

Connecticut LEA Reopening Template

Connecticut State Department of Education • June 29, 2020



This document identifies the critical “REQUIREMENTS” needed for each local educational agency (LEA) or school operator to submit a reopening plan in accordance with the Connecticut School Reopening Plan — *Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together*. In providing the LEA’s response, it is imperative to work through the Connecticut School Reopening Plan, which elaborates on certain requirements with additional considerations and also includes “GUIDANCE” to consider while developing the unique local approach.

While the submitted plans do not require approval by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), plans will be retained. Receipt and consideration of the plans will allow the CSDE to share best practices and provide technical support for those LEAs who require it.

LEAs should submit a reopening plan that clearly and specifically addresses the requirements outlined in each section below. The CSDE recommends plans be developed inclusive of, but not limited to school-based administrators, teachers and school staff, health and nursing staff, nutrition services, transportation services, boards of education, local health officials, municipal leaders, parents and other relevant stakeholders.

Additional Details:

Plans should be submitted in font size no greater than 11pt, in PDF format.

Due: July 24, 2020

Submit to: SDE.REOPEN@ct.gov

Include the following completed table at the top of your submitted plan:

Date of Submission:	Friday, July 24 th , 2020
LEA Name:	Portland Public Schools
Reopening Plan Point of Contact:	Charles D. Britton
Contact Email:	CBritton@portlandct.us
Contact Phone:	(203) 342-6791
LEA COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison:	Dawn Davis
Liaison Email:	DDavis@portlandct.us

If schools plan to iterate and/or improve their plan as result of newly released guidance and/or changes in their local communities, those should also be submitted to the CSDE at the email listed above.

This document reflects preliminary guidance and considerations as of the date published, and should not be interpreted as mandates, except where there is indication of a requirement. The Connecticut School Reopening Plan — *Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together* may be updated due to the rapidly changing response to this pandemic emergency and ongoing updates from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or changes to federal and state orders and guidance. The Connecticut State Department of Education will provide any such updates to Superintendents.

Clearly and specifically detail how you will address each critical “REQUIREMENT” listed below in your plan. While crafting your responses, it is imperative to work through the Connecticut School Reopening Plan which elaborates on certain requirements with additional considerations and also includes “GUIDANCE” to consider while developing a unique local approach.

Priorities	School Plan
<p>Fall Reopening Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools has developed three plans to support teaching and learning in the 2020-21 school year. The plans are designed to be flexible and respond to COVID-19 transmission rates and advice from state and local health officials.</p> <p>Plan A - Full Reopening (Low Risk of Transmission): If health data and advice from state and local health officials indicates that it is safe, all five of the public schools in Portland will open for full-time, in-person instruction. If schools fully reopen, the Portland Public Schools will implement, where feasible, the guidance suggested in Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together.</p> <p>Plan B – Hybrid (Moderate Risk of Transmission): If health data and the advice from state and local health officials indicates that it is less safe, all five of the public schools in Portland will open for in-person instruction and implement a rotating schedule that reduces student capacity in each school by 50%. If schools open at 50% capacity, the Portland Public School will implement, where feasible, the guidance suggested in Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together.</p> <p>Plan C - Distance Learning (High Risk of Transmission): If health data and the advice of state and local health officials indicates that it is not safe for any level of in-person learning, the district will implement online distance learning for all students.</p> <p>The district will be prepared to transition in real-time between each of the models the same way the district transitions from opening to closing and back in the event of weather-related emergencies.</p> <p>The primary gap involves a lack of clarity regarding what thresholds the district should consider when making the decision to transition between models. It is difficult to complete the reopening plan without guidance about the transmission rate thresholds for reopening. The district understands that the Connecticut</p>

	<p>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. This guidance along with guidance from local and state health officials will be strictly adhered to when the district makes decisions about which model is most appropriate.</p> <p>During the initial school closure in the spring of 2020, the Portland Public School District was able to communicate with all families and ensure that students had access to the technology and connectivity necessary to engage in our distance learning program. The district will ensure that all students have access to hardware, software and connectivity necessary to access the distance learning program if the district transitions to the hybrid or distance learning model. The primary gap that we have identified involves the varying levels of student engagement. The majority of our students were effectively engaged in the distance learning programs. However, despite repeated communications from teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, school psychologists, and paraprofessionals, some students were not fully engaged. Based on feedback from the faculty and staff who attempted to engage the divested students, we are unable to determine any single cause of the lack of engagement. To address this gap in student engagement, we are planning to clearly articulate our plans and expectations to students and families and will attempt to individualize and differentiate our support services in a concerted effort to motivate and engage reluctant learners.</p>
<p>Temporarily Choosing Not to Participate</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for parents and students who may temporarily choose not to participate in the return to school. 	<p>In July 2020, the Portland Public Schools administered a survey to all families that the district serves. Eight (8) percent of our families indicated that students will not return, and twenty-six (26) percent of families indicated that they are uncertain. The district will be prepared to offer families who choose not to participate in in-person learning a distance learning program of studies at all grade levels and in all content areas K-12.</p>
<p>School Liaison, Communications Plans, and Data Collection</p>	

- 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

The Portland Public Schools has designated the district's Director of Student Support Services, Dawn Davis, as the Portland Health and Safety Compliance Liaison. Ms. Davis is the nursing supervisor. Ms. Davis will work collaboratively with the district's head nurse, each school nurse, and the district leadership team to answer questions and concerns about health and safety requirements regarding COVID-19 concerns.

All reopening information is posted on the district website. The information is also communicated to students, families, faculty, and staff through email, text, and voicemail messages via the district's communication system, School Messenger.

Reopening plans will be available in all relevant languages and accessible for those with visual and/or hearing impairments.

The district website will be regularly updated. Changes to policies and protocols prior to reopening and throughout the school year will be communicated via the district's email system and School Messenger. The district will host Zoom town halls to communicate the plan and address concerns. The district will also encourage parents, students, faculty, staff and community stakeholders to communicate concerns directly to building administrators, the superintendent, and/or the compliance liaison officer via email and telephone. All email addresses and phone numbers are posted on the district website.

School Messenger communications will be distributed to all families weekly and as needed when critical information changes. Updates will also be posted on the district website.

The community will be notified of the need to cancel classes or transition between models (e.g., fully reopening to hybrid, fully reopen to distance, hybrid to distance, distance to hybrid, etc...) using the same format for adjusting plans based on weather-related emergencies. This communication includes voicemail, email, and text sent over School Messenger, and updates communicated through local media outlets.

All plans will be up-to-date and visible on the main landing page of the district website.

The district has administered surveys and

updated the community throughout the summer. The district will continue to gather information, data, and feedback from families as we continue to update and execute the reopening plans.

Clearly and specifically detail how you will address each critical “REQUIREMENT” listed below in your plan. While crafting your responses, it is imperative to work through the Connecticut School Reopening Plan which elaborates on certain requirements with additional considerations and also includes “GUIDANCE” to consider while developing a unique local approach.

Operations Plan	School Plan
<p>Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>The district’s health and safety compliance liaison, facilities director, building custodians, principals, and the superintendent visited each classroom and learning space in the district’s five school buildings. If health data and advice from state and local health officials allows the district to open for full, in-person learning (e.g. transmission rates are low), the following facility-related adjustment will be implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where feasible, six feet of space will be created between students’ workstations. • Classrooms and learning areas that cannot sustain six feet of space will not be used. Those teachers and students assigned to the unusable spaces will be relocated to repurposed spaces that are able to accommodate the six feet of space. • Space between teachers and students will be maximized. • Signs and messages related to stopping the spread will be posted and accessible for all students with disabilities and in language appropriate for the school population. • Health and safety protocols will be designed in collaboration with the district health and safety compliance liaison, school nurses, and local health officials. Training modules will be identified and/or created and implemented prior to reopening. • The Portland Board of Education has adjusted the school calendar to provide six days of training for faculty prior to reopening. The first four days of school will be early dismissal days for students, which will give faculty and staff the opportunity to meet in the afternoon to discuss and refine protocols. • All students, faculty and staff will be required to attend training on social distancing, cleaning protocols, and hygiene protocols. The training will be repeated and reinforced as needed throughout the year and made available to

	<p>parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The training will be required for all students, substitute teachers, faculty, and staff who begin the school year after the first day.
<p>Daily Operations</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the key strategy of establishing stable cohorts within the school population, when feasible. Placing students in cohorts is <i>strongly encouraged</i> for grades K-8, and <i>encouraged where feasible</i> 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. 	<p>In grades K-8, building principals are creating class lists and designing schedules that will create stable cohorts of students during the school day. The cohorts will be designed by grade level classes in grades K-4, and homerooms in grades 5-8. The cohorts will average between 15-22 students. The cohorts will not interact with any other cohort during the school day. The cohorts will stay put in a single room for the majority of the school day. Instead of students changing classrooms, all teachers will change classrooms. The “teacher on a cart” model will extend to all specials, electives, and core content areas. Cohorts will be allowed to go outside for mask breaks, physical education, recess, and to receive some instruction. Cohorts will remain intact and will not interact with other cohorts when they go outside.</p> <p>In grades 9-12, it is not feasible to create stable cohorts the same way the cohorts are created in grades K-8. There will be some intermingling of students. To limit intermingling of students, the high school has revised the bell schedule to create instructional blocks. The high school is also modifying how students travel through the building and interact in various locations throughout the building.</p> <p>Clubs, athletics, and before and after school activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Those activities that are able to engage in a distance format</p>

	<p>(e.g. Zoom or Google Meet) will be expected to do so. Those activities that require in-person engagement will be expected to do so in a socially distanced format with masks, hygiene, and sanitizing protocols in place. Those non-athletic activities that are unable to socially distance will not be permitted. All athletic programs will follow guidance articulated by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Association and advice from state and local health officials.</p> <p>The use of facilities by outside groups will be generally discouraged. Requests will be considered on a case-by-base basis. The district is going to make every effort to clear the buildings as quickly and completely as possible at the end of each school day so that the custodial staff can clean and sanitize.</p>
<p>Child Nutrition</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools has developed a plan to provide for all child nutrition needs in each of the three models that have been developed. The school will meet all expectations associated with the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program, and Special Milk Program (SMP) as applicable. The district will continue to determine eligibility for and make available free and reduced-price meals and snacks and free milk to all eligible students. The district will comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) regulations and policies for school meals and milk including the meal pattern requirements.</p>

Clearly and specifically detail how you will address each critical “REQUIREMENT” listed below in your plan. While crafting your responses, it is imperative to work through the Connecticut School Reopening Plan which elaborates on certain requirements with additional considerations and also includes “GUIDANCE” to consider while developing a unique local approach.

Operations Plan, continued	School Plan
<p>Transportation</p>	
<p>Low Transmission Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>Moderate Transmission Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>The district has not received guidance that identifies what is considered low, moderate, and high transmission risk. Once that guidance is received, the Portland Public Schools will use the guide to determine the extent to which the district is able to meet all statutory requirements for providing transportation to any families who need transportation to and from school.</p> <p>The district administered a survey to all families in the Portland Public Schools. Responses indicate that sixty-six percent of parents will require transportation. Thirty-four percent of parents indicated that they would provide transportation to school. We anticipate that this will reduce capacity on the district’s busses.</p> <p>In the event of low transmission risk, as part of the reopening plan, the district will communicate expectations and train students on transportation protocol. The training will articulate the requirement that passengers wear masks during transit, prior to boarding the bus, and until they are completely off the bus. Students will be expected to load the bus from the back row to the front row, and then unload the bus in a controlled manner from the front row to the back row. Bus capacity will be carefully monitored and, when feasible, students will be expected to spread out and occupy empty seats to the maximum extent possible. Family members will be seated together and, if feasible, non-family members will be spaced six feet apart utilizing alternating diagonal seating. Buses will be sanitized at the end of each school day.</p> <p>If the transmission risk is elevated, all protocols established in the low transmission risk will continue to be implemented, and where feasible the district will operate buses at reduced capacity. We expect that if transmission rates are elevated, the district will move to the hybrid model. In the hybrid model, student capacity in the district will be reduced by 50%, which will reduce demand for transportation by fifty percent. If transmission rates are high risk, the district will move to the distance learning model, which will eliminate the need for</p>

	<p>transportation.</p> <p>The district will consult with state and local health officials in the event of elevated transmission risk. Transportation will be a central consideration in all decisions relative to moving from full, in-person instruction to the hybrid (reduced 50% capacity), and, if necessary, to distance learning.</p>
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Health Practices and Protocols	School Plan
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools has engaged in numerous endeavors designed to deepen our understanding of evolving public health policies and protocols. This endeavor has been complicated by the amount of information, the constantly changing nature of the information, and the occasionally inconsistent messaging from officials. At this time, the Portland Public Schools has defaulted to CDC guidelines, CT Health Department recommendations, recommendations from the Chatham Health District, and the Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together to design the policies and procedure articulated in the district's reopening plan.</p> <p>Communication, training, and the articulation of logistics and protocols designed to keep children, faculty and staff safe is the centerpiece of Portland's reopening plan. We have set aside time at the beginning of the year for training of faculty and staff. Faculty and staff will train our students with developmentally appropriate methods and will endeavor to implement protocol and policy throughout the reopening process and school year. Specifically, training and protocol will emphasize the importance of social distancing, frequent hand washing and use of sanitizer, use of face coverings that cover the nose and mouth, respiratory and</p>
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	<p>cough etiquette, and advanced cleaning/disinfecting of surfaces.</p> <p>The district will maintain an inventory of 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 trash cans. The material will be provided to faculty, staff and students and deployed in a concerted effort to ensure that all health and safety protocols are implemented.</p>
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Clearly and specifically detail how you will address each critical “REQUIREMENT” listed below in your plan. While crafting your responses, it is imperative to work through the Connecticut School Reopening Plan which elaborates on certain requirements with additional considerations and also includes “GUIDANCE” to consider while developing a unique local approach.

Health Practices and Protocols, continued	School Plan
<p>Reporting Illnesses and Addressing Vulnerable Populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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. 	<p>The district has developed a self-assessment health screen. All students will be trained in how to use the self-assessment. Parents will be trained how to use the assessment health screen with younger children. All students and families will be encouraged to use the health assessment screen to self-screen prior to coming to school. Any students or parents who have concerns about any of the indicators outlined in the health screener will be expected to stay home.</p> <p>In addition to the screener, the school will communicate school-wide sick protocols, including signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and temperature thresholds requiring students, faculty and staff to stay home.</p> <p>All students, families, faculty and staff will be instructed to immediately notify school nurses or administrators if they have COVID-19 related symptoms, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or have had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population.</p> <p>If the school receives a report of a known contact, the school will immediately inform the health and safety compliance liaison and/or the superintendent. The health and safety compliance liaison and/or superintendent will immediately contact local health officials and request guidance. The superintendent will take action up to and including closing schools or the district and transitioning to distance learning until the school and district is deemed safe to return by local health officials.</p>
<p>Social Distancing</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>Where feasible, the district will 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. All classrooms will be configured to create six feet of distance between workstations. Faculty and staff will encourage students to maintain the distancing requirements.</p>
<p>Use of Face Coverings, Masks, and Face Shields</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt policies requiring use of face coverings for all students and staff when they are inside the school building, with certain exceptions listed below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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. 	<p>The Portland Board of Education is reviewing a policy requiring use of face coverings for all students and staff when they are inside the school building, with certain exceptions listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>In a recent survey, eighty-nine percent of families indicated that they would provide face coverings for their students. The district will maintain an inventory and provide face coverings for any students, faculty or staff who request a face covering/mask.</p>
<p>Health Monitoring Plan</p>	<p>School Plan</p>
<p>Planning and Distribution of Information</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>The district will not provide daily screening of students, faculty and staff. However, the district will be prepared if, at the recommendation of state and local departments of public health, screenings are initiated based on local factors such as confirmed cases or known exposures. If required, school nurses will conduct the screening prior to the start of the school day. School nurses will also be prepared to assess students, faculty, and staff who present with COVID-related symptoms.</p> <p>The district will monitor faculty, staff and student absenteeism and track the reasons for the absences. Absences that suggest the spread of COVID-19 will be tracked and reported to the Chatham Health District.</p> <p>If the district implements the hybrid learning plan, student attendance will be monitored for in-person learning, and participation will be monitored for distance learning.</p> <p>If the district implements distance learning, student participation will be monitored.</p>

Clearly and specifically detail how you will address each critical “REQUIREMENT” listed below in your plan. While crafting your responses, it is imperative to work through the Connecticut School Reopening Plan which elaborates on certain requirements with additional considerations and also includes “GUIDANCE” to consider while developing a unique local approach.

Containment Plan	School Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>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.</i> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools will carefully review the forthcoming tiered system and decision-making approach recommended by the Connecticut Department of Health. The superintendent will rely on the decision-making guide and advice from local health officials in the Chatham Health District when making decisions about school/district closure, and which of the three models are safe to implement.</p> <p>The Portland Public Schools will immediately respond if an individual exhibits 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 response will include the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training faculty, staff and students to identify the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. • Creation of a response team in each school. The team will include the building principal, school nurse, teachers, and administrative assistants. All members of the teams will have clearly defined roles and responsibilities to execute if any faculty, staff, or student exhibits signs and symptoms of COVID-19. • Training school nurses, building principals, and members of the response team on the response protocol will be provided prior to the start of the school year. The training shall include: a) Isolating any faculty, staff, or students who exhibit signs or symptoms of COVID-19. b) Dismissing individuals exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19 from school. c) Ensuring faculty, staff, or students exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19 are safely and expeditiously removed from the building. d) If individuals are not able to be safely removed from the building, contacting emergency medical services and requesting an ambulance. e) Documenting all areas of the building and individuals in the building where the individual exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19 interacted. f)

	<p>Maintaining confidentiality of all individuals involved while concurrently taking appropriate steps to notify contact tracers in the local department of health. g) Communicating the situation to Chatham Health District officials, the district's health and compliance liaison, and the superintendent of schools. h) Following up with individuals exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and all individuals who interacted with the individual who exhibited signs and symptoms of COVID-19 to determine time and conditions for readmittance.</p> <p>The Portland Public Schools has created an isolation room in each building. Individuals who exhibit signs and symptoms of COVID-19 will be placed in isolation rooms until they can be safely removed from school.</p>
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Cancellation of Classes, Remote Learning, and Reopening Plans	School Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>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.</i> • 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools will carefully review the tiered system and decision-making approach recommended by the Connecticut Department of Health. The superintendent will rely on the decision-making guide and advice from local health officials in the Chatham Health District when making decisions about school/district closure, and which of the three models are safe to implement.</p> <p>The district has developed three models to support teaching and learning. The models support 100% in-person learning if the infections rates are considered low risk, reduced capacity hybrid learning if infections rates are considered moderate risk, and distance learning if infection rates are considered high risk. At this time, it is unclear what the infections rates consist of relative to the low, moderate and high rates. The district will defer to local and state health officials when determining the models.</p> <p>The district will be prepared to implement the various models in real-time using the same process that the district uses to respond to weather-related cancellations and reopening.</p> <p>Should the district decide to transition from</p>

	<p>100% in-person to hybrid; 100% in-person to distance learning; or hybrid to distance learning, the superintendent will notify and consult with the CSDE.</p> <p>The district has developed a communication plan and clear policies for faculty and staff. If the district moves between models, faculty and staff will be prepared to transition teaching and learning models in real-time. Faculty and staff will be expected to maintain a consistent continuum of instruction in the event of short-term or long-term transitions between the three models.</p> <p>All students in grades K-12 will be provided the devices necessary to transition from all in-person to hybrid or full distance learning. Teachers will communicate the process and expectations to students and families prior to the start of the school year and reinforce the expectations as circumstances unfold.</p>
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Clearly and specifically detail how you will address each critical “REQUIREMENT” listed below in your plan. While crafting your responses, it is imperative to work through the Connecticut School Reopening Plan which elaborates on certain requirements with additional considerations and also includes “GUIDANCE” to consider while developing a unique local approach.

Cancellation of Classes, Remote Learning, and Reopening Plans, continued	School Plan
<p>Future Planning for Remote Blended Learning</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared to provide remote blended learning opportunities immediately upon cancellation of in-school classes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools is prepared to transition to distance learning in a hybrid model during which 50% of the students will be remote, and full distance learning during which 100% of students will be remote. The hybrid and distance learning models will provide students the same grade level and content area experiences facilitated by the same highly qualified educators who students interact with during the full, in-person learning model.</p> <p>Feedback from families, students, teachers and school leaders is being incorporated into the design of the hybrid and distance learning models. During the month of August, curriculum writing teams will convene and design the curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices for the hybrid and distance learning models. The teams will also identify or develop the resources and materials used to facilitate the online learning. These adjustment to curriculum, instruction, and assessment will be communicated to students and families at the start of the school year.</p> <p>The Portland Public School will be prepared to support students who have extended absences. The district is designing a distance learning program for families who choose not to return for in-person learning at the start of the 20-21 school year. If a student experiences an extended absence, he or she will be placed in the distance learning program. This will be communicated to parents at the start of the school year and again if and when a student experiences a long-term absence.</p>

Academics	School Plan
<p>Special Education</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools is preparing to begin the school year with a plan that recognizes the district's obligation to implement provisions outlined under the IDEA for FAPE in the LRE. In the 100% in-person model, the district will be able to implement all support services, and facilitate all accommodations and modifications outlined in each student's individualized education plan for those students who choose to return to school in-person. The district is working through the planning and placement team process to consider and redesign individualized education plans for those students who choose to participate in distance learning.</p> <p>The district will treat students eligible for special education and other special populations as general education students first. If students with disabilities are unable to access the reopening plan, the district will return to the planning and placement team and design individualized and alternative means of re-entry based upon student need, present levels of functioning, developmental needs, and student/parent input.</p> <p>The district will not make programming decisions based on students' disability category. The nature and/or severity of a student's disability will be considered in the context of a planning and placement team's consideration of the design of the individualized education plan.</p> <p>Planning and placement teams will invite school nurses and, if necessary, pediatricians, to contribute suggestions and recommendations relative to masks, face coverings, handwashing/sanitizing, and/or other social distancing requirements. If masks, face coverings, handwashing/sanitizing, and/or other social distancing requirements interfere with appropriate services or need to be removed for any reason, the planning and placement team will design mitigation strategies.</p>

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Academics, continued	School Plan
<p>English Learners (ELs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools understands that like all students English Learners (EL) are entitled to protections afforded under all applicable state and federal statutes. EL students will be provided access to all general education academic programming in all three of the teaching and learning models outlined in the reopening plan, including supplemental EL instructional programming.</p> <p>The district will communicate with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in a language that they understand.</p> <p>The district will provide EL students identified as student with disabilities all supports for EL needs as well as needs associated with the disability.</p>

Clearly and specifically detail how you will address each critical “REQUIREMENT” listed below in your plan. While crafting your responses, it is imperative to work through the Connecticut School Reopening Plan which elaborates on certain requirements with additional considerations and also includes “GUIDANCE” to consider while developing a unique local approach.

Family and Student Engagement	School Plan
<p>Family Support and Communication</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools will continue to regularly communicate with families. Prior to the pandemic, each principal sent a Friday email to parents, the district maintained a website with up-to-date information, and the district communicated with parents via email, text, and voice messages as needed. The district will continue to use these communication methods to inform families of the district’s reopening plan and any adjustments that are made to the plans.</p> <p>The district is posting and updating reopening information on the school website. Parents and students are also represented on the district’s reopening committee. The district is preparing a series of Zoom town hall meetings to review the district’s reopening plan. Details of the plan will be communicated at the building level by building principals and at the classroom level by individual teachers.</p> <p>Families will be provided the opportunity to provide feedback via surveys and through normal methods associated with email and phone calls.</p>
<p>Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Mental Health</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a detailed plan to reengage 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. 	<p>The district is developing a comprehensive plan for supporting the social-emotional and mental health needs of Portland students. The district has developed a K-12 mental health team comprised of counselors, social workers, psychologists, clinicians, member of the community health team, teachers, and administrators. The team is chaired by the district’s Director of Student Support Services. The team will meet throughout the month of August to review current SEL supports and identify enhanced practices necessary to support Portland students. Specifically, the team will develop a plan to gather baseline data on student social-emotional and mental health needs. The data will be collected from parents and through a universal screener. The data will be reviewed at the building level and used to design age-appropriate interventions.</p>

<p>After-school Programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>After-school programs will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Those after school activities that can conduct the activities remotely (e.g. Zoom or Google Meet) will be expected to do so. Those activities that must meet in-person will be required to maintain social distancing and mask requirements. Those activities that must meet in person and cannot maintain social distancing requirements will be cancelled.</p> <p>Decisions about athletics will be guided by advice from the Connecticut Association of Interscholastic Athletics and input from health officials with the Chatham Health District. We anticipate that some (or all) fall and winter athletics will be cancelled or subject to modifications.</p> <p>Community group requests to use district facilities will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In general, after school activities by outside groups will be cancelled to prevent contamination and allow for cleaning and sanitizing of the buildings.</p>
<p>Career And Technical Education</p>	<p>School Plan</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan for cleaning and disinfecting shared equipment in the shop or lab, before and after each use. 	<p>All career and technical education teachers are meeting this summer to redesign curriculum and related programming. The new programming will eliminate the sharing of equipment and materials and reduce the need for students to work in close proximity. This will dramatically change the nature and scope of CTE instruction and programming. All CTE instruction and programming will create the physical space necessary for students to social distance.</p> <p>In those instances where equipment is used, the equipment will be cleaned before and after each use.</p>

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Staffing and Personnel	School Plan
<p>Certification and Personnel Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>The Portland Public Schools issued a survey to all families, and a second survey to all faculty and staff.</p> <p>The faculty and staff survey was designed by the district’s board counsel. The survey outlined EEOC and ADA guidelines that asked teachers to identify if they are in a high-risk group or they reside with someone in a high-risk group. As of today, the district has identified nine teachers who fall into one of the identified categories.</p> <p>The family survey asked families to identify if they will not send their student back to school, and/or are uncertain. As of today, we have seventy students spread out across grades K-12 who have indicated they will not return to school. We have another 200-250 families who indicated they are uncertain at this time.</p> <p>Our goal will be to create two programs in the fall – an in-person program, and a distance learning program. The distance learning program will be staffed by the faculty who have identified as being in the high-risk category. This faculty will provide distance learning for the students who do not return. Based on our initial analysis, we have determined that certification requirements in grades K-6 align between students not returning and teachers in the high-risk category. We are still analyzing the content area requirements for the secondary grades. In some cases, we may need to either redeploy teachers from the in-person learning program or seek certification waivers from the CSDE. The ultimate goal is to ensure that all students in both the in-person and distance learning programs and instructed by highly qualified teachers.</p> <p>The district uses Source for Teachers for substitute teacher needs. The district has been in touch with the administrator at Source for Teachers. We anticipate that there will be a shortage of substitute teachers state-wide as all districts begin the year and work to accommodate what we believe will be increased absences among faculty, staff and students. We will work creatively and in partnership with</p>

	<p>CEA-Portland to provide coverage for all courses.</p>
<p>Professional Development</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>The Portland Board of Education modified the 20-21 school year calendar. Student days have been reduced from 181 to 178 and the first day of school has been moved from August 27th to September 1st. This adjustment was made in order to provide six full days of professional development at the beginning of the year.</p> <p>The district is in the process of designing the professional development plan for the first six days of professional development at the end of August. The district is planning follow-up professional development during the additional three full days and twelve partial days of professional development outlined in the district calendar. The professional development plan that is being developed will prioritize the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A deep dive into the implications of Portland’s reopening plan. 2. Identifying signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and responding when signs and symptoms are identified. 3. Health protocols and related logistics. 4. Hygiene practices. 5. Appropriate use of PPE. 6. Reporting illness. 7. Supporting the social-emotional and mental health needs of students. 8. Identifying and responding to learning gaps related to COVID learning loss and summer learning loss. 9. Modifications to curriculum, instruction, and assessment necessary to implement social distancing requirements. 10. Planning for transition to the hybrid model and distance learning model. 11. Instructional technology necessary to support teaching and learning in the distance learning model. 12. Communication strategies necessary to support teaching and learning in the hybrid and distance learning models.