



Montville Public Schools

School Reopening Plan | 2020-21

Staying Safe, Staying Connected, and Staying Engaged

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I. Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Montville Community,

The COVID-19 pandemic and shift to distance learning during the 2019-20 school year presented us all with new challenges and opportunities. I am proud of the way Montville's school community rose to the occasion. Our students, staff, and families demonstrated tremendous resiliency when confronted with unprecedented circumstances. Together, we worked to ensure students and families received technology and nutritious meals. Our teachers, counselors, and support staff rapidly learned and employed new online instructional tools and methods to keep our students engaged and learning from home. On behalf of our educators, I want to thank our families and community partners for supporting students as they continued to access their education online. While we certainly missed seeing our students on a daily basis and are keenly aware that distance learning cannot replace in-person instruction, we were inspired by all of the ways in which our community came together and remained connected through a new remote format.

The 2020-21 school year will require continued flexibility, patience, and perseverance. While uncertainty can be frustrating and disorienting, we remain focused on providing our students and families with an excellent education. And we recognize that we must be prepared to deliver on this commitment in different formats. Our school and district teams have developed school reopening plans for the 2020-21 school year in compliance with newly released and rapidly evolving federal, state, and local guidelines. Our school reopening plan -- ***Staying Safe, Staying Connected, and Staying Engaged*** -- strives to meet the State of Connecticut's requirements and guidelines while continuing to emphasize three overarching priorities.

- **Staying Safe:** Student and staff health and safety remain our top priority. We will continue to make decisions and plans that protect the health and well-being of our communities.
- **Staying Connected:** We are a strong and vibrant community. Working together we have the skills and commitment to ensure our students receive high quality learning experiences whether in-person, in a blended learning format, or in a fully distant learning environment. We also remain focused on supporting our students' social and emotional well-being, building caring relationships, and working with families to navigate difficult circumstances. The support of our town government, community partners, and parents is crucial to these efforts.
- **Staying Engaged:** Our commitment to engaging all students and ensuring equity as we develop supports for every student is at the cornerstone of our re-opening plan. We have focused on improving family engagement in the upcoming year. Furthermore, we are very grateful for the involvement of over 90 parents, students, staff, and Montville community members in the development of this plan.

Plans for the 2020-21 academic year will necessarily continue to evolve, and we will work hard to update you as new guidance is received. Please check our [district website](#) and School Messenger emails for new information.

Sincerely,



Laurie B. Pallin
Superintendent

II. Re-Entry Task Force

Our re-entry plan was developed by a number of subcommittees who provided input which was reviewed by a Steering Committee of representative stakeholders.

Steering Committee Members

Rob Alves, Assistant Principal David Baukus, Student Sandra Berardy, Board Chair LeeAnn Bigelow, Paraeducator Bethany Bonner, Oakdale teacher Karen Dragoo, Secretary Liz Dumond, Instructional Coach Amy Espinoza, Principal Robin Greenwald, Tyl teacher P. LaChance, Director of Special Services Suzanne LoPresto, Murphy teacher Jill Mazzalupo, Principal	Cheryl Montalvo, Mohegan teacher Hollyann Moriarty, MHS teacher Jenny Natale, CEM teacher Laurie Pallin, Superintendent Julie Perry, MHS teacher Heather Sangermano, Principal Brenda Severino, Oakdale teacher Dianne Vumback, Assistant Superintendent Betty Waselik, Head Nurse Donna Wilson, Paraeducator Tracy Zurowski, Teacher
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Subcommittees

		
Administrative Team	Health and Safety	Operations, Facilities and Transportation
Rob Alves Amanda Brown Jason Daly MaryJane Dix Amy Espinoza David Gollsneider Will Klinefelter Paula LaChance Jill Mazzalupo Laurie Pallin Mark Romano Heather Sangermano Dianne Vumback Laura Zurell	Lisa Kaplan Olga LaBella K. O'Shaughnessy Betty Waselik Marcia Wilcox	Ernie Bogue Steve Carroll Carol Dodson Kathy Lamoureux Kerry Tetreault



Academics and Instruction

Ashley Ager
Andrew Bakoledis
Paola Bellabarba
Bethany Bonner
Deb Carlsen
Janella Carroll
G. Christensen
Katherine Corey
Josh Cushing
Carolyn DeCosta
Liz Dumond
Meg Fournier

Staci Girardin
Robin Greenwald
Lynn Grills
Dan Healy
Jean Jordan
Dan Landeck
Mark Larson
Jen Lathrop
Michele Lathrop
Suzanne LoPresto
Heather Mathieu
Patty Miceli
Michele Mitchell

Cheryl Montalvo
Hollyann Moriarty
Krista Peltier
Julie Perry
Wendy Rohde
Sara Schutz
Brenda Severino
Lindsay Simkowski
Erin Spurgas
Kelly Teuner
R. Thomas-Shapiro
Tracy Wigfield
Tracy Zurowski



Social and Emotional Well-Being

Sasha Discuillo
Dawn Guntner
Michael McGovern
Jillian Porter
Amy Richter
Wendy Rohde
Gabby Taylor



Technology

Katherine Corey
Carolyn DeCosta
Liz Dumond
Krista Peltier
Julie Perry
Nic Savoie
Sara Schutz



Community Partners

Ronald McDaniel, Mayor
Joe Jaskiewicz, Town Council
Sandra Berardy, BOE
Carol Burgess, BOE
Robert Mitchell, BOE
Monica Pomazon, BOE
Jim Wood, BOE
Robin Bowman, parent
Amy Estelle, parent
Tara Jones, parent
Heidi Koning, parent
Marc LaFrance parent
Shannon Moreau, parent
Joy Valenti, parent

III. Plan Approval

Our re-entry plan was approved as a working draft by the Montville Public Schools Board of Education on July 21, 2020.

It was reviewed and endorsed by Montville Mayor Ronald McDaniel, Montville Emergency Manager William Bundy, and Uncas Health Director, Patrick McCormack.

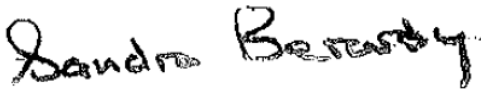
Of necessity, this plan has evolved and changed since that time based upon new guidance from the state, and we will continue to be responsive to public health conditions throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Our Steering Committee and subcommittees will continue to adapt and strengthen the plan. All signatories named below will be informed of necessary changes, parents will be notified through School Messenger, and changes will be publicized on the [Montville Public Schools Website](#). Based upon the authority given by the Board of Education to the Superintendent in Montville Public Schools Policy 6114.8: Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies, the Superintendent is authorized to make changes to this plan when necessary.



7/24/20

Superintendent of Schools, Laurie Pallin

Date



7/24/20

Montville Public Schools Board Chair, Sandra Berardy

Date



7/24/2

Mayor for Town of Montville, CT, Ronald McDaniel

Date



7/24/20

Montville Emergency Management Director, William Bundy

Date



7/24/20

Director, Uncas Health District, Patrick McCormack

Date

IV. Reopening Strategy

Fall Reopening Model

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- LEAs should plan to have all students, in all districts, return to schoolhouses for full-time instruction at the beginning of 2020-2021, so long as public health data continues to support this model. This model will be supported with more intensive mitigation strategies and specific monitoring, containment and class cancellation plans.
 - In addition to full-time instruction plans as indicated above, LEAs must be prepared to modify their plans to support a partial reopening or to allow for scaling back at a future date if the public health data changes.
- Identify gaps and develop action plans for reopening that specifically address inclusion, equity, and access for all learners with strategies and clearly defined action steps.

All Students Return to School

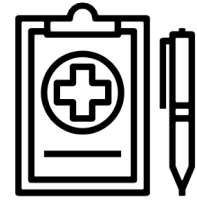
We welcomed students back to school on Sept. 8, 2020, and we started the school year in the hybrid model. Our [school calendar](#) was adjusted to provide increased staff training prior to the start of the student school year, and our first week of school began with half day sessions to allow our staff to monitor and adjust our plans as necessary based upon real time experiences. Our schools look different as all classrooms have been emptied of extra furniture so that students can be seated as far apart as possible. Teachers have been provided with a large area at the front of the room so they can provide instruction while maintaining a distance of more than 6 feet from students.

Safety protocols and one-way traffic patterns are clearly posted throughout the schools, and visitors are strictly limited. All visitors are required to complete a [visitor's questionnaire](#) before allowed access to the buildings.



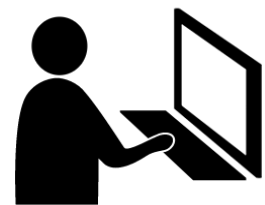
Adjusting to Public Health Data

Working in close partnership with the Uncas Health District, Montville Town Government, the CT State Department of Health, and the Governor's Office, we are prepared to monitor changing health conditions in our community in order to modify plans based on public health data. In the event that the spread of COVID-19 in CT worsens, this document provides our plans to respond accordingly. Our decision to open school for all students in the hybrid model at the start of the school year was based on the fact that although the concentration of circulating virus in the community was low in August, we wanted to take time to teach protocols and procedures to students and staff and provide the optimal six feet of distance between students in classrooms. The Board met in September and again at the beginning of October to discuss the possibility of moving to full in-person learning, however with rising infection rates in southeastern Connecticut, the decision was made to remain the hybrid model at least through the month of October. Through weekly meetings with the CT Department of Public Health and daily updates from Uncas Health District when needed, we have access to public health data and regularly reevaluate our plans.



Seamless Transition Between In-Person, Hybrid and Distance Learning Models

Instruction from grades pK-12 will take place in a one-to-one computing environment. On the first day of school students in grades pK-1 were issued iPads, and students in grades 2-12 were issued Chromebooks. Online platforms (SeeSaw for grades pK-2 and Google Classroom for grades 3-12) are maintained by all teachers to ensure that we are prepared to move seamlessly and rapidly between full in-person instruction, a hybrid model, and/or distance learning by maximizing the potential of technology tools in the classroom. High quality online resources have been vetted and purchased to support differentiation and personalized learning.



Commitment to All Students

Montville's long standing commitment to eliminating achievement and opportunity gaps remains a high priority. Inclusion and small group services for special education and 504 students, English Learners, and Title I students are provided according to IEPs and district plans. Teachers focus on providing grade level instruction aligned with the district's scope and sequence and CT state standards to all students. They will use pre-assessments and formative feedback to identify students' present levels and learning gaps. Building level SRBI teams meet every six weeks to review learning needs and develop plans and strategies to meet those needs. We are well-prepared to provide on-grade level instruction while differentiating to individualize instruction.



The district has developed plans to ensure our most vulnerable students are prioritized for in-person instruction in a hybrid learning environment. Plans to bring more students to school for in-person instruction will be based on changing public health guidelines and recommendations.

Temporarily Choosing Not to Participate

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Plan for parents and students who may temporarily choose not to participate in the return to school.

Stakeholder Group	Engagement Strategy
Parents and Families 	- Parents have been surveyed to determine whether they temporarily choose not to send their children back to school. Approximately 20% of our students have opted to participate in fully remote learning for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Those parents choosing to have their students participate in distance learning must complete an Intent to Participate in Distance Learning Form to select our temporary remote learning program - Families who choose remote learning will be expected to participate in the district's full program. They cannot choose to take some classes and not others. While students will be provided with a full schedule of classes, some elective classes will not be offered to distance learners due to the need to use specialized materials. Remote learners will not be able to join in-person cohorts for activities during or after the school day. Families commit to providing their students with supports in the home to promote their success. - Families who do not choose to participate in our full distance learning program will be offered the option of Homeschooling their children. Home-schooled students do not utilize our district's programs, teachers, or resources, but they can access resources created by the Connecticut State Department of Education at The Learning Hub.
Students 	Students will be assigned teachers through Seesaw (grades K-2), Google Classroom (grades 3-5) or Educere (grades 6-12). Grades K-5 teachers will provide live remote instruction following a full 8:45-3:15 daily classroom schedule two days each week and will provide remote asynchronous learning activities supported by synchronous daily class meetings three days each week. Grades 6-12 students will meet through Zoom several times each week with a district teacher to provide SEL activities and promote a sense of team. They will have live access to certified content area teachers to support their classwork from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Teachers and Paraeducators 	Teachers and paraeducators will be provided with alternative work assignments to monitor and assist distance learners.

School Liaison, Communications Plans, and Data Collection

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Designate an employee to serve as a COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison. This designated person will be responsible for engaging with students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to answer questions or concerns about health and safety requirements regarding COVID-19 concerns (e.g., school nurse).
- Put systems in place to communicate the most up to date policies and protocols related to the considerations herein, for staff, students, and families.
- Make communications plans available in relevant languages of families in the community, as well as accessible to those with visual and/or hearing impairments.
- Ensure the development of plans for ongoing two-way communication with the school community (staff, families, and students) about any new policies and/or protocols prior to reopening, any time there is a significant policy change, and upon re-entry if a school closes temporarily during the year.
- Develop expectations around frequency of communication, and ensure detailed updates are provided any time critical information regarding policies, protocols, or health data changes.
- Put in place a plan for how the community will be notified of any changed policies, need to cancel classes, or other changes or restrictions.
- Make plans easily accessible, including but not limited to being visible on the main landing page of the LEA and school websites.
- Prioritize gathering information from families prior to reopening. Collect information from families to properly plan for resuming classes in the fall. This should align with the forthcoming CSDE District Reopen Survey

Marc Romano, Health and Safety Compliance Liaison

The Montville Public Schools Athletic Director, Marc Romano, will serve as **Montville's COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison**. He will be responsible for engaging with students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to answer questions or concerns about health and safety requirements regarding COVID-19 and communicating up-to-date policies and procedures to all families. He will work with district and building administrators to develop and meet expectations for frequency of communication and updates to the [district website](#). Mr. Romano can be contacted by emailing: mromano@montvilleschools.org.



The community will be informed of any critical information or significant changes to district plans by the Liaison or the Superintendent through a combination of phone calls home, emails to every household, and postings on the [district website](#). Updating family contact information will be a priority for re-opening using the district's online registration site on PowerSchool, parent surveys and follow-up communication by each school.

V. Operations Plan

Facilities

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Maximize social distancing between student workstations, achieving 6 feet when feasible, when determining the classroom layout.
- Where necessary, assess other space that may be repurposed for instruction in the school, in municipal or other community space, or if the school will require additional modular space.
- Maximize space between the teacher and students due to the risk of increased droplets from teachers during instruction.
- Ensure all signs and messages related to stopping the spread are accessible for students with disabilities and in languages appropriate for the school population.
- Identify the training needs of staff related to health and safety protocols; perform such training prior to the first day of classes.
- Consider having training days and days to practice new protocols with staff only prior to having students enter the building.
- Plan an in-person or online training that includes: social distancing; cleaning protocols; and hygiene practices. Require attendance by all students and staff, and make available to families who are interested. Consider repeating this training during the first months that school reopens, and as needed.
- Ensure training is provided to substitutes or others who may enter the school outside of the first day or typical calendar start.

Maximizing Distance in Classrooms

All classrooms have been reconfigured to maximize space between students. Based upon the recommendation of the [American Academy of Pediatrics: Guidance for School Re-entry](#) (updated 06/25/2020), student workstations are spaced to provide a distance separating students that is between 3 and 6 feet. Teachers across the district were provided 3 hours of paid time to remove materials from classrooms in order to maximize floor space. All personal furniture, classroom carpets, fabric covered items, and extra district furniture have been removed.



Students will be seated at desks whenever possible or spaced at tables in pK and K. During hybrid instruction students will be placed 6 feet apart; during full in-person instruction elementary students will be about 4-6 feet apart, Tyl students will be spaced about 3 feet apart and high school students about 3- 4 feet apart. Teachers have a designated presentation area that is more than 6 feet from students. Unless separated by a table divider, students will be facing in one direction. Students who are seated at round or horseshoe-shaped tables to promote group work or more individualized instruction from a teacher will be separated by dividers.



Providing Barriers for Closer Interactions

Offices and meeting spaces have been reconfigured to ensure social distancing and when that is not possible, barriers have been installed.



Signs, Messages, and Training Protocols

Signs and messages explaining district protocols and expectations to stop the spread of disease are posted throughout our schools. These signs are age-appropriate and in languages representative of our community. Staff members have all been provided with [written protocols](#) for ensuring health and safety in the workplace. Weekly reminder emails and announcements are provided. Staff members attended mandatory training in health and safety protocols on Aug. 24, 2020. All staff members, including substitutes, who are hired after this date will be required to view a video of this training before their first day of work. Topics covered in the training will include: social distancing; cleaning protocols; and hygiene practices. Video training will be provided to students and families so they can practice before the start of school. In-person student instruction will include topics in health and safety. Verbal explanation of expectations noted in signs will be provided to visually impaired students. Weekly announcements are also provided in writing for the hearing impaired.



Job specific training in clearing and disinfecting protocols have been provided to custodial and maintenance staff and will be provided to bus drivers based upon “DPH Disinfection of Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic” guidelines. Job specific training has also been provided to all food services workers.

Ventilation in Classrooms

Classroom air is exchanged with filtered, fresh outside air at an average of 450 cubic feet per minute and exhausted air is vented at this same rate. This means that the air in a classroom is fully replaced about every 12.5 minutes. All air vent and air conditioner filters have been replaced.

Daily Operations

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Implement the key strategy of establishing stable cohorts within the school population, when feasible. Placing students in cohorts is ***strongly encouraged*** for grades K-8, and ***encouraged where feasible*** for grades 9–12.
- Develop consistent policies to address when clubs, before- and after-school programs, or other voluntary groups may be allowed to use school space. Include ways to safely allow access for before- and after- school and childcare programs.

Cohort groups

Schools	Cohort Strategy
Elementary Schools	Elementary students' primary cohort group is the students in their classroom (or cohort in the hybrid model). These students will also belong to a larger grade level cohort group to allow for recombination of students across the grade level for pull-out services (e.g. special education, English Language, and SRBI groups and instrument lessons). Grade levels will be cohorted for lunch in the cafeteria and for recess. Students will remain in their grade level classroom except for special area instruction when they will travel to the gym, library, music and art classrooms. Classes will be encouraged to meet outside when appropriate so students can remove masks. Students will be asked to bring a beach towel to leave at school to define their seating area when working outside. An additional security officer was hired to monitor the school grounds while students are outside.
Tyl Middle School	Students will be grouped into classes by cohort (though there will be larger grade level cohorts for exploratories), and they will move between classes as groups. Students will move between no more than 4 different classrooms during the day. Their movement in hallways and to lunch will be staggered to minimize interaction between cohort groups.
Montville High School	Students will not be schedule into cohort groups in order to allow students to select personalized schedules of courses. Students will move between classrooms due to the specialized nature of science and elective area classrooms. They will wear masks at all times in the building and in passing between classes. Halls will be configured for one way traffic. Staff will be stationed throughout the halls during passing time to discourage physical interactions and to remind students to distance as much as possible.

Palmer Academy	Students will remain in three distinct cohort groups, and each will occupy a separate portion of the building. Teachers will rotate between cohort groups and support staff will remain with the same group throughout the day.
After-School Activities	• Many clubs and other after school groups will meet virtually • There will be no late bus • Sports teams will operate according to CIAC guidelines unless in the judgement of the superintendent student contact needs to be further restricted based upon conditions in the community. There will be no, or very limited numbers, of spectators at games. All games will be livestreamed. • TVCCA will continue to use space at Murphy for their pre-school program and will be expected to adhere to all relevant child care regulations and guidance as well as MPS policies and protocols. • Use of the schools by community groups will be allowed ONLY if all school policies and protocols are followed. • Tyl and MHS gym access will be significantly limited as these spaces will be set up for meal service.

Child Nutrition

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Schools and institutions that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program, and Special Milk Program (SMP) as applicable, must continue to determine eligibility for and make available free and reduced-price meals and snacks and free milk to all eligible students.
- Schools and institutions must comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) regulations and policies for school meals and milk including the meal pattern requirements.
- Schools and institutions that participate in the NSLP are required to claim meals/milk provided to eligible students using accurate counting and claiming methods.

Meal Program Compliance

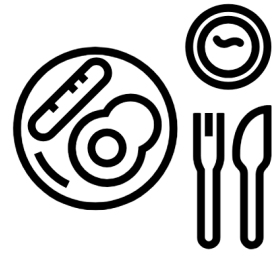
Breakfast and lunch, compliant with USDA guidelines, will continue to be available for all students. Eligibility for free and reduced-priced meals will be determined and meals will be made available to eligible students. Grab-and-go meals will be available for pick-up at two locations (MHS and Mohegan) for distance learners.

All meals for breakfast and lunch will be pre-ordered and packed in “grab-and-go” containers.



Breakfast

Elementary schools - Breakfast will be delivered to classrooms by a combination of cafeteria workers, monitors, and/or teachers. Monitors and/or teachers will be trained in order to distribute meals, and required “Justice for All” USDA posters will be displayed in classrooms. Large garbage cans for breakfast containers will be located in classrooms and custodians will be assigned to empty them and clean up any spills after breakfast. All breakfasts will be eaten prior to 10 a.m.



Secondary schools -

- **Tyl** - Students eating breakfast will go to the cafeteria after the homeroom bell rings and eat during the homeroom period. The 50-60 students who eat breakfast each day can be separated by more than 6 ft.
- **MHS** - Breakfast will be offered in both the cafeteria and gymnasium prior to the start of classes at 7:30. Appropriate 6 foot distancing will be maintained. Barriers will be placed between any students who are facing each other.

Lunch

Plans will change if the state continues to provide free breakfast and lunch for all students.

- Parents must pay online for both lunches and snacks.
- Students will use POS to scan ID cards; secondary students will be issued, and must carry, ID cards with ID numbers to allow for touch free payment. The cafeteria worker will input the student's ID number if the student doesn't have a card.
- Students will order lunch and snacks by paper roster in the classroom in the morning (elementary) and by electronic Google Forms survey at the start of the day (secondary). Lunches will be prepackaged in disposable containers. Students will pick up pre-ordered lunches and snacks at the same time as they go through the lunch line.
- Lunch lines will be marked for three foot social distancing.
- All students will be required to wear masks while in line and paying for lunch.
- The district will pay for increased cafeteria worker hours as well as loss of revenue from a la cart sales.



Elementary Lunch -

- Lunch will be served by grade level in the cafeteria. Students will be seated at least 6 ft apart, 2 students per table, facing in one direction at tables. If students face one another, they will be separated by a Plexiglas partition.
- Students will have assigned seats by classroom cohort to create six distinct lunch waves.
- Cafeteria worker shifts will need to be lengthened.

Secondary Lunch -

Tyl and MHS

- Lunch will be served in the cafeteria and one half of the gym. (Planned gym floor refinishing will be postponed until the end of the school year.)

- Students will pick up lunches from a server table in the gym or cafeteria. Warmer tables will be brought to the gyms.
- Six foot round tables in the cafeterias will seat two students each, facing one another and separated by Plexiglas partitions. Six foot long rectangular tables will seat two students, one at each end, facing each other and separated by Plexiglas partitions.

Palmer

The three student cohorts will eat lunch separately. Lunches will be pre-packaged by MHS cafeteria workers into three cohort groups.



Transportation

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

Low Transmission Risk

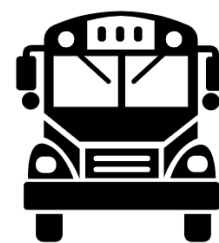
- Plan to operate at full capacity or close to while maximizing health and safety protocols, as well as considerations outlined in the plan.
- Require passengers to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth during transit, prior to boarding the bus, and must be kept in place until they are completely off the bus.
- Passengers should load into the bus from the back row to the front (where the first passengers onto the bus sit in the back row) and then unload the bus in a controlled manner upon arrival at the school from front to back by seat.

Moderate Transmission Risk

- Plan to operate at significantly reduced capacity while maximizing health and safety protocols, as well as considerations outlined in the plan.
- Bus passengers should be spaced with family members sitting together and non-family members should be spaced 6 feet apart utilizing alternating diagonal seating.
- Require passengers to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth during transit, prior to boarding the bus, and must be kept in place until they are completely off the bus.
- Passengers should load into the bus from the back row to the front (where the first passengers onto the bus sit in the back row) and then unload the bus in a controlled manner upon arrival at the school from front to back by seat.

Bus and Personal Vehicle Transportation

When the transmission risk is low, buses may be filled to near capacity as necessary to transport all students to school. Students will not use the front seat of the bus to ensure the driver is at least 6 feet from the nearest seated student. **Parents are strongly urged to drive their students to and from school whenever possible** to enable us to provide increased social distancing on our buses. A recent survey of parents indicated that only 47% of our total student population plans to use school transportation. Parents will be notified on the [bus transportation letter](#) sent out this summer that they must provide a week's notice when requesting that a student be added to bus transportation. **Every school has developed plans to efficiently manage increased parent drop off and pick up of students.** Click to view maps showing traffic patterns for buses and parents' vehicles during student drop off and pick up:



- [Dr. Charles E. Murphy](#)
- [Mohegan](#)
- [Oakdale](#)
- [Tyl](#)
- [MHS \(dropoff\)](#) / [MHS \(dismissal\)](#)

Bus Procedures

- All students and the driver will be required to wear masks when on the bus.
- Drivers will be provided with face shields.
- Parents are expected to provide masks for their students, but buses will have disposable masks available for students who do not have a mask.
- Parents are expected to be present at the bus stop to provide assistance to any child who is unable to put on their own mask.
- Gloves will be available on the bus for monitor to wear as needed for distribution of masks to young children.
- By Board policy, all students in kindergarten through grade 2 must be accompanied by a parent at the bus stop.
- For at least the first three weeks of school, monitors will be placed on elementary school bus runs. This will be continued as long as needed (assuming the district is able to recruit and hire monitors).
- During morning pick up, students will load the bus from back to front and when the bus arrives at school, they will exit the bus from front to back.
- At the end of the day, elementary students will load the bus by grade level, with grade 5 loading first and grade K loading last. They will be seated from back to front on the bus, and will exit when the driver arrives at the appropriate stop. At the secondary level students will load the bus randomly at the end of the day and will be seated from back to front. They will depart the bus at the appropriate stop.
- Bus drivers will sanitize bus seats between runs.
- Students who do not comply with mask-wearing, seating assignments, or other directions given by the bus driver and/or monitor will be disciplined and may be suspended from the bus

Students will not be allowed to switch buses; they may only ride their assigned bus.

When the transmission risk is moderate, a 77 passenger bus will only be able to transport 12 students. The district will be severely limited in the number of students it can transport to and from school, and a hybrid model in which fewer than 50% of students are brought to school on buses will be put into place. See page 36 for more information on the hybrid model.

VI. Health Practices and Protocols

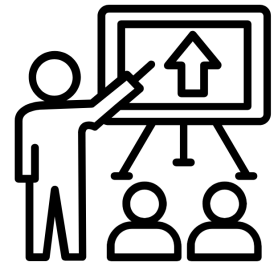
Practices and Protocols

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Ensure that students are educated and engaged in the new expectations related to all public health policies and protocols. As part of this requirement, assess the best approach to communicating the information for the age group, and plan to set aside time at the beginning of the school year, as well as frequent reminders, to review the new policies and protocols.
- Familiarize all participants of the standard public health practices used to prevent the spread of diseases. These practices include, but are not limited to:
 - social distancing,
 - frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer,
 - use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth,
 - respiratory and cough etiquette, and
 - enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces.
- Provide adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethyl alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol (for staff and older students who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible), and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.

Staff and Student Training

District-created videos, student-created PSAs, [CDC videos](#) and posters, and classroom instruction will be used to educate students in our new health protocols. Families will be provided with videos and instructions through our website prior to the start of school so they can begin to practice protocols at home and acclimate students to the concepts of social distancing, frequent hand washing, correct use of face coverings to completely cover nose and mouth, and respiratory and cough etiquette. A significant focus will be placed on reminding students not to touch their face or their face covering.



Recommended Training Videos

- [Understanding Coronavirus and Stopping the Spread](#)
- [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
- [Hand Washing](#)
- [Mask Wearing for Young Children](#)
- [Cloth Mask Wearing](#)
- [Disposable Mask Wearing](#)
- [Social Distancing](#)
- [Coughing and Sneezing Etiquette](#)

Students will not be taught cleaning/disinfecting protocols because Connecticut Department of Public Health Epidemiologist Thomas St. Louis has informed the district that, “Students shouldn't be routinely using

disinfectants to clean surfaces inside the school. A couple reasons for this... disinfectants can be respiratory and dermal sensitizers and are known asthma triggers, so if students are being directly exposed to these products en masse several times per day, there will likely be health issues that arise.” Mr. St. Louis goes on to state that, “frequent cleaning of desks might not be necessary anyway if students are avoiding touching their faces, wearing face coverings, and using hand sanitizer. Realistically if you sanitize your hands after touching an object and before you touch your face, I would think that would be adequately protective.”

The district will follow this expert advice from the Department of Public Health and focus on instruction in the practices of frequent hand washing or sanitizing and avoiding touching your face. This will enable students to share objects and desks when necessary. Students at the elementary school will not rotate between classrooms outside their grade level cohort except to go to special area classrooms (art, music, library, gym) when the specialized classroom is necessary to provide instruction. When special area teachers choose to have students meet in their classroom, the teacher will be responsible for sanitizing desks between classes. At the secondary level, with the block schedule, each classroom will have only two or three groups of students per day and the custodians will sanitize desks at the end of the second block each day. Wherever practicable, students will have individual kits of items which will be stored in their desks or personal bins. However, with appropriate hand washing/sanitizing, students may share objects that cannot be provided to every student individually.

Cleaning Supplies

The district has purchased extra cleaning supplies, soap, and hand sanitizer (with appropriate alcohol content) and installed hand sanitizing stations in every classroom as well as in offices, the cafeteria, and other common areas. Touch-free paper towel dispensers have been installed in every bathroom and rolls of paper towels are available in classrooms. Garbage cans are also touch-free. Sanitizing wipes have also been purchased and will be used by adults to wipe down high touch surfaces throughout the day. Cleaning supplies are on the Environmental Protection Agency’s List N. The district has purchased supplies in advance which we believe will meet our cleaning needs for the first half of the year; we will purchase more as needed.



Daily Cleaning

- Bus seats will be sanitized each day.
- Custodians will clean all classroom bathrooms once a day and all bathrooms in hallways twice a day
- Custodians will disinfect touch-surfaces.
- Custodians will log cleaning of classrooms and bathrooms. Logs of classroom cleaning will be hung in classrooms by the door and logs for bathroom cleaning will be kept on the custodian’s cleaning cart
- The district will strive to hire enough substitute custodians to maintain the established cleaning schedule in event of absences
-

Bathrooms and Water Fountains

- Touchless paper towel dispensers will be installed in every bathroom. The Tyl hand dryers will be disconnected.
- Water fountains at all schools have been replaced to provide touchless water bottle fillers.

- Bathroom capacity will be limited to ensure social distancing and, in the elementary and middle school, bathrooms will be assigned by cohort groups. Bathroom capacities will be noted on doors, and monitors will be stationed at bathrooms at the secondary level to ensure they do not exceed capacity. Students will not use bathrooms during passing time in order to control the number of students in the bathrooms at one time.
- A separate bathroom has been identified in every school near the isolation room to be used by students who have been isolated to contain any potential infection.

Reporting Illnesses and Addressing Vulnerable Populations

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Instruct students and staff to inform the school if they are sick with COVID-19 related symptoms, particularly if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population.
- Develop consistent protocols for information reporting, and a point person to appropriately receive and safeguard this information, such as the school nurse, district nursing supervisor, or principal.
- Educate staff and families about when to stay home. Schools should properly communicate the content of this or any updated guidance.
 - Instruct staff and students (or their parents and guardians) to perform a self-assessment prior to leaving for school to identify fever and other possible COVID-19 symptoms. Communicate this expectation and provide parents with reminders about the symptoms consistent with COVID-19 that require keeping their students at home.
- Establish and communicate school-wide sick protocols, including signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and temperature thresholds requiring students or staff to stay home.

District Requirements

- Complete daily self-check
- Stay home when sick (based on results of self-monitoring)
- Communicate reason for staying home to school nurse or principal (student) or supervisor (staff)
- Immediately inform the district of a positive COVID-19 test



Students/parents and staff must complete a self-monitoring check for [COVID-19 Symptoms](#) every morning before coming to school or work. [Student self-monitoring protocols and a log](#) for results will be clearly communicated to all families.

All staff have also been provided with a [daily staff self-monitoring checklist and log](#) for their results. Any student or staff member who responds positively to a self-monitoring question is required to contact the district to report their results. Staff should report directly to their supervisors and families should call their student's school office where they will be connected to the school nurse or principal. The district will no longer incentivize student or staff attendance with "perfect attendance" awards to ensure that people stay home when they are ill.

Thresholds for staying home include:

- 1.) Any one of the following symptoms:
 - ☐ Fever of 100.0 °F or higher
 - ☐ Cough
 - ☐ Sore throat
 - ☐ Shortness of breath
 - ☐ New loss of taste or smell or
 - ☐ Nausea
 - ☐ Vomiting
 - ☐ Diarrhea
 - ☐ Any other COVID-19 OR flu-like symptoms
- 2.) Presence in the household of a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a medical provider
- 3.) Close contact (within 6 feet for equal to or greater than 10 minute period of time or living in your household) within the preceding 14 days with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a medical provider
- 4.) Instruction by a health care provider or public health official to self-quarantine due to potential COVID-19 exposure(s) or suspicion of having COVID-19
- 5.) Travel within the last 14 days to a location which requires 14 days of self-quarantine according to [Executive Order 7BBB](#)

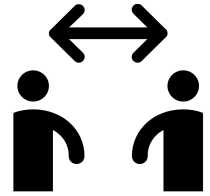
Social Distancing

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Assist staff and students to maintain maximum social distancing between individuals to reduce the transmission of the virus per the public health guidelines at that time.

General Expectations

Social distancing will be maintained to the maximum amount possible at all times during the school day. At no time will individuals be allowed to remove their masks (unless they have a medical exemption) if they are closer than 6 ft apart and do not have a physical barrier between them. Classrooms have been set up to provide at least 3 feet between students.



Building-Based Strategies for Daily Operations

Each building is working on detailed explanations for entry and exit of students, transitions of students throughout the day, distribution of meals, etc. These documents will be updated as plans are continually being developed and revised. The most recently updated draft plans for each building can be accessed at the links below. Please be patient as we continue to perfect building plans. We have accomplished a great deal in the two weeks since the state guidance was issued, but we still have more work to do!

- [Dr. Charles E. Murphy Elementary School](#)
- [Mohegan Elementary School](#)
- [Oakdale Elementary School](#)
- [Leonard J. Tyl Middle School](#)
- [Montville High School](#)
- [Palmer Building](#)

General District-Wide Strategies

Location/Process	Protocols
Buses	- Students will be seated as far apart on the bus as possible based upon the number of students using bus transportation. Since they are not socially distanced, they will be required to wear masks at all times on the bus. To minimize contact, students will not be allowed to move when on the bus and they will fill the bus from back to front when boarding in the morning and at the end of the school day. They will exit the bus upon arrival at school from front to back. To minimize contact, students will only be able to ride their assigned bus(es). Parents are strongly urged to transport their children to school to decrease the number of students on buses.
Morning Arrivals	Elementary: - Students will enter and exit from their own classroom doors when available or from hallway doors as close to their classroom as possible and start their morning work upon entry in their classrooms. Parent / bus drop off will continue to be allowed between 8:30 and 8:45. Monitors and teachers will be available to help students follow painted marks on sidewalks to classroom doors. Floor mats will be added at every classroom door. Secondary: Tyl: Students will enter and wait for the start of school in three locations. The back bus line will enter through the cafeteria doors, the front bus line will enter through the front door and go to the gym, parent drop offs will enter through the side front door and go to the auditorium. Parents would drop off in two lines of cars to accommodate increased parent cars. Students will wait in the gym, cafeteria, and auditorium until it is time to proceed to classrooms. Monitors will be hired to proctor students in these locations. MHS: Students will enter the school from three different locations (cafeteria doors, main doors, and back door) in the morning and will be separated into three locations (the cafeteria, the gym, and the auditorium). Students who eat breakfast will be spaced in the cafeteria and gym. Monitors will be hired to proctor students in these locations.
Recess	- Playground equipment will be sanitized between cohort (grade level group) - PE teachers will communicate guidelines for socially distanced games which students can play during recess
Meals	See Child Nutrition Section, p. 13
P.E. Classes	- Classes will primarily meet outside since students will not wear masks for PE - At Tyl and MHS PE classes will have use of only half of the gym - Tyl and MHS PE classes will be provided with a classroom space for days when they cannot meet outside

Bathrooms	• K-2 students have bathrooms in classrooms which will be restricted to their classroom cohort. • Other students will use shared bathrooms; bathroom capacity will be posted and monitored • At Tyl Middle School student cohorts may be assigned time for bathroom breaks. • Monitors will need to be hired to proctor bathrooms at the secondary level; students will not use bathrooms during passing time.
Fire and Safety Drills	• Will be conducted as normal with students wearing masks, but all would be announced.
Lockers	• Secondary students will not be issued lockers. They will carry belongings with them to classes. With the larger spaces around desks and decreased movement in the classrooms, there should be room to put backpacks or bags next to desks.
Hallways	• Where possible, hallways will be one directional. • If this is not possible, halls will be divided in half and students will be instructed to always walk on the right side of the hallway. • Teachers will be reminded of their duty to monitor hallways during passing time to ensure students adhere to social distancing as much as possible. • Student mask-wearing in hallways will be strictly enforced.
Entering and Exiting Classrooms	• Students will be required to wash their hands or use the wall-mounted hand sanitizing station upon entrance to or exit from their classrooms

Use of Face Coverings, Masks, and Face Shields

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Adopt policies requiring use of face coverings **for all students and staff when they are inside the school building, with certain exceptions listed below.**
- For anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance, face coverings and masks should not be required, per CDC guidance.
 - For anyone who has a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face covering, masks should not be required.
- Be prepared to provide a mask to any student or staff member who does not have one.

General Expectations

Montville Public Schools has adopted [Policy 5141.8 Face Masks/Coverings](#) requiring the use of face coverings for all students and staff when in the building unless the teacher is delivering instruction from a distance of more than six feet or students and staff are eating, drinking, or engaged in physical activity. Parents are asked to provide masks for their students; the district will provide disposable masks when needed. The district has ordered disposable masks for all students and staff assuming we will need to supply one disposable mask per person per week for twelve weeks. We are prepared to order more masks after the first week of school if we find we have underestimated the need for disposable masks. Based upon communication from the Office of Early Childhood, children in the preschool program will not be required to wear masks.



Teachers and paraeducators will have the option of wearing district-provided protective face shields as well as masks when working with students who cannot wear masks or require an adult in close proximity. If desired, face shields can also be worn by staff when masks have been removed to provide instruction, when the teacher needs to remove their mask to deliver specialized instruction which requires students see their lips or facial expressions, or whenever wearing the shield makes the staff member feel more comfortable. The district has purchased one face shield for every staff member and pediatric and adult-sized face shields for students who need to wear masks in lieu of face shields based upon medical exemptions and for use in instruction where the students' and teachers' lips need to be visible.

Students and staff who have medical reasons making it unsafe to wear a mask must provide a [medical exemption form](#) signed by their physician. These students and staff members will be encouraged to wear face shields if medically appropriate. A conversation with UCFS indicates that their physicians will not be quick to fill out mask exemption forms based upon parent request; they will support the district's need to require masks unless there is a specific condition requiring an exemption.

Students who cannot wear masks will be required to report to the designated monitor or nurse for a daily health check to protect the safety of other students and staff.

Health Monitoring Plan/Planning & Distribution of Information

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Include in the LEA reopening plan written protocols for monitoring of symptoms that could be related to COVID-19, with the goal of decreasing the risk of spreading or contracting the virus and maintaining oversight related to the pandemic while complying with relevant privacy and health laws.

Monitoring Plan

Plans for monitoring symptoms of students and staff that could be related to COVID-19 are included in section on Reporting Illnesses, p. 21-22.

Montville Public Schools will follow the guidance below, issued by the CDC, to decrease the spread of the virus.



- MPS, working together with the Uncas Health District, has an important role in slowing the spread of diseases and protecting vulnerable students and staff to help ensure students have safe and healthy learning environments.
- Guidance from the CDC is organized into three categories based on the level of community transmission: 1) when there is no community transmission, 2) when there is minimal to moderate community transmission, and 3) when there is substantial community transmission.
- Guidance is also provided from the CDC for procedures when a confirmed case has entered a school, regardless of the level of community transmission.
- All decisions about implementing school-based strategies (e.g., dismissals, event cancellations, increased social distancing measures, etc.) will be made locally, in collaboration with Patrick McCormack, Director of the Uncas Health District who can help determine the level of transmission in the community.

Montville Public Schools will continue to collaborate, share information, and review plans with Patrick McCormack to help protect the school community, including those with special health needs. Our school plans will complement other community mitigation strategies to protect high risk populations while minimizing disruption to teaching and learning and protecting students and staff from social stigma and discrimination.

Our head nurse, Betty Waselik, will coordinate the daily review of student absences in each building by her nursing staff. Parents are asked to provide the reason for their student's absence when they call in to report the absence. Codes will be added to PowerSchool so that we can identify absences which are due to COVID-19 related symptoms. Reasons for absences will be collected and monitored. Nurses will follow up with families whose students are out sick but have provided no explanation or reason for their absence. In the event that absences increase above their normal level, and the reasons given show correlation to COVID-19 symptoms, we will provide this data to the Uncas Health District and collaborate to determine whether there is a reason for concern. Potential short-term shut down of the schools to assess the possibility of community transmission will be considered. Parents will be advised that they must immediately inform the district if their student has a positive COVID-19 test.

VII. Containment Plan

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- *The Connecticut Department of Public Health will be providing a tiered system to assist leaders and define the decision-making approach should partial or full class-cancellation become necessary. Anticipate this will be available at the time decisions will need to be made related to containment and possible school class cancellations.*
- Include in the LEA reopening plan written protocols for containment and immediate response if an individual has signs or symptoms of COVID-19, there is a known exposure, or a member of the school community has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. The purpose of containment plans are to decrease the risks of spreading COVID-19, and shall include the following:
 - Immediate coordination with the local health department, including being ready to comply with requests for information from the local health department to assist with contact tracing.
 - Identification of a response team within the school and LEA with specific responsibilities.
 - Consideration of what signs and symptoms exhibited by students or staff would require their immediate dismissal from school; for what period of time; and conditions for their re-admittance to school.
 - Identify an “isolation room” (besides the health office) to accommodate students who exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19 until a parent or guardian arrives.
 - Create a consistent policy for dismissal of students or staff who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 and must be dismissed from school.

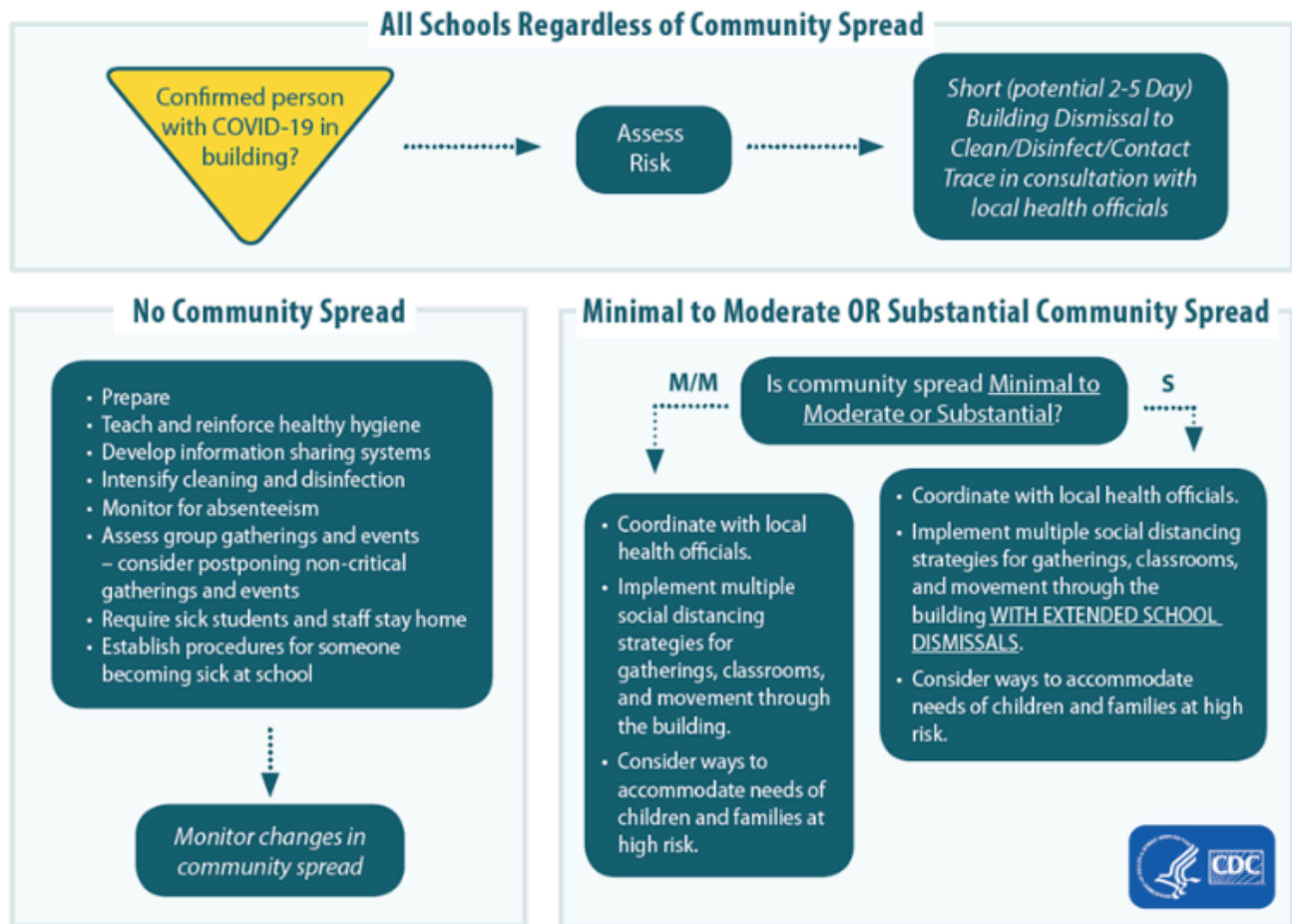
Responding to a Positive Case of COVID-19

Working with Uncas Health District, we will follow the decision tree developed by the CDC which is shown on p. 28 until a tiered system for decision-making is provided by the CT Department of Public Health. Response to a confirmed case of COVID-19 depends on an assessment of the level of community spread at the time.



Level of Concern	Protocols
Isolated positive case; no known community spread	• School, or section of school, will close for several days to intensively clean our buildings\ and review and reinforce mitigation strategies • Contact tracing will be requested
Minimal to moderate community spread	• DPH advice will be sought and followed • If school reconvenes, social distancing would need to be increased • It is likely we would move to a hybrid model (or potentially to distance learning)
Substantial community spread	• Shift to full distance learning plan • Only essential workers report to work

School Decision Tree



Containment of Infection

Each school has identified an isolation room and bathroom for symptomatic students who are waiting for a parent to bring them home. The isolation room will be used for students who exhibit respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) that are not attributable to another cause. Students who have a fever or nausea will not automatically be placed in the isolation room, but will be sent to the nurse's office for evaluation. The district will hire a monitor at each school to oversee students who are in the isolation room.

Parents will receive written notice prior to the start of the school year advising them of their responsibility to keep sick children home from school, providing protocols for evaluating student's health, and notifying them that they must have a plan in place to ensure they or an emergency contact can pick a sick child up from school in less than one hour after receiving communication from the school nurse that the student is too sick to remain in school. Parents will also be educated that treating symptoms with medication (e.g. fever-reducing medication) will not keep the student from being contagious. Any child who needs to be medicated for symptoms should not come to school.

Teachers who observe students who exhibit COVID-19 related symptoms (fever of 100.0 °F or higher, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, new loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea) without a known cause (e.g. allergies, motion sickness, etc.) will follow specified protocols to contact the school nurse (or building administrator if the nurse is not available) and make arrangements to send the child to be evaluated by the nurse. Teachers will receive an appropriate explanation, keeping in mind student's and family's privacy rights, of why a student who they perceived was symptomatic is being returned to class, when they have been exposed to a potential case of COVID-19, and when they have been exposed to a student or staff member who has tested positive for COVID-19.

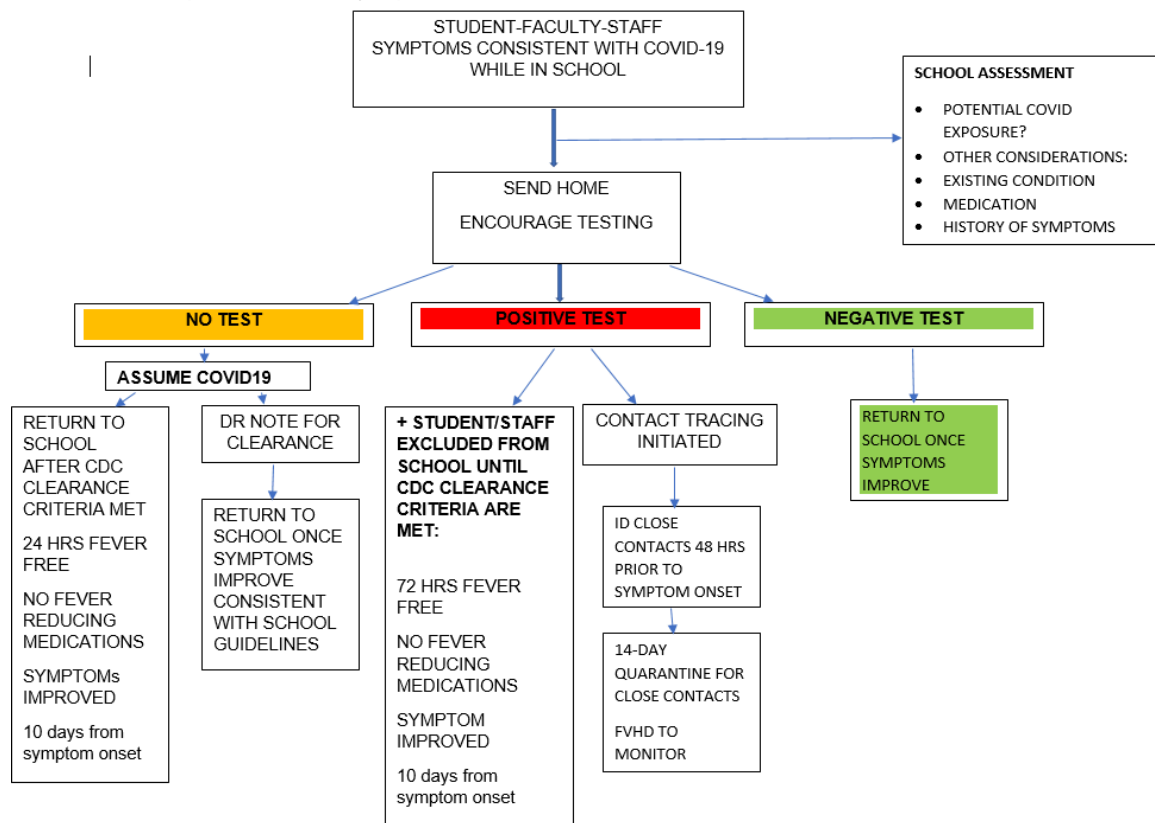
COVID-19 symptomatic students and staff who stay home from school or work, or are sent home sick, will require a doctor's note before reintegration into the school community.

Any student exhibiting respiratory symptoms will be immediately masked by the nurse if they are not already wearing a mask.

The district routinely coordinates with the Uncas Health District for advice regarding potential infection and will maintain necessary records regarding student contacts to assist in contact tracing.

Staff who come into contact with symptomatic students will be advised of sanitizing protocols including showering when they get home from work and washing clothes before wearing them again. The nurse's office will contain taped floor markings to designate the distance which should be maintained between the nurse and students or staff who visit their office.

The decision tree developed by the Farmington Valley Health District outlined below provides guidance for use when staff or students present with symptoms related to COVID-19:



VIII. Cancellation of Classes

Cancellation of Classes, Remote Learning, and Reopening Plans

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- *The Connecticut Department of Public Health will be developing specific community and school-based indicators to assist leaders and define the appropriate decision-making approach.*
- Develop a plan for school class cancellations and reopening to be implemented in the event that the superintendent, their designee, or state government suspends or cancels in-school classes for some or all participants.
- Notify and consult with the CSDE immediately if the LEA is contemplating class cancellations.
- Include a communication plan and clear policies for faculty and staff regarding individual roles and responsibilities in the event of a shutdown occurring during the school year.
- Prioritize ongoing educational opportunities when drafting the plan for shutdown. Materials for continuity of learning must be made available to allow for school sessions to continue remotely.

In absence of specific community and school-based indicators to assist the district in appropriate decision making regarding school cancellation, the district will utilize the CDC School Decision Tree on p. 28.

Responses to Symptomatic Individuals and Positive COVID-19 Tests

Scenario	Protocols (developed based upon consultation with the Uncas Health District.)
Symptomatic person who has not had a positive test	• The person will be sent home from school. A doctor's note will be required before that person returns to school. The person must stay home at least 3 days (72 hours) after recovery (resolution of fever; improved respiratory symptoms). • School for all other students and staff will continue as normal.
Asymptomatic person who lives with a person who has symptoms, but has not had a positive test	• This person will continue to attend school or work, but will be advised of the requirement that they self-monitor and stay home if they experience any symptoms of illness.
Asymptomatic person who lives with a person who returned from a quarantined location	• This person will continue to attend school or work, but will be advised of the requirement that they self-monitor and stay home if they experience any symptoms of illness.

Asymptomatic person who lives with a person who had a positive test	• This person will be required to stay home from school for at least 14 days to ensure they have not been infected.
Person with a positive test	• Person will be excluded from work until a doctor has provided written notice that they can return to work. • The school building or a section thereof may be closed for the short term (2-5 days) to clean and disinfect and conduct contact tracing. • Advice from the local and state DPH will be followed. • The CSDE will be informed of the school closure. • Members of the community will be notified through School Messenger that schools are closed due to a positive test. They will be advised to be vigilant about self-monitoring for symptoms. The person's identity will not be divulged and every effort will be made to protect their confidentiality rights.
Multiple people with positive tests indicating minimal to moderate community spread	• The DPH will be contacted and their advice will be followed regarding the length of a potential school closure. • The advice of the DPH will be followed regarding the conditions for re-opening of school (e.g. increased social distancing in classrooms and buses, decreased numbers of students and staff in the buildings, elimination of gatherings, increased distance between people during transitions).
Multiple people with positive tests indicating substantial community spread	• The district will shift to distance learning for all students and only essential workers (custodians and food service workers) will report to work.

Communication Plan for School Closure

The district will use School Messenger phone calls, emails, and text messages and the District and School Websites to communicate with families and staff regarding any school closure. The Board of Education and the Mayor will be immediately informed of the reasons for the closure and procedures being put into place by the district.



Preparations for a School Closure and Seamless Transition to Distance Learning

Concern	Protocols
Access to devices and internet	• Prior to the start of school parents will receive and complete an on-line device agreement. The document linked is currently in draft form. • All parents who have not communicated that they have access to the internet will receive a mailing and follow-up phone call to ensure they have internet services. Working with the Montville Town Government and local internet providers, we will ensure internet access for all. • Every student in grades pK-12 will be issued a device on the first or second day of school (iPads for students in grades pK-1 and Chromebooks for students in grades 2-12) unless the device agreement has not been received. These parents will be contacted personally to explain the importance of completing the agreement or to understand the barrier keeping them from completing the agreement. • Students will carry devices home from school every day to use them for work completion during blended in-person learning and so they are in the students' homes in the event that schools close. For younger grades, if this is not practical, and immediate device distribution protocol will be put into place.
Use of devices and applications	• A MPS One-to-One Student Handbook is being developed. The document linked is currently a draft. • During the first week of school, all students will be taught to use the district's platform for blended and distance learning (SeeSaw in grades pK-2 and Google Classroom in grades 3-12). • Students and families will be provided with a document explaining how to access and use all grade-level online applications and resources. The purpose of these resources will also be shared. • On-line, remote support to families will be provided through a Help Desk; software has been purchased which enables IT staff to remotely control a student's device in order to address issues. • IT staff will work an evening shift to ensure Help Desk responses from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Access to Instruction and Feedback	• Teachers will use SeeSaw and Google Classroom as the vehicle for delivery of content and assignments to students whether school is in-person or remote. • Teachers and students will therefore be able to shift readily between in-person and remote learning.

High-Quality Instruction	• Instructional teams are currently at work across the district to review parent and staff feedback regarding spring remote learning experiences and to prepare plans to act on this feedback for any future distance learning.
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Future Planning for Remote Blended Learning

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Be prepared to provide remote blended learning opportunities immediately upon cancellation of in-school classes.
 - Consider implementing a plan to gather feedback from families, students, teachers, and leaders on experience with remote learning. Incorporate any feedback into a revised remote learning plan and incorporate into hybrid learning model.
- Develop a plan for extended absences and communicate it with parents or guardians in the event of a second extended closure.

Remote Learning Plans

Page 32 explains the procedures which will be in place to ensure remote learning opportunities can be provided immediately upon cancellation of in-person classes.



Surveys were conducted of students, parents, and staff regarding their experiences using remote learning in the Spring of 2020. [General results of family surveys](#) and comments from [elementary](#) and [secondary](#) families were summarized and presented to the Board of Education and used by instructional teams to plan for a second wave of remote learning. Teachers reviewed feedback from all stakeholders to prepare for an improved distance learning experience in the event that a second extended closure is necessary. See the links for building-based distance learning plans.

- [Elementary Schools](#)
- [Leonard J. Tyl Middle School](#)
- [Palmer Building](#).

Teachers from across the district have been provided with paid time this summer to address feedback from the surveys and improve plans for remote and blended learning programs. In efforts to increase consistency and continuity and simplify access to online resources, all teachers are developing plans that will be used across grade level bands (K-2, 3-5, 6-12) and content areas.

Teachers are working on

- Specification of the learning platform used
- Development of a consistent format for use of the learning platform to communicate classwork/homework, link to instructional resources, etc.
- Plans to capitalize on our 1:1 learning environment (e.g. use flipped classroom or other blended learning techniques)
- Identification of technology tools which will be used for instruction whether in-person or remote
- Creation of documents to communicate codes and access to online sites
- Development of documents explaining the use of online resources for parents and students
- Design of intentional plans for the first unit in the fall to include clear identification of instructional priorities, pre-assessments, plans to differentiate for students with learning gaps, introduction to all technology, and strategies for building a sense of community and belonging
- Plans for use of shared materials based upon health and safety considerations
- Plans for student-to-student and student-to-teacher interactions while maximizing social distancing

- Plans for monitoring attendance of distance learners
- Plans for grading of distance learners (all students will be graded)
- Design of appropriate assessments for distance learners and methods to provide feedback
- Plans for synchronous live instruction using Zoom or Google Meets
- Plans for to record and provide meetings to students whose parents opt out of live meetings (see attached [letter of passive consent for student participation in live meetings](#))
- Plans for asynchronous use of resources included teacher-created videos
- Development of a suggested schedule for students showing a sample plan for the day and meeting times for synchronous work

Hybrid Learning Plans

If the district, working with the state and local DPH and the CSDE, determines that there are minimal to moderate levels of infection, in-person instruction may be able to continue after a brief closure with much smaller groups of students who are more widely separated in classrooms and grouped in very small, contained cohorts. To accomplish this, not all students would be able to attend school at the same time.

Superintendents from across the region have collaborated to select one model for hybrid instruction that will be used in many southeastern Connecticut districts. This will enable us to work collaboratively on planning for implementation, and it will ensure more teachers can report to work because their children will be on the same schedule as their students. In the model which we have selected, we will split our students into two groups. We estimate that about one third of our students will elect to participate in fully distant learning, a second third will be in cohort A, and remaining students will be in cohort B. Each cohort would attend school two days a week and participate in distance learning 3 days a week. Cohorts will be established to ensure all students from the same family attend school on the same day. To a large extent the cohorts will be determined alphabetically, however students from the same family with different last names will be in the same cohort.

Hybrid Model by Cohort

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A In-Person Full Day Instruction A-Day*	Cohort A In-Person Full Day Instruction B-Day*	All Students Participate in Distance Learning	Cohort A Distance Learning	Cohort A Distance Learning
Cohort B Distance Learning	Cohort B Distance Learning		Cohort B In-Person Full Day Instruction A-Day*	Cohort B In-Person Full Day Instruction B-Day*

*A-Days and B-Days are at Tyl and MHS only

This particular model was selected because it promotes several important priorities.

- Having cohorts attend two days in a row with no in-school instruction on Wednesday allows time between each cohort for thorough cleaning and sanitizing.

- Families are grouped together to minimize the inconvenience to families and ensure siblings are home together.
- The schedule allows for a break of 5 days between each cohort's presence in school. (Cohort A is at home Wednesday through Sunday and Cohort B is at home Saturday through Wednesday.) Since research indicates symptoms may present in as early as two days, this schedule could help ensure that presymptomatic infected students stay home.
- All teachers and students will see each other at least once a week. Elementary students will see their teachers two days each week. Secondary students will attend each class one day a week as they will be in school for one A day and one B day.
- Teachers with child care needs across the region would all be able to count on Wednesday at home.

With only about $\frac{1}{3}$ of students present in each school on any given day, students can be spaced more than 6 feet apart in classrooms, and the number of students using hallways and common bathrooms will be greatly reduced. Much greater social distancing can also be achieved on buses.

In the hybrid model, we hope to be able to provide daily in-school instruction for students who are not able to access distance learning (e.g. English learners and students with significant special needs).

More information will be provided as we continue to develop this hybrid model.

It is important to note that current state of Connecticut regulations do NOT support starting school in a hybrid model. While several districts have released plans saying they will start the year with hybrid plans in place, communication from the Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of School Superintendents Frances Rabinowitz was clear: "Commissioner Miguel Cardona reiterated that given the current Covid-19 data trends in CT, the expectation is, and continues to be, that we will bring all students back in the fall and that we will offer 180 days of school to all students. It was made clear that failing to offer 180 days to all students would not meet the statutory requirement. While the *Adapt, Advance, Achieve* guidance makes it clear that districts should provide alternative service for students who choose not to return, it was made clear that the obligation to offer the full 180 days to all remains." (This statement was made prior to the decision to reduce the school year to 177 days.)

Montville therefore has three plans:

- In-person blended learning instruction for all students
- Hybrid instruction with about 50% of students electing in-person learning present at a time
- Fully remote instruction.

We will be prepared to implement the plan which provides the greatest access to school possible while also promoting the health and safety of our students and the entire community.

IX. Academics

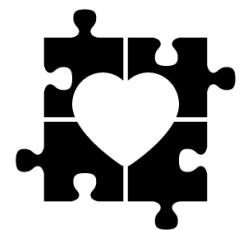
Special Education

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Prepare with the understanding that there has been no waiver of requirements under the IDEA for provision of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). During COVID-19 school closures, schools were required to provide FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students, as well as those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students. Schools may not have been able to provide all services in the same manner that they are typically provided. Federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the individualized needs of students receiving special education services.
- Treat students eligible for special education and other special populations as general education students first. Guidance and policies related to school reopening plans apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for individual education programs under the IDEA and accommodation plans for eligible students under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If students with disabilities are unable to access the reopening plan as designed, facilitate individualized and alternative means of re- entry based upon student need, present levels of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input. Consider blended learning schedules if needed.
- Do not make programming decisions based on a student's disability category. However, the nature and/ or severity of a student's disability may require unique considerations. Protocols should consider the student's developmental level and skills.
- Address mask and face covering use for the population of special education students, including cases where masks may need to be removed to provide appropriate services, and the approach to implementing any other possible mitigating strategy, including but not limited to maximum social distancing.

IDEA, FAPE, and LRE

Based on the state guidance Montville Public Schools will prepare for the opening of schools in the fall with the full intention to provide FAPE in the least restrictive environment (LRE). All in-person Special Education students will receive services according to their IEP. The health and well-being of students and staff is our top priority. In order to provide this level of safety we have reevaluated our systems, processes and service delivery models.



All students and staff will be required to wear a mask while in school and/or on transportation unless medically exempt. This masking requirement is to promote the safest possible learning, teaching and work environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors. If a special education child is unable to wear a mask, we will determine

whether a face shield is a viable option. Staff working with unmasked students will be provided with mask and face shield. Unmasked students will be evaluated each morning using a symptom-monitoring checklist.

All Special Education resource rooms have been redesigned to allow proper distancing. When distance is not possible in order to meet a student's service needs, face shields and Plexiglas barriers will be utilized. In situations such as provision of speech and language services or services to the hearing impaired, students and staff will be provided clear masks and/or face shields.

The federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the individualized needs of students receiving special education services. If a student is unable to access their education in person due to medical or other circumstances, we are prepared to provide alternative means of delivering these services. A service plan will be developed in collaboration with the parents based on the specific needs of individual students.

COVID-19 Guidance Regarding De-Escalation Procedures

(Adapted from [State of Vermont Handle with Care Guidance](#))

District procedures for managing students who have challenges with behavioral issues in the classroom that require de-escalation procedures or potential restraint have been developed based upon Handle with Care guidance. Necessary modifications to Handle with Care procedures can be found in the [COVID-19 Guidance for De-Escalation and Restraint](#).

English Learners (ELs)

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Understand that like all other students, ELs are entitled to FAPE. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IV, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (1974) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) provide guidance on the services to which ELs are entitled. ELs must have access to the general education curriculum as well as to a supplemental language instruction education program. During school closures due to COVID-19, ELs continue to be entitled to receive their supplemental EL instructional program in addition to their general education program of mainstream, grade-level and content-area instruction. Such language instructional education programs may consist of a range of services, including bilingual education, English as a Second Language (ESL), Sheltered Instruction and others. When returning to school buildings, language instruction education programs must continue.
- Comply with the requirement that eligible students in bilingual mandated districts are offered bilingual education programs. During COVID-19, school districts that are mandated to provide bilingual education remain required to offer a bilingual program to eligible students who have opted into the program. While program implementation may be altered during COVID-19 as compared to traditional in-building schooling, students in bilingual programs are still entitled to receive native language support as part of their school's designated bilingual program model. As with other language instruction education programs, when returning to traditional schooling, bilingual programs must continue.
- Communicate with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in English in a language they understand as required by Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. As during traditional schooling, communications during school closures due to COVID-19 may be provided through translation and/or interpretation.
- Provide ELs who are also identified as students with disabilities, supports for their EL needs, as well as supports for their disabilities. During COVID-19, these dually identified students must continue to receive these supports. As in times with traditional schooling, dually identified students should have their language needs represented in their annual meetings about their IEP.

Meeting the Needs of Our English Learners

In the fall whether English Language services are delivered in-person or remotely, all EL students will continue to receive supplemental instruction. They will continue to be provided with services by our EL teacher, EL tutors and interpreters. At this time Montville does not have a bilingual program based upon the low numbers of speakers of any one language.



All documents regarding the COVID-related closure will be provided to parents and guardians with limited English proficiency through translation or interpretation.

Dually identified students will continue to receive both EL and special education services, and interpreters will be provided as necessary at PPTs and other parent meetings.

X. Family and Student Engagement

Family Support and Communication

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Comply with all state and federal family engagement requirements (e.g., School Governance Councils and Title I requirements) during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Prepare to provide families with clear and ongoing communication about what to expect, during and prior to reopening. This includes, but is not limited to, guidance on the school protocols related to health and safety guidelines.
- Continue to engage with families and students as the reopening moves forward to ensure they are informed and have the ability to provide feedback.
- Make reopen plans available on the LEA website, accessible, and clearly identify the school liaison.

Communication with, and Support of, our Families

Our district has placed a high priority on providing communication to parents and students during this unprecedented time. Efforts to maintain and increase connections to families have been ongoing. Teachers, school counselors, social workers, and building administrators communicate individually with families; school-wide communications in the form of School Messenger emails, calls, and texts are provided frequently, and special videos intended to promote connections to staff are posted on school websites. Any changes to our programs, schedule, or policies are communicated to the entire community by the superintendent and posted on our website.



All health and safety guidelines are linked to the appropriate sections of this plan for easy access and are located in the COVID-19 resources on our district website's main page.

The Board of Education has held very frequent meetings of the whole Board or Board subcommittees to discuss changes to policies and practices, and these meetings are posted with a means for electronic access to the entire community.

Families have been engaged through surveys, posting of FAQs, and timely responses to emails in our planning process for the fall. All families (and staff) received a draft copy of this re-opening plan and were provided with the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback by email and virtual Zoom meeting prior to presentation of the plan for the Board of Education for approval.

Montville Public Schools commitment to the continual support of our families is illustrated by the creation of two additional social worker positions in the last two years. Our ratio of social workers to students has been reduced from about 1:2000 to approximately 1:670.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Mental Health

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Develop a detailed plan to re-engage all students, staff and families. Particularly identify strategies to identify and engage populations and specific students that have been disengaged.
- Prepare staff to identify issues related to abuse and neglect in the context of the pandemic and comply with all mandated reporting requirements.

Supporting the Whole Child

Recognizing the importance of the mental health benefits of a strong SEL (social-emotional learning) program, social workers, school psychologists, teachers and administrators formed a committee to address the particular needs around engaging all stakeholders as they return to school. Incorporating SEL allows the delivery of preventative classroom-based wellness services that has the ability to reach all students. Additionally, it provides universal programming to help develop the critical social and emotional skills of our learners, as well as school wide approaches to support all community members outside the classroom.



The primary goals of the SEL committee is to focus on protocols that identify and support struggling, disengaged or traumatized students and establishing a system of support for students and staff as needed for the rapid referral of at-risk populations to appropriate building level support teams and community-based agencies. Training to spot signs of child abuse and neglect through all re-entry models will continue to be emphasized through DCF Mandated Reporting Training and our collaboration with our DCF liaison.

A comprehensive professional development program has been established to deliver to the entire MPS team, focusing on integrating SEL activities into every lesson, developing student voice and choice in their academics, and developing solid relationships with students and their families. Through the use of RULER and CASEL resources, the team created a collection of materials and tools for teachers to use as a way to build a greater sense of community as we re-engage our staff and students to our new learning environment.

The professional learning plan is designed so that every students' academic and social emotional needs will be addressed through the integration of SEL and strengthening connections with students. Resources around self-care, mindfulness, and resiliency strategies will be compiled to further support faculty and staff.

Through our partnership with Connecticut ADL (Anti-Defamation League), we will continue to use their expertise to support our District with timely and relative training around the critical issues of bias and social injustices. While still in the preliminary stages, we are hoping to deepen our understanding around issues of equity and diversity through an interactive session with strategies to respond to bias incidents and foster a stronger sense of belonging.

After-School Programming

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Programs receiving funding from the CSDE through the State After School, Extended School Hours (ESH) and 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) programs, consult with the CSDE for individual grant-specific guidance.
- Follow the requirements outlined in this document, as applicable, including but not limited to requiring the use of face coverings that cover the nose and mouth, and maximizing social distancing.

Extra-Curricular Activities and After-School Enrichment and Intervention

Montville does not receive CSDE funds for after school programming. However the district does have a robust offering of afterschool activities across all schools including: small group academic recovery, homework help, SAT prep, clubs, student leadership groups, and open use of the library and weight room.

At this time, it is our plan to send students home right after school and use distance learning techniques to meet with student groups remotely. This will provide our custodians more time when the school is empty to complete necessary cleaning and it will ensure students are unnecessarily recombined into new cohort groups. We also believe that students will need a break from wearing masks at the end of the academic day. Stipends will still be offered to club advisors, and certified teachers will still be hired to work with individual and small groups of students to support their academic progress, but connections between students and teachers will be through Zoom and Google Meets. This plan means we will not need to utilize the late buses and that will eliminate creation of additional cohort groups.

The building is not used for outside purposes before school hours.

These plans will evolve as we continue to assess community health conditions as the school year approaches.

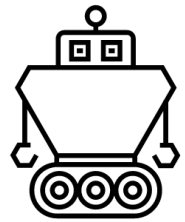
Career and Technical Education

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Develop a plan for cleaning and disinfecting shared equipment in the shop or lab, before and after each use.

CTE Programming

Career and Technical Education courses are an important component of the Montville High School program. High school shop, foods, and science lab students will be responsible for cleaning the materials they routinely use in class, just as they always have been. Thoroughly cleaning with soap and water is an effective method for transmission of COVID-19, and will be expected. Where soap and water cannot be used, disinfectant wipes will be used. Students will be provided with gloves if they have concerns about dermal contact with disinfectants. Wherever possible, students will be issued their own personal kit of materials.



The courses offered in the first semester will be adjusted to offer courses that use fewer shared materials in the first semester.

Our high school pre-school class runs in the spring and will follow all COVID-19 protocols for operating a pre-school.

Foods classes will follow all safety procedures for food preparation and food will be prepared is to-go so it is not eaten in the foods classroom.

XI. Staffing and Personnel

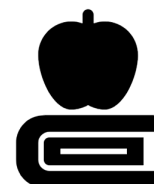
Certification and Personnel Planning

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Prepare with school human resources and board counsel to comply with legal and regulatory requirements related to personnel, including but not limited to the EEOC guidance related to the ADA and the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Assess how to engage a full roster of staff, including potential substitute plan, and whether stipends or changes in substitute pay is required to support the needs of the school.

Taking Care of Personnel

We are working now to develop and communicate a document to all staff explaining applicable leave policies and contract language. We will explain ADA guidelines, FFRCA leave, FMLA, and use of sick and family sick time and then review staff circumstances and discuss applicable leave options. Hopefully we will be able to help staff navigate difficult situations.



We are currently working with unions to develop Memorandums of Understanding regarding changed work conditions. I am confident that we will be able to collaborate to reach mutually agreeable conditions of employment that are fiscally responsible, meet students' needs, and are fair and reasonable to employees.

We are very concerned about how we will fully staff our schools. Our survey of certified and uncertified staff indicated that a number of staff members have concerns about returning to work. In addition, with heightened awareness that staff should never come to work when sick, we anticipate that there will be more teacher and staff absences than we have experienced in the past. Substitute teachers and substitute bus drivers are very hard positions for the district to fill, and they are essential to opening school. Administrators will each review staffing needs in their building to identify the number of staff who need to be present to safely open schools. Our electronic absence management system will be reviewed carefully on a daily basis, and principals will be in close contact with the superintendent when they have concerns about their ability to adequately staff the building.

The Board of Education will review additional incentives to offer to substitutes and we will try to hire additional permanent substitutes.

Professional Development

Connecticut State Department of Education Guidance:

- Prioritize mandatory training for staff, before the beginning of the school year, that covers signs and symptoms of COVID-19, Standard Public Health protocols, Hygiene Practices, PPE, Reporting Illnesses, and supporting SEL. Plan ongoing trainings as changes occur in recommendations and public health data.

With the state's recent decision to reduce the number of student days from 180 to 177, we plan to add two more days to the planned four days for professional development before the beginning of the school year.

Professional Development will be held on: August 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 31
Student days will begin on Sept. 1st and the first four days of school will be half days.

We are still working on the details, but a draft of possible plans is below

August 24:

- Livestream convocation with TOY and POY announcements; video of traditional convocation components
- Health and safety protocols training (nurses, Patrick, Dr. Stocki)
 - Signs and symptoms of COVID-19
 - Standard public health protocols
 - Hygiene practices
 - PPE use
 - Reporting illness
- Building meetings
- Optional workshops on self-care: Yoga and Mindfulness Techniques

August 25:

- Blended learning techniques – ContextEDU PD
- Grade level sharing of summer work by instruction teams; common expectations

August 26, 27: Full days on technology tools supported by ContextEDU

- SeeSaw
- Google Classroom
- Screencastify
- Edpuzzle
- Pear Deck, Flip Grid
- Zoom
- LanSchool – Possible presente
- Smart Notebook recording
- IAB remote administration
- Google Choice Boards and Playlists

August 28, 31: SEL and Equity

- ½ day of SEL by SW / School psych teams-n- creating community in-school or through distance learning; identification and protocols for students at risk
- ½ day workshop by ADL – to be followed by ADL facilitated book clubs if desired