

WEST DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

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August 4, 2020

Dear West Deptford School District Families,

On June 26, 2020, Districts throughout the State received reopening guidance from the NJDOE in a document known as The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education. As our District works through the process of planning for the September 2020 reopening, the Administration is ready to share our plan with the community. This communication is meant to provide our families with an easy to understand overview of the West Deptford Reopening Plan. The attached PowerPoint presents the highlights of the plan and will hopefully provide answers to many of the questions you have. Our detailed Reopening Plan (over 60 pages long) has been submitted to the County and State and is available on our website. We have launched a West Deptford School District Reopening page on our website which will provide parents with a comprehensive overview of our planned procedures and protocols anticipated for September 2020. Our Reopening website is being updated daily and will include the following: FAQs, suggestions for families to prepare, cleaning protocols, attendance guidelines, lunch procedures, safety and hygiene protocols, parent commitments, parent survey results, and pages describing the school day at each school.

To assist families, the District has established an email address for parents to submit any and all questions regarding the school's reopening: reopening@wdeptford.k12.nj.us. Upon receipt of a parent email, the District will direct the email to the appropriate person to ensure our families receive a prompt response. It is our hope that this letter, in addition to our West Deptford School District Reopening website, our District Reopening Plan PowerPoint presentation, and our newly established Q&A email address will provide you with answers to your many questions.

The West Deptford School District has been working closely with the members of our Reopening Task Force, our School-Based Pandemic Response Teams, and our Sub-Committees since the Governor's announcement. The members of these teams have served as liaisons to District Administration and have solicited feedback from their colleagues to share with the committees. The individuals on these committees have dedicated numerous hours of their personal time to plan for our safe return to school.

Our Principals, Nurses, CST staff, and School Counselors have been working on plans to support both our staff and students' physical/mental health and wellness. Each of these groups is meeting with our Administrative team to finalize the details of submitted frameworks and plan collaboratively for the school year ahead. Although the majority of the plan is completed, there are many operational details that still must be sorted out. The West Deptford Education Association Executive Council and the Administrative team will be meeting in August to review the plan and discuss ways in which we can all support our staff and students. Finally, our committees will continue to meet throughout the month of August to finalize our curriculum planning and other details. In terms of teaching and learning, the school day in September 2020 will likely look very different than it did in Spring 2020. It is important to understand that the West Deptford School District's plan is based on the requirements of the State of New Jersey, collected feedback from stakeholder groups, as well as guidance issued by the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and collaboration with other School Districts.

Please keep in mind, the West Deptford School District's Reopening Plan *is not final*. We still have a little more than four weeks left of summer, and if you are following the news, you know the COVID-19 situation is ever-changing. This could affect our District's planning at any time, up to and after, the beginning of school. The information shared in this letter is communicated to our families with the understanding this plan can change at any time and is based on information we have as of today, August 4, 2020.

Pride, Passion, and a Commitment to Excellence

Other important communication dates are as follows:

- June 26, 2020: The NJDOE Road Back: Restart & Recovery Plan shared with NJ Schools
- July 17, 2020: West Deptford School District Community Letter Outlining Plan Framework
- August 4, 2020: West Deptford School District update to families (including PowerPoint presentation and reopening website information) released via School Messenger and social media sites
- August 5, 2020: West Deptford School District Preferred Learning Model Survey to be sent to West Deptford families via email addresses in School Messenger
- August 7, 2020: Approx. NJDOE issued deadline for schools to share reopening plans with community
- August 10, 2020: West Deptford School District Preferred Learning Model Survey closes

In choosing our Hybrid Learning Model, the West Deptford School District considered guidelines from the “American Academy of Pediatrics” which states that policymakers “should acknowledge that COVID-19 policies are intended to mitigate, not eliminate, risk. No single action or set of actions will completely eliminate the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission, but implementation of several coordinated interventions can greatly reduce that risk.” Although there is no way to completely ensure that students and staff will not get the virus, we are taking every precaution that we can to keep our school community safe with the resources available. The West Deptford School District intends to review our plan and operations daily to help keep your children and our staff safe, while complying with the State mandate to reopen schools.

The West Deptford School District will strive to create six feet of physical distancing throughout our buildings to the best of our ability. We will also require face coverings to be worn at all times by staff, students, and visitors in our buildings. It is imperative all face coverings remain over an individual’s nose and mouth unless directed otherwise by a staff member. Accommodations will be made for students with certain medical and other conditions which would preclude him/her from wearing a facial covering, as identified and verified in writing by a treating physician. We are asking that students bring masks with them to school each day. Furthermore, practicing mask wearing and helping students build up mask tolerance at home immediately will help students get accustomed to wearing their mask for longer periods of time. Frequent mask breaks may be offered throughout the school day if permitted, but students will need to be ready to keep their masks on for longer periods of time.

Masks will be required at the following:

- Bus Stop
- School Bus
- Arrival/Dismissal
- Classroom
- Hallway
- Main Office
- Nurse’s Office
- All other times

WEST DEPTFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT REOPENING PLAN FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

Hybrid Learning Model Option

West Deptford School District is fully aware that the modified hybrid schedule will be a challenge for many families. We understand the importance of the model chosen and have spent many hours considering every model from every angle, and feel that given our resources, the Hybrid Learning Model is the best overall option for our District. Our hope has been that we will soon get back to a 5 day a week in-person schedule; however, because of the need to maintain adequate social distancing in our instructional spaces, it is not possible to have all students report on-site at the same time each day at this time. Student numbers and classroom size will not support all students in classrooms together while meeting the necessary social distancing guidelines. The goal is to adhere to social distancing practices, when permissible, to reduce the number of individuals who could potentially be identified as “exposed” through contact tracing in the event of a District positive student/staff test result.

Student Groupings to start the 2020-2021 School Year:

- **Cohort A** (last name A-K) and **Cohort B** (last name L-Z): **Hybrid Learning Model** (2 days in-person, 3 days virtual). Family members who reside in the same household with differing surnames will be assigned to the same Cohort (Parents should contact us if siblings are assigned to different cohorts). Our Hybrid Learning Model will limit building capacity to 50% by managing two groups of students.
- **Cohort C: In-Person** Monday through Thursday, Virtual Friday. This option is only for our Specialized Population (MD and LLD Self-Contained Special Education students) and our Preschool students.
- **Cohort D: 100% Virtual Learning** If students choose this option, they will engage in our distance learning program from home Monday through Friday.

COHORT	TYPE OF LEARNING	NOTES
A	Hybrid	Last names A-K In-person* Monday/Tuesday Virtual Wednesday/Thursday/Friday
B	Hybrid	Last names L-Z In-person* Wednesday/Thursday Virtual Monday/Tuesday/Friday
C	In-Person*	Special Needs (MD and LLD) and Preschool In-person* Monday-Thursday Virtual Friday
D	100% Virtual	New option as per the Governor on 7.20.20 Virtual Monday-Friday

*In-person instruction is 4 hours per day

West Deptford School District:

1. All students will follow an early dismissal schedule when learning on-site. Sample schedules and start and end times are contained in our Reopening PowerPoint presentation that can be found on the Reopening page of our District website.
2. Students enrolled in the Hybrid Learning experience will engage in both synchronous and asynchronous instruction. Students may still have virtual learning opportunities with at least one teacher in the afternoon for up to an hour each day on their designated distance learning days (M-T-W-R).
3. Friday will be a District-wide distance learning day. This will provide the necessary time for staff to plan and prep for teaching both on-site and remotely in a distance learning model. Staff will also have office hours to answer student and parent questions, as well as small group instruction and enrichment. The Facilities Department will also be using Fridays to thoroughly clean our facilities.
4. Students will have the option to eat breakfast on-site, but they will not eat lunch on-site during in-person learning days. All students will be permitted to bring a peanut/tree-nut free working snack to consume during the school day. Students are also encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school each day. Lunches will be structured in a grab-and-go style for those attending in-person, and students will bring their “to-go” lunch home to enjoy. Students on 100% Virtual Instruction will also have access to meals. More information will follow soon.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A (A-K) In School	Cohort A (A-K) In School	Cohort A (A-K) Virtual Instruction	Cohort A (A-K) Virtual Instruction	Virtual Instruction for Cohorts A,B,C,&D, Enrichment, Teacher Prep and Planning, Virtual Office Hours, Deep Facility Cleaning
Cohort B (L-Z) Virtual Instruction	Cohort B (L-Z) Virtual Instruction	Cohort B (L-Z) In School	Cohort B (L-Z) In School	
Cohort C In-Person	Cohort C In-Person	Cohort C In-Person	Cohort C In-Person	
Cohort D Virtual	Cohort D Virtual	Cohort D Virtual	Cohort D Virtual	
Deep Facility Sanitizing in the PM	Deep Facility Sanitizing in the PM	Deep Facility Sanitizing in the PM	Deep Facility Sanitizing in the PM	

We fully understand how difficult it is knowing that our District plans are subject to change. It is our intention to keep our families up-to-date throughout the remainder of the summer by addressing the myriad of issues and considerations such as: school routines, instruction and curricular resources, accelerated learning plans, technology support and the Chromebook loaner program, student/staff health and hygiene practices, etc. as soon as those plans have been solidified and vetted with staff feedback. Our website will be updated regularly. We feel that our plan will be accepted by the State and approved by our Board of Education, and we will continue to fine-tune all of the details in the weeks ahead to make your student's educational experience the best that it can be and we look forward to the time we are able to welcome them back again.

For our complete plan, please see our Reopening Website [here](#).

The West Deptford School District Administration and staff sincerely thanks you for your continued support, understanding, cooperation, and flexibility as we move forward. Wishing all our families much relaxation, good health, and enjoyment over the remaining summer weeks. As always, we are committed to providing the best education possible, in the safest way possible.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Cappello

Gregory J. Cappello
West Deptford School District Superintendent