

# WPS START Operational Guidelines: 2021-2022 School Year

Schools Transition and Reopening Team, Wolcott Public Schools

Original Document July 2020. Updated on: June 15, 2021

This document is an update of work completed in July of 2020 by 30 stakeholders from across our district with a wide variety of perspectives. The planning group included parents, teachers, administrators, and the local director of public health. We are thankful for the time that START team members have dedicated to driving this process. In this document, we describe the continuity that we plan to restore for the children of Wolcott in their public school experience.

**Our goal** is to return the daily operations of school to the most-normal-feeling experience possible for students and staff members. It is important to remember, that deadlines forced this document to be created before guidance has been issued by the State of Connecticut for the 2021-2022 school year. Thus, changes may be needed when/if such guidance is issued.

## Restoring Continuity to Wolcott’s Public Schools

	Wolcott Public Schools Fall 2021 Reopening Guidelines	Important Notes
Model of Instruction:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unless otherwise advised by state or local health officials, the 2021-2022 school year will open for all students every day on the Board of Education school calendar.</li> <li>An elective remote learning option will not be offered. Parents with questions regarding home schooling their child can contact the Superintendent’s office.</li> </ul>	From time to time, some students or classrooms may be placed on temporary remote learning in response to the number of students who are on COVID-related quarantine as directed by school officials and/or local health officials.
Attendance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All students attend school in person each school day.</li> <li>When a student is absent from school, the school and teacher will make the missed work available as soon as possible.</li> <li>Livestreamed instruction will not be provided for individual student absences.</li> </ul>	<p>Attendance will follow established Board of Education policies and Connecticut State Statutes.</p> <p>As of the date of this draft, the CT DPH/SDE have not issued binding guidance to schools on school attendance. If binding guidance is issued, this plan will be amended and the district will comply with such guidance.</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wolcott Public Schools</b> <b>Fall 2021 Reopening Guidelines</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Important Notes</b></p>
<p>Masks &amp; Personal Protective Equipment:</p>	<p>Students &amp; Staff Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masks will be encouraged but not required.</li> <li>All students and staff members should bring a mask to school with them in case a need for it develops during the school day.</li> </ul> <p>Visitors and Volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully vaccinated visitors and volunteers shall not be required to wear a mask.</li> <li>Visitors and volunteers who are not vaccinated will be asked to wear a mask as indicated by signage at each school.</li> </ul> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extra masks, face shields, and gowns will remain available upon request and as appropriate to the person's role.</li> </ul>	<p>As of the date of this draft, the CT DPH/SDE have not issued binding guidance to schools on PPE. If binding guidance is issued, this plan will be amended and the district will comply with such guidance.</p>
<p>Social distancing requirements:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students and staff members will exercise social distancing to the greatest extent practicable while still delivering high quality instruction.</li> </ul>	<p>As of the date of this draft, the CT DPH/SDE have not issued binding guidance to schools on social distancing. If binding guidance is issued, this plan will be amended and the district will comply with such guidance.</p>
<p>Handwashing:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hand sanitizer stations will remain available throughout all school buildings.</li> <li>Handwashing will continue to be encouraged via signage.</li> </ul>	
<p>Transportation:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus routes will return to normal operation.</li> <li>Student seating on buses will return to normal operation.</li> <li>Mask guidelines for buses will be the same as for at school.</li> </ul>	<p>As of the date of this draft, the CT DPH/SDE have not issued binding guidance to schools on student transportation. If binding guidance is issued, this plan will be amended and the district will comply with such guidance.</p>
<p>Arrival at school and dismissal:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To facilitate smoother arrivals and dismissals, parents who traditionally used the school bus to transport their child are encouraged to do so.</li> <li>Arrivals and dismissals will be safe and orderly but no special waves or assigned times will be used.</li> </ul>	
<p>Passing in the hallways:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be encouraged to maintain distancing while passing in the hallways.</li> <li>Students and staff members who elect to use masks while in common areas may do so.</li> </ul>	

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Respiratory etiquette:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage will encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue when not wearing a mask and immediately wash their hands after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing.</li> </ul>	
Visitors to schools:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitors will be allowed as described in Board of Education policy and as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>As of the date of this draft, the CT DPH/SDE have not issued binding guidance to schools on school visitors. If binding guidance is issued, this plan will be amended and the district will comply with such guidance.</p>
Services for special populations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with IEP, 504, or English Learner plans will continue to receive their services as prescribed.</li> <li>• For students who cannot safely socially distance or are a threat to themselves or others, additional safety protocols and/or PPE may be required.</li> </ul>	
School meals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The federal government has established that regular school meals shall be free of cost for all students in the 2021-2022 school year. This does not include a la carte selections.</li> <li>• Students in the cafeteria will be distanced to the extent practicable.</li> </ul>	<p>As of the date of this draft, the CT DPH/SDE have not issued binding guidance to schools on school meals. If binding guidance is issued, this plan will be amended and the district will comply with such guidance.</p>
Student materials and technology:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom instruction will minimize the need to have multiple students sharing high-touch materials to the extent possible while still maintaining high quality instruction.</li> <li>• These materials include, but are not limited to books, computers, calculators, writing utensils, computer keyboards/headphones, and art supplies.</li> </ul>	

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<p>Social-emotional needs of students:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students and parents will be reminded about and encouraged to communicate with counseling staff members.</li> <li>• Counseling staff will perform formal and informal check-ins with students of concern.</li> <li>• The DESSA one-minute mental health assessment will be available to all students in grades K-12. The assessment will be used to help school administrators and mental health staff members more effectively provide services to students in need.</li> <li>• Federal rescue monies will be used to increase staffing levels of the district’s mental health professionals.</li> <li>• “Mental Health First Aid” training will be made available to all staff members.</li> <li>• Question Persuade Refer (QPR) refresher training will be offered to staff members.</li> </ul>	<p>Parents will be kept apprised of these offerings and will be offered an opportunity to provide consent for any assessments.</p>
<p>Extracurriculars &amp; Athletics:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubs will be implemented with all of the same precautions and mitigating factors as classroom instruction.</li> <li>• Athletics will be implemented according to guidelines published by the DPH, SDE, and CIAC.</li> </ul>	
<p>Other facilities considerations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ventilation capacity and frequency of filter changes will be increased to the degree feasible.</li> <li>• Teachers may open windows when safe to do so.</li> <li>• HVAC maintenance and repair schedule will increase in frequency with checks at least once per month.</li> <li>• Interior (non-security) doors may be held open to the degree allowable by fire code.</li> </ul>	
<p>Contact tracing, isolation, and quarantining:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact tracing, isolation, and quarantining will be done in compliance with published guidance from DPH and SDE.</li> <li>• We will continue our strong partnership with Chesprocott Health District in contact tracing if mandated by State order.</li> <li>• The district will send frequent reminders to parents and staff members about the need to self-screen and to stay home when showing any signs of illness.</li> </ul>	<p>As of the date of this draft, the CT DPH/SDE have not issued binding guidance to schools on contact tracing. If binding guidance is issued, this plan will be amended and the district will comply with such guidance.</p>
<p>Diagnostic COVID screening and testing:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the State of Connecticut provides a turnkey option for school districts, in-school testing may be made available.</li> </ul>	
<p>Efforts to provide vaccinations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district has partnered very closely throughout the pandemic with Chesprocott Health District and has already hosted four mass vaccination clinics. This partnership will continue should the broadening of vaccine eligibility cause the need for further clinics.</li> </ul>	

**Periodic Review Process:** This plan will be reviewed and possibly amended at least every six months. The target dates for these revisions are: June 23, 2021, December 23, 2021, June 23, 2022, December 23, 2022, June 23, 2023

**Stakeholder Input:** As stated in the introduction to this document, the original plan was constructed by a team of 30 stakeholders representing parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrative assistants, custodians, school nurses, school administrators and district administrators. This update had input from the district's administrative council and was emailed to all staff members and parents/guardians with an opportunity to provide feedback via a dedicated email address. Stakeholder input was incorporated into the plan where possible and appropriate.

Revision: June 15, 2021