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Letter from the Superintendent

To all of our members of the Watertown Public Schools Community:

The Watertown Public Schools **Bridge to Return** document provides our strong and resilient community with a comprehensive overview of the phased-in plan to return to learning this fall. We are scheduled to resume student learning on September 22, with a phased-in approach to in-person learning-- our Bridge to Return.

I want to extend my gratitude to everyone who participated in our coffees, principal chats, educator forums, and recent School Committee meetings. Based upon the feedback and input from our thoughtful families and educators, and our continued dialogue with our Task Force Members and Leadership Team, I am sharing an update on the reopening plans for the District, our Bridge to Hybrid. The Watertown School Committee voted on August 6 for a phased-in approach to school reentry, with the first three phases being fully remote for the majority of our students.

The Commonwealth's careful and disciplined approach has enabled our state gradually to begin reopening, in part because of strong compliance with health and safety precautions. Just as the state gradually reopened with a multi-phased plan, so too will the Watertown Public Schools open with a multi-phased approach. Of course, we know that under normal circumstances, students would be best served in schools every day, interacting with their peers and engaged in live classroom learning. However, we must balance this with the context that we find ourselves in: a global pandemic that has a tremendous impact on how we deliver instruction.

We recognize that the circumstances of every family and staff member are different, and that no plan ultimately will work for everyone in our community, short of a full return to school. We look forward to the day when that will happen, and in the interim, we commit to our students, staff and families, that we will provide the best learning experience possible given our current context. One of the ways to do so is to have a consistent schedule and structure no matter which model we find ourselves in. Throughout the plan, you will find tight alignment between our Bridge to Hybrid and our Virtual School plan, which will allow us to move easily between the two models as we progress through the 2020-2021 School Year.

As we move closer to September 22, we welcome input and feedback from all of our stakeholders. We invite you to share your questions, comments, and ideas to help inform and strengthen our plans. I will be holding [weekly community forums](#) throughout the coming weeks via Zoom and welcome all WPS community members to join.

I am confident that we can prioritize both safety and learning as we prepare for the start of a successful school year. Thank you for your patience and cooperation in these difficult times.

With kind regards,

Dede Galdston, Ed.D., Superintendent

Executive Summary of the 'WPS Bridge to School' Plan

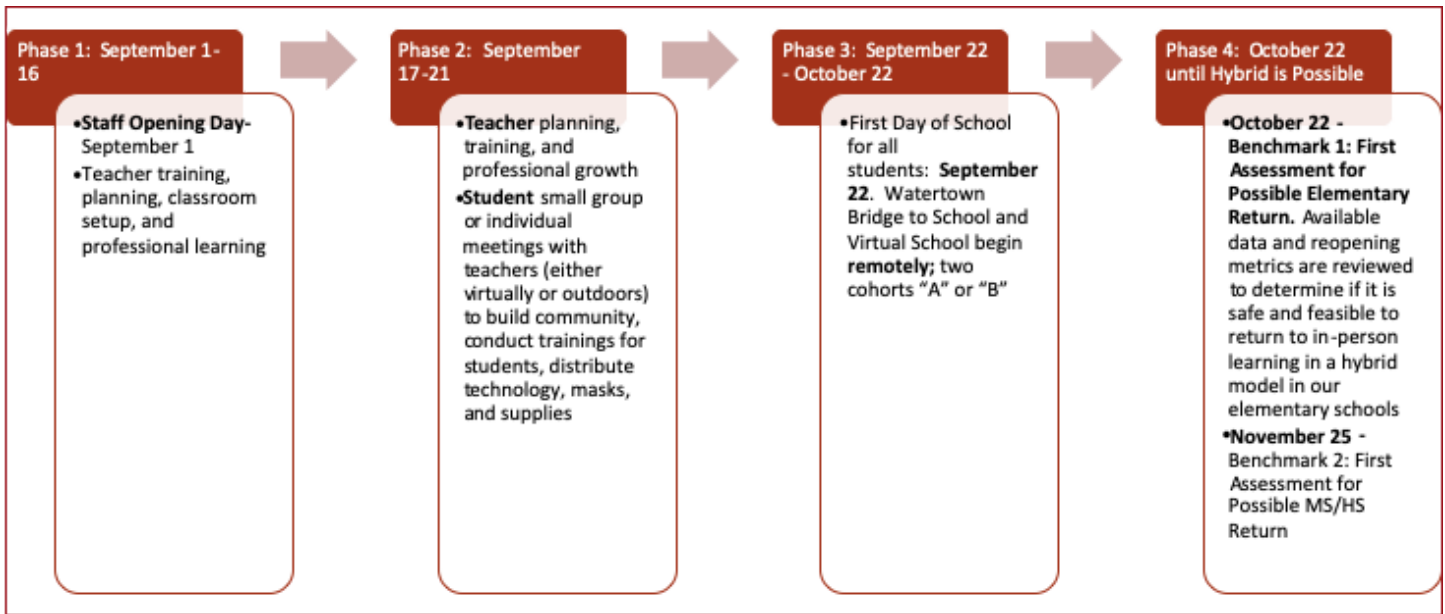
In Watertown, our school community's desire for information is as varied as the unique learners we serve. Below is what students, staff, and families need to know about the upcoming 2020-2021 school year to this point. For those who prefer an abbreviated version of our **Bridge to School Plan**, this Executive Summary is for you. Frequent communications and updates will follow. For those interested, a copy of the updated *draft* 2020 - 2021 WPS School Calendar can be found [here](#).

The updated '**WPS Bridge to Hybrid' Plan** proposal includes the following main elements:

- **The Watertown Public Schools will ensure a thoughtful and safe return for students and staff.** In order to assure a safe return to school, decisions will be based on current data and state metrics, which have yet to be fully defined by the state, along with student, family, and staff feedback.
- The District has purchased substantial Personal Protective Equipment for all staff, and masks for all students. Safety protocols have been established for handwashing/hygiene, entries and exits, bus transportation, athletics, afterschool programming, food service, and all other school-related operations.
- The base reopening plan for all students will be the **Watertown Bridge to Hybrid**, which includes a Phased-in Reopening plan with the ultimate goal of returning in-person when it is safe to do so for both students and staff.
- WPS will provide an in-person school option for **some families of our students with specialized needs**, including students in substantially separate programs, students who are experiencing homelessness, our newcomer ELs, and our preschool program.
- Students (PK-12) will have the option to be part of the **Watertown Virtual School (WVS)**, which is designed specifically to respond to the needs of those students who are immunocompromised and require remote learning. This option also may be appropriate for students who thrive in a remote learning environment. Once the final plan has been voted and distributed to families detailing this option, elementary families will be asked to sign up for the Watertown Virtual School. **Families choosing this model will remain in Watertown Virtual School until at least February 8, 2021.**

All K-12 students will start remotely, with a robust, full-day learning experience. Students identified as having the greatest learning needs (as defined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) will have opportunities for instruction and support services that are delivered in school.

The Watertown Public Schools will gradually phase to a hybrid model based on sound scientific metrics and the readiness of our buildings or a fully virtual model for students who can't return to school based on sound scientific metrics and the readiness of our buildings. The tentative schedule for the Phases are as follows:



Phase 1: September 1-16

- Opening Day- September 1
- Teacher training, planning, classroom setup, and professional learning

Phase 2: September 17-21

- Continued Teacher planning, training, and professional growth
- Student small group or individual meetings with teachers (either virtually or outdoors) to build community, conduct trainings for students, distribute technology, masks, and supplies

Phase 3: September 22 to October 22

- First Day of School for all students: **September 22**. Watertown Bridge to School and Virtual School begin **remotely** following the same schedules established for the hybrid model.
- **While remote**, all students will be placed into two cohorts "A" or "B".
- Elementary and Middle School will begin the week with both cohorts together on Mondays for core instruction. Following Monday, each cohort receives core academic instruction two days a week in their cohort, with specials and other learning opportunities being offered on the other two days.
- High School will follow their seven-period schedule two days a week, with three days a week with students engaged in both synchronous and applied learning (i.e. group or independent projects)

Phase 4: October 22 until Hybrid

October 22 - Benchmark 1: First Assessment for Possible Elementary Return

- Available data and reopening metrics are reviewed to determine if it is safe and feasible to return to in-person learning in a hybrid model in our elementary schools or primary grades. If so, the first day back would be Tuesday, October 27th.

November 25 - Benchmark 2: First Assessment for Possible MS/HS Return (or Second Assessment for Elementary Return)

- Available data and reopening metrics are reviewed to determine if it is safe and feasible to return to in-person learning in a hybrid model for middle school and high school students. If so, the first day back would be Monday, November 30.
- Benchmarks correspond to academic quarters and semesters

When we begin in a hybrid model, students will be in-person two days a week, and will be remote three days a week based on their cohorts

Students who are in the *Watertown Virtual School* will continue in the virtual model through February 8. At that time, families can reassess their options for their children.

Phase 5: Full Return to In-Person Learning

Safety Precautions:

Once we are able to resume in-person (hybrid or fully in-person) learning, the District is committed to providing a safe learning environment for students and staff. We have already prepared for safe in-person learning in the following ways:

School/Classroom Setup

- No more than 12 people (students and adults) in a typical classroom (depends on the size of the room)
- Desks & tables spaced 6 feet apart
- When possible, sinks will be available in classrooms for handwashing, especially with the specialized programs, and additional sanitizer will be available in all rooms
- Plexiglass placed in high traffic areas
- Quarantine rooms in every building
- Entrance and exits are controlled, hallways and staircases will have one-way directions

Air Quality

- WPS has contracted with Ai3 to review our HVAC systems
 - Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee will meet to review any recommendations that are made
- Air Purifiers with HEPA filters have been purchased for nursing offices, isolation rooms, and any rooms without adequate ventilation (i.e. rooms without windows)
- Windows have been checked in all rooms and work orders have been generated with windows that don't open

Cleaning

- Detailed [Custodial Response Plan](#) developed, in line with CDC guidelines
- Custodial staff will be scheduled to maximize time in the buildings
- Purchased additional electrostatic sprayers to disinfect buildings
- Cleaning & disinfectant supplies have been purchased for every classroom and every building

Masks, Face Shields, Gloves and PPE

To date, the following items have been ordered (and more):

- 18,700 disposable masks
- 800 Student Fabric Masks
- 1000 Staff Fabric Masks
- 6600 Gowns
- 650 Fisherman's hats
- 312 Goggles
- 3000 N95 Masks
- Sneeze Guards
- 600+ Gallons Hand Sanitizer
- Sanitizing Wipes
- Student Desks for K and 1 (to replace tables)
- 600 boxes of gloves

Testing

- Working with the Broad Institute, our goal is to provide testing for all staff before school starts

Covid-19 Scenarios

- [Protocols](#) for possible COVID-19 scenarios have been developed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and will be followed in consultation with the Watertown Department of Health.

Reopening Goals and Guiding Principles

Overarching Goal

Protecting the health and well-being of every child and staff member---along with the need to reimagine, renew, and reopen our schools to support equitable outcomes for every student--- is critical and central to our work. This summer's specific challenge calls for us to use an equity-focused, scenario-based framework of planning for an uncertain future (in-person, hybrid, virtual) as we welcome students safely back to school. It is an iterative process.

Guiding Principles

These Guiding Principles will serve as the foundation for all three plans that we are currently developing.

Equity

- Ensure equal access to curriculum (internet/food/materials, etc.) and customization of teaching and learning (e.g., intervention/assessment) to personalize and continuously reduce achievement and opportunity gaps
- Ensure culturally responsive teaching and tiered specific interventions

Excellence

- Ensure rigor and continuity of curriculum by:
 - Identifying where curriculum begins by each grade focused on moving forward rather than reviewing

- Prioritizing essential grade-level standards and themes for all students
- Curating curriculum resources for on-line and in-school learning,
- Utilizing assessment data and creating a schedule for administration, either online or in-person
- Determining expectations for in school and virtual learning
- Prioritizing common planning amongst departments and grade levels to ensure staff has adequate time to plan as a team and feels the support of their colleagues
- Designing a cohesive system that provides all students with a core curriculum that can be delivered either virtually or in-person, or in a combination hybrid system

Community

- In a physically and emotionally safe environment, we will support students, staff members, and families through the use of social/emotional learning strategies, effective two-way communication, and a positive home-school partnership by prioritizing the building of relationships through building upon what we already have in place.
- As a district, we will determine a clear and cohesive structure for home/school communication in order to promote and build students' and families' knowledge and understanding of expectations and in support of students' executive functioning and self-advocacy skills.

Essentials for Opening

The most important factor when considering reopening in the fall is the *safety of students and staff*. To that end, there are certain tenets that we consider essential for returning to our school buildings.

- Universal Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for all Staff
- Masks required for all students 2-12, masks and face shields required in PreK-1
- 5-6 feet of social distance in classrooms
- Additional support for special populations
- Outdoor learning opportunities when possible (e.g., tents and outdoor spaces)
- 'Weekly Learning Plans' for all classes or grade levels
 - This will allow for concurrent learning plans for students in virtual learning and in-person learning, which will enable easy transitions into the virtual learning environment, if necessary
- Time for teachers to plan and meet in collaborative groups either every day (PreK-8) or one full day (9-12)
- 3 days of PD September 1-3 and 10 additional days granted by DESE
- **More than likely, voluntary COVID testing for all staff weekly
 - Working on funding and logistics in collaboration with the Broad Institute

Guidance Documents from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

- [Initial Reopening Guidance](#)
- [Special Education](#)
- [Classes Requiring Additional Precautions](#)
- [COVID-19 Scenarios](#)
- [Fall Reopening Transportation Guidance](#)
- [Remote Learning](#)
- [DESE FAQ](#)

THE THREE PLANS FOR REOPENING

In the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidance released on June 25, 2020, the State directed school systems to consider a range of options, from a full return to school (in-person), to a hybrid learning model, to full virtual learning. At this time, Watertown will be implementing a **Bridge to Hybrid Program** and a Watertown Virtual School Program, with the intention to return full in person when possible. We reserve the right to make changes to any and all aspects of this WPS Bridge to Return, as we consider community feedback, additional guidance from the State, and continue to monitor COVID-19 trends.

WATERTOWN BRIDGE TO HYBRID SCHOOL (WBS)

In this model, the Watertown Public Schools will gradually open in Phases with progression in the later phases based on sound scientific metrics and the readiness of our buildings. The tentative schedule for the Phases are as follows:

Phase 1: September 1-16

- Opening Day- September 1
- Teacher training, planning, classroom setup, and professional learning

Phase 2: September 17-21

- Continued Teacher planning, training, and professional growth
- Student Small group or individual meetings with teachers (either virtually or outdoors) to build community, distribute technology, masks, and supplies

Phase 3: September 22-November 25

- Watertown Virtual Bridge School and Virtual School Begin virtually following the same schedules established for the hybrid model
- October 22- Available data and reopening metrics are reviewed to determine if it is feasible to return to in-person learning in a hybrid model in our elementary schools or primary grades:
- By November 25- Available data and reopening metrics are reviewed to determine if it is feasible to return to in-person learning in a hybrid model for middle school and high school
- High Needs Students would attend school either four days a week or two days a week depending on their level of need

Phase 4: When Safe to Do So

- Full return to in-person learning

During the phased-in approach to in-person learning, the Watertown Virtual Bridge School provides PK-12 students and staff with a combination of In-Person and Remote teaching and learning experiences (or hybrid work experiences for non-instructional staff). Students in each school are divided into two cohorts to attend in-person 2 days a week.

Grades K-5

- The 'Weekly Learning Plan' is the same in WVS and Virtual Hybrid
- Monday is a fully virtual weekly Core Academic Kick-off
- In-person learning for half-day 2 days a week focused on core instruction (Math & Literacy)
 - Hybrid Off is focused on Specials, FLES, Science, SEL, Other Assignment
 - Cohort A
 - In-Person Hybrid – Tuesday, Thursday – Remote in the afternoon
 - Virtual Hybrid – Wednesday, Friday
 - Cohort B
 - In-Person Hybrid– Wednesday, Friday – Remote in the afternoon
 - Virtual Hybrid- Tuesday, Thursday
 - Each day begins with Morning Meeting and ends with Closing Circle with class as a whole (both in-person and virtual cohorts)
 - Grab-and-go breakfast and lunch for two days

Grades 6-8

- Monday is a fully virtual weekly Core Academic Kick-off
- The 'Weekly Learning Plan' is the same in WVS and Virtual Hybrid
- In-person learning for half-day 2 days a week focused on core instruction (Math & Literacy)
 - Virtual Hybrid focused on World Languages/Reading, Specialists, Support, Enrichment
 - Cohort A
 - In-Person Hybrid – Tuesday, Thursday – Remote in the afternoon
 - Virtual Hybrid – Wednesday, Friday
 - Cohort B
 - In-Person Hybrid– Wednesday, Friday – Remote in the afternoon
 - Virtual Hybrid- Tuesday, Thursday
- Block Schedule (Math/English/Science/SS/Cluster Time) (approx. 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.)
- Cohort A
 - Hybrid in-person – Monday, Wednesday, every other Friday – Remote in the Afternoon
 - Hybrid Distance – Tuesday, Thursday
- Cohort B
 - Hybrid in-person – Tuesday, Thursday, every other Friday – Remote in the Afternoon
 - Hybrid Distance – Monday, Wednesday
- Remote learning focused on World Languages/Reading, Specialists, Support, Enrichment

Grades 9-12

- Students divided into two cohorts, alphabetically across all grades
- Cohort A
 - In-Person Hybrid - Monday and Tuesday - follow 4-period schedule
 - Virtual Hybrid- Wednesday, Thursday - simulcast or asynchronous lessons
- Cohort B
 - In-Person Hybrid - Wednesday and Thursday - follow 4-period schedule
 - Virtual Hybrid - Monday, Tuesday - Simulcast or asynchronous lessons
- Friday (all students) - counseling curriculum, office hours, affinity groups, contact virtual learners

- Students with specialized programs are in-person Monday through Thursday

WATERTOWN VIRTUAL SCHOOL (WVS)

Students (PK-12) and staff who are enrolled in this model will engage in 100% virtual (synchronous, realtime learning and asynchronous, applied learning) teaching and learning experiences. This plan may be used for those who select it for the 2020-21 school year or used during full school closure(s). According to state guidelines, the WPS Remote Learning Plan must adhere to the 850/930 hours to meet time on learning. Whether the school is utilizing the “in-person” or “hybrid” model, the virtual learning plan will operate 5 days/week. Please see the Addendum for more information regarding this option.

Grades K-5

- The ‘Weekly Learning Plan’ is the same in Remote Learning, Hybrid, and In-Person
- The Remote Learning Plan schedule mirrors the In-Person model
 - Each day begins and ends with Morning Meeting and Closing Circle with whole class (includes in-person/hybrid students if those plans are operating)
- Grab-and-Go breakfast and lunch available for pick-up

Grades 6-8

- The ‘Weekly Learning Plan’ is the same in Remote Learning, In-Person, and Hybrid
- Students in virtual learning engage in a schedule and opportunities that closely mirror the in-person experience
- Each day begins with Community Meetings of cluster cohorts with both in-person/hybrid and virtual learners

Grades 9-12 -

- The ‘Weekly Learning Plan’ is the same in Remote Learning, In-Person, and Hybrid
- Students in virtual learning engage in a schedule and opportunities that closely mirror the in-person experience
- Students may attend classes virtually with their in-person peer

Detailed Schedules for each level for both plans can be found in the Addendum.

Academics

Planning, Instruction, Learning Models

As noted in the introduction letter, we reserve the right to make changes to any and all aspects of this WPS Roadmap to Return, as we consider community feedback, additional guidance from the State, and continue to monitor COVID-19 trends. This pertains especially to our evolving schedules in the various models.

WPS Educational Technology Reopening Plan

WPS Ed Tech and IT Team is prioritizing efforts to:

1. Provide Chromebook and reliable internet access, including provision of WiFi & hotspots to all grade 1-12 students and computers to all staff. Each Chromebook and computer will have a camera, microphone, and speakers to facilitate online learning and teaching, as needed. iPads will be available for our younger students as needed.
2. Collaborate with Teaching and Learning Teams, School Leadership, Academics; Office of Special Education; Office of English Learners, and educators to obtain, learn to use, and utilize digital learning tools and existing system applications.
3. Identify and prioritize a core set of platforms and Ed-tech tools. (i.e. Google Suite, See Saw, Zoom, BrainPop, Zearn, Turnitin, iXL, Raz Kids, EPIC and others to be included) to provide robust support for an overall portfolio of systems and tools that provide a secure, stable, purposeful, and effective online learning experience. WPS will provide direct links to all district ed-tech tools via the WPS Ed Tech SDPA website.
4. Collaborate with EL and Special Education teams to support families with Ed Tech Support Sessions.
5. Leverage the WPS platforms to help administer academic assessments for students, to track student interventions and individualized success plans.
6. Powerschool will be used to track daily attendance, master schedules, and individual school schedules. All school schedules will include specialties, EL, resource room, and any other individual student supports.
7. Continue to curate, create and host a pool of resources that teachers can access to support the creation and customization of their purposeful usage of Ed Tech Suite of tools for teaching & learning

WPS EdTech & IT Team Reopening Schools Professional Learning Plan

During the weeks of September 1-21, WPS Leadership Team and educators will engage in virtual learning to kick off the upcoming school year. Professional Learning will be provided keeping in mind the needs and learning interests, with dedicated strands (*SEL, EdTech, Differentiation, Instructional Planning & Student Engagement*) for educators, school leaders, and families. Training for all groups will start with the health and safety protocols put in place to keep our students and staff safe, followed by two days of Ed Tech Collaborative Learning Sessions and Educator PD sessions that will focus on pedagogy adapted to the curriculum standards.

Phase 3 Learning Platforms:

Moving forward, all students in grades K-2 will use SeeSaw and students in grades 3-12 will use Google Classroom as our learning management system.

Assessment

Students will be assessed on an ongoing basis using both formative and summative assessments to determine student progress and to provide meaningful and actionable feedback. We will assess where every student is in their skill development in the content area(s) and help them to grow as needed. For example, using BASC to assess where all of our students are in reading and plan our instruction based on this assessment and using i-Ready, K - 9 for diagnostic and formative assessments.

Plan for Special Populations

Across each reopening model, the district and our schools are planning how our special populations of high-needs students, including students with disabilities and English learners, will receive necessary services and accommodations. *High-needs* students will be prioritized for full-time in-person learning when feasible. That is, even if most students are not in school each day, schools will set up small programs that would run daily **or on a hybrid schedule** for one or more cohorts of high-needs students, including students with disabilities and English learners who are most in need of in-person services.

For the purposes of planning, DESE defines students with complex and significant needs to include: Students already identified as “high needs” through the IEP process on the IEP form entitled “Primary Disability/Level of Need-PL3.” Such students must meet at least two of these criteria:

1. Services provided outside of the general education classroom; Service providers are special education teachers and related service providers; Special education services constitute more than 75% of the student’s school day. In WPS, this includes students in our Connections, ISP, and LSP programs.
2. Students who cannot engage in virtual learning due to their disability-related needs;
3. Students who primarily use aided and augmentative communication;
4. Students who are homeless, in foster care or congregate care; and/or
5. Students dually-identified as English Learners and students with IEPs
6. English learners in levels 1-2 or any English learners that were not attending virtual learning in the past
7. Preschool children with IEPs

English Learners

Watertown Public Schools will meet the needs of our ELs and former ELs within the WVS and the WVBS reopening models.

- Provide dedicated teachers and classes to newcomer ELs in either small groups or a co-teaching model.
- We are targeting time for intervention and small groups in all models in order to give the students as many opportunities to build relationships and practice speaking English as possible.
- When possible, we will prioritize in-person attendance.
- We will be fostering collaboration between ESL teachers and classroom teachers in order to ensure SEI strategies are being implemented.
- We will utilize our family liaisons to ensure robust communication between the students, their families, and teachers.
- We will offer multilingual technical support in terms of using different computer programs for virtual learning.

Students with Disabilities

Watertown Public Schools will meet the needs of our students with disabilities within the WVS and the WVBS reopening models by:

- We will provide each student with the services as outlined on the Individual Education Programs to ensure access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education
- As health advisories allow, we are prioritizing in-person instruction for our students with disabilities particularly those:
 - Receiving services in a substantially separate setting
 - Who are not able to benefit from virtual services due to their disability-related needs
 - Who use alternative or augmentative communication systems
 - Who have experienced educational instability (e.g. homelessness, foster care placement, and the like)
 - Who are dually identified as SWDs and ELs
 - Are ages 3 - 5
- Provide dedicated teachers and classes to SWDs in either small groups or a co-teaching model.
- Provide targeted interventions and supports, individually and in small groups, in all models in order to give the students as many opportunities to build relationships and receive specially designed instruction
- We will continue to foster collaboration between special education teachers, related service providers, and classroom teachers in order to ensure strategies for Differentiated Instruction and Universal Design for Learning are being implemented
- If special education services look differently than they would prior to pandemic precautions, we will communicate these differences with parents/ guardians through dialogue and in writing
- In partnership with the Watertown SEPAC, we will continue to provide ongoing support for families, including frequent Question & Answer sessions with administrators, training for parents and guardians, and a support group specifically for families of children with special needs

Additional Academic Considerations

Physical Education

In accordance with DESE guidance, Physical Education will continue to be offered to students as a necessary part of growth, development, and learning. Due to health concerns, this will be offered virtually.

Fine and Performing Arts

All schools should keep fine and performing arts instruction accessible and relevant through choice-based activities, virtual ensemble and creation opportunities, while embracing the National Standards for the Arts. For many students special subjects such as Art, PE, Music, Library, and recess are the highlights of their day. Finding a way for students to embrace these subjects remotely, and to do this safely when in-person is important.

Special Education Considerations

Students with special needs will receive all services documented in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) through in-person, virtual instruction, or a combination of both, with an emphasis on providing

in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible while following health and safety protocols during the COVID pandemic. Any adjustments to the delivery of services will be communicated with families.

Monitoring Effectiveness of the plans

We will develop a protocol to assess the effectiveness of the plan throughout the school year, utilizing surveys, focus groups, available achievement data, and health indicators.

Taking Care of the Whole Child

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Mental Health

Watertown Public Schools recognizes that the entire community has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting “stay at home” order and school closures. Students and staff alike may be coping with anxiety around their health or the health of a family member, food and housing insecurity, loss of employment, and other significant life stressors. Collectively, this experience is traumatic, and while most people respond to trauma by returning to baseline, we will need to assure that supports are in place for our students, staff, and families as we recover. We recognize that the mental health of our adults and students is a priority during our return to school this fall.

Addressing Social-Emotional Learning

Watertown Public Schools utilizes Responsive Classroom to support Social and Emotional Learning for all students at the elementary level. To foster a continued sense of classroom community, all elementary students will participate daily in a full class Morning Meeting (i.e. home base) and Closing Circle that includes students in both the A and B cohorts (whether we are hybrid or virtual). Responsive advisory was adopted at Watertown Middle School last year and is entering its second year of implementation. WHS students will meet during advisory once a week, following the newly developed advisory curriculum.

Meeting Mental Health Needs

The Watertown Public Schools community will emphasize relationship building as we re-enter schools. Opening days for faculty and staff will focus on school-based team building and processing our experiences. We will provide targeted professional development for our faculty on social-emotional topics including, but not limited to:

- Trauma-informed practices
- Building resiliency
- Social and emotional skill building
- Mindfulness

At each building, a process will establish a process to help identify and support students or staff who may be at higher risk for significant trauma or stress from COVID-19.

Regular check-ins and social opportunities will be scheduled to ensure that students and staff who must remain virtual, are able to establish and maintain a sense of community and connection.

Physical Operations

Physical Distancing and Occupancy Guidelines

We are taking great care to ensure that all of our students in Pre-school through grade twelve will move safely through a socially distanced school day. This process will begin in the next few weeks as we clearly communicate with families (in their primary language) the protocols in place via reentry plan, handbook, newsletter, and virtual meetings.

Watertown is committed to following the CDC guidelines for physical distancing in the school building. According to the CDC, COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) for a prolonged period. Spread happens when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, and droplets from their mouth or nose are launched into the air and land in the mouths or noses of people nearby. The droplets can also be inhaled into the lungs. Recent studies indicate that people who are infected but do not have symptoms likely also play a role in the spread of COVID-19. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay at least 6 feet away from others when possible, even if you—or they—do not have any symptoms. Social distancing is especially important for people who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Our space feasibility review indicates that 100% of students will not be able to return to in-person teaching and learning while maintaining six feet of physical distancing. It is not feasible in Watertown to bring back our students full time and maintain 6 feet of distancing due to space and staff limitations and therefore will begin with a phased-in hybrid schedule, with students in cohorts to reduce class size.

Signage and floor markers will be placed throughout our schools to continually remind students and staff of the need to maintain a minimum physical distance of six feet. Markers will be painted on the ground at the exterior of the building to illustrate where students should be standing based upon the established physical distancing of six feet. Inside classrooms, empty desks, or tape on the floor will be utilized to help students understand the importance of staying within their space.

TRAINING ON PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

It is essential that training for staff be provided before in-person instruction can be conducted. In addition, it is equally important to educate and train students on health and safety considerations, as well as newly adopted routines and protocols.

Watertown's Training Plan:

We will:

- Identify staff who will need to be trained and what that training should address.
- Develop a system for monitoring staff completion of required trainings and identify staff responsible for ensuring all staff members have met the training requirements prior to beginning in-person work.
- Develop a mechanism for staff to communicate additional training needs.
- Determine what training, if any, may be needed for families of students with specific needs.

Staff Training

- Training must be provided by qualified professionals.
- Training must include all staff who have contact with students, including but not limited to educators, support and related services staff, administrators, clerical staff, custodial staff, and food service providers.h
- Training for staff must include the following but should not be limited to:
 - Safe and effective use of protective equipment (putting on and taking off protective equipment and disposing and/or washing protective equipment);
 - General information related to COVID-19 from the CDC;
 - How COVID-19 is spread;
 - How to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
 - Symptoms of COVID-19; and
 - When to seek medical assistance for students or staff who exhibit symptoms or become sick.

Education for Students on Safety Protocols

- Students should be provided with training through direct instruction and/or embedded content in lessons and activities, as developmentally appropriate.
- Training content must include general information related to COVID-19 from the CDC as well as content to ensure students are familiar with changes to their regular school practices, such as routines for entering and exiting the school, snacks/meals, assembling, passing in hallways, being transported via bus or van, and accessing the bathroom.
- Students must be explicitly trained on how to use protective equipment, as appropriate. Training should include how to put it on, take it off, dispose of it, and where it should be placed in instances where it needs to be cleaned by staff.
- Social stories, visual cues, and other appropriate developmental strategies should be used to reinforce these new concepts and protocols.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Visitors and Volunteers

There will be limited and restricted access to visitors and volunteers. A list of who will be allowed on school grounds will be communicated to staff and families. Clearly marked directions for deliveries- including- mail will be posted on the Main Entrance door. A phone number will direct visitors to call the Main Office for additional information. Where possible, deliveries will be scheduled to take place outside of the school day. Students waiting to be dismissed due to illness will be brought out to parents, once they arrive for pick-up. Parent/guardian & teacher conferences will take place online.

Entry and Exits:

In order to facilitate safe entrance and exits into our buildings the following protocols must be followed:

- Prior to school beginning, student, teachers, and parents will be trained on proper entry and exit routines

- Hallways will be marked to note the direction of traffic in yellow; Stairwells will be marked one direction
- Signs are posted noting directionality
- Stagger entry and exit based on a set criteria
- Utilize multiple entrances to reduce crowding in entryways
- Exterior social distancing markings beginning approximately 20 feet outside of the school
- Assigned staff at entries and exits to supervise social distancing and masks wearing
- All children use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting their cohort
- Grab and go lunch provided
 - Brought to classrooms or distributed at building exits
 - Can not be eaten on the bus

School Meetings/Events

At the current time we do not anticipate holding in events within our school buildings. As much as possible, these events will be held outdoors, using our tent spaces, or on virtual platforms.

Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality Considerations

In line with DESE guidance, the District is looking at ways to maximize facility ventilation and enhance air quality.

Watertown is unique in that we not only have a full-time HVAC technician on staff, but also a full-time Preventative Maintenance (PM) technician whose focus is only on preventative maintenance of our critical facility systems, like our HVAC systems. We have developed a very robust preventative maintenance schedule based on the manufacturer's recommendations and building needs. This schedule automatically produces work orders for our PM technician to be assigned work and do preventative maintenance, such as changing belts, cleaning air coils, changing filters, or checking to make sure our systems are working in order to prevent any catastrophic failure. In the event something is not working properly, our HVAC technician is here to fix the issues. We also have an on-call contractor for requirements that are larger than our in-house staff can handle.

In addition, the District will have Ai3's (the architectural firm for the school building projects) HVAC engineer to complete an analysis of our HVAC systems to determine whether there may be opportunities to increase airflow. Although airflow is primarily based on the initial design, the engineer can confirm that the systems are operating as designed and may recommend improvements. Many of our classrooms have old-style unit ventilators which provide good air exchange, especially when the windows are open.

When schools are in use and as long as the weather is cooperative, we will increase our circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows in our classrooms/offices. Staff will be reminded not to open windows if doing so poses a safety or health risk for current or subsequent occupants, including children (e.g., allowing outdoor environmental contaminants including carbon monoxide, molds, or pollens into the building). Windows will be closed at night for security reasons and for custodians to disinfect the rooms. Some of our older windows can be difficult to open; we have logged which ones the custodians could not open and are getting a proposal from a contractor to repair them.

For rooms that do not have windows, we are purchasing HEPA-filtered air purifiers. Although these filters do not provide added ventilation, they do help purify the room where that lack of ventilation exists. We will add the change of filters to our PM schedule. Fans will not be used in the district because depending on placement, they could move contaminants more rapidly and may be counterproductive.

Our Preventative Maintenance (PM) technician and custodians change out of all of our Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) filters based on the manufacturer recommendations, which we have put into our PM schedule. The filter change is scheduled for at least twice a year but is generally done more often as both our PM and HVAC techs often change them when doing work on a unit for any reason. Although there are newer filters that provide better filtration, such as those rated MERV 13, our systems cannot accept those and if they were used, the units' operations and efficiency could be compromised.

We have a very robust cleaning plan and schedule that will be tailored to any educational learning schedule within our buildings. Please review that in the Cleaning Section. We have also purchased sneeze guards for the entrance and/or main office counters and will be providing them to our Interventionists to use during their sessions if needed. We have also purchased approved hand sanitizer and surface wipes for every classroom/office and the entrances of the schools.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures

Due to the developments in light of Covid-19 the frequency and intensity of cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection routines must be our highest priority. In addition to the daily cleaning tasks outlined in the standard WPS Custodial Manual, all custodians will follow prescribed steps and protocols to ensure that the buildings are being cleaned in a manner that will support and protect the health of all our staff and students. The [COVID-19 Custodial Response Plan](#) is to be considered a living document and is subject to change based upon new requirements and guidelines from governing agencies as they are released. These methods are to start immediately and continue until directed otherwise.

One of the most effective methods for controlling the spread of germs, outside of washing your hands with soap and water, is to keep the building areas clean with the proper custodial care program. The WPS cleaning plan was developed in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Education and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Local Board of Health (BOH). According to CDC guidelines, the regular daily cleaning routine is sufficient to reduce the amount of germs and microorganisms to a safe level. Although already a daily task, increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting will help to further limit the spread of germs and illness.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures, Drills, and Lockdowns

Emergency evacuation procedures will be provided and reviewed with students. Signage will be visibility displayed in classrooms. Routes will be defined that follow best practices for minimizing contact and crowds while exiting the classroom and school in an efficient, socially-distanced, and orderly manner.

- Our first priority is the safety of students and staff in the event of an emergency
- Adapt Emergency Operation Plan to create as much safety and security as possible to allow for social distancing and mask-wearing

- Create procedures for drills and emergencies to allow for cohorting and social distancing

Athletics

The MIAA Sports and Medicine Committee and the MIAA COVID-19 task force have been working tirelessly on safe return to play guidelines and has provided the [MIAA Fall Return to Play document](#). Here in Watertown, the athletic director has been monitoring the MIAA committee meetings very closely. We will be following the guidelines provided by MIAA when we restart our programs. The Athletic Director and the Athletic Trainer will work collaboratively to ensure a safe environment for our student-athletes if permission is given to begin athletics. In the meantime, the Athletic Director, along with many other athletic directors in the Middlesex League, have been brainstorming about potential alternative options and/or schedules for sports in the hopes that we can offer our student-athletes the opportunity to participate in athletics in some form.

At this time we are not accepting registrations for our fall athletic programs due to the uncertainty around when athletics will resume. When we are approved to start the season we will open up the registration process and will reach out to students and families via email with more detailed information.

Transportation

Watertown Public Schools is planning to run all regular bus transportation for the Hosmer, Cunniff, and Watertown Middle School with two buses per school each day when school is in person. Pick-up and drop off times will be announced after the reopening plan has been voted by the School Committee. Our bus vendor, Local Motion, has provided us their [Bus Protocols](#) and will continue to update the document as new information becomes available. Per the State's [reopening guidance](#) for the coming school year we will assign seats to 25 students per bus, as opposed to our normal 52-65 riders per bus. With two cohorts each having 25 seats, the number of riders we can accommodate per bus over a given week will be 50 students. As we have in past years we will follow State regulation (transportation must be offered to students in Grades K-5 who live more than two miles from the school that they are entitled to attend), and School Committee policy when determining those students who will be offered no-cost bus transportation (for those who qualify) and fee-based bus transportation.

In addition, we will run two Local Motion buses to transport students to the Minuteman Vocational High School.

Bus Procedures

- Students coming off the bus and back onto the bus
 - Prior to opening, students, parents, and staff will be trained
 - Students should be screened by parents/guardians prior to the child getting on the bus and kept at home if feeling ill or any symptoms
 - Bus drivers will contact their dispatcher if a child appears ill or says they don't feel well while on the bus. The driver will interrupt the route to bring the students already on the bus to the school immediately and the school will manage the students from that point. The bus will be sanitized completely before being put back into use. A different bus will complete the route that was interrupted.
 - Marked/assigned seats

- Siblings may be assigned to sit together
- Students will board the bus starting with rear seats first and continuing so that the last students to board are in the front seats to avoid close contact in the aisles. A reverse procedure will be used when students disembark at their school.
- Seats will be numbered and assigned in configurations that are in accordance with State guidance (staggered window/aisle seating, one student per bench seat)
- Windows on the buses will be kept open to circulate fresh air, weather permitting
- Students will maintain six feet of distancing when boarding or disembarking the bus. A staff member will be present at the school to call children off of the bus and to load the bus
- NO student may board the bus without a bus pass and/or being on the roster of assigned seats
- All students must wear masks at all times with the exception of students who are unable to do so based on disability and/ or medical condition
- School staff will usher students to the designated building door and have them immediately enter the building to avoid congregating
- Riders hand-sanitize upon exiting and entering the bus

Meals and Nutrition

From the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, Watertown Public Schools has committed to providing nutritious meals to our students. We will continue to prioritize student nutrition and the availability of school meals to all.

We are awaiting additional guidance from DESE regarding safety protocols and expectations for meals and food preparation and will adjust this plan as necessary.

I. Food Safety and Kitchen Sanitation

All food service personnel will be required to wear masks at all times. Employees will be required to keep physical distancing practices in place during meal production and service. Signage and decals will be installed at production stations in kitchens to ensure proper distancing is maintained between staff. All food service staff will receive training on and will follow the district guidelines on when to stay home from work. All cleaning supplies used for kitchen and serving lines are FDA approved to control the spread of the virus.

- The cleaner used in foodservice area that is effective against the novel coronavirus: SFSPac Germicidal Cleaner (EPA Reg # 1839-215-8722)

II. Student Safety during Meal Service

Students will wash and/or sanitize their hands before and after consuming meals in the school buildings. Hand sanitizer will be provided for all students and staff in classrooms and at meal pickup locations. All serving lines and designated eating areas will have specific sanitation protocols in place. All food will be served to students using disposable containers and utensils and will be consumed in a designated eating area that provides 6' of distance to other students/staff.

- All food service staff will be required to wear a face mask at all times and it is recommended that face shields are worn in addition to a mask during meal service to protect the students and staff.

- All food offerings will be individually packaged to-go style lunches, instead of buffet style served directly to students.
- It is strongly recommended that families preload online student meal accounts at paypams.com to expedite meal service.
- Students who eat meals inside of the classroom will be offered disposable surface coverings for an added layer of protection.

III. Meal Distribution- Hybrid schedule

Hybrid - Districtwide Meal Distribution Schedule				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 days meals Distributed to COHORT A for Monday & Tuesday	2 days meals Distributed to COHORT B for Tuesday & Wednesday	3 days meals Distributed to COHORT A for Wednesday, Thursday & Friday	3 days meals Distributed to COHORT B for Thursday, Friday & Monday	5 days of meals Distributed to virtual LEARNERS for Monday - Friday

- **Elementary/MiddleSchool:** We will offer Grab-N-Go service during school dismissal for both breakfast and lunch according to the schedule above.
- **High School:** Students will have scheduled lunch periods where meals will be picked up at designated locations in the building (cafeteria and 3rd-floor serving site) and will be brought back to their classroom for consumption. In addition, Grab-n-Go meals will be offered for days students are scheduled for virtual learning.
 - Breakfast will be offered in the cafeteria starting at 7:15 am for students scheduled for in-person learning that day.
- **Virtual Learners:** Curbside pickup will be available for students who are 100% virtual. If the entire district is virtual this schedule will be modified as needed.

IV. Meal Applications

Students who do not qualify for free meals will need to pay the applicable price for meals served at school. If this should change due to waivers that may be approved by USDA, families will be notified. As we await further guidance from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the free and reduced meal application process remains the same as in previous years. Applications will be distributed at the start of the school year and are also available on the WPS website. All applications must be submitted to the school nutrition office. In order to get the benefit of free or reduced meal prices beginning at the start of the school year, applications must be approved early in the year. We urge all families who may qualify to submit an application as soon as possible. ***Applications for free and reduced-price meals are required even for those approved last year or who received meals through August. Applications should be submitted prior to 9/30 if possible in order to ensure that families receive consideration for the month of September.***

V. Deliveries

All entrances where deliveries will be handled will be marked with appropriate signage. All deliveries will be scheduled in a way that reduces crowding and all delivery personnel will be required to wear a face-covering and follow social distancing guidelines.

Community Education/Extended Day/Afterschool Programming

An in-person Extended Day Program is dependent on school meeting in-person or with a hybrid model and would only be open to enrolled students who attended school on a given day. This will allow any potential programming to be offered to both cohorts.

Community Education will also plan for in-person and virtual programming opportunities for students that promote social and emotional well being as well as physical movement and creative opportunities that can be used if school opens with a virtual model and potentially may be used with a hybrid model as well. These offerings would be separate from Extended Day and the fee structure will be determined when more details are finalized.

Watertown Community Education will adjust the size and pricing of our programming as needed to conform with all the needed protocols. Adjustments may also be made to the program hours based on the structure of the school day, access to classrooms, and the school's cleaning schedule. These changes could include expanded, abbreviated, or altered hours as compared to previous years. Program options will be communicated in late-August.

Watertown Community Education will adapt these protocols as needed based on the programming that is determined to be offered.

Watertown Community Education will use the same protocols as the school day as far as students and staff wearing masks, providing staff with appropriate PPE, following minimum social distancing requirements, use of classrooms spaces, max capacity guidelines, cleaning protocols, hand washing protocols, mask breaks, storage of student belongings, keeping windows open when the weather allows, materials use, etc.

All staff and students will follow the health-check guidelines used by the district. For all students and most staff, the Extended Day Program will continue from their school day/workday and they will have completed the health check through the school's protocols. Staff who do not work for the school system during the day will complete these protocols prior to the start of their workday.

In addition, Community Education programming will be run outdoors as often as possible, weather permitting. Community Education will make use of the tents procured by the district as well as the school playgrounds, fields, and other outdoor space to the maximum extent possible.

Community Education programming will require a nurse on-site at all times. On days when a nurse is unavailable and a substitute cannot be found in-person programming would be canceled.

Snack, as well as lunch if eaten at Extended Day would be brought by the students and must come in disposable packaging.

Additional opportunities for organized programs may be offered through town and outside organizations, such as the Watertown Recreation Department, based on health guidelines available at that time.

For Extended Day program drop-off, students will be coming from within the school building. The exact procedures will be based on the school day structure and will likely consist of students either being dropped off at their specific Extended Day classroom, or in a larger check-in area that allows for the required social distancing. During Extended Day pick-up, parents will inform the building monitor who they are picking up via the door intercom and the building monitor will call that student down using the school intercom. If the building monitor does not recognize the pick up person by sight, they will be buzzed in to present ID while maintaining social distancing. These are our initial thoughts on drop-off and pick-up protocols, but may need to be adjusted once the school day structure details are more finalized and are dependent on space availability and adherence to other District-wide protocols.

For any programming offered through Community Education, supplies must be able to be cleaned and sanitized, or single-use. In instances where providing supplies may not be safe or feasible, it will be encouraged that students bring toys or activities from home that they can use by themselves. Community Education staff will plan for a variety of student interests including movement activities, socialization activities, craft activities, and to the extent possible, project-based learning activities.

Additional opportunities for organized programs may be offered through town and outside organizations, such as the Watertown Recreation Department, based on health guidelines available at that time.

School Safety Operations

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Face coverings/ Masks that cover both the nose and mouth are the single most effective measures to contain the spread of COVID-19. Whenever students and staff are in buildings, the following protocols must be followed.

- Students and staff will wear face coverings or masks throughout the day.
 - Students in Pre-school - grade 1 will also be provided with a hat/ face shield combination to be used in addition to the mask.
- Parents/ guardians are responsible for ensuring that students come to school with clean face masks/ coverings every day. Disposable masks will be provided if needed.

- Staff may choose to wear their own face coverings/ masks, or masks provided by the district. Every staff member will also be provided with a face shield that can be used in addition to, but not in place of, a face covering/mask.
- Staff and students will be provided training on how to properly wear and maintain face coverings/ masks.
- Times will be provided during the day for “mask breaks.” Whenever possible, these will take place outdoors while maintaining social distancing of at least 6 feet. Tents are available at all schools to facilitate outdoor mask breaks.
- Clear masks, along with any other recommended accommodations, will be provided for staff working with students with hearing impairments and English Learners.
- Watertown Public Schools ordered additional PPE based on guidelines from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. While these guidelines did not recommend N95 masks for any staff other than school nurses, Watertown has elected to provide this level of PPE for nurses and for any staff supporting students requiring close proximity, students who are unable to wear a mask due to a disability, and/or students who require assistance with personal care needs (feeding, toileting).
- Other PPE for staff such as goggles, disposable gowns for certain staff (in categories in prior bullet or others who may request them), and disposable gloves have been ordered and will be reordered as needed.

The school community will be reminded frequently of the expectation to wear face coverings/ masks. Signage in multiple languages will be used to support and reinforce practices that help reduce the spread of COVID and other infectious diseases.

Personal Hygiene/Handwashing

A plan will be developed in each school to promote healthy hygiene practices in each area of the building. All students and staff are expected to practice frequent handwashing, with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer will be provided for students and staff to use when handwashing with soap and water is not feasible.

Students and staff should wash their hands or use sanitizer immediately *before*:

- Leaving home
- Leaving the classroom
- Eating
- Touching shared objects
- Touching their face
- Using the playground/ shared outdoor space
- Leaving school

Students and staff should wash their hands or use sanitizer immediately *after*:

- Arriving at school

- Finishing lunch
- Touching shared objects
- Taking mask breaks/ touching their mask
- Using the bathroom
- Using the playground/ shared outdoor space
- Coughing, sneezing, blowing their nose
- Arriving at home

Technology Use/Sanitation

Student Devices: 1-to-1 Deployments (WMS and WHS student Chromebooks, taken home nightly)

Sanitization with wipes and/or UV sanitizing cabinet will be performed at the time of initial deployment. If a device needs to be replaced or repaired, it will be sanitized both at the time of collection and before getting returned to the student. The same goes for any 'loaner' devices. As always, students are expected to keep their devices clean.

Student Devices: Individually-Assigned devices (Cart-based Chromebooks, laptops, and iPads at elementary schools)

Students in grades 1-12 will be assigned a specific device that they will use exclusively throughout the school year. School staff should sanitize these devices (keyboards, chassis, and screen) with appropriate wipes and/or UV cabinet (if available) at least weekly. If a student is using a device for the first time, it should be sanitized beforehand. Touchpoints of storage carts should be disinfected with wipes at least twice a day.

Lab-based computers, laptops, and other shared devices

Any shared device should be sanitized before each use, including keyboards, mice, touchpads, touchscreens, peripherals, and any related furnishings.

Staff laptops, computers, keyboards, phones, peripherals, etc.

Sanitization with wipes and/or UV sanitizing cabinet will be performed at the time of deployment. If a device needs to be replaced or repaired, it will be sanitized both at the time of collection and before getting returned to the staff member. Staff should sanitize their personally-deployed equipment (keyboards, chassis, phones) using appropriate wipes at least once per week. If a device has been used by another staff member, it should be sanitized immediately upon return.

Common Equipment (printers, copiers, fax machines, phones)

Touchpoints for shared equipment should be sanitized multiple times throughout the workday. Sanitizing wipes should be available so that anyone using a device can wipe it down as needed.

Playground Use and Outdoor Tents

Recess breaks will require close adult supervision. Teachers will work with physical education staff to teach students games and activities that can be managed and enjoyed with social distancing in place. Contact sports will not be allowed. Students will also utilize practices for safely removing and storing masks when taking a break.

Outdoor learning tents will be utilized daily across the grade levels. A schedule will be in place that all classrooms have access to. Social distancing protocols will be followed during tent use as well.

Student and Staff Bathroom Protocols

Protocols for bathroom use will be clearly defined. Classrooms will be provided with staggered schedules and students will need to follow safe practices that include hand washing and disposal of paper towels in receptacles and not on the floor. Regular supervision and cleaning of bathrooms and high touch point areas will take place consistently throughout the school day.

- Prior to school beginning, student, teachers, and parents will be trained
- Stagger times and designate cohorts for certain bathrooms
- Adult supervision
- Bathroom cleaning protocols
- Preschool - if AM/ PM sessions are utilized deep cleaning needs to be done in between

Screening Students/Staff at Home

Most common symptoms of COVID-19 and testing requirements

The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to **STAY HOME**. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; please do not assume it is another condition. When in doubt, stay home.

Please STAY HOME if you have any of the symptoms listed.

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves:

- Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms

- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

If staff or students have any of these symptoms, they must get a test for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to school. Every school should have a list of available test sites. A list of test sites is available [here](#), and Massachusetts also has an [interactive testing map](#). Staff and students who have symptoms should also contact their primary care physician for further instructions. For more information, please see the attached [COVID-19 Scenario document](#) from DESE.

Attendance

The Commissioner of Education provided specific guidelines around student and staff attendance that we will follow. Schools and districts must take daily attendance whether a student is in person or virtual. Districts must have a daily attendance policy and system for virtual learning that can be reported to the State. Schools may employ multiple ways to track attendance (e.g., monitor whether students are present in synchronous sessions, submitting assignments online, logging onto online learning platforms, attending virtual check-ins, etc.) depending on the structure of the virtual learning program.

During the 2020-21 school year, DESE will also require schools and districts to differentiate between students attending school in-person and virtually in their local Student Information System. Watertown Public Schools will continue to investigate extended absences and make and document reasonable efforts to locate the student and determine the reason for nonattendance. We will work directly with families to identify barriers to student attendance and to support families in alleviating these challenges. Specifically, we encourage districts to create formal support plans for students and families experiencing challenges.

School Nurse's Office Protocols

To minimize the spread of COVID-19, guidelines for visiting the school nurse's office will be developed. Students who are ill but NOT exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, are injured, need medications, or who otherwise need to access the school nurse will follow specific procedures identified for their particular school. These procedures will be developed by each building-based school nurse, in coordination with their building administrator. School nurses will continue to use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for ill students and staff.

Medical Waiting Room (Isolation Room)

Each school will designate an isolation or "medical waiting room" that is separate from the nurse's office for students or staff who exhibit COVID19 symptoms during the school day. Schools will develop protocols for isolation and discharge of students/staff who become sick during the school day. A student or staff member who shows COVID-19 symptoms should remain in the medical waiting room until they can be picked up by a family member.

COVID Response Plan for Cases of Illness

Watertown will adopt the state's guidance for following Covid-19 scenarios in school, on the bus, or in community settings. The following [supplement](#) provided by DESE will guide our implementation of safety protocols.

Students with Physical Impairments

Special consideration will be given to the following:

- Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff working with students requiring close proximity and personal care assistance (e.g. feeding and toileting) and/ or students who are unable to wear masks
- Planning for students who are immunocompromised and/ or medically fragile
- Planning for students who have skin or respiratory conditions
- Assuring adequate space and facilities to maintain the health and safety of students and staff when providing for personal care needs in close proximity

Shared Use of Equipment by Staff

Appropriate steps will be taken to minimize the sharing of equipment and materials in all buildings. When equipment must be used by more than one person (copy machines, phones, computers, printers, refrigerator door handles, microwave buttons, etc.) proper sanitizing between uses is essential. All individuals must thoroughly clean the equipment before and after use. Appropriate cleaning products will be available wherever such shared equipment is located.

- Minimize sharing as much as possible
- Wipes next to shared equipment for staff to wipe down machines
 - Copier
 - Laminator
 - Book binder
 - Teacher workroom resources and supplies
- Minimize paper by utilizing electronic resources
- No student locker use
- Individual student material bins elementary
- MS/ HS keep material in backpacks

Certification of Health and Safety Requirements

The Watertown Public Schools will certify compliance with all health and safety requirements of the Watertown Board of Health as well as the guidelines provided by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education upon the start of school.

Communication

District Communication Plan

The Watertown Public Schools commits to ensuring all students, families, and staff are informed of the decisions and practices in place at our schools, especially with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We will ensure that our website is updated on a regular basis and contains all pertinent documents, forms, protocols, and information for all members of the WPS Community.

The Superintendent will continue her monthly coffees and principals will hold principal coffees/chats throughout the year, both in-person and via Zoom.

Recognizing that students and parents are receiving several emails from WPS, the following schedule will be implemented for *general* communications throughout the year:

- Weekends: Principal/Early Childhood Director will send out weekly newsletters
- Mid-Week: Central Office Administrators will send out communications
- Fridays: Elementary and Middle School Classroom teachers will provide the following week's goals/schedule for student learning
- Mondays: High School Teaches will provide parents and students the Weekly Learning Plan

Family Engagement

Principals in all buildings will continue the practice of weekly newsletters to families via Smore, which allows messages to be easily translated into home languages of our families.

WPS is committed to providing support to parents with our online learning platforms (Seesaw, Google Classroom, iReady, etc.) in advance of the start of the school year. Opportunities for trainings and support sessions will be published on the website and social media sites and sent to parents via email. This type of support will continue throughout the school year, providing parents with both virtual and outdoor trainings and drop-in sessions to assist with any teaching and learning needs parents may have.

At the end of every quarter, students, families and staff will be invited to participate in surveys to assess the progress of the school year.

Addendum:

Bridge to Hybrid and Virtual School Schedules

Watertown Bridge to Hybrid Learning Model

Elementary School Bridge to Hybrid Schedule

The [Daily Schedules](#) and [Weekly Learning Plan](#) are the same for the Watertown Virtual School and the Bridge to Hybrid plans.

Each day will begin and end with *Morning Meeting* and *Closing Circle* that includes Cohorts A and B.

School Days Alternate between **Core Days** and **Extension Days** (samples below):

- **Core Day** is live (either virtually or in-person) from 8:15-12:15; asynchronous between 12:15 and 2:30.
- **Extension Day** is virtual from 8:15-12:15 (predominantly live/frequent touchpoints); asynchronous (applied learning) between 12:15 and 2:30

Sample Grade 2 Student Schedule

Core Day Schedule	Extension Day Schedule
Morning Meeting 8:15-8:30	
Math 8:35-9:30	Lesson Extension/ IReady Math 8:40-9:10
Snack/Recess 9:30-10:00	Extension/ Intervention 9:15-9:45
Readers' Workshop 10:00 - 10:50	Spanish (LIVE) 9:50-10:20
Fundations 10:50 - 11:25	Special (LIVE) 10:25-10:55
Writing 11:25-11:55	Lesson Extension/ IReady Literacy 11:00-11:30
	Special (LIVE) 11:30-12:00
Closing Circle 12:00-12:15	
Lunch 12:15-12:45	
Movement Break 12:50-1:10	
Drop Everything and Read (Independent Reading!) 1:10-1:40	Drop Everything and Read (Independent Reading!) 1:10-1:40
Asynchronous Social Studies 1:40-2:10	Asynchronous Science 1:40-2:10
Complete Your Learning Checklist & Reflection	

All students are **virtual** on Mondays and the day is spent following the Core Schedule (see chart below).

- Grades K-5: Cohort A:
 - **In-Person (Core) Days:** Tues. & Thurs (when we move to Hybrid)
 - **Extension Days:** Wed. & Fri.
- Grades K-5: Cohort B
 - **In-Person/Core Days:** Wed. & Fri.
 - **Extension Days:** Tues. & Thurs.

Student Schedule by Week

Remote & Hybrid Schedule					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Core Instruction	Cohort A & B TOGETHER for Core Instruction	Cohort A	Cohort B	Cohort A	Cohort B
Extension		Cohort B	Cohort A	Cohort B	Cohort A

Watertown Middle School Bridge to Hybrid Schedule

The [Weekly Learning Plan](#) is the same in Virtual School and the Bridge to Hybrid plans.

Each day will begin with a *Community Meeting* that includes Cohorts A and B.

School Days Alternate between **Hybrid-IN Days** and **Hybrid-OUT Days** (samples below):

- **“Hybrid IN Day”** is in person (once we transition from the Bridge program) from 8:30-12:30; a combination of asynchronous and synchronous between 1:15 and 3:00 (travel and lunch from 12:30-1:15).
- **“Hybrid-OUT Day”** is virtual 8:30-12:30 (predominantly live/frequent touchpoints); a combination of asynchronous and synchronous between 1:15 and 3:00 (lunch from 12:30-1:15).

Sample Grade 7 Student Schedule

“Hybrid In” Day Schedule	“Hybrid Out” Day Schedule
Community Meeting 8:30-8:50	
ELA 8:50-9:35	Special Education Support (synchronous virtual) 8:55-9:25
Science 9:40-10:25	WL/Reading or Specialist (synchronous virtual) 9:30-10:00
Break 10:25-10:40	Asynchronous Mathematics 10:05-10:35
History 10:40-11:25	Asynchronous ELA 10:40-11:10
Mathematics 11:30-12:15	WL/Reading or Specialist (synchronous virtual)

	11:15-11:45
Organization/Support Dismissal 12:15-12:30	Performance Music (synchronous virtual) 11:50-12:30
Lunch (and travel and movement) (12:30-1:15)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asynchronous Work for World Language/Reading (1:15-1:45) Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) w/Jot (1:45-2:15) Complete checklist of assignments/reflection of work (2:15-2:30) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asynchronous Work for Science/History (1:15-1:45) Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) w/Jot (1:45-2:15) Complete checklist of assignments/reflection of work (2:15-2:30)
Synchronous virtual support from cluster teachers (2:30-3:00)	

All students are **virtual** on Mondays and the day is spent following the “Hybrid In” Schedule (see chart below).

- Grades 6-8: Cohort A:
 - **In-Person (“Hybrid In”) Days:** Tues. & Thurs (once we begin the in-person hybrid)
 - **“Hybrid Out” Days:** Wed. & Fri.
- Grades 6-8: Cohort B
 - **In-Person (“Hybrid In”) Days:** Wed. & Fri. (once we begin the in-person hybrid)
 - **“Hybrid Out” Days:** Tues. & Thurs.

Student Schedule by Week

	Remote & Hybrid Schedule				
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
“Hybrid In” Instruction	Cohorts A & B TOGETHER for Instruction in ELA, Mathematics, History, and Science	Cohort A	Cohort B	Cohort A	Cohort B
“Hybrid Out” Instruction		Cohort B	Cohort A	Cohort B	Cohort A

Watertown High School Bridge to Hybrid Schedule:

Watertown High School will use the [Weekly Learning Plans](#) for the Virtual School and the Bridge to Hybrid model.

Once the district transitions from the “remote” bridge, the hybrid model will have students placed in cohorts.

Cohort A is in the building on Monday and Tuesday. Cohort B is in the building Wednesday and Thursday. Everyone is home and working synchronously and asynchronously on Fridays.

	Monday Cohort A In School	Tuesday Cohort A In School	Wednesday Cohort B In School	Thursday Cohort B In School	Friday All Students Home
8:30 – 9:46	A	E	A	E	See Teacher and Student Schedule
9:52-11:08	B	F	B	F	See Teacher and Student Schedule
11:14-1:02	C Lunch	G Lunch	C Lunch	G Lunch	See Teacher and Student Schedule
1:08-2:14	D	Advisory	D	Advisory	See Teacher and Student Schedule
2:20-3:05	Flex Block	Flex Block	Flex Block	Flex Block	See Teacher and Student Schedule

Fridays for Students: Office Hours, AP Meetings, Ensembles, Asynchronous work time, Group projects, Guidance programming, Seminar classes,

Fridays for Teachers: Data Review, Student Support Team, Asynchronous Planning and Development, Office Hours, Department Meetings, Common Planning Time, Individual Coaching, Guidance Curriculum

HS Hybrid - STUDENT IN COHORT A

	Monday In School	Tuesday In school	Wednesday Home	Thursday Home	Friday Home
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8:30 – 9:46	A English 9: Madden/Vogel	E Spanish: Chiodo	A Simulcast English	E Simulcast Spanish	9th Grade Seminar
9:52 – 11:08	B History: Mastro/Ward	F Algebra 1: Cacace/Ullian	B Simulcast History	F Simulcast Math	Async Science
11:14-1:02	C Academic Support: O'Neill Lunch	G Physical Education: Glencross Lunch	C Simulcast AS	G Simulcast PE	Async Math <hr/> Math office hours Zoom
1:08-2:14	D Physics: Rose	Advisory	D Simulcast Physics	Asynchrono us Work Period	Async English <hr/> English office hours Zoom
2:20-3:05	Meeting with Mr. Mastro	Review session with Cacace	Group Project Meeting Over Zoom	Discussion Section via Zoom	Async WL

WHS Bridge to Hybrid - STUDENT IN COHORT B

	Monday Home	Tuesday Home	Wednesday In School	Thursday In School	Friday Home
8:30 – 9:46	A Simulcast English	E Simulcast Spanish	A English 9: Madden/Vogel	E Spanish: Chiodo	9th Grade Seminar
9:52 – 11:08	B Simulcast History	F Simulcast Math	B History: Mastro/Ward	F Algebra 1: Cacace/Ullian	Async Science
11:14-1:02	C Simulcast AS	G Simulcast PE	C Academic Support: O'Neill Lunch	G Physical Education: Glencross Lunch	Async Math <hr/> Math office hours

					Zoom
1:08-2:14	D Simulcast Physics	Asynchrono US Work Period	D Physics: Rose	Advisory	Async English English office hours Zoom
2:20-3:05	Group Project Meeting Over Zoom	Discussion Section via Zoom	Review session with Cacace	Zoom Guidance Appointment	Async WL

Early Childhood

The Early Childhood program is broken into 2 sections Pre-kindergarten and Preschool. Pre-kindergarten will follow the Kindergarten schedule. The preschool has 3 scheduling options 5 Day/5 Hour (would be reduced to 4 hours) and AM/PM sessions.

The Hybrid Model for Preschool will allow for the peer models to be in 2 Cohorts. Students will have 2 consecutive days in person. Our special education students will be attending sessions based on their IEPs.

5 Day/5 Hour

Time	In Person (Group A)	Virtual (Group B)
8:00-8:15	Morning Meeting	Morning meeting
8:15-8:30	Whole group OWL read-aloud/instruction	Literacy Activities
8:30-9:00	Small Groups	Literacy Activities
9:00-9:20	Body Break/Recess	Body Break
9:20-9:30	Bathroom Break	Bathroom Break
9:30-9:45	Snack & Conversation Groups	Snack & Conversation Groups * Log in to Zoom to be part of the class
9:45-10:00	Building Blocks (Math) Whole Group Instruction	Review Math Concepts
10:00-10:30	Math Groups	Independent Math Activities
10:30-11:00	Body Break/Recess	Body Break

11:00-11:30	Independent Activity Time (handwriting, science, etc.)	Independent Activity Time (handwriting, science, etc.)
11:30-11:45	SWPL (songs, wordplay, letters)/Read-Aloud	SWPL (songs, wordplay, letters)/Read-Aloud *Log in to Zoom to be part of the class
11:45-12:00	Whole Group Closing Circle	Whole Group Closing Circle * Log in to Zoom to be part of the class

AM Preschool HYBRID

Time	IN PERSON	REMOTE
8:00-8:15	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting
8:15-8:30	Whole group OWL read-aloud/instruction	Whole group OWL read-aloud/instruction
8:30-8:45	Small Group 1	Literacy Activities
9:00-9:20	BreakSnack & Conversation Groups Bathroom Breaks	BreakSnack & Conversation Groups Bathroom Breaks
9:30-9:45	Building Blocks (Math) Whole Group Instruction	Review Math Concepts
9:45-10:15	Math Group	Independent Math Activities
10:15-10:30	Whole Group Closing Circle	Whole Group Closing Circle

PM Preschool HYBRID Model

Time	IN PERSON	Virtual
12:00 - 12:15	Whole Class Meeting	Whole Class Meeting
12:15 - 12:30	Whole group OWL read-aloud/instruction	Whole group OWL read-aloud/instruction
12:30 - 1:00	Small Group Literacy Work	Literacy Activities

1:00 - 1:20	Body Break/Bathroom Break/Snack & Conversation Groups	Body Break/Bathroom Break/Snack & Conversation Groups
1:20 - 1:30	Building Blocks (Math) Whole Group Instruction	Review Math concepts
1:30 - 2:00	Math Groups	Independent Math Activities
2:00-2:05	Whole Group Closing Circle	Whole Group Closing Circle

AM Preschool Sessions

Time	
8:00-8:15	Morning Meeting
8:15-8:30	Whole group OWL read-aloud/instruction
8:30-8:45	Small Group 1 (Group A with teacher, Group B with IA)
8:45-9:00	Small Group 2 (Group B with teacher, Group A with IA)
9:00-9:20	BreakSnack & Conversation Groups
9:20-9:30	Body Break/Bathroom
9:30-9:45	Building Blocks (Math) Whole Group Instruction
9:45-10:00	Math Group 1 (Group A with teacher, Group B with IA)
10:00-10:15	Math Group 2 (Group B with teacher, Group A with IA)
10:15-10:30	Whole Group Closing Circle

PM - Preschool virtual Learning

Time	
	Whole Class Meeting

12:00 - 12:15	
12:15 - 12:30	Whole group OWL read-aloud/instruction
12:30 - 12:45	Small Group 1 (Group A with teacher, Group B with IA)
12:45 - 1:00	Small Group 2 (Group B with teacher, Group A with IA)
1:00 - 1:20	Body Break/Bathroom Break/Snack & Conversation Groups
1:20 - 1:30	Building Blocks (Math) Whole Group Instruction
1:30 - 1:45	Math Group 1 (Group A with teacher, Group B with IA)
1:45 - 2:00	Math Group 2 (Group B with teacher, Group A with IA)
2:00-2:05	Whole Group Closing Circle

Watertown Virtual School

While schools will continue to look and feel very different than in the past, we are committed to creating engaging learning experiences for our students that will enable them to progress and grow as learners in the coming school year. We are focused on ensuring that all students develop their academic abilities as well as their social-emotional learning competencies whether in-person, hybrid, or remotely.

Students (PK-12) will have the option to be part of the **Watertown Virtual School (WVS)**, which is designed specifically to respond to the needs of those students who are immunocompromised and require remote learning. This option may also be appropriate for students who thrive in a remote learning environment and can be selected by any family in the district (does not require medical documentation). **Families choosing this model will remain in Watertown Virtual School until at least February 8, 2021 (mid-year), and may remain in the program until the end of the year.**

Watertown Virtual School is a separate distance/remote learning school run by the Watertown School District. It will be staffed by licensed Watertown teachers using the same curriculum that all Watertown Public Schools students will use, with adjustments made for online learning. If families choose to enroll in Watertown Virtual School at the elementary level, students may be placed in classrooms that are not necessarily composed of students/teachers only from their neighborhood school.

For those families interested in the Watertown Virtual School, please fill out the WVS Enrollment Form by Friday, August 24. Students with enrollment forms received after August 24 will be placed on a waitlist until staffing and space limits are determined.

[Watertown Virtual School Enrollment Form](#)

Watertown Virtual School (WVS) Features:

1. Similar schedule, nearly identical assignments to in-person or hybrid models, with consistent live engagement opportunities
2. Remote model will be different than last spring's in a number of ways, attendance required, required assignments, feedback and grades provided
3. Synchronous teaching and learning following the outline of a traditional school day schedule (hybrid)
4. Assessing our students academically and social emotionally
5. Supporting and advancing curriculum that is aligned to state standards throughout the year
6. Consistent teacher as learning coach & main point of contact with families
7. Building in SEL and opportunities for staff and small groups of children/adolescents to meet and build relationships.

The components of the Watertown Virtual School are still in development and may depend upon the number of families that choose this option. The plan may be coordinated entirely by WPS staff or academic content may be provided through a state-approved program for distance/remote learning that is in the midst of being developed with frequent updates provided by the Commissioner. Participating in this option means that students and staff will regularly participate in complete online instruction.

For families of students with disabilities who require or prefer a virtual learning experience, WPS will provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) remotely, assuring all aspects of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan are implemented.

Frequently Asked Questions

When will the Watertown Virtual School start?

The first day of school for students will be the same for all Watertown Public Schools, which will be September 22.

What's the difference between the comprehensive Bridge to Hybrid and the Watertown Virtual School?

The comprehensive Bridge to Hybrid will be available to all students and will last as long as a decision is made to return to in-person learning. With that in mind, it's meant to be a short-term online solution. The first possible date for the transition to hybrid learning will be October 27.

Watertown Virtual School is designed to be a long-term option for families who want a fully remote learning experience for their students. While taught by WPS teachers, elementary students may not be taught by their regular teachers from their neighborhood schools, depending on enrollment. Elementary Virtual School students will, however, participate in Spanish and specials with students from their home schools.

We ask that students remain enrolled in Watertown Virtual School at least through the end of a semester, or February 8.

What's the same about the comprehensive Bridge to Hybrid and the Watertown Virtual School?

Our curriculum and commitment to providing the best for our students remains consistent in both offerings.

At the Elementary level, students in both models will be placed in A/B cohorts and will follow the same online schedule. [Sample elementary schedules can be found here.](#)

At WMS, students in both models will be placed in A/B cohorts and will follow the same online schedule. [Sample middle school schedules can be found here.](#)

At WHS, students in both models will follow the same online schedule. WHS students will not be placed in cohorts. [Sample high school schedules can be found here.](#)

Is the Watertown Virtual School free?

Yes

Is there an enrollment cap for the Watertown Virtual School?

At this time, we are not planning to have a cap on the Watertown Virtual School enrollment. At the end of the initial Watertown Virtual School application window (August 24), we will review how many students have applied and make a decision as to whether to close the application process or keep it open. We encourage those interested to apply by August 24.

Will Watertown Virtual School use the same curriculum as the Bridge to Hybrid Program?

Both the Watertown Virtual School and the Bridge to Hybrid will offer the same content standards that students would receive in a normal school year, using the platforms Seesaw for grades PreSchool to 2 and Google Classroom for grades 3 through 12. In grades K-8, teachers in a given grade level will utilize a 'Weekly Learning Plan Template' ensuring students across the district are focusing on the same learning targets and standards. Here are the [DRAFT WMS Weekly Learning Plan](#) and [DRAFT WHS Weekly Learning Plan](#) .

While in a fully remote model, all WHS students, even those choosing to enroll in WVS will be attending live classes over Zoom. Continuous planning is underway this summer, and we're planning that WVS may continue

to have access to the same Zoom instruction with the same teachers during a hybrid opening. If we are not able to arrange that, WVS students will continue to learn virtually, and teacher assignment may change.

An additional option for families who want a **fully online program** will be available as well, using the [Edgenuity Platform](#). This program may be administered by our partners at the [EDCO Collaborative](#) and will be monitored, not taught, by WPS faculty. The Edgenuity program will cover the same Massachusetts standards and learning targets as the Watertown Virtual School but will use the fully online platform. **Thus, the majority of learning will be asynchronous and online.** This is a good option for families who are not able to follow a traditional school schedule. Click on this link for the [Edgenuity student experience demonstration](#).

Are Watertown Virtual teachers also teaching in the Bridge to Hybrid School?

It is possible that at the middle school and high school level, WPS teachers may be teaching in both models, as students take content-specific courses.

How will specialized courses at the high school including Advanced Placement (AP) classes be offered at the Watertown Virtual School?

We will be offering AP courses either through students virtually attending courses at WHS, or by accessing online curriculum through Virtual High School (a program that WHS has used for several years), or the Edgenuity curriculum.

How will science be taught?

Science courses will include online lab simulations and at-home lab experiences.

Will the Watertown Virtual School offer music, band, or chorus classes?

Students will attend specials and electives with their Bridge to Hybrid peers virtually. All specials, whether in the Bridge to Hybrid program or the Watertown Virtual School program will be online.

Students can join or remain in activities, athletics, and clubs that are offered as extracurricular activities.

What technology will be provided?

Watertown Virtual School will provide Chromebooks for students in grades 1 through 12 and iPads for students in grades Preschool through kindergarten.