

NYS School for the Blind

2A Richmond Avenue, Batavia, NY 14020

Reopening Plan

August 7, 2020

NYSSB Families, Students and Staff:

On July 27, 2020, State-Operated Schools were charged with creating and submitting a Reopening Plan by August 7, 2020 which meets all requirements outlined in the guidance released by NYS Department of Health (DOH) on July 13, 2020. In addition, the Plan must address the mandatory elements outlined in the July 16, 2020 NYSED's guidance document that are applicable to a State-Operated School.

To accomplish this task, we surveyed stakeholders and used the most up to date research, statistics, guidance documents, reopening frameworks, and school reopening models. Each department utilized the aforementioned information and their varied perspectives to construct a plan in the best interests of our students and staff. The plan was guided by three basic principles:

- To attend to the safety of students, faculty and staff,
- To promote emotional well-being, and
- To provide a responsive educational model to meet current conditions.

Based on feedback from parents, the NYSSB has identified the need to plan for two reopening scenarios: in-person and remote learning. Students electing remote learning will be considered for in-person learning after the first 10 weeks of school. In-person learning will adhere to this Plan.

As the consequences of the COVID-19 unfold, the NYSSB will continue to follow evolving guidance from local and NYS Department of Health, and other regulatory entities, which will support our policies and practices. We will work diligently to invoke the confidence of all the NYSSB stakeholders and to have as a primary responsibility the maintenance of the health and safety of every person we serve and our valued staff.

We look forward to safely restoring our learning environment. One step at a time...always forward.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Lemen

Barbara J. Lemen
Superintendent

Overview

The Superintendent will serve as the COVID-19 safety coordinator whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or "new normal" levels.

All teachers hold valid and appropriate certificates for their teaching assignments except where otherwise allowable under the Commissioner's regulations or Education Law.

Capacity and Space Design

The NYSSB is a small special education setting with a closed group of students that allows for social distancing. The School has acquired adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning materials and has measures in place to train staff and students to meet the Department of Health's reopening guidance.

Social Distancing

Social Distancing also called "physical distancing" means six feet of space in all directions between individuals or the use of appropriate physical barriers between individuals that do not adversely affect air flow, heating, cooling, or ventilation, or otherwise present a health or safety risk. The NYSSB will implement and enforce social distancing in all school facilities and on school grounds. The NYSSB will ensure student groupings are as static as possible by having the same group of students remain together in classroom and dorm settings and make every reasonable attempt to maintain social/physical distancing and reduce density by:

- " Restricting student mixing between groups and limiting the maximum number of student groups in any specific area, as feasible.
- " Students, staff and approved visitors will receive instruction on social/physical distancing
- " Staged entry into the school upon staff/student arrival
- " Stagger dismissal from classrooms/dormitories and other transition times when large numbers of people may be in common areas such as hallways
- " Limiting trips outside of the classroom/dormitories
- " Alternate seating and/or desk/table configuration to promote and maintain six feet " separation
- " Placement of carrels or other appropriate dividers/barriers to limit droplet exposure
- " Limit the number of individuals in smaller spaces (Main Offices, conference rooms, bathrooms)
- " Limit the number of activities where multiple groups interact (playground, student lounge)
- " Additional distancing will be ensured for individuals who are participating in activities requiring projection of a voice or instrument, or aerobic activity
- " Place signage throughout common areas indicating requirement for social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene
- " Staff will adhere to appropriate social distancing by maintaining at least six feet of distance between students unless the safety or core function of the activity or instruction requires a shorter distance

- " Seating and desks shall be arranged to promote social distancing. Desks will be turned to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other) or have students seated on only one side of tables, spaced more than six feet apart

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Face Coverings

Students, staff and approved visitors must wear a mask or an acceptable face covering which covers their nose and mouth at all times with the following exceptions:

Students:

- " Students can remove their face covering during meals, instruction, and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance. (classroom, dormitory, playground, etc.).
- " Students with medical or sensory issues which impede their ability to wear a mask may wear an alternative barrier to protect others in the learning environment, if tolerable. Acceptable barriers include, but are not limited to dust masks, face shields, etc. For students with sensory issues unable to wear any barrier, training and desensitization will take place to build their tolerance.

Staff: Are required to wear masks or face coverings in common areas such as hallways, restrooms, elevators, conference rooms and break rooms. If a staff person approaches you at your workstation or office, you both must put on a face mask or covering to engage in conversation. Exceptions to this:

- " Staff unable to medically tolerate
- " Staff can remove their face covering if alone in an individual office space. However, if you roam outside of your workstation or office, you are required to wear a mask or face covering.
- " Staff can remove their face covering during meals while social distancing or for short breaks while not in the presence of others.
- " Face shields along with masks may be worn when staff are engaged with students during mealtime activities or unskillful behaviors.

The NYSSB will allow individuals to wear their own masks/face coverings as long as they securely cover the individuals' mouths and noses. Students, parents/guardians and staff will be informed on the importance of masks, and students/staff will be instructed on:

- The proper way to wear face coverings;
- Washing hands before putting on and after removing face covering;
- Proper way to discard disposable face coverings;
- The importance of routine cleaning of reusable face coverings; and
- Face coverings are for individual use only and should not be shared.

The NYSSB has currently stockpiled disposable looped masks. Masks will be made available to students, staff and approved visitors who are unable to secure their own. Parents are strongly encouraged to provide masks or face coverings, properly labelled with their child's name, and

work with their child to encourage the wearing of a mask or other face covering. Masks or other face coverings will be washed/laundered during the week for students staying in the dormitory.

Staff will be provided additional PPE to care for individuals expressing COVID-19 symptoms. Such PPE includes, but is not limited to:

- " Respirators (N95) masks
- " Eye protection
- " Face shields
- " Gloves
- " Disposable gowns

Operational Activity

Conference Rooms

- Only use when videoconferencing or teleconferencing is not preferable or possible
- Will limit in-person meetings (refer to NYS guidance), if virtual meetings are not feasible
- If meetings are to occur in person, they will be conducted in a quick manner
- Leave space in between chairs and have individuals sit in alternating chairs
- Social distancing among participants will be required
- Lingering and socializing before and after meetings should be discouraged

Break Rooms (Lunch/Dinner)

- Breakroom use will be discontinued if a minimum of 6 ft. separation cannot be " maintained when consuming food or drinks "
- Staff cannot store their lunch/dinner or any other foods in same refrigerator in which student food/drinks is stored
- Staff are advised to take their lunch/dinner and breaks in their private offices; in their vehicles or outside at the picnic table throughout the campus
- Staggered break schedules may be utilized to assist with separation concerns
- If staff wish to take breaks together, they must do so in a large space or outside, where at minimum 6ft. of separation can occur
- Communal meals will not be provided, and food will not be available in common areas where employees may congregate.
- Disinfecting wipes will be available next to equipment and near amenities such as " vending machines "
- Staff are encouraged to wipe down touch surfaces post and prior use

Copier Rooms/Areas

- Congregating in copier rooms/areas is prohibited
- Cleaning supplies will be provided at copier stations
- Staff are encouraged to wipe down touch surfaces post and prior use

Elevators

- One person in an elevator at a time unless staff are assisting a student or required to move large items with assistance
- Staff must wear acceptable face coverings when in common use area
- Elevators will be frequently disinfected.

Restrooms #

- The NYSSB will reduce the number of toilet and sink fixtures available for use during the school day to enhance social distancing
- Cleaning and disinfecting schedules for lavatories and signs promoting social distancing and hand washing have been placed in all lavatories
- All bathrooms regardless of size will be limited to two persons at one time
- Signage will be posted on entry indicating no more than two people at a time
- Individuals must knock before entering a bathroom to ensure limit is not already reached
- Students should use bathrooms located in their classroom/dorm to the greatest extent possible
- In special circumstances where a student must be assisted in the use of the lavatory, the adult present must be wearing all applicable personal protective equipment including a face covering and when medically applicable, the student will be wearing a proper face covering as well
- Staff and students must wash their hands after using the bathroom. Use a towel to turn off faucet and open the door to exit the bathroom, thereby avoiding recontamination of hands.
- Bathrooms will be routinely cleaned and disinfected as described in the Cleaning and Disinfection Section

Hallways/Stairwells

- Where feasible hallway traffic may be limited to single flow direction
- Where single flow is not applicable, bi-direction traffic will be permitted.
- Adequate distancing will be obtained between all individuals by taped off lanes on the corridor floors/stair treads.
- All individuals must allow for adequate space between others when traveling in the same direction.

General Office/Reception Areas

- All offices will be limited to 50% the rated occupancy for the space. Offices must normally maintain a minimum of 150 sq. ft. per individual
- Where applicable all offices and small spaces will be limited to one (1) individual at a time
- In a multiple occupant office, occupancy will be reduced to 50% rated occupancy in addition to maintaining at least 6ft of separation between individuals with barriers surrounding personal space
- Additional protective barriers such as polycarbonate screens or strip curtains will be utilized to create a physical separation without hindrance to egress or airflow
- Workstations will be reconfigured so that employees do not face each other, or partitions will be established if facing each other cannot be avoided
- Face coverings should be worn in these multiple use office settings when physical barriers are not present

- Where possible, the NYSSB will stagger shift start and end times greater than normal when possible (while still ensuring safe operations), to eliminate employees from congregating during the shift change-over, and from overcrowding at entrances and exits
- Will reduce tasks requiring large amounts of people to be in one area
- Employees will be encouraged to use virtual meeting tools, including phone and virtual teleconference, in lieu of in-person meetings, whenever possible
- If in-person meetings are essential, consider limiting meetings to 3 people or less

Classrooms/Dormitory

- " Students will be assigned to a dorm based on their classroom grouping
- " Students will not be permitted to intermingle across dorms, to the greatest extent " possible. "
- " Students and staff will adhere to not less than 6 ft. of separation from others, when practical.
- " Students and staff will be required to wear a proper face covering.
- " Where possible, related service staff will travel to the classroom/dormitory to provide services.
- " Restrict items to that of obvious use.
 - " Remove any unnecessary furniture.
 - " Remove any soft surfaces that are difficult to disinfect such as:
 - " Area Rugs
 - " Soft fabric chairs

Health Center

- " Where applicable, nurse stations have been reconfigured to:
 - " Maintain social distancing of no less than 6ft.
 - " Create "sick" and "well" zones.
 - " Students that receive daily medication should be treated separately from students presenting with symptoms of illness.
- " Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGP): Treatments include suctioning, nebulizer and peak flow meters for respiratory conditions. Procedures will be conducted in a room separate from others in the Health Offices. The separate room will be sanitized after each treatment and nurses will use the following PPE while administering:
 - Gloves;
 - N95 or surgical facemask with a face shield;
 - Eye protection; and
 - A gown.
- " Physical separation will be achieved by utilizing:
 - " Individual exam rooms
 - " Polycarbonate barriers
 - " Retractable dividing curtain walls.
- " Isolation Rooms

- " Individuals presenting with symptoms representative of COVID-19 should be immediately isolated to reduce risk of transmission.
- " Two rooms have been identified for quarantining individuals
- " Parent apartments can be used as staging and assessment areas

Fitness Center/Pool Areas

- " The fitness center will be closed to all staff and students while under COVID response.
- " The pool and attached locker room will remain closed. When opened, the NYSSB will follow the New York State Department of Health Guidance for Pools (July 11, 2020).

Restart Operation

Ventilation: The NYSSB will maintain adequate, code required ventilation as designed. The HVAC units use make-up air and outside air. This type of HVAC solution pulls in fresh, tempered air from outside the building to replace existing air that cannot be recirculated. Per recommendations, the units have MERV 13 filters. Workstation, classroom and dormitory doors should remain open to the greatest extent possible to improve airflow throughout the building. Do not open windows which may pose a safety or health risk (e.g., allowing pollen in or exacerbating asthma symptoms) to students using the facility.

Drinking Water: As required by New York State Code a potable water supply will be provided per 150 occupants, but not less than one source per floor. To reduce cross contamination the bubbler/drink spout has been removed or disabled. Automatic/touchless bottle filling equipment is installed in place of the drink spout. These appliances will be routinely cleaned and disinfected as described in the Cleaning and Disinfection Section. Bottled water will be provided to all students.

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection

Hygiene: Healthy hygiene practices will be taught and re-taught to our students and staff. Instruction in hand and respiratory hygiene, along with providing adequate supplies and time to allow for frequent hand hygiene will be provided. Families will be provided information in their native language about when their child should stay home and refrain from attending school and other activities. This guidance will also include parent education about when it is acceptable to have their child return to regular activity within the school/dorm program. Teaching healthy hygiene practices will be accomplished in person, by videos, announcements, and signage throughout the school. Some of the healthy hygiene practices that will be taught through multiple modalities are:

For students:

- Proper handwashing
- Proper mask-wearing
- Respiratory hygiene
- Social distancing
- Arrival & Dismissal
- How to greet a peer, friend, or teacher/therapist
- Meal etiquette

- Moving through the hallways

Staff and student training will be provided through:

- " Daily General Announcements over the PA system:
 - COVID-19 Everyday Prevention Actions - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/CDC-COVID-19-PSA-Everyday-Prevention-Actions.pdf>
 - COVID-19 Readiness - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/CDC-COVID-19-PSA-Readiness.pdf>
 - Coronavirus Stops with Me - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2020_06_30_SG-PSA-Re-RECORD.pdf
 - Cleaning and Disinfection - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/PSA_Cleaning-and-Disinfection.pdf
 - What To Do If You Are Sick - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/PSA_What-to-Do-When-Sick.pdf
- " Videos
 - Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease 2019 - <https://youtu.be/7zzfdYShvQU>
 - How does COVID-19 spread? - <https://youtu.be/WfJSVbQtHsk>
 - How to Safely Cough and Sneeze - <https://youtu.be/a220fnvLyxY>
 - What You Need to Know About Handwashing - <https://youtu.be/d914EnpU4Fo>
 - How the Virus Spreads and How to Stop the Spread: "
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ML3n1c0FHDI> "
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfJSVbQtHsk>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-zhhSQDD1U>
 - " <https://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/patients/coronavirus-information/videos-for-kids-parents>
- " Conspicuous signage will be placed in the following areas:

○ Entrances	○ Auditoriums
○ Restrooms	○ Operations and Maintenance Spaces
○ Classrooms	○ Dormitories
○ Offices	
○ Health Center	
- Signage reminding individuals of the following will be posted:
 - Stay home if you feel sick
 - Proper storing and discarding of PPE
 - Adhere to social distancing instructions
 - Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID- 19
 - Wash Your Hands - <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/wash-your-hands-poster-english-508.pdf>
 - Handwashing is Your Superpower - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/superhero_poster.pdf
 - Stop the Spread of Germs - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>
 - Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease 2019 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID19-symptoms.pdf>

- Please Wear a Cloth Face Covering - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering-building-entrance.pdf>
- Protect Yourself and Others from COVID-19 - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/Young_Mitigation_recommendations_and_resources_toolkit_01.pdf
- Cover Coughs and Sneezes - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cover-your-cough_poster.pdf

Hand Hygiene

Students, staff and approved visitors will practice good hand hygiene to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Hand washing stations which include soap dispensers and paper towels are located:

- " Inside restrooms
- " Inside classrooms
- " Inside health offices
- " Inside operations and maintenance areas
- " Inside food service areas

Students, staff and approved visitors will wash their hands:

- " Before, during, and after preparing food
- " Before eating food
- " After using the restroom
- " After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
- " After touching garbage
- " After having been in a public place and touched an item or surface that may be frequently touched by other people, such as door handles, railings, etc.

When washing hands, individuals will:

- " Wet hands with clean, running water and apply soap
- " Lather hands by rubbing them together with the soap
- " Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds
- " Rinse hands well under clean, running water
- " Dry hands using a clean towel
- " Use the towel to turn off the faucet and open the door to exit the area, thereby avoiding recontamination of hands

Alcohol based hand sanitizer will be available at all entrances, throughout the hallways, and operations and maintenance areas. Student use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers should always be supervised by adults to minimize accidental ingestion and promote safe usage. While hand sanitizer is a quick fix and easily accessible, it does not replace the full benefit and cleanliness of handwashing. Hand sanitizers should not be used when hands are visible dirty. Handwashing is the preferred method for good hand hygiene.

Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures: Staff will be responsible for general cleaning and disinfecting within their areas per daily checklist and will be provided with appropriate cleaning supplies. Staff will adhere to the following cleaning and disinfecting protocol:

- " Create and retain logs for each area stating:
 - Date
 - Time
 - Scope of cleaning and disinfection
- Schedule cleaning and disinfecting throughout each shift of frequently touched surfaces (PE equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) and shared objects (toys, games, art supplies) between uses.
- Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants including adequate contact times
- Keep cleaning/disinfecting products away from students and do not allow student use
- Take steps to ensure all water systems and features (drinking fountains) are safe to use.
- Clean soft surfaces using soap and water or with appropriate products for use on these surfaces.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfecting electronics. If there are no instructions, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays and dry surfaces thoroughly
- Use and appropriately label spray bottles or buckets
- Wear disposable gloves or any other required PPE
- Read all labels and follow instructions
- Change cleaning cloths (microfiber) often or use disposable products

Step 1. Clean

- Clean surfaces using an appropriate cleaner making sure you produce friction on the surface. Cleaning reduces the number of germs, dirt and impurities on the surface. Friction action breaks biofilm on any virus allowing disinfectant to contact the area
- Clean surfaces prior to disinfecting

Step 2. Disinfect

- Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces
- Use EPA-registered disinfectant. Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product. Many products recommend:
 - Keeping the surface wet for the entire contact/dwell time (see product label)
 - Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product
- Ensure the area or item is cleaned with a cleaning agent before disinfecting
- Disinfectant according to the directions and take all precautions on the label such as PPE, and safe handling procedures
- " Diluted bleach solutions may also be used if appropriate for the surface
 - 1/3 cup bleach per gallon of water - highly concentrated solutions may result in adverse health effects, discoloration and residue
 - Bleach solutions should be made fresh and not kept for more than 24 hours
 - Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection, and ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening may not be suitable for disinfection
 - Unexpired bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation
 - Never mix bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser
 - Leave solution on the surface for at least 1 minute

Laundering

Launder items (if possible) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely or disinfect with an EPA-registered disinfectant

- Washing face coverings in a washing machine and drying in a dryer is recommended to properly clean a face covering
- If masks are hand washed prepare a bleach solution of 4 teaspoons household bleach per quart of room temperature water. Soak the face covering for 5 minutes. Rinse the face covering thoroughly with cool water. Air dry, in direct sunlight, when possible. Wash hands for 30 seconds after washing the mask
- Face coverings must be completely dry before wearing
- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from a person who is sick
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick can be washed with other people's items
- Do not shake dirty laundry
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces
- Remove gloves and wash hands immediately

Extracurriculars

During the COVID shutdown students were unable to engage in and enjoy these social activities that are part of the fabric of any school program. At this time, all extracurricular activities including field trips and large gatherings are suspended, except for activities within a closed setting such as a dorm or classroom grouping in which social distancing can be achieved. Attention will be paid to bringing back other activities that can be conducted in a safe environment with appropriate social distancing protocols.

Before and Aftercare

The NYSSB does not operate a before or after school care program.

Vulnerable Population

Individuals in the below groups will collaborate with their healthcare providers to make informed decisions. In order to meet the needs of individuals in these groups and ensure their health and safety, the NYSSB requires medical documentation supporting recommended courses of action. The NYSSB will consider all information when determining courses of action.

Individuals in these groups should consult with their healthcare provider regarding prevention:

- " Age 65 or older;
- " Individuals with the following underlying health conditions including, but not limited to:
 - Cancer
 - Chronic kidney or lung disease
 - Severe asthma
 - Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
 - Immunocompromised
 - Obesity (body mass index of 30 or higher)

- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Diabetes
- Children who are medically complex, who have neurologic, genetic, metabolic conditions, or who have congenital heart disease are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 than other children.

CDC website for updated 'At Risk' categories: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html>

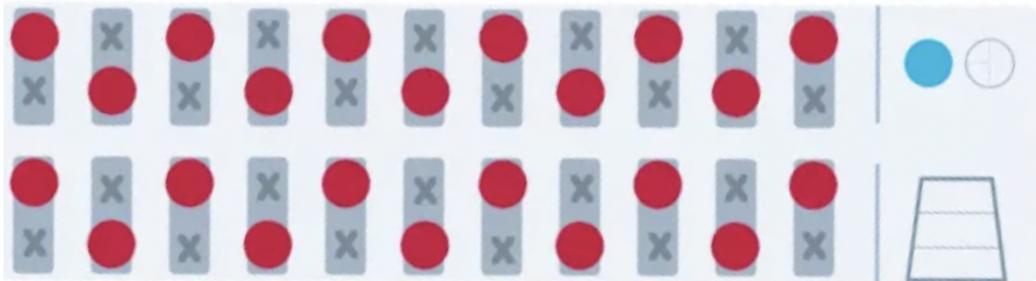
Transportation

The NYSSB does not provide daily scheduled transportation to students. However, when transportation is needed, we utilize the Attica Bus Company and a school owned bus and vans. The NYSSB will coordinate its reopening plan with its contract service provider, if needed.

School Bus

Density Reduction, Social Distancing, Bus Capacity

- Children will sit one (1) child per seat as denoted in the following diagram.



- " Decals will indicate where students may sit and to mark six-foot distances in aisles.
- " Students will wear face coverings while in transit.
- " No student will be denied transportation due to their inability to tolerate the wearing of a mask/face covering.
- " The NYSSB will remind students/parents/guardians that social distancing requirements extend to the bus stop.
- " Students will maintain social distancing when they disembark from transportation and proceed to their assigned entrances at their respective schools.

School Van

- " Students will sit in every other seat to ensure social distancing and follow the bus protocol above.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Buses/Vans

- The NYSSB busses and vans will be cleaned and disinfected after each use, including:
 - All trash removed
 - Floors swept and dust mopped
 - Walls and windows cleaned
 - Bus seats and seat backs

- Seat belts
- Door handles, handrails
- Driver operator area
- " EPA approved cleaning and disinfecting products will be used. Labels will be read, and directions will be followed. Appropriate PPE will be worn by staff who are cleaning and disinfecting transportation
- " Proper ventilation will be ensured during cleaning
- " All cleanings will be documented

Food Services

The following will be adhered to during student meal service:

- " Cafeteria will remain closed and all meals will be consumed in the classrooms or dormitory "
- " All students and staff will wash their hands prior to touching or eating meals
- " Staff will wear gloves when delivering food and interacting with students during mealtime "
- " There will be no self-serve food items or serving line
- " Shared workspaces within the kitchen will be minimized
- " Staff will be dedicated to certain tasks, at separate workstations
- " Exposed clean silverware, dishes, glasses, pots and pans will be covered
- " Condiments will be pre-packaged
- " Bottled water will be available to students
- " Classroom meals will be individually packaged in a disposable container with disposable utensils
- " Choices will continue to meet meal pattern requirements and dietary needs of students.
- " Food-sharing is prohibited
- " Small appliances outside of the kitchen, except microwaves and refrigerators, will be discontinued. Toasters can be utilized in the dormitory only.
- " Classroom and dormitory can eat outside so long as there is adequate supervision, social distancing, and appropriate weather
- " Refrigerators within the classrooms, dormitory and health center will be clearly label 'Student Use Only' or 'Staff Use Only' to ensure staff and student items are not intermingled

Mental Health, Behavioral and Emotional Support Services and Programs

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

	Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)	Mental Health Support	Behavioral Supports & Interventions
Tier 3	Individual instruction in SEL competencies strategies & skills	Crisis Intervention Individual Counseling Risk Assessments (e.g. suicide, threats of harm) Trauma, Illness & Grief (TIG)	Wrap around supports (Residential & Educational Programs & Home) Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIPs)

		Team intervention	
Tier 2	Targeted small group or individual explicit instruction in SEL competencies & skills Social skills groups	Individual/Small Group Counseling	Conflict resolution Peer mediation Restorative Conference Self-monitoring of behavior
Tier 1	Explicit instruction in SEL competencies & skills Integration of SEL in content and related service areas General teaching practices that model & support SEL Explicit instruction in compensatory social skills for the blind & visually impaired Communication skill- building PBIS Character Education Program	Mental Health Education Mental Health Screenings Prevention/Intervention Supports Campus Wide Trauma Invested Practices Community Building Circles	Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) Teaching replacement strategies for unskillful behaviors Restorative Practices Handle With Care Trauma Invested Approaches

Both students and adults are grappling with new and exacerbated traumas that can have far-reaching impacts on health and educational outcomes. In addition, anxiety and depression may present or worsen in response to these additional stressors and traumas. Research demonstrates that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) (e.g. exposure to abuse) and trauma can have a negative impact on a student’s social emotional well-being, and consequently, their capacity to learn.

All NYSSB staff are trained in trauma-invested practices that help shift negative reactions to unskillful behavior to thoughtful responses that consider the root causes and help to support individual student needs to address those causes. In addition, staff have received updated behavior management training using a program called Handle With Care which is trauma informed and utilizes best practices for crisis intervention.

It is unrealistic to expect that students will return to instruction as they left it months ago. Students have experienced an extremely stressful, and for many, traumatic experience while isolated from school, friends, and community. Some students have had positive experiences during school closures. The NYSSB supports and nurtures new skills and mindsets. Some of our students may return to instruction anxious, fearful, withdrawn, grieving, and/or unprepared to self-manage new or exacerbated unskillful behaviors. The NYSSB recognizes that our school community will present a wide range of needs. To mitigate trauma and address worsening or new mental health/behavioral/emotional concerns:

- " Informal and/or formal screening activities will be conducted to gather information on students’ incoming social, emotional, and behavioral status.
- " Students who are identified as at-risk will be provided with additional support as needed
- " All staff will be provided with additional training on cultivating resilience for students and staff using trauma-invested practices. Resilience is a process focusing on strengths to overcome adversity
- " Close monitoring of all students to identify those who require additional support using a Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Model (see chart above).

- " Students will be provided with time to adjust to being back in school. Ongoing support will be provided as needed to help students process how COVID-19 has disrupted their lives
- " Informal or formal counseling services (including play therapy and grief counseling), social-emotional learning (SEL) focused programs and curricula, and peer/social support within classroom and dorms
- " Ongoing training in mindfulness and relaxation strategies to support everyone's ability to cope with stress, anxiety, and fear responses
- " Students and staff will engage in positive practices to create an environment where everyone works together to protect others and maintain safety across campus and during all activities. The NYSSB enjoys a rich history of enduring crises and adjusting to changes. Our school culture is based on high expectations, respect, and co-accountability. Staff are committed to the healthy development of students and will model the skills, behaviors and mindsets they seek to cultivate in students. To help foster a strong school community, staff and students will use common language and themes such as: *Together we will...Work Hard, Have Fun, Stay Safe, and Make History*
- " Ongoing participation in the Genesee Valley BOCES Trauma, Illness and Grief (TIG) cooperative service.

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is a systems approach to creating and maintaining positive school climates where teachers can teach and students can learn. The NYSSB implements universal school-wide, small-group, and individualized systems of positive behavioral interventions and supports to create a teaching and learning environment that is less reactive and maximizes academic engagement and achievement for all students. PBIS is utilized to promote the development of prosocial behaviors, self-discipline, habits of learning, & healthy well-being.

Trauma, Illness, and Grief (TIG) Team within the MTSS

We know that after events related to trauma and loss, the ensuing emotional reactions of children can have a significant impact on their learning and behavior, as well as on their relationships and interactions with classmates, staff, and often the larger school community. Even normal reactions, such as grieving after a death, can become problematic if not understood and responded to with cultural sensitivity and developmental appropriateness. We also know that adjustment following major trauma and loss is an ongoing process that requires support over a period of time, as the student's developmental needs evolve, anniversary dates occur, and new loss events cause trauma and grief reactions to resurface or even trigger the re-experiencing of the initial trauma itself.

Our TIG Team is prepared to appropriately respond to events involving trauma, violence, illness, and death. School personnel are considered the front-line interventionists for the students within their schools. Members of our TIG Team have completed formal training to prepare for crisis situations within our school community as well as local school districts upon request. The Team consists of a variety of roles and perspectives including:

- " Superintendent
- " Department Heads
- " School Psychologist
- Social Worker
- School Nurse

More information about TIG can be found using this link:

<https://tigconsortium.org/#:~:text=To%20maintain%20and%20grow%20a,%2C%20illness%2C%20grief%20and%20loss.>

Handle With Care (HWC)

All staff will receive training in the behavior management program HWC. HWC is dedicated to the reduction of unskillful behaviors through:

- " Tension reduction. By reducing the “tension” that exists in the interaction, conflict is reduced
- " Staff’s use of preventative actions that result in a decrease in the need for the use of physical restraint
- " The use of prompt, skillful and appropriate intervention when physical restraint is necessary, in order to minimize injuries to students & staff "
- " Creating a universal perception of physical and psychological safety
- " Safety is the most important consideration
- " Students need to be protected from the physical and emotional consequences of their behavior
- " In order to act in the student’s best interest, staff need to be in control of their own feelings and behaviors

More information on HWC can be found at this link: <https://handlewithcare.com/>

Restorative Practices

Staff have been trained in restorative practices. The core of restorative practices is building and restoring **relationships**. Restorative practices range from informal to formal. On a continuum, informal practices include affective statements and questions that communicate peoples’ feelings, and allow for reflection how their behavior has affected others. Restorative practices require students to own the problem, reflect on the impact of their behavior on themselves and others, and to understand why the behavior was unacceptable, inappropriate or unskillful. Interventions engage students in some action or learning process that will enable them to correct behaviors, repair relationships, learn desired replacement behaviors, and restore their good standing in the school community.

Key language:

- " **We are a community.** The NYSSB recognizes that the strength and health of our school community (among students, staff, and families) is of utmost importance and directly impacts school climate and academic achievement. Every member of the community is important and contributes greatly. Each person’s actions affect the health of the community.
- " **We strive to form and maintain positive relationships.** Reinforcing the importance of positive relationships is essential to the development of a strong community. Positive relationships lay the foundation for cooperation, skill development, and learning.

Affective Statements: The starting point for all restorative processing involves active and non-judgmental listening and expression of feelings. Affective statements allow for students and staff to strengthen relationships by genuinely presenting oneself as someone who cares and has feelings.

Restorative Discussions: A restorative approach to help those harmed by others' actions, as well as responding to unskillful behavior. It consists of asking key questions:

1. "What happened, and what were you thinking about at the time?"
2. "What have you thought about since?"
3. "Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?"
4. "What about this has been the hardest for you?"
5. "What do you think you need to make things as right as possible?"

Community Building: Community building is a Tier 1 strategy that is proactive and responsive. Regularly scheduled meetings with students and staff in their respective classrooms and residential settings provide a forum through which students can bond with one another and with caring adults. As a prevention strategy, the process enables the groups to get to know one another, build relationships, establish understanding and trust, create a sense of community, learn how to make decisions together, develop agreements for the mutual good, and resolve difficult issues.

Restorative Conference: A restorative conference is a Tier 2 strategy which uses various communicative techniques focused on affective statements and questioning to induce empathy, self-reflection, and accountability. Restorative conferencing can range from informal one-to-one conferences to more formal processes like mediation between students. Listening and speaking responsibly are the basic building blocks of all restorative interventions. Having an adult's undivided attention immediately communicates to the student that he/she is valued and his/her thoughts and feelings matter. One-to-one conferencing has been shown to reduce disruptive behaviors significantly when applied.

Planning and Capacity Building

Families are encouraged to prepare students for returning to school:

- "Talk with your child about how school will appear different (e.g. desks far apart from each other, staying in classrooms for meals during the day)"
- "Talk to your child about how they are feeling. Normalize grief reactions and adjustment issues"
- "Anticipate behavior changes with your child. Watch for changes from typical or baseline behavior like excessive crying or irritation, excessive worry or sadness, unhealthy eating or sleeping habits, difficulty concentrating, which may be signs of your child struggling with stress and anxiety"
- "Ask questions to reduce your own feelings of anxiety and to express any concerns that you may have about your child returning to school"
- "Contact the school psychologist to discuss any mental health or behavioral concerns you have prior to your child returning"
- "Be a role model by practicing self-care activities including taking breaks, getting plenty of sleep, exercising, eating well, and staying socially connected"

Adult SEL & Well-being

All staff will be provided with initial & ongoing training and support in the following areas:

- "Strategies to build resilience (the capacity to recover from difficulties; toughness)"

- Strategies to develop a “growth mindset” including assistance recognizing that not all change is negative, reframing of events to see the positive, and praising the process
- " Models of quarantine and why peers and/or staff may be absent for days or weeks
- " Realistic guidelines for teachers to limit pressure of curriculum
- " Appropriate responses to anxiety
- " Social distancing and feelings of rejection and disappointment
- " Self-Care

Staff will be provided with Employee Assistance Program contact information and menu of supports.

Student SEL & Well-being

Staff will receive training on the importance of considering students’ overwhelming anxiety as they reintegrate or come to school for the first time. Staff have been directed to focus on relationship building and re-establishing classroom and residential communities. Students will be closely monitored for adjustment issues including signs of:

- " **Cognitive Distress:** poor concentration, difficulty making decisions, preoccupation with the event, sensory distortions (acute), guilt, confusion
- " **Emotional Distress:** anxiety, irritability, anger, mood swings, depression, fears/phobias/avoidance behaviors, post-traumatic stress responses, grief "
- " **Behavioral Distress:** impulsiveness, risk-taking behaviors, issues with sleep, withdrawal, excessive eating or loss of appetite, interpersonal discord, crying spells, hypervigilance/hyper-startle
- " **Physical Distress:** headaches, hyperventilation, tachycardia or bradycardia, muscle spasms, psychogenic sweating, fatigue/exhaustion, indigestion/nausea/vomiting
- " **Spiritual/Existential Distress:** questioning beliefs, anxiety about the fate of the world, fear for existence, loss of faith in adults or humanity, feeling overwhelmed or powerlessness, wondering if life is meaningless

Students will be provided instruction in the following areas to mitigate trauma response and for prevention:

- " Strategies to build resilience (the capacity to recover from difficulty; toughness)
- " Strategies to develop and maintain a “growth mindset” including assistance recognizing that not all change is negative, reframing of events to see the positive, and praising the process
- " Models of quarantine and why peers and/or staff may be absent for days or weeks
- " Explicit instruction on how to get help and who are the student’s “go to” people
- " Ensuring that students know staff can keep them safe and care about their physical and emotional well-being
- " Letting students know that PPE is available and provided by the school in the event they do not have or forgot their personal PPE.
- " Why peers may be exempt from PPE
- " How to practice social distancing as a student who is blind and visually impaired
- " How to manage feelings of isolation and disappointment
- " Strategies for managing excessive worries and fears about their own and other’s safety

- " Social Stories and songs to teach new safety routines and to manage thoughts, feelings, and emotions
- " Mindfulness & relaxation techniques
- " Strategies to manage “Fight” “Flight” and “Freeze” responses when fearful or anxious

Using Data for Continuous Improvement

Surveys will be implemented and analyzed by the Leadership & TIG Team for continuous improvement. Data from the Student Care Review (SCR) Committee will also be utilized to determine more specific areas in need of intervention.

Communication

The NYSSB will utilize a multi-prong approach to communicate matters of importance to its students, parents/guardians, staff and visitors. Communications will be provided in the language(s) spoken at home among families and written plans will be accessible to those with visual impairments.

- " The NYSSB Webpage – <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/nyssb/>
- " Blackboard Connect automatic call, email and text system
- " Mailing/Emails
- " Signage from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) will be posted in conspicuous areas to promote best practices and the safety of building inhabitants.

Monitoring Protocols/Procedures to Track Health Conditions at School

Watch for symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. The CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19 at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Staff will be educated to observe students or other staff members for signs of any type of illness. Students will be instructed on how to complete the questionnaire and may require assistance due to their unique needs.

Health Checks and Screenings

The NYSSB defines screening as a measure or procedure put into practice to identify actual or potential cases of illness. School nursing staff will train staff members in the appropriate use of a no-touch infrared thermometer and screening protocol. Temperature checks will be performed on students daily and approved visitors prior to entering the facility. Trained staff conducting temperature screenings will:

- Utilize no-touch, infrared thermometers;
- Wear a face covering;
- Wear gloves;
- Perform a visual inspection of an individual prior to conducting a temperature screening; and
- Ensure individuals maintain social distance while waiting for their temperature screening.

For Students:

- " Required daily temperature checks
- " Parents will be required to complete a bi-weekly Health Survey on their student. The survey will be sent home with their student or emailed on Friday every other week and will need to be returned to the Health Center by the following Monday.
- " The Health Survey, at minimum, will consist of the following questions:
 - Have you had COVID-19 symptoms (per CDC) in the past 14 days (i.e. viral respiratory illness such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, irritated eyes, nasal congestion or runny nose, vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, fever, chills, new loss of taste or smell, headache, body aches or, fatigue)?
 - Have you had a positive COVID-19 test in the past 14 days?
 - Have you had close contact with any confirmed or suspected COVID -19 cases in the past 14 days?
 - Have you traveled internationally, or from within one of the designated states with significant community spread?
- " Upon arrival to school, Students who answer yes to any of the above questions or have a temperature screen of >100.0 Fahrenheit, will return home on the bus or be sent directly to the isolation room to be picked up. Parents will be notified to determine transportation and advised to contact their healthcare provider or County Public Health COVID-19 Hotline to discuss their situation.
- " Emergency transport (911) will be called for any student showing any of these emergency warning signs of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) or other concerning sign:
 - " Trouble breathing
 - " Pain or pressure in the chest that does not go away
 - " New confusion
 - " Inability to wake or stay awake
 - " Bluish lips or face

- " Severe abdominal pain
- " Students showing symptoms of illness while at school must report to the Health Center for evaluation. If a student is unable to successfully ambulate, case staff will call the Health Center to determine if a nurse needs to come to the location. Students who present with positive screenings will be immediately isolated and/or sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and possible testing.

For Staff:

- " All Direct Care staff must complete the on-line NYSED health survey at least one hour prior to reporting to work and every 12 hours thereafter, if remaining on duty.
- " All other staff are required to complete the NYSED health survey prior to entering the building or within one hour of arrival.
- " Staff DO NOT report to the worksite if they answered “yes” to any of the screening questions and must notify their supervisor immediately.
- " Staff at work that develop symptoms will notify their supervisor immediately to be sent home to follow up with their health care provider.
- " Staff members diagnosed with COVID-19 or having symptoms must follow the NYSED guidelines for employees.

For Visitors:

- " Visitors will be given limited access to the education setting only with advance " scheduling and approval.
- " Families are encouraged to “Zoom” with their student in place of in-person visits. Families can notify the Program Service Office to arrange for this at " crystal.davis@nysed.gov "
- " All visitors are to complete the NYSED health survey and temperature screening upon entrance into the building.
- " Visitors that answer ‘yes’ to any of the screening questions or have a temperature >100 will be denied entry.

If students or staff become ill with symptoms of COVID-19 at schools, the NYSSB will follow Education Law § 906, which provides:

“whenever...a student in the public schools shows symptoms of any communicable or infectious disease reportable under the public health law that imposes a significant risk of infection of others in the school, he or she shall be excluded from the school and sent home immediately, in a safe and proper conveyance. The director of school health services shall immediately notify a local public health agency of any disease reportable under the public health law. The director of school health services, or other health professionals acting upon direction or referral of such director, may make such evaluations of teachers and any other school employees, school buildings and premises as, in their discretion, they may deem necessary to protect the health of the students and staff.”

COVID-19 Testing Protocol: The Department of Health guidance serves as the mandatory baseline of health and safety protocols for school to follow and testing is part of a continuum of mitigation efforts that includes mandatory daily temperature checks and other additional

screening, testing for symptomatic individuals or exposures and contact tracing in the event of a positive case. Individuals needing a COVID-19 test, will be referred to their primary health provider and the DOH for testing related to symptomatic or exposed individuals.

Positive COVID-19 Diagnostic Test: The NYSSB will notify the local health department immediately upon being informed of any student, staff member, or visitors testing positive for COVID-19 to determine what steps are needed for the school community and so that contact tracing may be initiated.

Students Returning to School After Illness: The NYSSB has established the following protocols and procedures, in consultation with the local health department(s), about the requirements for determining when students who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment at school:

- " Documentation from a healthcare provider following evaluation
- " Negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result and symptom resolution
 - " Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours.
 - " If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have a healthcare provider written note stating that they are clear to return to school/work.
- " Release from isolation documentation

Contact Tracing: Contact tracing is a public health function performed by local public health departments to trace all persons who had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. This allows public health officials to put in place isolation or other measures to limit the spread of the virus. The NYSSB will cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing. The NYSSB will assist the Department of Health in knowing who may have had contact at school with a confirmed case by:

- " keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members;
- " ensuring student schedules are up to date;
- " keeping a log of any visitors which includes date, time and where in the school they visited; and
- " Assist in tracing all contacts of the individual at school in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.

Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. School staff will not determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the Department of Health.

Containment Protocols and Procedures

Isolation: Students suspected of having COVID-19 who are awaiting transport home by their parent/guardian will be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult present utilizing appropriate PPE. Multiple students suspected of COVID-19 may be in this isolation room if they can be separated by at least 6 feet. Following the CDC and NYSDOH recommendations, the NYSSB will clean the isolation area as follows:

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.

- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and copier machines.
- Vacuum the space if needed. Use a vacuum equipped with a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available.
- Consider temporarily turning off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.
- Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection. "
- If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection should continue.

Student Pick-Up: The Health Center will notify parents/guardians if they need to pick up their student with instructions that the student must be seen by a health care provider.

Infected Individuals: Students who have tested positive must complete isolation and have recovered, and no longer be able to transmit COVID-19 when returning to in-person learning. Discharge from quarantine and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the parent/guardian, Health Center and the local health department.

Exposed Individuals: Students who were exposed to the COVID-19 virus must complete quarantine and have not developed symptoms before returning to in-person learning. Discharge from quarantine and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the parent/guardian, Health Center and the local health department.

Health Checks

Parents/guardians, student and staff will be provided the following resources to educate them regarding the careful observation of symptoms of COVID-19:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

School Closures

The NYSSB will collaborate with the Department of Health to determine the parameters, conditions or metrics (e.g., increased absenteeism or increased illness in the school community) that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level. These conditions may warrant reducing in-person education or closing the school. The NYSSB will work in consultation with the State and local health department, and plan for an orderly closure; if necessary.

Residential Living

Social distancing, face coverings/masks, hygiene practices, cleaning and disinfecting outlined above will be adhered to in the residential living area.

Visitors:

- " Visitors are prohibited in the Residential area during the COVID response.
- " Families are encouraged to schedule a 'zoom' meeting with their student in lieu of an in-person visit.

Cottages:

- " Non-essential gatherings and activities will be prohibited during the COVID response.
- " Living room furniture will be assigned specific to each student.
- " Throws will be placed on living room furniture and laundered nightly.
- " Toys and other materials/supplies considered shared items will be cleaned between usage.
- " Markings will be placed in high traffic areas such as exits, bathrooms, and kitchens to indicate social distancing and traffic patterns
- " Students will not be permitted to intermingle with students from other cottages.
- " Bathtubs and showers will be sanitized after each use.
- " Beds will be arranged 'head to toe' in rooms housing two students. One student will be assigned per bedroom to the greatest extent possible.
- " Additional spaces will be identified as future bedrooms, if necessary.
- " Hand sanitizer stations available in cottages and large bathrooms.
- " Mealtimes will be staggered to ensure social distancing.

Laundry:

- " Cloth materials (i.e., linens, aprons, etc.) will be washed and dried on the highest " temperature setting allowable for the fabric. "
- " Staff will ensure student masks/face covering are laundered weekly
- " Items will be laundered according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- " Disposable gloves must be worn when handling dirty laundry.
- " Staff will not shake dirty laundry
- " Staff will clean and disinfect clothes hampers.
- " Staff will remove gloves after usage and wash hands immediately.

Residential Arrival and Departure Procedures:

- " Busses arrive Sunday evening beginning at 5:00 pm. All busses will unload at the Upper Knight Hall Entrance or Outside Door at South Cottage East. Staff assigned to bus duty will ensure students unload the bus while social distancing immediately upon arrival, unless there is already a bus unloading and social distancing cannot take place.
- " Prior to students entering the building, students will receive a temperature screening.
- " Parent drop off will be no earlier than 6:00 pm on Sunday evening. Parent/guardian will call the Health Center to let them know their student has arrived. Dorm staff will meet the student at the door and the student will get a temperature screening. Staff will escort the student to their cottage.
- " If a student has a temperature >100 , the student's bus will be asked to wait. The student will be placed in an isolated holding area, evaluated by a nurse, toileted and provided food. Parents/guardians will be notified of the student's condition and whether or not the

student can return home safely on the bus. If determined that the student cannot return on the bus, the parent/guardian will be responsible for transporting the student home.

- " All students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon arrival.

Emergency Response Protocols: Education Law § 807 requires that schools conduct 8 evacuation and 4 lockdown drills each school year. Conducting drills is an important part of keeping students and staff safe in an emergency; however, steps will be taken to minimize the risk of spreading infection while conducting drills. **Drills will be conducted in the same manner except for the following changes:**

Shelter-In-Place and/or Evacuate

- " Provide 6 feet of space between students and staff to the greatest extent possible
- " Use of mask/face coverings throughout the event will be required
- " Identify, in advance, who will be holding the door to get out of the building, therefore reducing the amount of people touching the door hardware when leaving the building. Personnel that will be conducting this task may be assigned to holding the door for one or more classrooms or until confirmation that everyone has vacated the building
- " Bring all necessary items needed: extra face coverings, and hand sanitizer
- " If no extra face coverings are available, instruct anyone that does not have a face " covering to use their shirt to cover their nose and mouth during the event "

Lockout

- " Provide 6 feet of space between students and staff to the greatest extent possible

Lockdown

During a Lockdown, there may be a violation of the 6-foot recommendation between people. In order to continue to protect life safety, lockdown protocols will be mostly the same process as they have been conducted in the past.

- " Evaluate, in advance, if there is room to social distance without being in the line of sight
- " Use of masks/face coverings throughout the event will be required
- " Instruct anyone that does not have a mask/face covering to use their shirt to cover their nose and mouth during the event

Daily Student Arrival and Departure

- " Busses arrive between 7:30 and 8:00 am. Busses will be assigned a drop-off door (Severne Hall East End, West End or Front Door handicapped entrance) and asked to stay until students clear screening to enter the building.
- " Prior to entering the building, all students will get temperature checks.
- " If a student has a temperature >100 and can safely return home on the bus, parent/guardian will be notified, and the student will return home on the bus. If a student cannot safely travel back home on the bus, the student will be isolated, and the parent/guardian will transport the student home.
- " Parent drop off will be at the program services office. Families and students will answer the health survey and have their temperatures taken, prior to entering the school building. Students will be escorted directly to their classroom by staff.

- " Starting at 8:00 buses must report to the program services office, so that temperatures can be taken, and students can be accepted into the school building.
- " Students
- " When students arrive on campus, all student belongings will be left in a designated area before entering the classroom. Student's will use hand sanitizer upon their entry into the school. Backpacks and personal items should remain in designated areas unless the item is needed in class.
- " Daily departure is at 2:00 pm. Stagger dismissal times will take place via the three pre-assigned drop-off/pick up areas (Severne Hall East End, West End or Front Door handicapped entrance).
- " Friday departure is at 2:00 pm. A schedule will be created to stagger dismissal times via four pre-assigned drop-off/pick up areas (Severne Hall East End, West End, Front Door handicapped entrance and Upper Knight Hall entrance).

Attendance for Reporting Purposes

The NYSSB will take daily attendance for in-person and remote learning. Teachers will record daily attendance in SchoolTool, our student management system, based on the required daily scheduled student contact and engagement. Reports will be generated often to identify students who are absent and/or chronically absent. Contact with the families will be made as needed to determine reasons for absence and needs or barriers the student may have to participate in daily lessons.

Chronic Absenteeism

While there is no one-size-fits all approach to addressing chronic absenteeism, The NYSSB is committed to providing interventions to prevent and address health-related and mental health chronic absenteeism. We recognize that many factors will influence student attendance and may be greatly impacted by the instructional models provided; in-person and remote. Classroom teachers, the school psychologist and administration are responsible for identifying students who are not participating. Families must reinforce regular attendance for in school and remote learning and maintain consistent communication with their school program. Families of those with attendance concerns will communicate/meet with staff and/or administration to address the attendance concerns. Meetings will be scheduled with the family to develop a plan to overcome any learning barriers. If students cannot access virtual instruction, hard-copy materials will be provided to the student.

Technology and Connectivity

Access to technology is essential for the successful roll-out of this plan. The NYSSB has been committed to ongoing planning and implementation of school technologies to ensure equitable access for staff and students. We have been mindful of student home access to reliable internet and computers. In the event, students and/or teachers do not have access, the NYSSB will take the necessary steps to meet their needs where plausible.

Teaching and Learning

In an effort to assure high-quality teaching and learning, the NYSSB developed a Continuity of Learning Plan for the 2020-21 school year. This plan considers and includes teaching and learning in-person and remote models of instruction. Our plan assures that instruction aligns with

the New York State Learning Standards and assures equity as well as quality for all learners. Each plan describes instructional models, prioritizing the standards, academic gaps and interventions, structures and expectations for K-12. All core and special area courses will follow the specifications of the determined model. The model is subject to change at any time during the school year.

In-person Learning Model

- " A 5-day a week in-person model will be offered
- " It is important to identify that significant time will be dedicated to re-introduction to a structured program.
- " Class sizes will be created to accommodate social distancing
- " Students are assigned to a classroom and a teacher and will remain with this group of students/staff throughout the day.
- " Students and staff will adhere to the NYSSB's protocols regarding face covering and social distancing requirements.
- " To the greatest extent practicable, special area teachers (Art, Music, and Library) will provide services virtually or push into the classrooms to limit cross-contact.
- " Related Services will push-in to classrooms to the greatest extent possible.
- " The sharing of instructional items, objects, and equipment shall be limited. As much as possible, students shall be provided with items needed for instruction or activity on an individual basis. Such items needed for instruction or activity shall be cleaned after each use and subject to the same cleaning/disinfection protocol noted within this plan. Individual belongings shall be separated from others and placed in containers that are individually labeled and stored in areas so as to be easily identified and located for the purpose of returning them home to be cleaned and disinfected
- " Items such as electronic devices, books, games, learning aids that cannot be cleaned or disinfected shall not be shared between students

Remote Learning Model

- " Classroom teachers will be assigned to students who would normally be in-person in their classroom. Instruction for students will be accomplished through:
 - " Daily individual Google Meets/Zoom with instructor
 - " Classroom aides may also have scheduled time to provide accommodations such as pre-teaching or of re-teaching materials, scribing homework or test answers, reading questions, working on reading/braille skills, etc.
 - " Related services will be remotely provided
 - " Materials as listed below
 - " Large print, braille or auditory instructional materials provided to students
 - " Instructional materials provided via technology, emailed by teacher or available through the Learning Management System (Google Apps for Education/Schoology)
 - " Online learning courses or course content modules (Accelerate U)
- " Parent/Student/Teacher Communication Tools
 - " Telephone and/or video calling
 - " Email
 - " Video conferencing

- Learning Management System (Google Apps/Schoology)
- Scheduled teacher/student/parent check-ins, virtual (online) and/or via phone