



**WATERFORD-
HALFMOON UNION
FREE SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

*2020-21
School
Reopening
Plan*

Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD

2020-21 School Reopening Plan

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Introduction

The health, safety and well-being of our students and staff at the Waterford-Halfmoon Union Free School District is our number one priority. The District's Reopening Committee helped to design a plan that would bring the most students back to face-to-face education as possible while also providing virtual learning opportunities for those students that choose this option. The District has found that it cannot accommodate the entire student population for in-person learning while maintaining six feet of social distance in classrooms as required by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). In light of this finding, the District has designed a reopening plan which allows for students in **Grades K-6** to attend school in-person daily. Students in **Grades 7-12** will be taught via a combination of in-person and virtual learning (alternating days) to reduce the student population in the building and allow the District to meet social distancing requirements within classrooms. Please note that this plan has been created and submitted to the NYSED, as required, prior to Governor Cuomo's decision on reopening schools. **This plan may be adjusted depending on Governor Cuomo's future Executive Order as well as the information we receive from our final parent survey to be given in August.**

For students in all grades (K-12), parents may opt for their children to receive instruction virtually only. All classes will be live-streamed and students learning virtually will be required to attend classes at their scheduled class times.

Elementary School:

Students in grades K-6 will be allowed to attend school in person on a daily basis. Students will be socially distanced to ensure 6 feet of space between each pupil while in the classroom. Classrooms for students in grades K-6 are expected to be expanded to encompass the entire elementary school and if necessary, utilize additional classrooms from the junior/senior high school.

High School:

Due to the potential use of elementary and junior/senior high school space for K-6 instruction, students in grades 7-12 will be provided with in-person instruction on a rotating A-day/B-day basis with virtual instruction when not on campus. A/B day in-person assignments will be designated alphabetically by last name. Final determinations and announcements will be made once the results of the final survey are viewed.

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Special Education:

All students K-12 who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Accommodation Plan will be encouraged to attend school daily. Related services will also be provided per students' IEPs. Special education and related service providers will refer to the Individualized Education Plan for each student and ensure that the accommodations, modifications and supplementary aids and services are in place in the classroom and during small group instruction. Should the district be required to resort to distance learning, related services, accommodations, modifications and supplementary aids and services will be provided to the greatest extent possible. Requests for Committee on Special Education meetings will continue to be accepted. Virtual meeting participation will continue for the time being.

District Wide Plan Specifications

1. Professional Development/Curriculum Development

- a. To allow for adequate professional and curriculum development for faculty the District will modify its calendar as follows:
 - I. September 2, 3, 8 and 9th will be utilized as Superintendent's conference days.
 - II. Additional time for professional/curriculum development will be available on September 10th and 11th according to student schedules.

2. Student and Staff Safety Instruction

- a. All students and staff will receive instruction and guidance on adhering to all NYSDOH and NYSED protocols and recommendations surrounding COVID-19. These include, but are not limited to,
 - I. Proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - II. Acceptable face coverings and requirements related to their wear
 - III. Hand washing
 - IV. Adherence to social distancing instructions
 - V. Symptoms/prevention of COVID-19
 - VI. Respiratory Hygiene
 - VII. Daily monitoring of Temperature
- b. To allow for the essential safety and protocol instruction, the following opening week schedule will be implemented as follows:
 - I. September 10th: grades K-2 and 7-12 "A" day students will be on site for ½ day (morning) orientation

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- II. September 11th: grades 3-6 and 7-12 “B” day students will be on site for ½ day (morning) orientation.
- c. Emergency Evacuation and Safety Drills:
 - I. Safety drills such as fire drills and lockdown drills will continue to take place during the year.
 - II. Students will be instructed as to the procedures to be followed during a real drill.
 - III. A staggered schedule will be utilized for fire drills and students will remain at their desks during lockdown drills.

3. Academic Instruction

- a. In-Person Instruction
 - I. In-person instruction will be provided with proper social distancing between students and staff.
 - II. Students in grades K-6 will be allowed to attend in-person instruction daily.
 - III. Students in grades 7-12 will be allowed to attend in-person instruction every other day.
- b. Virtual Instruction
 - I. If a parent opts for virtual instruction for their child (children), daily attendance will be taken. Students who fail to attend virtual instruction daily will receive an unexcused absence.
 - II. With this model, students will need to be present with the camera on and microphone off until directed by the teacher.

4. Face Coverings

- a. Face coverings are required for anytime in which six feet of social distance cannot be maintained (e.g., in hallways and on buses).
- b. Face masks are recommended to be worn by all individuals at all times.
- c. Acceptable face coverings include cloth based face coverings and surgical masks. Face shields are not considered acceptable face coverings.
- d. Although the District requests that all students and staff obtain and wear their own masks, the District will provide masks to those individuals who are unable to obtain one.
- e. The District will follow all NYSDOH guidelines for medical exceptions for face covering requirements. Exceptions to face covering requirements will only be made upon receipt of adequate documentation from the student’s medical provider.

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- f. Students who receive speech language therapy will be allowed to remove their face coverings while participating in therapy using appropriate barriers and/or 6 foot distance.

5. Social Distancing

- a. Classrooms:
 - I. Will be arranged to accommodate six feet of social distancing or the use of appropriate physical barriers.
 - II. There is a twelve foot requirement for chorus, band, and physical education.
 - III. Limited furniture will be allowed in the classroom to ensure free safe movement throughout. Storage will need to be available for excess materials and furniture.
 - IV. While seated at a six foot distance or behind acceptable barriers, students will not be required to wear a mask.
 - V. Moving to a rest room or about the room will require a mask.
- b. Hallways:
 - I. Masks will be required for staff and students as they travel through the hallways.
- c. Students and staff are expected to make every effort at all times to maintain six feet of social distance.

6. Screening

- a. Questionnaires:
 - I. Daily temperature checks will be required. No individual with a temperature of 100.0 or higher will be permitted entry to the building or school bus, as applicable.
 - II. Students/families will be required to complete screening questionnaires related to COVID-19 exposure and symptoms prior to arrival.
 - III. All staff must also complete a daily questionnaire related to COVID-19 exposure and symptoms.
 - IV. Individuals who experience changes to their responses of the aforementioned expenses
- b. Positive Screening (an individual with COVID-19 symptoms or exposure but not, at the time, a positive COVID-19 test):
 - I. Individuals will immediately be referred to Professional Health Care Providers

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- II. In accordance with NYSDOH guidance, students returning to learning after positive screening results must provide:
 1. documentation from a health care provider evaluation;
 2. negative COVID-19 testing; and
 3. symptom resolution; or
 4. if COVID-19 positive, release from isolation.

7. Contact Tracing

- a. The District will notify State and Local Health Departments immediately upon notification of a COVID-19 positive test result by an individual within school facilities on school grounds, including, students, faculty, staff and visitors of the District.
- b. To assist the NYSDOH and Saratoga County Department of Health with tracing the transmission of COVID-19 the District will trace all contact of exposed individuals in accordance with protocols, training and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program.
- c. The District will utilize and comply with protocols outlined in the NYSDOH's "Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure"
- d. The District may assist with contact tracing by:
 - I. Keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members;
 - II. Ensuring student schedules are up to date;
 - III. Keeping a log of any visitor which includes date and time and where in the school the individual visited; and
 - IV. Assisting the Saratoga County Department of Health in tracing all contact of the individual in accordance with the protocol, training and tools provided by the NYS Contact Tracing.

8. School Closure Protocol

- a. We will adhere to all directives and Executive Orders released by the NYS Governor's Office, NYSED and NYSDOH.
- b. The District will shift to entirely virtual learning as a last resort in the event that the COVID-19 infection rates indicate that schools must be closed.
- c. The District will use its School Messenger System to notify parents and/or guardians, community members, faculty and staff of closure related events.

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9. Cleaning and Disinfection

- a. The spaces within the building (with emphasis on frequently touched surfaces) will be cleaned and disinfected nightly by the custodial team (disinfecting method TBD)
- b. Cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer will be made available in each classroom.
- c. For elementary classes (which will be separated into cohorts) no disinfection will be necessary during the school day as the same individuals will be using the same spaces
- d. For high school classes, staff will be assisting with wiping down desks and commonly used classroom areas in between classes.
- e. All custodial staff will be trained on proper cleaning and disinfecting protocols and guidance set forth by NYSDOH and the CDC.
- f. Daily reviews of nightly cleaning and sanitizing will be conducted by senior facilities personnel.
- g. Logs of the date, time and scope of cleaning and disinfection will be maintained.

10. Transportation

- a. Temperatures will be taken prior to students entering the school bus. See 6 (a) (l) above for further detail.
- b. To the extent possible, social distancing will be maintained on buses (one student per seat).
- c. Buses will be filled from back to front and emptied from front to back.
- d. Masks must be worn by students and adults on buses.
- e. Buses will release students either:
 - I. On a time staggered basis
 - II. To specific doors in the building
- f. Parent drop off/pick up - will be in a designated area at a designated time
 - I. Students who drive and/or are dropped off must enter the building only through designated doors.
- g. No students will be allowed to enter the building prior to their designated time (i.e, bus drop off time, or parent drop off time).

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11. Student Meals and Beverages

- a. The District will adhere to “Interim Guidance for Food Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency” as well as all other applicable food preparation and safety protocols.
- b. Meals will be eaten at the student’s desk.
- c. If a student stands to throw out garbage, masks will be worn.
- d. Drinking fountains will be closed. However the District does have two water bottle filling stations which will be accessible to students. Students will also be allowed to bring water bottles to school.
- e. The District will make meals available to students eligible for free or reduced meals who are receiving virtual instruction.

12. Communication to Students, Parents and the Community

- a. Live streamed informational sessions for parents and students will be offered once our finalized plan is in place.
- b. Informational letters and newsletters from the district in regards to reopening will be mailed to all households.
- c. Time dedicated during the first week of school to familiarize students to all new protocols and safety guidelines.

13. Filtration and Ventilation

- a. The District will meet or exceed minimum requirements.
- b. The District will open windows and doors when feasible to increase ventilation in the building.

14. School Visitors

- a. Visitation will be restricted to those required for school business only.
- b. All visitors will be subject to all screening, social distancing and face covering requirements discussed in this documents.
- c. All visitors must document their destination and path through the building.

15. COVID-19 Educational Component

- a. Students will be taught to follow new COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly

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16. District Signage

- a. Hallway traffic patterns, proper face covering, social distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and COVID-19 symptoms and prevention signage will be prominently displayed.

17. Before and Aftercare

- a. The District is committed to allowing its before and after care vendor to provide services as long as that vendor is willing and able to commit to all requirements contained within this plan and set forth by the NYSED, NYDOH and NYS Governor's Office.

18. Field Trips

- a. Field trips will not be permitted at this time.

19. Athletics/Extra-Curricular Activities

- a. Interscholastic athletics are not permitted at this time. Additional information on athletic activities is forthcoming.
- b. Club and extra-curricular activities will be placed on hold until at least October 2020.

20. Accommodations for Vulnerable Populations

- a. Students who are at an increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness or live in a household with a vulnerable individual may choose virtual learning.
- b. To the extent feasible, the District will make reasonable accommodations for staff who are at increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness on a case by case basis.

21. Mental Health and Wellbeing of Staff and Students

- a. The District utilizes the services of Saratoga Center for Family who provides a mental health counselor.
- b. The District also utilizes the services of school counselors, school psychologists, and social workers to help identify concerns of staff and students and provide support.

22. COVID-19 Safety Coordinator: Patrick Pomerville (Superintendent of Schools)

- a. Responsible for continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan
- b. District administrators will be the primary points of contact upon the identification of a positive COVID-19 case within their building and will be responsible for subsequent communications.

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Grade K-6 Considerations

1. Background

- a. There are approximately 425 students in grades K-6.

2. Transportation

- a. If the entire K-6 group cannot fit on one bus run, they will have staggered school day start and end times. If they can be accommodated on one bus run, all grades K-6 will have the same school start and end times.
- b. Students must exit the bus and report directly to their classrooms.

3. Classrooms

- a. Students will be placed in classrooms with either 6 feet of social distancing or acceptable physical barriers.
- b. If a family chooses virtual learning they cannot change to in-person instruction until the end of each trimester.

4. Recess

- a. Recess will only be held outside and when possible. No inside recess will occur.
- b. Classes will recess as a group and groups will be spread out throughout the field.
- c. Students will not be able to intermingle while in this mode unless they are within the same cohort.
- d. Playground equipment will be off limits.

5. Dismissal

- a. Students will exit the building a grade at a time to their assigned buses. Masks will be worn until they have left the bus at their stop.
- b. If all elementary school students cannot be accommodated on one bus run they will be dismissed in two groups (see below for school hours).

6. School Hours

- a. If all students in grades K-6 who choose in person learning can be accommodated on one bus run elementary school hours will be **9:05-2:50** for all students.

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- b. If all students in grades K-6 who choose in person cannot be accommodate on one bus run, elementary school will be divided into two groups with the following school hours:
 - i. Group A: 8:30-2:10
 - ii. Group B: 9:05-2:50

7. Grading

- a. Traditional grading practices will be instituted and potentially reevaluated as needed.

Grade 7-12 Considerations

1. Background

- a. There are approximately 350 students in grades 7-12.
- b. Students attending in-person instruction will be on campus every other day.
- c. School hours for students: 7:50 AM to 2:00 PM
 - i. Eight 39 minute periods
 - ii. One 30 minute lunch period

2. Classrooms

- a. Students will be placed in classrooms with either 6 feet of social distancing or acceptable physical barriers.
- b. Students will follow their normal period by period schedule changing classes as necessary.
- c. If a family chooses virtual learning they may change to in-person instruction at the end of the first semester (end of January).
- d. Students will eat breakfast and lunch in classrooms maintaining the required 6 feet of social distancing.

3. Locker access

- a. Students will be allowed to utilize their lockers at the beginning and end of the school day only. Students will not be allowed to use their lockers during the school day.
- b. Students may carry backpacks during the day with their belongings (including lunch if brought from home)
- c. Students will be asked to carry a minimum number of materials on a daily basis.

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4. Changing of classes

- a. Students will change classes after each period with 2 minutes of passing time between periods.
- b. Since social distancing in the hallways cannot be adhered to, masks are required for all staff and students while in the hallways.
- c. Students may not congregate in the hallway with others.
- d. Students will follow the appropriate signage for hallway traffic.

5. Virtual Instruction

- a. All students are expected to follow their schedule and attend classes at their assigned time whether they are on campus or doing virtual instruction at home.
- b. On virtual instruction days, students will be required to participate in the classroom activities.
- c. Period attendance will be taken by teachers for all students regardless of their location.
- d. An "Office Hour" time block will be offered to all students daily from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

6. Labs

- a. Students who are on virtual instruction (full time or every other day) will be able to complete science lab associated activities.

7. Band/chorus

- a. Given the 12 foot social distancing guidelines for these classes and the rotating A/B day schedule, the combination of in person and virtual instruction may be necessary.
- b. Additional options may include instrumental and voice lessons only.

8. Sanitizing Classrooms (During Instructional Day)

- a. Staff will be assisting with wiping down desks and commonly used classroom areas in between classes.

9. Grading

- a. Traditional grading practices will be instituted for all students (in-person and virtual) and will be potentially reevaluated as needed.

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10. Students attending CTE Programs

- a. Information will be forthcoming from WSWHE BOCES. Please see BOCES website for updates www.wswheboces.org

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Has the district considered having all of the students attend in-person daily?

A: Yes. We are following the NYSDOH guidelines to keep the students in-person as safe as possible. We don't have the capacity in the building or on the busses to maintain 6-foot distance between students.

Q: Has the district considered various scheduling options for a hybrid model? (i.e. block scheduling or 2 days on 2 days off)

A: Yes. We have had extensive discussion about different models. We have settled on a model that fits our students best which allows for maximum engagement and productivity. This allows us to incorporate as many academic offerings as possible.

Q: How will the district assure general cleaning and disinfection of the building and classrooms?

A: The district is committed to meeting or exceeding all cleaning standards set by NYSED. The district recognizes this entails additional cleaning and sanitizing and is evaluating various options to accomplish this. Additional cleaning and disinfecting supplies have been ordered and staff is assisting in cleaning commonly touched surfaces in the classrooms. We will evaluate the need to hire more custodians.

Q: How will the virtual day work for staff and students?

A: The district believes strongly that engaging students in learning every day is essential. The district also recognizes that online virtual learning does not replace in-person instruction. The district is currently evaluating specific methods of virtual instruction. Daily office hours will be provided by teachers and staff.

Q: What will breakfast and lunch look like in school?

A: Bagged breakfast and lunch will be provided to students within the classroom supervised by a staff member. Students will continue to have the option to bring their own lunch. Students should not be sharing any food and allergy free areas will be established in each classroom for students with food allergies.

Q: What will breakfast and lunch look like for virtual students who qualify for free or reduced meals?

A: Students who qualify for free or reduced breakfast and lunch will receive their meals in school on days they attend for both that day and the following virtual day. For students who are participating in full time virtual learning, they can pick up their meals for the week on Mondays from the school at a designated time.

Q: Are staff and students expected to wear masks?

A: Yes. All staff and students are required to wear masks in all common areas including busses, hallways, bathrooms and anywhere 6-foot of distance/barriers cannot be maintained. While seated in class with

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6-foot of distance or appropriate barriers, students may remove their masks. The school will follow all guidelines set forth by the NYSDOH.

Q: Can a parent choose full time virtual learning for their children?

A: Yes. Please note, if a parent changes their mind, reentry to in-person learning will only be permitted at certain times of the year.

Q: Can a parent choose to change from parent drop off/pick up to bussing?

A: Yes, however, this can only occur during certain times of the year.

Q: Will the district provide masks for students?

A: We are asking students to bring their own masks, however, if a student does not have a mask on a particular day, they will be provided one.

Q: Will there be signage to direct safe behaviors?

A: Yes, signs will be posted for proper hand washing, social distancing and direction of traffic throughout the hallways.

Q: Will arrival and dismissal be staggered to alleviate gathering in the hallways?

A: Yes. For Jr/Sr. High School (6-12), anyone who drives or is dropped off, will enter through the Auditorium entrance. One bus at a time will be released. Doors will be locked until 7:50 am. For Elementary grades, Kindergarten-2nd grade parent drop off is 8:30-8:45. Grades 3-5, parent drop off is 9:15-9:30. Drop off location is at the main entrance (as of now).

Q: Will students have access to their lockers?

A: Students will be allowed to their lockers at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day only. Students are encouraged to carry a backpack or bag.

Q: Where do students wait until school starts?

A: Students are going directly to their classrooms. There is no gathering of students in any areas.

Q: How is the Jr/Sr High School deciding which students attend on A days and B days?

A: It depends on the master schedule. Due to the nature of master scheduling, the school cannot guarantee matching sibling schedules due to required coursework, scheduling of mandatory classes and class size balancing.

Additional Resources

- [State Education Department Issues Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 16, 2020)
- [State Education Department Presents Framework of Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools](#) (July 13, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, NYS Department of Health](#) (July 13, 2020)
- [Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) (June 26, 2020)

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- [Interim Guidance for Food Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency \(June 26, 2020\)](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Office-Based Work during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency \(June 26, 2020\)](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Public Transportation Activities during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. \(June 26, 2020\)](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure \(May 31, 2020\)](#)
- [New York State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [New York State Education Department Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19 Website](#)

***This plan is subject to change based on final decisions from the NYSED, the NYSDOH, and the Office of the Governor.**

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