

BSD Reopening Community FAQ Document

Updated as of July 29, 2020

- 1. How will A/B schedules be decided/will I have an opportunity to pick what works best for my family?** All schools will develop schedules to prioritize safety, equity, and inclusion. We will ask all families if there is a preference for “A” days or “B” days. It is important to note, however, that we may not be able to accommodate each family’s preferences. We will begin building schedules based on our needs and expectations at the high school level and will then work to balance parent preferences with the need to ensure we offer inclusive classrooms. We hope to have all family members on the same schedules and will do our best to get these schedules to you several weeks in advance of the first day of school.
- 2. What will remote learning look like? (Will remote learning look like last year or will students attend classes online?)** Students will participate in school remotely three days a week. On the days students are learning from home or another remote setting, students will work on assignments that require collaboration and deeper learning, and students at times will work together to complete their work. These longer-term assignments will create continuity from in-person instruction to remote instruction and will be designed to keep students engaged with their peers and their teachers throughout the week, regardless of setting. School staff will meet with students daily using the Google Meets virtual platform. In addition, we will use learning management systems including Seesaw, Google Classroom, and Unified Classroom on these remote days.
- 3. Will families have the choice to opt-out of face to face learning and go 100% virtual?** As of 7/29/2020, we are developing 100% remote learning opportunities for students who cannot attend school. We are planning both in-District and regional opportunities for 100% virtual learning. All families who select this option will have a BSD contact person to support their child’s learning.
- 4. Can students attend more than 2 days a week in-person?** As of 7/29/2020, we anticipate being able to provide in-person instruction at least four days a week for students with specific education or language needs that require intensive instruction which cannot be delivered in a virtual learning environment.
- 5. How will schools ensure health screenings upon entering and how will that impact students entering the school every day?** We will ensure a health screening for all students prior to entry into any school building. This currently includes a temperature reading with a touchless thermometer, a yes or no health questionnaire, and hand sanitizing. Student screenings will occur prior to building entry daily. Our class sizes will average 12 students and we will utilize multiple entrances for arrivals to reduce the impact screens may have on the start of school. On-site health screenings take approximately one minute per student. In order to keep schools safe, parents will not be allowed in the building during arrival.
- 6. Will masks be provided to students and staff? Will they be worn outside and during meals?** Cloth masks in various sizes will be provided to all students and staff. If you have your own and would like to wear them at school that is acceptable as long as your nose, mouth, and chin are covered. Bandanas are not acceptable. We will have disposable masks at every school in case anyone forgets their mask at home or need one for any other reason.

Masks will not be worn while eating meals; students will all need to be seated and physically distanced from others in the same room (or outside). For outside activities, masks can be off as long as appropriate physical distancing is being practiced.

- 7. What happens if a student or staff member becomes ill with COVID symptoms? Will we let the whole pod know if anyone is ill? What about confidentiality?** Anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms or a fever of 100.4 or higher will have to stay home and call their primary care provider. Those with COVID symptoms must

stay home until they are fever-free (without use of fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours AND 10 days have passed since the first symptom started unless their primary care provider has diagnosed them with something other than COVID-19 and then we will follow back to school protocol for the diagnosed illness.

Both staff and students who appear with symptoms during school hours will consult the school nurse. Students will be placed in an isolation room with a surgical mask on while they wait for their emergency contact to pick them up from school.

If a staff member develops COVID symptoms, they will contact their supervisor and then contact their primary care provider to determine if they should be tested for COVID-19.

If there is a positive case in our district, the Vermont Department of Health (VT-DOH) will contact the school administrator and the District will work with the VT-DOH to conduct contact tracing to determine who else is at risk and needs to quarantine. Based on the contact tracing, we will follow the VT-DOH instructions. The VT-DOH will instruct the District in how to proceed with sharing of information and we will be as transparent as we can by law.

- 8. If a teacher or child tests positive, will all children and adults in a classroom/pod be tested/quarantined?** Schools will maintain attendance and seating records so that if one person is COVID-19 positive, the VT-DOH can use our records in contact tracing and advise us on whom in the pod needs to be quarantined and who can remain in school.
- 9. Will the District continue to provide meals on the days when students are in remote learning?** The Burlington School Food Project is committed to providing meals for all of our students. We plan to provide meals that can be picked up at the end of a student's scheduled in-person day, to be taken home. We will provide access to a breakfast and lunch for each day that a student is learning remotely. Families choosing to participate will be charged based on their eligibility. If a student is learning remotely everyday, meals will be available for pickup at your child's school. A parent may pick up meals on behalf of their child. Families that pay full price will be asked to keep funds on their account to cover the cost of these meals.
- 10. Will there be PE and recess for students?** Yes. Children need activity and exercise. Each school will provide outdoor learning and recess activities for students.
- 11. Will students be graded this year, even if remote?** Yes. Teachers will provide grade-level instruction based on state and national standards that are aligned with BSD adjusted curriculum maps and scope/sequence documents. Students will receive grades/credit for their work. Teachers will share grade/course level grading expectations at the start of the school year. Parents can expect regular reporting of student progress.
- 12. Will the District help parents that have to work five days a week?** We understand that having students on an ABCAB schedule creates hardships for families and impacts some families more than others. We are currently working with the City and partners to determine possibilities for child care on remote learning days. This is challenging as we do not have the staff to create these programs in the school department, as our staff will be in schools, and we need to be cautious about students crossing groups on off days.
- 13. How will students get to school?** Students and families are encouraged to use alternate transportation to get to school due to diminished capacity on Green Mountain Transit (GMT) buses. This is one reason we have decided to implement an alternating day, hybrid schedule. We can better ensure bus transportation for students with no other option with fewer students riding the bus. All districts across VT are facing the same issue around density on public transportation; therefore there are no "extra" buses or drivers available to us. As of July 24, 2020, the maximum number of riders on GMT buses is 18 passengers riding at one time. This reduces bus capacity by more than half. Therefore we are asking all families to consider any other way to get

students to and from school before choosing the bus: walking, biking, driving, or carpooling with any others in your school pod.

- 14. Will the school day be the same length?** We plan to open schools with similar start and end times as last year, although Fridays will no longer be late start days at BHS. The exact times will be announced in the coming weeks. Afterschool will begin when the regular school day ends.
- 15. What measures are being taken to promote inclusivity, especially for students with disabilities?** We are always looking at our classrooms with an inclusive lens and will continue to look at multiple options in serving students based on individual needs. We will work to ensure PODS and days are created inclusively and are looking at different ways to offer 1:1 and small group services to help maximize the face to face learning as well as keep children and staff safe.
- 16. Did I hear that class sizes will be the same? What is the recommended number in a pod?** With an A/B schedule, classes should be roughly half their normal size. Generally, classes will be in the range of 9-12 students, preK-12. There is no firm recommendation from the State regarding the size of a pod, rather they have asked schools to increase the amount of space in between students in the classroom when possible. We believe that we can achieve the necessary spacing by going to an A/B schedule.
- 17. What is the plan for immunocompromised children?** If your child is immunocompromised, you should schedule an appointment with your primary care and/or specialty health provider to determine what accommodations your child may need. Some students with health conditions will be able to return to in-school learning while others will have to opt for remote learning. For those students with underlying health conditions that have made a plan with their health care provider, it is important that families and providers share that information with the school nurse at their schools. That way we know what students' needs are and how best to meet their needs.

Students who are immunocompromised and have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or 504 plans should contact their student's case manager and building principal. The education team will convene to determine what, if any, revision to education programs are necessary.

- 18. Literature seems to suggest that prolonged periods indoors can be more conducive to aerosol transmission. Has the District considered that a half-day option might better mitigate potential aerosol spreading?** We considered that but weighed the A/B option against having all kids in school every day for a half-day and worrying about potential transmission from the AM to PM cohorts. Ultimately we decided having half of our students in schools for a full day was a better option and more inline with the community needs expressed in the reopening survey.

Prior to re-occupancy, we will ensure all school ventilation systems have been properly cleaned with all new filters and are properly operating. Where possible we will increase the circulation of outdoor air ventilation and run our systems for longer periods of the day. (The wearing of masks is key regardless of the ventilation.) We are also encouraging teachers and students to move in pods to other areas of the building to take a break from their traditional classroom space, such as the library, outdoor classroom, or gymnasium, to help mitigate prolonged periods in the same space. We are also providing tented areas on each school campus to create additional outdoor spaces.