

July 17, 2020

## Waltham Families

Waltham School District assembled a Transition Team, made up of several multi-disciplinary staff members to take on the task of working through the ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education) and IDPH (Illinois Department of Public Health) Guidelines to develop a practical reopening plan for our district. The following is our 2020/2021 Transition Plan and we are asking that you please review this document and develop questions you would like to have addressed by the team. Access [this link](#) to forward your questions. The Transition Team will then review your questions and develop an FAQ. There will be a virtual informational session to address your questions by the Transition Team Monday, July 27th at 6:00pm. The invitation link is the following: <https://meet.google.com/gbx-buni-sfw>

We realize that this plan does not begin to answer all of the questions and concerns you as caregivers are experiencing. We also understand that this plan is not ideal for each of our individual families, but we have worked diligently to address the issues before us along with giving families some choice in the upcoming school year. After much deliberation, we are recommending this plan for now but we will continue to work to make adjustments as needed. This plan is a fluid document and our team is prepared to revise the school reopening plan as more information becomes available from ISBE, IDPH, CDC, parent surveys, staff surveys, and other school district's plans.

Please know we are working to do our best to provide quality education while addressing the health and safety needs of all students and staff. We thank you for your feedback, patience, and understanding during these extraordinary times.

*Transition Team*

**Waltham Elementary School District 185**  
**School Re-Opening Transition Plan**

**Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Requirements**

Executive Order 2020-40, filed on June 4, 2020, allowed schools to reopen for in-person instruction in Phase 3. In-person instruction is strongly encouraged in Phase 4; however, it is critical to note that this does not signify a return to pre-pandemic operations. Appropriate social distancing, face coverings, enhanced sanitation measures, and other accommodations will be necessary to ensure the safety of students, staff, and their families. During Phase 4, IDPH guidelines will:

- Require use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face masks,, at all times within the school building, except while eating and during band, even when social distance is maintained.
  - All individuals in a school building must wear a face covering unless they have a medical contraindication, are under 2 years of age, have trouble breathing, or are unconscious, incapacitated, or unable to remove the face covering without assistance.
  - Face coverings are not required outside if social distance is maintained (if individuals remain 6 feet apart from each other).
- Prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space;
- Require social distancing be observed, as much as possible;
- Require that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings; and
- Require an increase in schoolwide cleaning and disinfection.

**Communication & Coordination**

- We developed a transition team of 8 staff members. This team has met multiple times during the past 3 weeks to discuss the logistics of reopening our school building for student instruction.
- Parent survey - Approximately 80% of respondents prefer in-person instruction.
- Staff survey - 88% of our staff is comfortable returning for in-person instruction.
  - The majority of concerns on both surveys were in regards to the wearing of masks.

**Scheduling**

- Blended Learning Approach - In-person instruction will be provided from 8:20-12:30 5 days a week and remote learning will be provided from 1:30-3:20 5 days a week. Families who are not comfortable with sending their children to the school building can opt into full-time remote learning for the first 12 weeks of school.
  - K-4 Core Academics - The in-person instruction will focus on core academic subjects (reading, writing, math) and all other subjects will be taught remotely.
  - 5-8 Core Academics - The in-person instruction will focus on core academic subjects (reading, writing, math, science, and social studies\*) and all other subjects will be taught remotely.
    - \*5th grade social studies will be taught remotely
  - K-4 Specials - Classroom teachers will collaborate with Art, Music, STEM, and PE to enhance teaching of core curriculum. Specials classes will also be taught remotely.
  - 5-8 Specials - Art, Music, STEM, and PE will be taught remotely.
- School buses will continue to run daily routes before and after school. Students will have assigned seats and be socially distanced on the bus.
- For parents choosing to transport their own children, the district will ask for a commitment for the entire trimester.

## Teaching and Learning

- Families will be required to enroll and commit to one of the following options for the 1st trimester; blended learning, remote learning, or homeschooling (unless a COVID related illness occurs)
  - Blended Learning
    - In-person learning in mornings and remote learning in the afternoon
  - Remote Learning
    - All learning will take place remotely with teacher developed lessons.
    - Teacher's lesson will be available online
    - Teachers' hours of availability will only be during regular school hours (8:00-3:30)
    - Attendance and grades will be required
    - Chromebooks will be made available
  - Homeschooling
    - Student(s) will be unenrolled from Waltham School and parents will be responsible for all curriculum.
- Grades will be taken and will count as if school were functioning normally. Unlike last spring, students will have no prior grade to maintain and must work to earn their grade.
- Students will remain in homeroom for learning and teachers will move between classes
- Teachers and staff will maintain social distance as much as possible throughout the building.
- Special education, 504, and MTSS (old RtI) students are a priority therefore exceptions will be made to address their plans.
- Teachers are encouraged to utilize outdoor space for instruction as much as possible which will create more mask-free time while maintaining social distance.
- Given there are so many unknowns during this pandemic, staff will be prepared to transition to full-time remote learning should the state require it.

## Health and Wellness

- **District is awaiting information from ISBE and IDPH regarding the exact guidance for returning to school after a Covid-related illness, but the following are examples:**
  - **Suggested Flowcharts for COVID19 Symptoms from district law firm, Robbins/Schwartz**
    - [Return to School/Work Flowchart](#)
    - [Families First Coronavirus Response Act \(FFCRA\) Leave Flow Chart](#)
- Designated quarantine space located in the office
- Student symptom screening by school staff twice daily; before entering and leaving the building
- Staff symptom screening will be self-certification at home along with a fever check upon arrival to school
- Multiple outdoor breaks/activities where students will be mask-free and socially distanced will be scheduled during each school day
- Frequent hand washing and sanitizing during the school day
- Contact Tracing - records will be kept of all entering/exiting of rooms in the school throughout the day
- Social/emotional checks will be provided for support as needed to students, staff, and families
- Social Worker will have classroom check-ins on a regular basis.

## **Facilities and Operations**

- Blended learning approach will allow time for cleaning and disinfecting building after student dismissal
- Frequently touched surfaces will be sanitized frequently throughout the school day
- All staff will be trained on proper cleaning protocols
- Entrances and exits will be used strategically to ensure social distancing during student arrival and dismissal from school.
- No school supplies/equipment will be shared within the classrooms or outdoor spaces.
- Due to limited storage capacity, further conversations are being held regarding school supply lists.
- Lockers and cubbies will not be used during the school day.
- Locker rooms will not be used nor will students change for any activity periods.
- All school sponsored sports and activities are on hold until further notice.

## **Technology**

- Technology access survey will be sent to families to assess needs
- Chromebooks will be available to provide access for remote learning
- Tutorials will be available to support families during remote learning.
- The district is working to unify our remote learning plan.

*This plan was created by: **2020 COVID19 Transition Team;***

*Kristi Eager, Melanie Lukacsy, Nina Mitchell, Kathy Holtzman, Veronica Blue, Dan Gustafson, Heather Linnig, Amber Backus*

**Updated 7/16/20**