

Dear North Tonawanda City School District Families:

As we move forward with a reopening for schools in September 2020, we have many different guidelines to follow and adhere to. The following is a list of some of the frequently asked questions and concerns that have been presented by staff and families in the North Tonawanda community:

General:

- **Can I choose remote learning for my child?**
 - The North Tonawanda City School District has decided to offer a remote learning opportunity for ALL students who are interested. When parents and guardians are making this decision, it is important to note, the choice is for the first 10 weeks (extend through November 6, 2020) due to the precision needed for class sizes, bus routing, and teaching schedules to simultaneously support two comprehensive school district learning environments across grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. Families who would like remote learning for their child/children, must commit to full remote learning by Friday, August 14th. Please be aware that due to the unique nature of remote learning, your child's schedule may look different than it would if your child was enrolled in a face-to-face or hybrid option
- **When does my child start school for the 20-21 school year?**
 - Thursday, September 10th for children with the last names L-Z and Monday September 14th for children with the last names A-K.
- **Is there a full remote model?**
 - Yes! The teacher that your child would have had been assigned will post lessons and updates daily and these will also be accessed by the students in the hybrid model when they have nonattendance days.
- **Temperature checks?**
 - We are asking everyone to do their part. Please take your child's temperature each morning. In addition, each staff member and child will be temperature checked upon entering the buildings. If anyone has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, they will be sent home.
- **How long till school is back to normal?**
 - We are starting with **10 weeks** of the Hybrid model. After 5 weeks we will reevaluate the system and see what needs to change or be added. It is important to note that if NY state regulations require social distancing this model may continue well after 10 weeks.
- **Once a person gets a positive test result to COVID what happens?**
 - The department of health (DOH) is notified first to start contact tracing. Once the DOH or the parent or the staff member notifies the district we will be doing a general global call letting you know which buildings have a positive COVID case. After a positive COVID test, the person and the family that they live with will be required to quarantine for 14 days.
- **What is Pre-K doing?**

- They will be following a hybrid model that mirrors the district. Parents can also opt for full remote learning as well. They are currently working on class lists and will be contacting parents on the option that works best for them by the end of August.
- **School Supplies?**
 - Masks have been added for all, but the district will provide those as well. A full supply list for each grade K-8 is on the district web page at www.ntschoools.org.

Facilities:

- **Will students and staff be trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene?**
 - YES. NYSED and DOH guidelines require that all students and staff be trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene. Mandatory professional development will be provided to staff. Teachers will instruct students.
- **Will additional sanitizing equipment and opportunities be available to ensure cleanliness and disinfection?**
 - YES. Our protocol requires that logs are kept to document the date, time, scope, and frequency of cleaning and disinfection. This process will be managed by our Director of Facilities and Operations with the engineering, custodial, and cleaning staff in each building. Proper training of our staff on appropriate equipment use and disinfecting solutions will be conducted and will continue in the future.
- **Will restrooms and other areas be cleaned and sanitized?**
 - YES. Restrooms and other high touch surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized multiple times each day, including times of high-volume use/exposure.
- **What ventilation adjustments have been made to increase the access to outdoor air?**
 - Our district will follow the guidance that suggests the increase of ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining health and safety protocols. Filters will be checked and changed as often as needed.
- **Will water fountains be used for traditional individual use?**
 - NO. All students and staff will be encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle to school. Water fountains and bottle filling stations will be used to refill these bottles. If a student or staff member does not have a reusable water bottle, the district will provide a single use cup.
- **Will the track and fitness center be open and accessible to the public?**
 - NO. The use of the track and fitness center will NOT be available for public use at this time.
- **What will happen if there is a positive case of COVID-19?**
 - All staff and students will follow NYSDOH and CDC guidance related to testing positive for COVID-19.

Operations:

- **Can middle/high school students enter the building early?**
 - NO.
- **How will my child exit the building each day?**
 - Buildings will stagger dismissal/departure of students to reduce density. Students will be dismissed and directed to move immediately to their buses. Multiple student dismissal locations will be established to minimize potential congregation

of students and move students outside as quickly as possible. Students will wear face coverings throughout the dismissal process as well as on buses.

- **Will parents be allowed to enter the building?**
 - Parents and visitors will be encouraged to NOT enter the building. If a parent or visitor must enter the building, they will be screened and if cleared may enter the building briefly wearing a face mask/covering to conduct their necessary business.
- **Will fire drills and lockdown drills remain mandatory?**
 - YES. Fire drills and lockdown drills are required per NYS. Processes for these drills will be modified to adhere to social distancing guidelines.
- **Will lockers be used at NTI?**
 - Lockers will be used in a limited manner at arrival and dismissal only.
- **Will lockers be used in the middle/high school?**
 - LOCKERS WILL HOUSE COATS AND SUCH BUT NOT VISITED DURING PASSING.

- **How will people be screened to enter the building?**
 - As per recommended NYS guidance, the staff and students/parents will screen themselves for symptoms before leaving their residence. The District will send the screening questionnaire daily. In addition, a personal health screening of symptoms, including a temperature check must be completed before leaving your residence. If any staff, student or parent answers YES to any of the below questions, he/she must remain home and NOT report to the District.
 - *Have you (for staff) or your child (for parents) experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including having symptoms of lower respiratory illness such as a cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or sore throat or a fever greater than 100° F or 38.0 C?*
 - *Have you or your child knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19?*
 - *Have you or your child tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?*
 - *Have you or your child traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 as per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days?*

If you answered "No" to ALL of these questions, please arrive at your school and fully participate in your daily activities.

If you answered "Yes" to ANY of the following questions you must:

- Remain home and do NOT report to school
 - Contact your school to report your absence using normal protocols
 - Contact your physician to report your condition and concern
- In addition, each staff member and child will be temperature checked upon entering the buildings. If anyone has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, they will be sent home.

- **What social distancing practices will be required to mitigate transmission risk?**
 - Students and staff will be required to remain six feet away from one another OR be separated by a barrier. Students and staff will be required to wear a mask/face covering **and** perform social distancing measures. Students and staff will be permitted to take mask breaks as designated by the teacher.
- **Should I bring my own face mask/covering or will the district provide a face mask/covering?**
 - All students and employees are required to have a face mask/covering when in school. Each person is encouraged to bring his/her own face mask/covering. On the rare occasions when a person does not have a mask/covering, the district will provide a mask/covering to that person.
- **What if my child cannot return to school due to an ADA compliant reason?**
 - The District will provide information regarding medical conditions accepted as high risk for contracting/being impacted by COVID-19 and potentially eligible for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations as per the employee's/student's physician.
 - All students and staff seeking accommodations for potential high-risk medical conditions will follow District procedures, as per district processes for ADA accommodation request.
 - Documentation from physicians will be considered and proper PPE will be provided to students and staff to accommodate the documented condition.
- **What happens if schools are closed by the Governor due to a COVID-19 outbreak?**
 - The Governor has determined parameters for school closing due to COVID-19. Our district will follow the mandated protocols as defined by the Governor.
- **What is the process if a student is showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?**
 - If a student comes to school and displays symptoms, he/she will immediately be escorted to the isolation room to be screened by the school nurse. If the student has symptoms, the nurse will quarantine the student in a designated, supervised room until picked up. Parents will be encouraged to arrive as quickly as possible and to contact their physician.
- **When should I keep my child home from school?**
 - If your child has answered yes to the daily screening questionnaire provided by the district, your child should remain home. With all other illness or family-based issues we ask parents to use their discretion as they know their child best, or contact your primary care physician and follow their recommended guidance.
- **Will the Boys & Girls Club afterschool program continue?**
 - Yes. Please see their reopening plan.
- **Where can I find resources to support mental health, behavioral, and social emotional support services?**
 - Resources to support mental health, behavior and emotional support is located on our district website. You may also contact your child's school to connect with any member of our Student Support Service Team.
- **Will the school be testing students and staff for COVID-19?**
 - NO. Department of Health guidelines do not recommend the testing of students and staff to engage in face-to-face instruction.
- **What should I do if I am concerned that my child has been exposed to someone who has or may have COVID-19?**
 - Follow CDC, DOH guidelines and contact your primary care physician.

Instruction:

- **What does synchronous AND asynchronous learning mean?**
 - **Asynchronous Learning**—Asynchronous learning is when learners participate in an online learning course at different times. Asynchronous learning allows learners to go through a course at their own pace and on their own schedule.
 - **Synchronous Learning**— Synchronous learning is when learners participate in an online learning course at the same time but in different locations. Synchronous learning allows learners to interact with the instructor and other participants.
- **Will students be sharing materials in classrooms?**
 - NO. Classroom materials and manipulatives will be used by one individual only. Other items, such as textbooks and instructional games, will be avoided in most circumstances. Students will be encouraged to bring their own classroom supplies for their individual use. Students engaging in remote instruction will be assigned an iPad for grades K-12.
- **Will students be allowed to work closely together in groups?**
 - NO. In most cases students will not be working in teams or small groups where they would be seated closely together. Every opportunity for social distancing will be utilized.
- **Will students be allowed to carry a backpack or other bag between classes?**
 - YES. Students will be permitted to use a backpack or other bag to carry instructional materials/supplies to avoid using lockers and other areas that cause students to gather.
- **When can a student remove his/her mask in a classroom?**
 - Students will remove his/her mask at the direction of their teacher or building administrator during designated mask break times.
- **Will every classroom have plastic barriers to separate student desks?**
 - NO.
- **Will students travel in the hallway between every class change?**
 - At the middle/high school, schedules will be created for students and teachers that reduces the number of times and duration of time that students travel between classrooms or are in situations of mass congregation with others.
- **Will students be allowed to get up and move around the classroom regularly?**
 - Due to our efforts to reduce density, social distancing, and other transmission mitigating efforts, students will NOT be allowed to move around the classroom as in the past.
- **Can fans be used in the classroom?**
 - NO.

PE/Athletics:

- **Will locker rooms be used for students?**
 - NO
- **What clothing/footwear will be needed for PE classes?**
 - During days when students have PE, they should arrive at school in clothing that is comfortable and allows them to actively take part in PE. Students will still be required to wear sneakers during all PE classes. Dress shoes, heels, boots, sandals, flip flops, and any backless shoes will NOT be allowed to be worn

during PE class. Students may change in and out of their sneakers before and after PE class in the gymnasium. Students should wear sneakers on the day of PE or be prepared to carry them throughout the school day in their backpack.

- **Will PE classes be outdoors often?**
 - YES. PE classes will utilize outdoor space when possible and appropriate for instruction.
- **Will PE classes include written work, study, and classroom lessons?**
 - YES. All PE classes will continue to maintain current curriculum while maintaining social distancing guidelines for all PE classes while students are taking part in physical activity.
- **What are the social distancing parameters for students participating in PE?**
 - Students will maintain 12 feet of separation from other students and teachers during all PE classes while engaging in physical activity. Wearing a mask will NOT be required during the PE class period while students engage in physical activity and maintain their 12 feet of separation.
- **How can students have access to water to drink?**
 - Students will be encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school and PE classes. Fountains can be used for the refilling of personal water bottles.
- **Are sports seasons scheduled for student participation?**
 - The Fall sports season is scheduled to begin on September 21. Further guidance regarding the sports' seasons will be provided by the NYSPHSAA.
- **Will fields, courts, and facilities be open and accessible for spectators?**
 - As per the guidance from the NYSPHSAA and Section VI, during an athletic event, only two spectators per athlete in a socially distant manner will be allowed and will have designated socially distant viewing areas for games and matches.
- **Will fields, courts, and facilities be open and accessible for community members?**
 - NO. As further guidance is released, this will be reviewed and updated.

Performing Arts:

- **Will concerts, recitals, and other performances be scheduled and held?**
 - NO. At this time, the District requires further guidance. Instrumental lessons and music classes will continue to encourage fine arts. Concerts are on hold until further guidance from NYSED and DOH.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

- **Will student clubs and events be held before or after school for participation?**
 - NO. The only programming after school will be Boys and Girls Club at NTMS

Food Service:

- **Will my child eat breakfast in the cafeteria each day?**
 - Students in grades K-6 will eat breakfast in their classrooms. Students in grades 7-8 and in 9-12 will eat in the cafeteria using social distancing.
- **Will my child eat lunch in the cafeteria each day?**
 - Students in grades K-3 will eat lunch in their classrooms. Students in grades 4-6, 7-8 and in 9-12 will eat in the cafeteria or using social distancing.
- **How will you separate children in the cafeteria while eating?**
 - Students will be separated by social distancing (six feet apart) OR by use of available barriers.
- **Will the cafeteria be cleaned between each lunch period?**

- YES. The cafeteria including high touch surfaces will be cleaned between each lunch session.
- **Will typical meal options, including served hot lunches, be available?**
 - Student meals will be in compliance with the NYS Child Nutrition Program requirements.
- **Will students be allowed to move around the cafeteria during the lunch period?**
 - Due to our efforts to reduce density, social distancing, and other transmission mitigating efforts, students will NOT be allowed to move around the cafeteria in the same manner as in the past.

Transportation:

- **Will my child have to wear a mask on the bus?**
 - YES. The NYS Education Department and the Department of Health guidance requires that ALL persons on a school bus wear a mask at all times.
- **Is there a maximum number of students allowed on each bus?**
 - The district will adhere to the NYS DOH, NYSED and any further guidance from the governor. Parents/legal guardians are encouraged to drop off or walk students to school to reduce density on buses.
- **What happens if my child arrives at the bus stop without a mask?**
 - It is required that all students arrive at the bus stop with their own mask.
- **Will my children be allowed to sit together on the bus?**
 - YES. Children from the same household will be seated together.
- **How and when will the bus be cleaned and disinfected?**
 - Every school evening each bus will be thoroughly disinfected and sanitized. Buses will also be wiped down after each bus run during the day including high contact areas.