



**NEWMARKET**  
School District

# School Reopening Plan

## Steering Committee Recommendation



July 27, 2020

# Introduction

Newmarket School District established a Steering Committee and Working Groups in May, composed of multiple stakeholders, to develop a plan for the safe reopening of our schools. Working Groups have been meeting remotely at least once per week to review survey results, state and federal guidelines, and lessons learned from schools around the world that have reopened. The working groups reviewed this information through the following five perspectives and shared their recommendations and insights with the Steering Committee. This document synthesizes these recommendations into this school reopening plan. It is important to note that there are many layers of planning involved in the reopening process. Approval of this conceptual plan and additional information from parents will empower the work groups to proceed with the next level in the planning processes.

## Work Groups:

- Teaching and Learning
- Student Support Services
- Health and Wellness
- Operations
- Student, Family, and Community Life

Steering Committee	Teaching & Learning	Student Services
Susan Givens, Superintendent	David Dalton, JSHS Principal	Erica MacNeil, Director Student Services
David Dalton, JSHS Principal	Sean Pine, NES Principal	Kristina Cochran, Assistant Principal
Sean Pine, NES Principal	Jen DeStefano, JSHS Assistant Principal	Lori Carmichael, Speech Pathologist
Joanne Lazarus, NES Teacher	Debbie Roffo, NES Assistant Principal	Karyn Hinkley, NES Case Manager
Delaney Rosenberg, JSHS Teacher	Catherine Butler, NES Teacher	Pat Yeager, JSHS Case Manager
Michael Kenison, School Board	Abigail Hatfield, HS Teacher	Nancy A. Miller, Teacher
Nicole Benson, Parent	Paul Henderson, MS Teacher	Oscar Carvalho, ESOL Teacher
	Kristin Eberl, MS Guidance Counselor	Barbara Sack, Tutor
	Lisa Coles, NES Tutor	Sara Santeramo, Paraprofessional
Work Group Chairs:	Elizabeth McKinney: School Board	Sara Thomas, Paraprofessional
Debbie Roffo, Jen DeStefano,	Jessica Berry, Student	Kim Shelton, School Board
Erica MacNeil, Kristina Cochran	Lilla Bozak, Student	Alison Minutelli, Parent
Sheana Thorell, & Janna Mellon	Abigail Henry, Student	Nicole Roy, Parent
	Brooke Sheeran, Parent	
	Drew Szeliga, Parent	
	Lisa Zhe, Parent	

Health & Wellness	Student & Community Life	Operations
Susan Givens, Superintendent	Sheana Thorell, Assistant Principal	Janna Mellon, Business Administrator
Amanda Nieves, School Psychologist	Sarah Denham, Assistant Principal	Jason Carey, IT Director
Kaitlyn Schena, Social Worker	Jamie Hayes, Athletic Director	Linda Hopey, Food Services Director
Jen Farnese, School Nurse	Christine Bisson, School Counselor	Laura Bascom, Teacher
Diane McCormick, School Nurse	Annette Blake, Teacher	Silas Richards, Teacher
Jodi Cote, Paraprofessional	Amanda Brauer, Teacher	June Williamson, Teacher
Holly Geekie, Paraprofessional	Erin Copeland, Teacher	Linda Bergeron, Administrative Assistant
Grace Lunney, Student	Nancy M. Miller, Teacher	Michelle Martinson, Administrative Assistant
Zoe McGuirk, Student	Emily Stern, Library Media Specialist	Gary Swanson, School Board
Julia Perry, Student	Donna Harrington, Paraprofessional	Jennifer Morton, Parent
Karen French, Parent	Amy Tilton, School Board	Sarah Soster, Parent
Amanda Rei, Parent	Stephen McKenney, Student	Wayne Stevens, School Resource Officer
	Alexia Catalano, Student	Dawn Kinck, Transportation Contractor
	McKayla Hartman, Student	Sandra Rowe, Transportation Contractor
	Taylor Kennison, Student	David Jack, Interim Business Administrator
	Mia Smith, Student	
	Erica Hiera, Parent	
	Lisa Sullivan, Parent	
	Ree Cooper, Linked Together	
	Alaina Creswell, PTA	
	Aimee Gigandet, Recreation Director	

Prior to considering any options, the Steering Committee discussed and agreed that all decisions would be considered through the lens of supporting the social-emotional and physical wellbeing of our learning community, with safety being the highest priority. While recognizing that learning is our goal, the committee made a commitment to support the physical safety of our students, staff, and community first and the social/emotional wellbeing of our students, staff, and the community second.

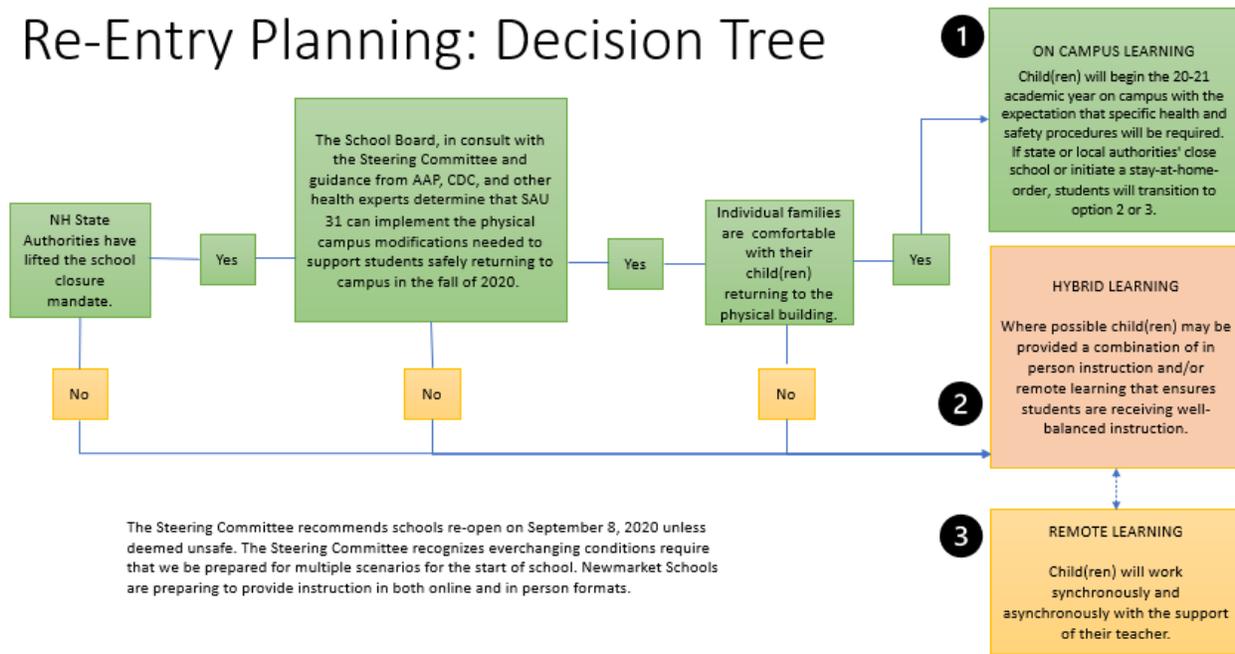
To this end, all work and recommendations are based on the advice of public health authorities, state guidelines, the experience of schools that have safely reopened this spring and during the prior SARs outbreak, input from all local stakeholders, and our working groups. Please know that the foremost thought in planning for our school reopening has always been and will continue to be safety. If it is not possible to open safely, or stay open, then we won't.

Scientists and health professionals have stated that returning to pre-COVID 19 work, school, and life routines is predicated on the development and distribution of a vaccine, with a 12-18-month timeframe. Until a vaccine is available, these experts recommend the following foundational protocols for reopening: small group sizes, with 15 or fewer students per class; social distancing at a minimum of six feet; masks or face coverings; frequent hand washing; limited sharing of furniture or other supplies; and no mixing of students across classroom to the greatest extent possible. Our plan ensures that these and other health and safety protocols are in place for staff and students.

# Learning Options and Transition Plan

Our student, parent, and staff surveys indicate most stakeholders are comfortable or prefer returning to school if social distancing and other health and safety measures are in place. With this in mind, the Steering Committee and working groups have been planning for three possible reopening scenarios; on-site, remote, and a combination or hybrid approach. The graphic below outlines our decision tree for reopening.

## Re-Entry Planning: Decision Tree

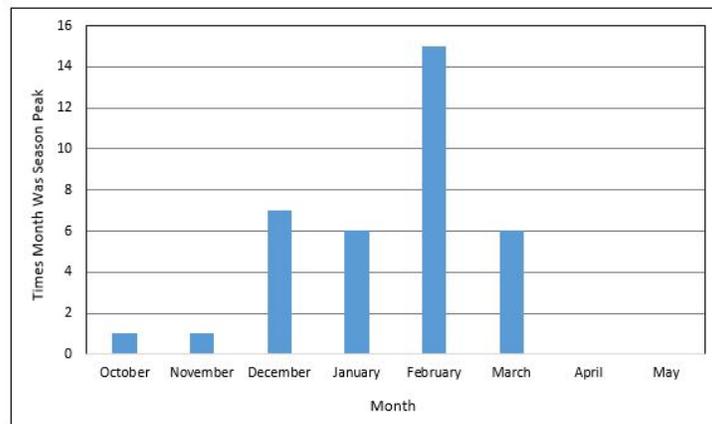


At this time, based on current conditions in Newmarket and in New Hampshire, the Steering Committee is recommending that **school open on September 8<sup>th</sup>** for on campus learning provided all of the safety measures outlined in this proposal are in place and families are comfortable sending their children to school. According to the survey data collected in early June, 82% indicated they would be comfortable sending their child to school; 18 % did not. Therefore, a remote option for learning will be offered to those families. To proceed with planning, a survey will be sent out to parents to allow them to share their final decision regarding their preferred mode of learning and their transportation needs. Prior to making this decision, parents are asked to read the proposed conceptual plan. **Please complete this survey by the end of the day on Monday, August 3. This information is critical for the next level of planning for reopening. It is**

needed to make final teacher assignments, classroom assignments, cohort groupings, and finalizing student schedules.

It is important to reiterate that at anytime it is no longer safe or practical to continue with on campus learning, we will transition to remote learning for all students. The transition to remote learning is likely to happen sometime in November, between Veteran’s Day and Thanksgiving in alignment with the rise of flu season. At that time, it will be difficult to determine the nature of symptoms presented making an orderly transition to remote learning practical.

### Peak Month of Flu Activity 1982-1983 through 2017-2018



## Health and Safety First!

### Masks or Face Coverings and PPE

All staff and students entering the facilities will be required to wear masks. Masks will also be required on buses and on school grounds. Parents are encouraged to provide their child with a properly fitted mask in a style with which they are comfortable. Health guidelines suggest masks should be cleaned or replaced daily. The school district will provide every staff member with five cloth masks and every student with one cloth mask. The District will also provide families that are unable to purchase additional masks (one for each day) with four more cloth masks to wear to school. Disposable masks will be available every day at all facilities to replace soiled, damaged, or forgotten masks. Parents should help their children practice proper mask etiquette now so they will be acclimated to it when returning to school.

Natural breaks from mask wearing will occur during meals or when eating or drinking. In addition, mask breaks may be provided by teachers when practical and safe so long as social distancing and other measures are strictly adhered to.

Preschool students will not be required to wear face masks or coverings when in the classroom but are required to do so in common areas and when directed to by the teacher. Since masks will not be required in these classrooms, preschool will only be offered to students who have been currently enrolled in the program. We will not, unfortunately, be accepting new applications to the Preschool Program, unless a student is deemed to be eligible for Special Education services.

Preschool teachers, service providers (nurses, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.) and others who must provide direct care to students, will be provided with PPE to wear.

### **Social Distancing**

Newmarket classrooms are large enough and our student population small enough to ensure social distancing of 6 feet by maximizing our learning spaces and reducing class sizes. Class sizes will vary based on the room size to allow for appropriate social distancing of 6 ft. or a plexiglass table divider with ideally no more than 15 students per room. Learning spaces will be outfitted with seating arrangements designed to ensure social distancing: individual student desks spaced apart, tables with plexiglass dividers, etc. To maximize classroom space, non-essential items and furniture will be removed or stored.

Arrival and departure times will be staggered among school buses, parent drop off, etc. to ensure social distancing guidelines are followed and students can transition to their classes in a safe and orderly fashion. Students will be assigned an entry and exit location that is closest to their classroom to limit contact and reduce the time it takes to complete screening.

### **Screening**

As an essential part of maintaining safety, all staff and students will be screened for COVID symptoms upon entering the building. Any person found to be symptomatic will not be admitted to the building.

The nurse at each school will be the designated contact person for all COVID-19 matters. The schools have designated an area for students who show or communicate any symptoms of a COVID-19 infection. This area will keep these students isolated and away from the rest of the school population. The school nurse will communicate with families regarding the student's dismissal from school. Teachers will be vigilant and report to the nurse any students who demonstrate COVID-19 symptoms. If a student has tested positive

for COVID-19, the school's designee must be contacted by the parent. The student cannot return to school until they have met the CDC's criteria for return, which are: 1. Three days of no fever; and, 2. Respiratory symptoms have improved (e.g. cough, shortness of breath); and, 3. It has been ten days since the student first expressed symptoms.

We will follow Department of Health and Human Services recommended protocols for someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, and for students and staff who have been in close contact with a known COVID-19 infected individual. These guidelines currently include the following.

1. Any person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should be reported immediately to public health by calling 603-271-4496 (after-hours call 603-271-5300 and ask for the public health nurse on call).
2. Public health will conduct a detailed investigation to identify people who may have been in "close contact" with a student or staff member diagnosed with COVID-19 during their infectious period. As part of the public health investigation, investigators seek to identify close contacts starting two days before the person became symptomatic or tested positive for COVID-19 (if asymptomatic).
3. "Close contact" for the purposes of the public health investigation in New Hampshire is defined as a person being within six feet of the individual diagnosed with COVID-19 during their infectious period for 10 minutes or longer. Depending on individual circumstances, and on a case-by-case basis, public health may identify other individuals considered at risk for exposure.
4. Any person who is identified as a close contact or at risk for exposure to COVID-19 based on the public health investigation will be required to quarantine for 14 days New Hampshire Grades K–12 Back-to-School Guidance, Fall 2020 10 from their last day of exposure. Depending on the specific circumstances, this may involve quarantine of only specific individuals (e.g., those sitting next to a person with COVID-19 in a classroom), but could include whole classes (depending on degree or likelihood of close contact, classroom size, age of students, etc.); this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by public health.
5. NH public health will work with schools to collect the necessary information (through the schools point-of-contact), interview the person diagnosed with COVID19, and potentially other staff involved to gather information to make an informed decision about risk and need for people to quarantine.
6. Public health will also assist with school and student/family communication.

### **Contact Monitoring**

Students will remain in cohorts, in the same room, in grades prek-8 with teachers moving to students for contact tracing purposes. High School students will not be in cohorts.

Instead they will transition to classes using one-way flow patterns and will sterilize their desk/table areas prior to changing classes.

Students will be assigned seating and provided with appropriate instructional resources to minimize sharing. All students will be provided with an appropriate individual device.

These grade appropriate devices will be:

PK to Grade 1	iPads
Grades 1/2, 2 and 3	Touch Screen Chromebooks
Grades 4-12	Chromebooks

Devices for Grades 3-12 are on hand. Devices for Grades PK-2 have been ordered. The current expected arrival date for iPads is August 21<sup>st</sup> and Touch Screen Chromebooks is September 4<sup>th</sup>.

Note: New devices for faculty have been received and are currently being distributed. Chromebooks will be provided to all tutors and paraprofessionals who require these tools to perform their work. In short, all staff and students will have access to technology for remote learning and services this fall.

### Cleaning and Sanitizing

To follow safety guidelines and allow for proper cleaning and sanitizing of the facilities, access to the buildings will be limited to Newmarket School District students and staff for educational purposes and services only. Therefore, all parent meetings and meetings with outside service providers will be held virtually. Programs such as Linked Together, Extreme Air, and One World Language etc. will not be permitted to use the facilities at this time.

The buildings will be cleaned and sanitized thoroughly every night. High touch areas will be sanitized multiple times throughout the day. High touch areas include doorknobs, bathrooms, entrances, exits etc. Hand sanitizer will be provided in all classrooms, offices, and common areas. Orders for these supplies have been placed and we are waiting on delivery.

Busses will be professionally treated with long-lasting sanitizing agents on a regular basis. This will be coordinated by the bus company through a third-party.



## Tactical Matters

**School Opening:** To ensure the safety and well-being of all, staff will need time to prepare, train and familiarize themselves with new educational tools, safety protocols and procedures. Therefore, the **opening day of school for students will be delayed until September 8, 2020.**

**Transportation:** Transportation will be available to all students as needed. However, due to limitations surrounding the availability of buses and drivers social distancing on buses is not possible. Therefore, parents are encouraged to transport their children to and from school. For those choosing to access bus transportation, parents will be required to pre-screen for COVID symptoms and have students wash or sanitize their hands before boarding the bus. Social distancing will be required at the bus stop and masks are always mandatory on the bus. Busses will be professionally treated with long lasting sanitizing agents on a regular basis.

**School Meals:** Breakfast, snacks and lunches will be provided on site. For on campus learners' meals will be delivered to classrooms. For remote learners' meals will be available for pick up at elementary school.

## Teaching and Learning

To allow staff adequate time to design and implement a high-quality educational program, collaborate with colleagues, and engage in professional learning, a 4-1 model of instruction and planning will be implemented this year. This means **teachers and students will attend classes for a full day Monday through Thursday.** On Friday, students will engage in at home independent work while teachers engage in planning, collaboration, and professional learning.

Remote learning options will be available for any student. These options will require families to choose either a full remote or full in-person learning model of instructional delivery and commit to this option for the year, except in emergency instances which will be handled on a case by case basis. **Families will need to make a decision on remote learning by the end of the day on Monday, August 3. This information is critical for the next level of planning for reopening.** It is needed to make final teacher assignments, classroom assignments, cohort groupings, and finalizing student schedules. Be advised that students who choose remote learning will not have access to the same program

offerings provided in the on-campus setting. The ability to educate our students remotely is dependent on the ability to match appropriate teachers to students. At the High School, virtual learning options will be used to supplement or supplant Newmarket course options.

Superintendents from surrounding districts have been communicating over the past months regarding re-opening plans to coordinate as much as possible. Each community has its own individual needs and is proceeding accordingly with what best meets their circumstances. At this time, Seacoast School of Technology has not released details regarding their reopening plan though they will be presenting a plan for consideration on Tuesday, July 28th. As such the Newmarket planning team as well as other local districts have had to proceed with planning without knowing this important information. Once their plan is available, coordination and planning for SST students will commence.

The first week(s) of school for students will be devoted to transitioning back to school, getting to know their classmates and teachers, learning new routines, and learning new safety protocols and procedures. Additionally, students will begin practicing with new educational technologies for the eventual return to remote learning. As previously mentioned, the transition to remote learning is likely to happen sometime in November, between Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving in alignment with the rise of flu season.

Google Classroom will continue to be the platform for teaching and learning. However, we will be introducing Zoom as our teleconferencing tool to enhance the remote learning experience for students. Additional training on these and other tools will be provided to staff, students, and families at the start of the year.

After school activities will be limited to those that can be offered virtually with adult monitoring. Examples include: National Honor Society, Model UN, Student Government, Chess Club, eGaming, Book Club, Code Squad etc. To the degree that it is safe and practical, varsity sports will be considered for low and moderate risk activities adhering to NHIAA expectations and guidelines.

## Final Note

Re-opening schools involves many layers of planning and communication. The Steering Committee and working groups will continue to develop the plan over the next month with increasing levels of detail and will continue to share our progress. In order to move to the next level, we need to know which children are returning to on-campus learning and those

that will be learning remotely. We also need to know if families will need transportation via the bus in the morning and afternoon and how many additional cloth masks we need to purchase for families who are struggling financially. We ask that parents take the time to review this plan and responded to [the survey](#). Opening schools safely requires that we all work together for the common good of our students, staff, and families. The Steering Committee respectfully submits this plan for your consideration and support.

In addition to this document and the survey, the Steering Committee will also be holding a staff and a parent meeting on Thursday to review this information. Please join us.

Staff meeting – Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 – 5:30 PM

Parent meeting - Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 7:00 PM

If you have any specific questions regarding your child, please contact the building principal. They would be more than happy to help you.

## [SURVEY LINK](#)

