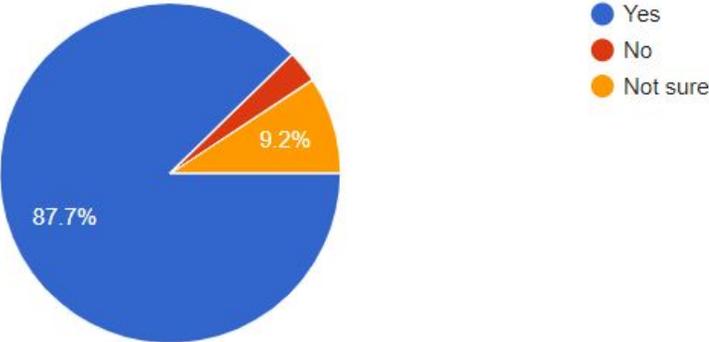
3. Based upon the draft plans as presented to you on July 22, to mitigate COVID-19 risk, would you be able to return to your position in the Hybrid Remote option without any accommodations?

65 responses



5. Based upon the draft plans as presented to you on July 22, to mitigate COVID-19 risk, would you be able to return to your position in the Full Remote option without any accommodations?

65 responses



7. If school were to begin tomorrow in the Adapted In Person model and we had the draft guidelines in place, would you intend to return to the building?

65 responses

