

Two-Step Process for District Fall Reopening Plans July 15, 2020

On June 25, 2020, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released [initial guidance](#) for school reopening that prioritizes getting students and staff safely back to school in person, following a comprehensive set of health and safety requirements. Through this guidance, DESE required schools to create a plan that includes three models: 1) in-person learning with new safety requirements; 2) a hybrid of in-person and remote learning; and 3) remote learning.

The reopening approach is built on a thorough review of current medical and scientific literature and was developed after extensive consultation with medical professionals from Massachusetts General Hospital, the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center's Medical Advisory Board, and others. Based on the current public health data and COVID-19 trends in Massachusetts, the medical community supports the return of Massachusetts students to in-person learning, with appropriate health and safety guidelines in place.

In this document, we provide an overview of the two-step process for district reopening plan submissions and the online form for preliminary plan summaries due July 31.

Overview of Two-Step Process for District Reopening Plan Submissions

Districts will submit their reopening plans to DESE through a two-step process:

- **Step 1: By July 31**, districts must complete and submit a *preliminary reopening plan summary* to DESE. Districts will fill out an [online form](#) that consists of two parts, which are outlined below and detailed later in this document. This form will allow DESE to collect key summary information about districts' reopening models and other planning considerations.
- **Step 2: By August 10**, districts must finalize their *comprehensive plan documents*, submit them to DESE, and release them publicly to their communities. This additional time will provide districts with an opportunity to incorporate any desired changes based on additional guidance DESE may release later in July, such as guidance on transportation and athletics. We strongly recommend that you work with your school committee (or equivalent board) on policy questions relevant to the final plan before submission.

Step 1: Preliminary Reopening Plan Summary due by July 31

This section provides an overview of the plan summary that districts will complete through the online form due by July 31. Please click [here](#) to access the form online.

The online form consists of the following sections:

- **Part I** asks for the district's contact information, key findings from the district's feasibility study on in-person learning, and the district's preliminary thinking about which of the three reopening models it may use to open the school year this fall.
- **Part II** asks the district to provide a brief description of each of the three reopening models districts have been asked to develop: 1) in-person learning with new safety requirements, 2) hybrid learning, and 3) remote learning. Each model must include support for High Needs students as defined [here](#).

Step 2: Expectations for Final District Reopening Plans due by August 10

As districts prepare for step two of this process – finalizing their comprehensive reopening plans – please note that plans should be written in a parent-friendly format, translated into the primary languages of students’ homes, and posted on the district website. All plans must be posted by August 10. Each district should include the following information in its final comprehensive reopening plan.

A. Executive summary

B. Letter from the superintendent to the community, including the district’s selection for the reopening model it will use to begin the school year.

C. In-person learning model:

- o For this learning model, students receive in-person instruction full time in school environments that have been appropriately modified to address health and safety requirements issued by DESE.
- o In this model, districts may still have a subset of students whose families have decided to continue in a remote learning model while the rest of the school returns in-person full time.
- o In the description of this model, districts should include information about how student learning, scheduling, protocols, and/or facilities use may look different than in traditional in-person learning with no restrictions.

D. Hybrid learning model:

- o In a hybrid model, students alternate between in-person learning with safety requirements and remote learning.
- o Districts should include information about how student learning will change across the two learning environments (in-person and remote) and provide sample schedules showing how students will rotate between in-person and remote learning models, including whether this varies among student groups and/or grade levels.
- o In a hybrid model, some High Needs students may still participate in full-time in-person instruction to ensure effective accommodations, and some families may still decide to keep their children learning remotely full time.

E. Remote learning model:

- o In this learning model, remote learning is the default mode of instruction for all students, though some High Needs students may still be served in-person full time or through a hybrid model. Structured Learning Time requirements apply to remote learning.
- o Remote learning must include the following requirements per DESE regulations: (1) procedures for all students to participate in remote learning, including a system for tracking attendance and participation; (2) alignment of remote academic work to state standards; (3) a policy for issuing grades for students’ remote academic work; and (4) a method for teachers and administrators to regularly communicate with students’ parents and guardians, including providing interpretation and translation services to limited English proficient parents and guardians.
- o Districts should also include information about the technology platforms, staffing model, curriculum, and instructional materials they will employ.

F. Out-of-school time plan: In this section, please include any information about additional supports, instruction, or services the district will provide to students: (a) before and after school, (b) through 21st Century Learning, if applicable, and (c) on the weekends.

G. Student supports and professional learning: Please include the following information in this section: (a) safety, wellness, and social emotional supports, (b) planning and instruction, (c) assessment, and (d) intervention. (e) A school calendar with start date and PD days prior to opening is recommended.

H. Other: Information in this section should be determined by the context of the district.

I. Certification of health and safety requirements: Districts will need to certify that they meet the final health and safety requirements issued by DESE. A preliminary list of these requirements appears in DESE’s initial fall reopening guidance; DESE will release a final list later this month.

Overview of Online Form for Preliminary District Plan Summary due July 31

Please click [here](#) to access the online form to submit your preliminary district plan summary. **The overview below is provided for informational purposes only and should not be used to submit a plan summary.**

Part I: Contact Information, Feasibility Study Results, and Preliminary Reopening Model

District Name(s) ¹ Superintendent Name:	Stefan Czaporowski
Superintendent Phone:	(413)572-6403
Superintendent Email:	s.czaporowski@schoolsofwestfield.org
Contact Completing Form:	Stefan Czaporowski
Contact Phone:	(413)572-6403
Contact Email:	s.czaporowski@schoolsofwestfield.org
COVID-19 Response Leader Name, Role, Title: <i>If different than contact completing form</i>	Christopher Rogers Administrator of Student Interventions and Safety
Response Leader Phone:	(413)572-6397/(413)246-9740
Response Leader Email:	c.rogers@schoolsofwestfield.org

1. What were the key findings from your in-person learning **feasibility study**, and what does this imply for the student learning model you may use this fall? Suggested word limit: 300.

Summarize feasibility studies:

Westfield Public School’s plan for reopening schools uses a Phased Approach for returning students with the goal of protecting the health and safety of all students and staff. We feel a Phased Approach will allow us to best support the educational development and social/emotional needs of all our students. Furthermore, the City of Westfield Health Department does not support a full return or hybrid model at this time to begin the 2020-21 school year.

Below is a summary of our feasibility studies conducted at all school buildings and locations:

- No school in our district can support all students back under the current guidance
- Particularly problematic at older schools not designed for large class sizes and current safety guidance related to COVID-19
- Current plan allows us to educate all Phase 1 students, including our CTE students in their technical courses, in person at the start of the school year and adhere to guidance
- All principals, based on their feasibility studies and concern for the safety of the entire school community, have advocated for the phased in model eventually moving to a hybrid model dividing our students into two cohorts

2. Which **reopening model** within your plan are you leaning towards for the start of the school year? Please select the predominant model for elementary, middle, and high school. (For example, in a plan where the majority of students are coming back in-person full time, a subset of students may continue to learn remotely if needed.) Districts can use the text box below this chart to provide further explanation of their selections, if needed.

Westfield’s plan for reopening schools uses a Phased Approach for returning students with the goal of protecting the health and safety of all students and staff. A Phased Approach will allow us to best support the educational development

and social/emotional needs of all our students. In Phase 1, the district will prioritize in-person instruction for high needs students: students with significant disabilities, English learners (Levels 1-2), preschool-age students, students in CTE programs, and students with significant and/or complex needs including those under McKinney-Vento and foster care, followed by students in Kindergarten. In Phase 2, we will bring back additional cohorts of identified students in a hybrid model beginning with our youngest learners at elementary (Grade 1) and students transitioning to a new school (Grades 5, 7, and 9) followed by the remaining grade levels (Grades 2, 3,4,6,8,10-12). Phase 3 will be the implementation of a full hybrid model where 50% (plus high needs) will attend school on weeks 1 and 3 and 50% will attend on weeks 2 and 4.

Reopening Learning Models

Grade Span	Reopening Learning Models		
	In-person	Hybrid	Remote
PreK	Half day program (Phase 1)		
Kindergarten	School visits (Phase 1)		
Elementary	High Needs Students with significant disabilities; English Learners L1s and L2s; Students under McKinney-Vento and foster care	Grades 1-6 with A week / B week Cohorts (Phase 2-3) English Learners L3s and FLEPs (Phase 2-3)	Grades 1-6 (Phase 1)
Middle School	High Needs Students with significant disabilities; English Learners L1s and L2s; Students under McKinney-Vento and foster care (Phase 1)	Grade 7-8 with A week / B week Cohorts (Phase 2-3) English Learners L3s and FLEPs (Phase 2-3)	Grades 7-8 (Phase 1)
High School	High Needs Students with Disabilities; English Learners L1s and L2s; Students under McKinney-Vento and foster care Students at risk for Dropout Grades 10-12; CTE Programs at Westfield Technical Academy (Phase 1)	Grade 9-12 with A week / B week Cohorts at Westfield High School (Phase 2-3) English Learners L3s and FLEPs (Phase 2-3)	Grade 9-12 at Westfield High (Phase 1) Grade 9-12 with A week / B week Cohorts at Westfield Technical Academy (Phase 1-3)

¹ For collaborative and superintendency union leaders submitting for more than one district, please list all districts.

If you would like to provide an additional explanation of the initial reopening model in question 2 above, or if there are additional factors or challenges that you would like us to know, please write those here:

Westfield Technical Academy will follow a different trajectory toward Phase 4. Because our CTE students will fully return to the established week on / week off model in Phase 1, all students will remain remote for Academics through Phase 3. These students lost a significant amount of time in the spring working toward competencies that could not be completed remotely. The shop areas are large enough to accommodate 50% of the students each week with more than 6ft of distance between them. Phase 4 will return all staff and students at WTA to full in person learning in shops and academics.

Through Parent Focus Groups and Surveys, we have identified significant barriers for families when students are not in school during Phase 1, 2, and 3 as we move from the remote to the hybrid model and while maintaining the hybrid model. Some parents that are working outside the home and require childcare for remote learning time. Some parents are working from home and can't provide adequate support to their students during remote learning time, some parents have shared that their students were unable to participate in remote learning for a variety of reasons. We are actively seeking alternatives for these families by meeting with community agencies (Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, etc.) as well as seeking spaces for lease that would allow us to support learning for students by WPS staff members during their remote learning weeks.

Part II: Summary of Three Reopening Learning Models

1. **In-person:** Please provide a summary of your plan for how students would return to full-time in-person learning. Please reference the “Step 2” section of this document (page 2) and provide an overview of what you believe to be the most critical information about how this model would work in your district. Suggested word limit: 400.

Westfield’s full in-person learning model (Phase 4) will be achieved when we are able to return nearly all students at 3 ft distance from one another. In schools where 3 ft distance is not possible, we will utilize additional spaces within the building, including library, cafeteria, auditorium, and outdoor classroom spaces. Professional support staff (Instructional Coaches, Reading Specialists, Math Interventionists) may be utilized to split classes where 3ft of distance cannot be achieved.

We will maintain our existing school schedules, but all students will be grouped in cohorts that minimize the number of individuals that come in contact with one another during the school day as well as reducing the amount of travel that occurs throughout the building. Students will eat lunch in their classrooms, in outdoor spaces, and in the cafeteria. All staff will be responsible for overseeing students at lunch and outdoor recess. At least two staff members will be assigned to each cohort so that one monitors lunch in the room with ½ the students while the other half of students is taken outside for a recess / mask break. This will be necessary in order to have 6 ft of distance to remove masks to eat.

Preschool and Elementary cohorts will remain in one classroom and special subject teachers, interventionists, and related service providers will travel to classrooms to work with students when able. Intermediate and Middle School students will be grouped in cohorts within teams that are assigned to a specific classroom. These groups will remain together for each subject area and will be assigned to specific special subject areas with this same cohort. Teachers will move to student groups. Students will pass through hallways for outdoor mask breaks and to pick up their lunches. High school students will be scheduled into cohorts as much as is possible. Students taking the same roster of core classes will be placed in cohorts and will have the same four core teachers (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies). Electives will be limited to a limited number of choices per cohort and the cohort will be subdivided into these electives.

At all levels, PreK-12, students will have assigned seats. Students will have individual materials for their use that will be stored in the classroom. Lockers use will be minimized to limit numbers of students in hallways. Hallways and stairwells will be labeled with arrows to maintain social distancing.

Student learning will include direct instruction provided by the teacher, guided and independent practice led by the teacher, and collaborative work between students done via Google Meet so that an appropriate distance can be maintained. At the PreK-6 levels, teachers will meet with students 1:1 and in small groups using plastic barriers installed at kidney-shaped teacher tables. Special education teachers, related service providers, interventionists, and counselors will provide services and meet with students 1:1 and in small groups using plastic barriers installed at tables. Teachers will maintain the use of Google Classroom for organization of assignments for consistency given the potential for returning to remote learning at the student, class, school, or district level. Any local or state assessments will be administered in the established student cohorts.

Students at Westfield High School in grade 12 who choose to do so will work with Guidance Counselors and the Career Center Specialist to develop a plan for early graduation when credits have been earned. Students that do not wish to graduate early will take a full course load at WHS and have the option to explore Early College and Career options available to them (Dual Enrollment, Job Shadowing

Employment, and Internships).

Westfield families will have the option to select a Fully Remote Learning Model in all Phases.

- o Will any of your students be learning fully remotely? Yes/No
- o Anticipated percent of students learning remotely (*14% as of 7/28/20*) %

2. **Hybrid:** Please provide a summary of your plan for how students would return to school through a hybrid learning model. Please reference the “Step 2” section of this document (page 2) and provide an overview of what you believe to be the most critical information about how this model would work in your district. Suggested word limit: 400.

Westfield’s hybrid learning model (Phase 3) will be achieved when we are able to return 50%+ of our students at a 6 ft distance from one another. The number will be greater than 50% given the return of high needs students in Phase 1 that will continue to attend every day. All other students will be assigned to Cohort A or Cohort B based on balanced bus routes and keeping siblings together. Cohort A will attend school in person on weeks 1 and 3 and access remote learning on weeks 2 and 4. Cohort B will attend school in person on weeks 2 and 4 and access remote learning on weeks 1 and 3. In Phase 2, we will bring back additional cohorts of identified students in a hybrid model beginning with our youngest learners at elementary (Grade 1) and students transitioning to a new school (Grades 5, 7, and 9) followed by the remaining grade levels (Grades 2, 3,4,6,8,10-12).

Students will be assigned to a team of highly qualified teachers which will be organized differently at different grade levels and will require teacher collaboration. In an elementary level example, when two of the grade 2 teachers are working with 10 of their students in person, the other 10 students from each class are at home, learning remotely. These 20 students are being supported by another grade 2 teacher during this time. The next week, the students switch to their in person or remote teacher. In a high school example, two teachers with a section of biology will partner with a third biology teacher. While 12 students meet with their biology teacher in class during their in-person week, they will be supported during their remote week by a second teacher that checks in and provides reteaching or enrichment opportunities. This in person / remote connection will be contingent on final enrollment numbers and available staff. Teachers may be required to teach up to 50% outside of their content area.

While in person, student learning will include direct instruction provided by the teacher, guided and independent practice monitored by the teacher. At the PreK-6 levels, teachers will meet with students 1:1 and in small groups using plastic barriers installed at kidney-shaped teacher tables. Special education teachers, related service providers, interventionists, and counselors will provide services and meet with students 1:1 and in small groups using plastic barriers installed at tables.

While remote, student learning will include opportunities for direct instruction, guided and independent practice monitored by the teacher, and opportunities for student collaboration through Google Meet. Students will engage in a balance of synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities.

G Suite for Education will be used PreK-12 to establish Google Classroom as the platform for remote learning. Teachers will be provided with a template for setting up their Classroom environment. This will provide consistency for families that have students accessing learning at multiple schools across the district. PreK and elementary teachers will have the option of augmenting their Google Classroom with Seesaw online learning community. Google Meet will be used for synchronous learning opportunities. Teachers will meet daily with students in the whole group, with students in small groups, and with

students 1:1 for a minimum number of minutes. During the remaining learning time, teachers will be available for students and parents to assist with asynchronous learning assignments. Screencastify and FlipGrid will be used to record videos as part of the asynchronous learning requirement.

Westfield families will have the option to select a Fully Remote Learning Model in all Phases.

3. **Remote:** Please provide a summary of your plan for remote learning as the default model of instruction for all students. Please reference the “Step 2” section of this document (page 2) and provide an overview of what you believe to be the most critical information about how this model would work in your district. Suggested word limit: 400.

Westfield’s Remote Learning plan will be structured, rigorous, and consistent across all grade levels. We will provide all students with a Chromebook PreK-12 to facilitate remote learning as the default model of instruction for all students. Families without Wi-Fi will be provided with a Kajeet hotspot device and subscription for their home.

G Suite for Education will be used PreK-12 to establish Google Classroom as the platform for remote learning. Teachers will be provided with a template for setting up their Classroom environment. This will provide consistency for families that have students accessing learning at multiple schools across the district. PreK and elementary teachers will have the option of augmenting their Google Classroom with Seesaw online learning community. Google Meet will be used for synchronous learning opportunities. Teachers will meet daily with students in the whole group, with students in small groups, and with students 1:1 for a minimum number of minutes. During the remaining learning time, teachers will be available for students and parents to assist with asynchronous learning assignments. Screencastify and FlipGrid will be used to record videos as part of the asynchronous learning requirement.

Students will be required to attend all scheduled synchronous learning sessions and complete all asynchronous assignments during a 6-hour time frame daily. Attendance will be taken daily by all teachers and entered in PowerSchool. Attendance will be tracked, and steps taken by school administrators to correct poor attendance during remote learning.

Teachers will use WPS curriculum maps, high quality instructional program materials, and specific digital resources to ensure alignment of remote work to state frameworks. Students will receive grades for remote assignments according to the same system (standards-based or graded system) that they receive in person grades. Teachers will provide feedback for remote assignments using Google Classroom rubrics in addition to assigning an indicator (standards-based) or numerical grade (graded system). Student participation will impact students’ grades.

Administrators and teachers will hold an evening meeting for all parents which will replace the in person Open House night. In addition, teachers will communicate with parents via Google Classroom, email, and phone to provide support. Our bilingual tutor / translators will provide interpretation and translation services to limited English proficient families.

Westfield’s Fully Remote Learning Model will align students whose parents opt for this model with staff members who opt for this model. Classes will be assigned based on enrollment numbers. A grade 4 teacher may be assigned a remote class of 24 students that are affiliated with different elementary schools

in the district. These fully remote classes will follow the same WPS curriculum as hybrid classes but will operate as a separate ‘virtual school’ within the district.

Westfield families will have the option to select a Fully Remote Learning Model in all Phases.

4. **High needs students:** Please provide a summary of how students with disabilities, English learners (ELs), former EL students, and Economically Disadvantaged students will be supported within each of the three reopening models. Suggested word limit: 400.

Special education students with significant needs (substantially separate) will be provided daily in-person instruction by a special education teacher and appropriate support staff. Teletherapy and/or in-person related services will be provided according to their IEPs. Inclusive opportunities will be provided via remote and/or in-person settings. Assessments will take place in a face-to-face format as dictated by the special education process.

English learners (levels 1 and 2) will return to district facilities and would engage in daily in-person instruction by an ESL teacher and appropriate staff (Phase 1). Intake assessments will take place in a face-to-face or online format as recommended by DESE Title III Guidance.

English learners (level 3 and higher) will be provided instruction by an ESL teacher in remote and/or in-person settings (Phase 2). FLEPs will engage in inclusive opportunities in a combination of in-person and remote learning settings. Intake assessments will take place in a face-to-face or online format as recommended by DESE Title III Guidance.

Students with disabilities, English learners, and Economically Disadvantaged students will be prioritized to receive a Kajeet hotspot device for connectivity throughout any remote learning. These high needs students will be given priority placement in remote learning support sites we are setting up in the community during fully remote and hybrid phases.

Assistance and Questions about Plan Submissions

Should you have any questions about the plan submission process or the online form, please contact reopeningk12@mass.gov. If you need technical assistance with the online form (e.g., issues with technology or functionality), please contact research@doe.mass.edu.