

***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN  
PRESENTATION  
AUGUST 25, 2021***

***Presented by  
Dr. Ronel Cook  
Superintendent of Schools***

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***“CATS Can, and CATS Will!”***

# ***OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION***

- *The purpose of this presentation is to provide the Board and the community with an overview of the Reopening of Schools Plan for the 2021-2022 school year.*
- *The District's goal is to safely and responsibly return all Pre-K- 12 students to school for 5 days a week of in-person instruction.*

# ***OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION***

- ***The Reopening of Schools Committee consists parents, law enforcement, emergency services, Questar III Health and Safety Liaison, school administration, representatives from the Board of Education, instructional staff, school nurses and support staff.***

# ***OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION***

- The committee met on three occasions (June 8, 2021, August 10, 2021 and August 17, 2021) to discuss, review, and align the health and safety guidance provided by the Center for Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics and the State Education Department.***

# ***OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION***

The NYS Education Department released a [Back to School Health and Safety Guide](#) on Thursday, August 12, 2021 to help schools and school districts as they plan for the 2021-22 school year. The guidance of the NYS Education Department is aligned with current CDC Guidance.

Catskill CSD is creating its school opening plan based on the NYS Education Department Back to School Health and Safety Guide, the [CDC guidance](#) and in coordination with Questar III BOCES and other regional school districts. Any additional state or county guidance received by school districts in the future will be incorporated into our district's plans.

# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **Multi-Layered Mitigation Strategies**

Many of the health and safety guidelines put in place last year, which helped prevent COVID-19 outbreaks and school closures, will continue indefinitely to ensure the safety of students, staff and families:

- Regular cleaning and disinfecting of school buildings and buses
- Temperature checks and surveys for visitors and substitutes
- Improved ventilation in all school buildings
- Wash hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

# **OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION**

*The Catskill Central School District's opening plan outlines specific health and safety guidelines, such as a multi-layered mitigation strategies, face coverings for all students and staff regardless of vaccination status, physical distancing in classrooms, transportation, cafeteria and meals, athletics and a full remote program for students, who have an immunocompromised condition and / or resides in the same household with a family members who has an immunocompromised condition.*

# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **CONTINUED**

### **Multi-Layered Mitigation Strategies**

Many of the health and safety guidelines put in place last year, which helped prevent COVID-19 outbreaks and school closures, will continue indefinitely to ensure the safety of students, staff and families:

- Respiratory etiquette - cough or sneeze into your mask or use a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
- Stay home when sick (regardless of symptoms) and call your family physician. It will be the parents responsibility to assess their children for any symptoms before they report to school.
- Potential surveillance and point of care testing of students and staff in schools (***requires parent authorization***).



# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## ***Mask Use in Schools***

Masks to be required for all staff, students and visitors inside school buildings regardless of vaccination status. Ensure consistent and correct mask use by all.

## ***CDC Guidance – Updated***

*Given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant, CDC has updated the [guidance for fully vaccinated people](#). CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Children should return to full-time in-person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place.*

# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **Physical Distancing**

Maintain a minimum distance of 3 ft physical distancing in all classrooms and areas in school buildings. This would also include teacher stations when necessary to accommodate full classroom capacities. Districts can adjust to greater physical distances (6ft) if spaces allow. Community transmission levels will be monitored in conjunction with the local health department for any required adjustments to physical distancing in school buildings.

Band/Chorus/Drama - Continue 6ft distances for those engaged in singing, playing wind instruments and play rehearsals held indoors. (see CDC recommendations for High Risk Extracurricular Activities)

Physical Education - Continue 6ft distances for those engaged in physical and aerobic activities indoors.

# **REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN**

## **CDC Guidance- Physical Distancing**

*Based on studies from 2020-2021 school year, CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing by people who are not fully vaccinated, to reduce transmission risk.*

*When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully re-open while maintaining these distances, it is especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, such as indoor masking, screening testing, cohorting, improved ventilation, handwashing and covering coughs and sneezes, staying home when sick with symptoms of infectious illness including COVID-19, and regular cleaning to help reduce transmission risk.*

*Mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is particularly important when physical distance cannot be maintained. A distance of at least 6 feet is recommended between students and teachers/staff, and between teachers/staff who are not fully vaccinated.*

# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **Transportation**

LHDS agree to allow full occupancy of the buses with the following protocols:

Mask use for all staff and students

Windows and roof hatches open

Continued cleaning and disinfection practices in place

## **CDC Guidance**

***During school transportation:*** [CDC's Order](#) applies to all public transportation conveyances including school buses. Regardless of the mask policy at school, passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems, subject to the exclusions and exemptions in CDC's Order.

*Schools should provide masks to those students who need them (including on buses), such as students who forgot to bring their mask or whose families are unable to afford them. No disciplinary action should be taken against a student who does not have a mask as described in the U.S. Department of Education [COVID-19 Handbook, Volume 1](#)[external icon](#).*

# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **Cafeterias / Meals**

Appropriate physical distancing in cafeterias and eating areas to provide the necessary meals to all students in attendance. Incorporate layered mitigation protocols for food areas which include:

- Hand washing, hand sanitizer before and after meals;
- Limiting mask removal to the duration of eating (consider < 15 minute periods);
- Cleaning and disinfection between table use;
- Provide increased ventilation of seating areas.

# REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN

## CDC Guidance- Food Service and School Meals

*Maximize physical distance as much as possible when moving through the food service line and while eating (especially indoors). Using additional spaces outside of the cafeteria for mealtime seating such as the gymnasium or outdoor seating can help facilitate distancing. Note: students, teachers, and staff who are fully vaccinated do not need to distance while eating.*

*Given very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, there is no need to limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals.*

*Clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals.*

*Promote hand washing before, after, and during shifts, before and after eating, after using the toilet, and after handling garbage, dirty dishes, or removing gloves.*

*Improve ventilation in food preparation, service, and seating areas.*

*U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued several Child Nutrition COVID-19 Waivers.*

# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **Athletics**

Follow local health department guidance for athletics. (Capital Region Workgroup to provide athletic guidance to schools as was provided last year.) Anticipated to conduct rapid antigen testing as last year.

Note: CDC recommends testing includes test for all sports levels (Low, Intermediate and High Risk) if community transmission levels are in Moderate, Substantial and/or High levels.

High risk sports are recommended to be tested twice per week if in Substantial levels. If in High Risk levels, High Risk sports are to be canceled or placed on hold unless participants are vaccinated.

# REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN

## CDC Guidance- Athletics

*To facilitate safe participation in sports, extracurricular activities, and other activities with elevated risk (such as activities that involve singing, shouting, band, and exercise that could lead to increased exhalation), schools may consider implementing screening testing for participants who are not fully vaccinated.*

*Schools can routinely test student athletes, participants, coaches, and trainers, and other people (such as adult volunteers) who are not fully vaccinated and could come into close contact with others during these activities.*

*Schools can implement screening testing of participants who are not fully vaccinated up to 24 hours before sporting, competition, or extracurricular events.*

*Schools can use different screening testing strategies for lower-risk sports. High-risk sports and extracurricular activities should be virtual or canceled in areas of high community transmission unless all participants are fully vaccinated.*



# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **Full Remote Program**

Questar III BOCES is working closely with our District and other school districts in our area to offer a Virtual Learning Academy to meet the needs of those students who require full-time remote instruction for the 2021-2022 school year due to a medical-related condition. Documentation of a medical need will be required to be eligible for this program.

# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **Continued**

### **Full Remote Program**

Questar III has developed critical concepts for each grade level and the NYS Learning Standards will form the basis for the curriculum that will be followed. Social Emotional Learning competencies will be embedded within the school curriculum. The Virtual Learning Academy will be staffed by Questar III employees to include a BOCES principal, counselor, teachers and clerical/data support staff.

The student course delivery model will include a teacher to student ratio not to exceed 25:1 and integrate an electronic platform along with synchronous instruction.

# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **Continued**

### **Full Remote Program**

#### **Delivery Models:**

- Remote – Grades K-6 - Teachers are NYS certified employees of Questar III Instruction: Scheduled video class sessions 5 days a week.
- Remote – Grades 7-12 Teachers are NYS certified in subject areas and employees of Questar III Instruction: Teacher led service (self-guided online coursework with scheduled video class sessions)

Course content: Course content is provided by Apex Learning with scheduled video class sessions twice per week. English 9-12, Global 9 & 10, Algebra 1 & 2, Geometry, US History, Participation in Gov't, Economics, Psychology, Sociology, Spanish 1-3, Living Environment, Health.

# ***REOPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN***

## **Community Forums**

The district will be sharing the school opening plans at the following upcoming events:

Board of Education Meeting - Wednesday, August 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.  
Catskill High School Library

Catskill Elementary School Parent Meeting (Virtual via Zoom)  
Thursday, August 26, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Catskill Middle School Parent Meeting (Virtual via Zoom)  
Monday, August 30, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Catskill High School Parent Meeting (Virtual via Zoom)  
Tuesday, August 31, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

**QUESTIONS**

**COMMENTS**

**CONCERNS**

