

# Blairstown Elementary School Re-Entry Plan

2020

## DRAFT

The following plan has been created by the BES administrative team in coordination with staff, parents and Board of Education members. The team elicited feedback from all interested community stakeholders via sub-committees. The information provided to those committees were used to create this plan.



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## 1. General Health and Safety Guidelines

CDC Guidelines: Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/> for the latest up-to-date information.

State and Local Guidelines: The NJ Department of Education released “The Road Back” on June 26, 2020 which outlines all the NJ Department of Education guidelines and recommendations for the reopening of our schools. The document in its entirety can be found at <https://www.nj.gov/education/reopening>

### Blairstown Elementary School District Guidelines:

The Blairstown School District will:

- Continue to maintain communication with authorities on both the local and state levels. The superintendent will keep the Blairstown Police Department, Mayor and Council, The Warren County Department of Education, The Warren County Health Department, and the Warren County Office of Emergency Management apprised of all incidents and outbreaks as they occur.
- Provide accommodations for staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness once medical documentation is obtained.
  - Accommodations can include but are not limited to:
    - Telework
    - Virtual Instruction
    - Additional protective equipment
- Follow CDC’s Guidance for Schools and Childcare Programs
- Promote behaviors that reduce spread by:
  - Requesting staff and students stay home when ill
  - Complete and maintain a health questionnaire and temperature check upon entering the building.
  - Maintain and provide proper hand hygiene and respiratory care
  - Require staff and visitors to wear face coverings at all times
  - Require students to wear face coverings when social distancing cannot be maintained.
  - Provided appropriate signage in our facilities to provide guidance to maintain social distancing.

## 2. Re-Opening Committee

Blairstown Re-Opening Committee was composed of Administrators, staff members, BOE members, parents, and members of the community in an effort to receive input from all stakeholders. Additionally, all subcommittee meetings were open to the teaching staff.

Mark Saalfield (superintendent)

Dr. Susie Elias (chair)

Matthew Herzer(chair)

Rosette Inscho

Karen Klein

Kelly McElroy

Jen Roof

Tom Amalfitano

Colomba Kampfe

Margaret Scialla

Marissa Hardy

Sally Smigel

Claire Fleming

Kelly Robinson

Sharon Bunce

Pat Ashbey

Cate Pasculli

Michele Andrews

Joan Ricker

Jen Crisman

Katie Kline

Mary Smith

Tammy Messina

Aimee Voss

Shannon Huston

Jen Pillion

Lisa Besser

Dr. Patrick Ketch(chair)

Kathleen Welsh(chair)

Jessica Twomey

Andrea Guiry

Claire Crowder

John Vogler

Jim Thaller

April Fee

Jamie Greifenberger

Anne Pereira

Narina Wyar

Jodi Hawkswell

Steve Van Dunk

Chrissy Grippaldi

Catherine Bowman

Abbey McDonald

MaryBeth Pollard

Heather Sutton

Clora Holyoak

Tara Anderson

Barbara Celentano

Christy Sazy

Dana Donlon

Joy Menzel

Marissa Hardy

Jen Apostolou

### **3. Pandemic Response Team**

Blairstown Elementary School has also established a Pandemic Response Team to address the on-going concerns of our school as we deal with the COVID 19 Pandemic and any possible future events. This team will meet during the school year to address concerns related to the Pandemic and the impact on the school. This team consists of:

Mr. Saalfield, Superintendent  
Dr. Ketch, Principal  
Mrs. Welsh, Supervisor of Special Services  
Mrs. Roof, School Nurse  
Mr. Amafitano, head custodian  
Mrs Andrews, guidance counselor  
Ms.Keefer, school psychologist  
Mrs. Smith, teacher  
Mrs. Constantine, teacher  
Mrs. Reynolds, teacher  
Mrs. Menzel, teacher  
Mrs. Lisa Besser (parent)  
Mrs. Kampfe, Secretary to the Superintendent  
Chief Johnsen, Chief of the BPD

## 4. Facilities and Cleaning Practices

### Signage:

- Clear and visible signs indicating social distancing, hygiene practices, mask wearing procedures and traffic flow will be visible throughout the school building in various areas at height appropriate to the students in that grade level.

### Cleaning:

- The district has developed a schedule to insure extra cleaning and disinfecting takes place in all areas of the building.
- All cleaning products used according to the directions on the label. For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants are effective. A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available on the EPA's website. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).
  - Examples of frequently touched areas in schools:
    - Classroom desks and chairs
    - Lunchroom tables and chairs
    - Door handles and push plates
    - Handrails
    - Kitchens and bathrooms
    - Light switches
    - Handles on equipment (e.g. athletic equipment)
    - Buttons on vending machines and elevators
    - Shared telephones
    - Shared desktops
    - Shared computer keyboards and mice
    - Drinking fountains
  - To limit crowding in the bathrooms, BES will limit the number of students who can enter the bathrooms to no more than two students by staggering bathroom breaks

### Classrooms:

- Classrooms will be measured and marked for appropriate social distancing during instruction.
- During periods of time when social distancing is not feasible within the classroom setting, a clear barrier between staff and students will be provided and the use of masks of face coverings will be required.
- Classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily utilizing electrostatic sprayers.
- Classrooms will be supplied with disinfecting wipes (EPA approved) for intermittent cleaning by staff of commonly touched areas.
- Custodians will utilize electrostatic sprayers to clean all student and teacher desks, door handles, handrails, light switches, computers, keyboards, tables, and seating areas.

### Restrooms:

- Classes will be assigned to specific restroom areas in order to limit movement throughout the building.
- The nurse's restroom will only be used for those students who will be admitted to the nurse's office for illness or injury.
- 1 Adult restroom will be available in each area of the building.
- Access to the restrooms will be limited to maintain social distancing and limited to no more than 2 students at a given time.
- Bathrooms will be cleaned on a regular schedule consistent with protocols outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Bathrooms will be disinfected at minimum daily using the electrostatic sprayer. This frequency will be adjusted with the use of a given bathroom facility.
- BES will have all student hallway bathroom doors propped open to limit personal contact.

### Hygiene Procedures:

- Homeroom teachers will develop a schedule of hygiene for all students with established times for hand washing.
- Signage and instruction for appropriate hand washing protocols will be provided to all students and strongly encouraged.
- Hand Sanitizer will be available in all classrooms, in the front entrance of the building, recess exit/entrance, Schaare Wing entrance, front side entrance, cafeteria, gym, bathrooms, and at designated spots throughout the hallways.
- Water bottles will be used in lieu of the water fountains. Students are encouraged to bring their own daily supply of water, but district will maintain a small reserve of water bottles on hand for any student who may forget their own.
- According to the DOH restart and recovery plan, parents are directed to send their child to school wearing a mask. The face covering cannot be any type of cloth or handkerchief

## **5. Transportation**

The district completed a survey of parents to provide a baseline of transportation needs. A follow up survey will be presented to the parents during the first week in August to provide a firm number of students requiring bus transportation within the district and those parents who prefer to waive transportation needs at this time. Changes to the transportation plan will be adjusted as information and state guidelines change during this Pandemic.

The district is working with Stocker Bus Company to adhere to state and federal guidelines for student transportation.

Busing numbers will be limited to maintain social distancing. Students will be required to wear masks during transportation on the bus, and bus windows will be open, weather permitting.

### **District Bussing for Students with Special Needs:**

The district maintains 2 small busses for the specialized transport of students with special needs who require accommodation that preclude them from utilizing general district transportation options.

Busing will adhere to all state and federal guidelines for student transportation. Busing on these buses will be limited to maintain social distancing and reduce the need for masks by students. The district will provide a bus paraprofessional (wearing a mask) to assist with transportation. Bus windows will be open, weather permitting to provide for greater airflow. Students load to the rear and disembark from the front to allow for social distancing.



## 6. Health Screening Protocols

### Procedures for ill students or staff:

If a staff member or student becomes symptomatic during the school day, they will be safely and respectfully isolated from others in a separate room. Parents will be notified to come pick up their child in a timely manner. See attached guidance from the Warren County Department of Health (WCDOH).

### Contact Tracing Protocols:

1. **Investigation:** Upon confirmation of a COVID diagnosis, BES will work with a patient to help them recall everyone with whom they have had close contact during the time when they may have been infectious. For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick until the time the patient is isolated.
2. **Notification:** BES will first notify the Warren County Public Health Department and the Warren County Education Department about the confirmation of a COVID case. BES will then begin contact tracing by notifying exposed individuals (contacts) of their potential exposure as rapidly and sensitively as possible, not revealing the infected patient's identity.
3. **Support:** Parents will be provided with education, information, and support to help them understand their risk, what they should do to separate themselves from others who are not exposed, and how to monitor themselves for illness. In addition, they are informed of the possibility that they could spread the infection to others even if they themselves do not feel ill.
4. **Quarantine:** Contacts will be encouraged to stay home and maintain social distance from others (at least 6 feet) until 14 days after their last exposure to the infected patient, in case they also become ill.
5. BES will maintain **logs** of contacts, dates of exposure, and quarantine dates.

### Physical Guidelines Signage

- Exterior Signage
  - Parking lot signs designating proper social distancing when parking
  - Exterior door and window signs listing COVID19 procedures for entry
  - Signs notifying masks required to enter building
  - Signs notifying temperature will be taken before entering building
  - Sidewalk markers identifying 6 feet social distancing spaces
  - Signs properly identifying designated entrance and exits & direction of travel

- COVID-19 procedure signs
- 6 foot social distancing markers
- Direction of travel signs
  
- Interior Signage
  - COVID19 procedure signs
  - 6 foot social distancing markers
  - Direction of travel signs
  - Hand washing signs
  - Masks required signs
  
- Hallway Flow
  - Social distance should be maintained in the hallways and common areas
  - All BES staff, students, and visitors will be required to wear face coverings unless doing so inhibits the individual's health
  - 6<sup>th</sup> grade lockers will not be utilized until further notice
  - Face masks are required at all times in the hallways
  - Desk shields will be utilized in the main office and CST office, already installed
  - Desk shields for all classrooms have been ordered

## 7. Alternate Schedules

- Schedules will be created to provide for safe social distancing to the maximum extent practicable.
- The district will ensure that their indoor facilities have adequate ventilation which includes
  - Recirculated air will have a fresh air component
  - Window will be opened if A/C is not provided
  - Filters for the A/C units will be maintained and changed according to the manufacturer recommendations
  - Hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) will be located in:
    - Every classroom
    - At the entrances and exits of the buildings
    - In the bathrooms
    - In various locations in the hallways
  - Students will be asked to wash their hands for a least 20 second intervals after eating, after using the restroom, and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing.
- **Parents will select 1 of 3 options for the child's return in September**
  - OPTION 1 – HYBRID IN-PERSON
    - Grades K-6 students will be placed into cohorts(Gold Team/Blue Team), then split into two sessions(Monday & Tuesday) or (Thursday & Friday) for four hour in- person instructional time. The school day will be early dismissal, exact time TBA. When students are at home in the afternoon, they will access special area subject virtually
    - Wednesdays will be a "flex" day for deep cleaning in the building and will be a total virtual day for both cohorts. Students will receive virtual instruction in core courses, specials, RTI and specialized support during this day. The schedule allows for very minimal movement during the in-person instructional time. For the alternate home days, students will participate in virtual assignments, small group instruction, and teacher/student meetings. Under this option, grade level teachers will each be assigned a homeroom. Classes will consist of 12 to 15 students, depending on room size and configuration, with social distance of 6 feet between students and teacher maintained.
      - Staff will be building-based for a full day, except for those with medical issues
      - Student lunches will be available to students and will be grab and go style, delivered to classrooms at dismissal for students to eat at home. No lunch will be served in the cafeteria or classrooms due to the difficulty with social distancing mandates.
  - OPTION 2 – FULL VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION
    - The Governor has mandated that it is the district's responsibility to get students back into the building but he is also allowing parents the right to keep their children home in the Fall of 2020. The district will provide online instruction and in this environment your child will receive virtual

assignments, projects and assessments. The student will meet with a certified staff member for the assigned instructional periods until dismissal. Your child will be assigned a grade level homeroom teacher who is responsible for lesson plans, assignments and assessments. The virtual teacher may more than likely be a different teacher than the homeroom teacher who will be instructing in person. If the district implants a full virtual instruction platform, your child will join an assigned homeroom schedule. Each grade level will have 3 assigned teachers. Two teachers will teach in-person to one cohort on each of the four days of in person instruction (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri), and one teacher will teach the same lesson, using the same lesson plan and materials virtually to the other cohort. This will allow us to provide a more consistent educational delivery of instruction than previously possible.

○ OPTION 3 – HOMESCHOOLING

- My child will no longer be enrolled in BES. Parents will be responsible to obtain all materials, curriculum etc.

Parents will receive notice of the date they must respond to the district survey regarding parent's decision of option 1, 2 or 3. Additional, parents will respond whether their child will ride the bus if choosing option 1.

BES is prepared to move to a **whole school full virtual instructional environment** if directed to do so.

- All students in need of an electronic device will receive one. The district hopes to have enough devices to become a 1:1 district by November 2020
- Any student in need of internet access will be set up with a hotspot plan from Kajeet through Verizon, purchased and paid for by the district.
- Virtual Instruction will be a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous activities each day. Scheduled Meet times will be provided to parents by the grade level staff.
- New instruction will be provided, activities conducted, and assignments given.
- Students will report to a virtual class schedule that will be set up by their teacher
- Attendance will be taken and students will be held accountable for attendance during these class times. Classes will continue as if we were in the building. Grades will be recorded and maintained as though all students were in-person.

## 8. Student / Staff / Visitor Entrance Protocols

- Student Drop Off
  - BUSES
    - Bus students will be screened by staff members upon arrival as they debark from buses. Students that have a fever (100 degrees F or higher), or other health concern, will be respectfully placed in the isolation room with a certified adult until parents can come pick up.
  - PARENT DROP OFF / WALKERS
    - Markers will be placed outside on the sidewalk in front of the main entrance for students walking to school. They will be screened by staff members. Students that have a fever (100 degrees F or higher), or other health concern, will be placed in the isolation room with a certified adult until parents can come pick up.
  - PARENT DROP OFF / CAR
    - Students will be screened by staff members upon arrival prior to exiting the vehicle. Students that have a fever (100 degrees F or higher), or other health concern, will be directed to return home with their parent or placed in the isolation room with a certified adult until parents can come pick up.
- Staff
  - All staff will self-check prior to commuting to BES. If they need to call out, ample notice will be given so that viable coverage for their classes can be achieved.
- Visitors
  - Few visitors will be permitted into the building. All visitors will be given a health screening questionnaire upon arrival, and will have their temperature checked. If no COVID symptoms are recorded they may be allowed to enter the building and will be required to wear a mask.
- Student dismissal will be staggered by homeroom. Staff and Administration will work together to ensure classrooms are dismissed following safe social distance guidelines.
- Students
  - Bus students will load the buses by homeroom. Students being picked up will be escorted to the front of the building for dismissal, keeping them socially distanced.
  - Pick ups and walkers will be dismissed following safe social distancing guidelines.
- Staff/visitors
  - All staff and visitors will exit the building through the main entrance.

## **9. Lunch Service**

- Food services will be provided to students through the Dept. of Agriculture Program, administered by Maschios's Food Service Company.
  - On in-school instruction days, lunch will be delivered to those students' homerooms to bring home.
  - On alternating virtual days, lunch will be provided for free and reduced lunch students for pick up at the school at a designated time.
- No lunch will be served during school hours, due to the inability to social distance. A period of snack time will be scheduled by each individual homeroom teacher. Students are encouraged to bring a small snack they can eat until they get home.

## **10. Extra Curricular and Use of Facility**

- All extra curricular activities will be suspended until further notice.
- Any external community organizations who normally utilize our buildings will be suspended until further notice.
- All meetings and clubs, meeting after school are suspended until further notice.
- Until further notice, all in person field trips are suspended.

## **11. Governance**

- New Board Policies will be adopted as required.

## **12. Special Education, 504, and ELL Services**

- BES will continue to meet our obligations to students with disabilities or ELL students to the greatest extent possible. The district will have:
  - Procedures to address the return to school of medically fragile students and students with physical or health impairments who may require accommodations and modifications as part of an IEP or 504.
  - IEP teams review student data/progress to determine whether critical skills were lost during the 19-20 school closure.
  - IEP teams consider the impact of missing services on student progress and determine if additional services are needed.
  - IEP teams develop a procedure to complete overdue and/or incomplete evaluations to determine eligibility for special education services
  - Clear communication to parents/guardians for the procedures for student referrals and evaluations to determine eligibility for special education and related services or a 504 plan.

## **13. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**

- BES will be utilizing the RTI framework (Response to Intervention) as a systematic approach to prevention, intervention and enrichment for students in grades K - 6. BES will:
  - Administer universal screening to drive instruction in the Fall of 2020, whether we are in-person or virtual.
  - Form teams of staff to utilize the data to inform decisions about instruction and intervention in each support tier

- Include family members in the decision making process
- Make instructional decisions grounded in the data obtained from formative assessments.

## 14. Social Emotional Learning

- Educator Well-Being It is extremely important for BES to address the social emotional well being of its staff. If our staff is healthy both emotionally and mentally, they will be better able to promote a healthy learning environment for our students.
- BES will look to:
  - Promote self-care and wellness through the remainder of summer and at the start to the 20-21 school year
  - Create opportunities for the staff to practice and reflect on their emotional well-being
- Trauma-Informed Social and Emotional Learning (SEL): BES will continue to embed Social and Emotional Learning into the classrooms. The district puts the mental health and well being of its students and staff in the forefront and realizes the potential trauma that the COVID-19 closures may have caused. In that regard, the district will:
  - Establish routines and maintain clear communication on the importance of SEL and how it translate to student success during the school year whether in-person or virtually
  - Support students and staff in feeling safe
  - Continue to provide professional development in social emotional learning and the integration into the classroom
  - Identify staff in each building who can address the trauma and emotional well being of our students
  - Provide professional development on trauma informed practices
  - Establish a system that promotes supportive staff-student relationships to ensure all students have at least one caring staff member who checks in with them regularly.
  - Prepare to support an influx of students who may need counseling support.
  - Be proactive in preparing access to mental health and trauma supports for adults and students, which may include establishing partnerships with outside entities and agencies.
- School Culture and Climate: It has always been a goal of BES to create a positive school climate and culture. The district will continue to identify ways to address issues in the school environment caused by the pandemic with an emphasis on improving the overall quality of the school environment whether in-person, hybrid or virtual. The district will:
  - Prioritize the health and emotional well-being of staff and students above all else
  - Assess the school climate to identify vulnerabilities and plan to implement evidence-based interventions to address identified needs
  - Plan to provide and sustain instruction on social norms, relationship building, and behavioral expectations beginning at the start of the school year.

## **15. Counseling Services**

- Our Guidance counselor and CST office will provide traditional school services to students, staff and parents. We have increased the guidance counselor schedule from 3 to 4 days per week. These services will be assessed and modified on an ongoing basis to reflect the evolving nature of the hybrid learning environment.
- Delivery of services will be conducted:
  - In a traditional manner when students are attending school in-person while adhering to all new health protocols.
  - Through phone, email and Google meet when students are attending school virtually.
- The guidance department recognizes the possible need for and is prepared to support an influx of students who may need counseling support.
- Our guidance counselor shall be involved in providing mental health supports via:
  - Individualized counseling, monitoring of progress, and therapeutic support through existing programs and current staff.
  - Classroom-based instruction in Social Emotional Learning and strategies to promote positive mental health and peer interaction.
  - Collaboration with local community providers, county resources, and other organizations.
  - Connecting students and parents to individual counseling, family therapy, out-patient programs, or addiction services as needed.
- The district has increased the part-time Guidance Counselor's time from 3 days to 4 days per week, insuring that the counselor will be in attendance during each of the four days students are present in the building.

## **16. Professional Development**

- BES will continue to afford administration, faculty and parents professional development.
- At the beginning of the school year, our building principal will identify the online platforms that will be used in both in-person and remote instruction. The staff will receive professional development and training on the programs chosen. The staff will also receive training in COVID 19 protocols and procedures.
- Throughout the school year, the staff will receive professional development in the areas of Social and Emotional Learning, instructional strategies, differentiation, trauma based incidents, and blended learning.
- As the year progresses, the district will look to identify other areas where professional development would be beneficial.

## **17. Technology**

- All students in need of a technology device will receive one that will be used for virtual instruction.
- By November 2020, the district hopes to have secured enough devices to become a 1: 1 district
- Students without internet connectivity will be provided with at hotspot by Kajeet through Verizon



## **18. Security**

- BES will maintain an open line of communication with the Warren County Central Office, local and County Law Enforcement, and the Warren County Health & Education Departments regarding recommended policies and procedures relating to proper social distancing.
- Blirstown Police Department will continue to maintain a positive and visible presence
- BES Pandemic Response Team will monitor all designated entrances and exits to prevent unauthorized access and ensure that all procedures as it relates to required social distancing are being followed by students, staff, and visitors.
- The main office will monitor surveillance cameras throughout the day to ensure that proper social distancing procedures are being followed.
- All other procedures of BES Crisis Management Plan will remain in force.

This plan will be monitored and updated as conditions change. Communication with BES families remains critical and we will continually strive to provide immediate notification to any changes in this plan as they become necessary through the use of all our social media sites and our one call system.