



New Hope – Solebury School District Health & Safety Plan

INTRODUCTION

The New Hope – Solebury School District Health and Safety Plan serves to formalize and communicate the guidelines that will be implemented for the 2021-2022 school year. This plan was developed to ensure that all community members are fully informed and prepared for the start of the 2021-2022 school year for socially distanced in-person instruction. This plan was developed through a comprehensive committee of key stakeholders including parents, teachers, school nurses, guidance counselors, social workers, support staff, members of the school board and school administration. The development of the plan was drafted with guidance and recommendations provided by the Bucks County Health Department, the Office of Governor, the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Education (PDE) the Department of Health and Human Services (DHS), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and other sources of research-based information and guidance.

The Guiding Principles of the New Hope – Solebury Health and Safety Plan for Reopening all Schools is as follows:

1. Ensure safe learning and working environments for all students and staff.
2. Provide choice to the extent possible in student learning format.
3. Ensure all students receive instruction that meets state and federal standards and have the necessary supports for success, including:
 - a. Access to technology and connectivity
 - b. Social-emotional wellness and health supports
 - c. As feasible, provide additional supports to meet the needs of special populations.
4. Provide training, time, support, and flexibility necessary for staff to maintain our schools open for instruction in the 2021-2022 school year.
5. Provide proactive, clear communication to all families and staff.

New Hope – Solebury’s Health and Safety Plan is subject to change to reflect and comply with the current status of public health conditions within Bucks County and the Commonwealth. To assure that the Health and Safety Plan is current and up to date, the New Hope – Solebury pandemic team will continually monitor all orders, rules, regulations, guidance, and other

relevant information issued by the Office of Governor, the Department of Health, the Department of Education, local authorities and other agencies or departments having jurisdiction over the district. Based on the most current information available, The Health and Safety Plan will be revised accordingly.

The Administration recommends approval of this plan on March 1, 2022, to:

- (1) provide buildings with direction so that detailed logistical planning can begin which will allow academic planning and scheduling to be finalized for each marking period and also permit the ongoing delivery of in person instruction throughout the 2021-2022 school year.
- (2) provide parents and guardians with guidelines for how schools will be prepared throughout the 2021-2022 school year to support the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Initial Effective Date: July 29, 2020

Date of Last Review and Revision: March 1, 2022

Date this plan will take effect: March 2, 2022

BACKGROUND

In November of 2020, the New Hope-Solebury School District returned for in-person instruction through a hybrid instructional model. By December of 2020, elementary students returned for in-person instruction five days per week and in March of 2021, secondary students returned for in-person instruction five days per week. For the 2021-2022 school year, the New Hope-Solebury School District returned to in-person instruction five days per week at all grade levels. This plan reflects those components we will keep in place to promote general health and safety for all students, employees and visitors as well as remaining compliant with national, state, and local health guidance.

ESSER HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN QUESTIONS

1. How will the LEA, to the greatest extent practicable, support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning?

The New Hope-Solebury School District has been updating and revising its Health and Safety Plan in accordance with the latest guidance from our federal, state, and local authorities. These include and are not limited to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Bucks County Health Department (BCHD), the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The New Hope-Solebury School District will continue to work in coordination with these agencies and our local partners to develop and refine expectations that meet all requirements.

For the 2021-2022 school year, the school district will continue to be governed by this guidance and will revise this plan in accordance with updated information from these agencies. As new guidance is received, the district administration and building administration will make amendments to the plans which will be brought to the Board of School Directors for consideration and approval. Any changes to the plan will be communicated to the school district stakeholders including faculty, staff, students, and families for implementation.

2. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services?

The New Hope-Solebury School District will continue to work to ensure safe learning and working environments for all students, faculty and staff. The New Hope-Solebury School District resumed regular full-day, five-day per-week instruction on September 1, 2021, at all grade levels (K-12). Based on public health conditions and any related mandates/requirements, the New Hope-Solebury School District will remain positioned to quickly pivot between in-person instruction, virtual/remote instruction and hybrid instruction.

The New Hope-Solebury School District will continue to ensure all students receive instruction that meets state and federal standards and have the necessary support for success, including access to technology and connectivity. The school district will be offering the following instructional models for the 2021-2022 school year.

1. Full in-person instruction

Our in-person instructional model consists of a pre-pandemic instructional model with full-day instruction five days per week at all grade levels (K-12)

2. Online instruction through the New Hope-Solebury Virtual Academy provided through a third-party cyber instruction provider.

Our virtual instructional model will consist of a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction through a third-party provider five days per week at all grade levels (K-12)

These models were determined based on a survey provided to our parents/guardians in May of 2020 and Spring of 2021 to determine their desired instructional models for the 2021-2022 school year. As a result of this survey, the majority of our families indicated they preferred to have their students return to school for full instruction in the fall.

Student medical issues which require a temporary leave from school will be addressed on a case-by-case basis to determine appropriate instructional alternatives to continue the student's education in consideration of information provided by the student's health care provider, parent/guardians, principal and counselor, and IEP team, if applicable.

The New Hope-Solebury School District has been working to address the issue of mental health concerns for our students and staff throughout the pandemic. The school district has provided extensive training to faculty and staff to address student mental health needs and to identify concerns with regards to mental health so that proper interventions can be put in place. The following measures will be in place for the 2021-22 school year:

1. Each school in the district will continue to provide general lessons and support for students to foster positive mental health and identify students in need of support.
2. Students who present with mental health needs or concerns will be referred through the MTSS process in each school to identify interventions and supports to meet their needs.
3. The New Hope-Solebury School District will continue to provide access to licensed social workers, counselors, school psychologists, and administrators.
4. Counselors will be made available to students in all four schools in the school district to provide mental health support for students and connect families with services.
5. Staff will be routinely reminded of how to access the district Employee Assistance Program.
6. Professional development and support will be provided to faculty and staff to assist them in supporting their students and addressing their own stress and mental health related issues. The professional development will also entail additional support for counseling staff over the summer to ensure adequate preparation for the reopening of the school year.
7. Professional development options will continue that support mental health/stress reduction.
8. Behavioral health supports will also be added through a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).
9. The New Hope-Solebury School District will continue to partner with local support services and agencies to assist students with mental health related issues.
10. As feasible, the New Hope-Solebury School District will continue to provide additional support to meet needs of special populations, through the IEP/504 process and/or through our multi-tiered system of support.

The school district has continued throughout the pandemic to provide student and family food services. The district applied for and received the opportunity to provide free lunch and breakfast for all students in the 2020-2021 school year. This service is available again in the 2021-2022 school year. Any students taking advantage of the cyber program available through the school district will also be able to pick up breakfast and lunch throughout the week.

3. Use the table below to explain how the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
a. Universal and correct wearing of masks;	The Universal Masking Order issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Health expired on June 28, 2021.

At this time the Center for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics are recommending masking as optional for communities in the medium level using the [CDC's updated recommendation criteria](#) as of February 25, 2022. This recommendation is supported by the PA Department of Education, the US Department of Education, The BCHD, and the PA Department of Health. Therefore, the New Hope-Solebury School District will progress to a mask optional policy on March 2, 2022, allowing students and staff to wear masks indoors as desired until further notice and may revisit this decision when/if the CDC modifies its recommendations. This decision is made based on the significant decline in the number of COVID cases in the county and specifically in the New Hope-Solebury community as well as hospitalization and bed use data. Masks will not be required for outdoor activities.

Masks will no longer be required on buses as the CDC order for buses has been rescinded.

In the event masks need to be reinstated, the CDC has provided exceptions for masking for:

- A person who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to the workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant

	<p>workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations.</p> <p>In the event of an increase in the level of infection in the region or the severity of the pandemic in our district, other indicators outlined in the CDC guidance or directives from the federal, state or local health organizations this guidance may be revisited and revised. As a result of increases in cases either in a classroom, school or the district, it may also be necessary to return to required masking for a period of time. Additionally, further decisions and modifications of these and other components of the Health and Safety Plan will be determined considering the current vaccination rate of the region, the transmission rate of the virus in the county and other indicators identified in the CDC guidance.</p> <p>Faculty and staff are encouraged to use outside teaching locations to the extent possible to increase social distancing and to provide opportunities to provide mask breaks to students.</p>
<p>b. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</p>	<p>The New Hope-Solebury School District will rely on best practices and implement high-quality, student-centered instructional environments. Specifically, the NHSD will continue to rely on the guidance of the BCHD, CDC and PDH to design safe instructional and workspaces for all individuals.</p> <p>Beginning on September 1, 2021, the following procedures were put in place in building facilities to support the health and safety of the school district community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use rows all facing the same direction for seating configurations of desks and work areas, when in high community level according to

	<p>the CDC guidance as feasible. If not feasible, consider staggered or diagonal seating at shared tables to avoid “across the table” seating. Students will be seated facing in the same direction, when possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Limit additional furnishings in classrooms to facilitate maximum social distancing in classrooms.○ Position desks and work areas in staggered rows facing the same direction using social distancing, when in high community level according to the CDC guidance as feasible.○ According to the CDC, 3-foot distancing from the center of one desk to the center of adjacent desk is acceptable if 6-foot distancing is not achievable to meet the needs of students. A minimum of three feet will be evidenced between students, more distance will be provided where possible.○ Consider and implement other interventions in each setting to assist with social distancing based on the developmental age of students including (furniture layouts, barriers, and signage)○ Ensure social distancing in offices and staff lounges, and during staff meetings when in high community level according to the CDC guidance.○ No less than three feet of space between students will be provided, to the maximum extent feasible.○ Reconfigure the use of cafeterias and other congregate settings to provide opportunities for social distancing to the extent feasible.○ Seat individuals in a staggered arrangement in cafeterias to avoid “across the table” seating to the maximum extent possible.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue with recess and physical education activities as long as those activities limit physical contact and touching, when in high community level according to the CDC guidance as feasible. ○ Teach students guidelines for acceptable activities and proper hygiene during these activities when in high community level according to the CDC guidance. ○ Limit students on school buses and vans to two (2) students to a seat. ○ Unloading buses at a common location at each school to stagger disembarking of students. Ensure only several buses unload at a time. This will be the same with the car line – one location per school. ○ Educate students and drivers of the importance of passengers facing forward (not sideways or backwards). ○ At arrival and dismissal, limit the number of students accessing the bus or school building at a given time. ○ Promote social distancing between people if events are held. If in person events and activities take place, engage in social distancing to the extent possible. ○ The administration will have the discretion to amend Section B without Board consent as needed.
<p>c. <u>Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;</u></p>	<p>All individuals will continue to be encouraged and reminded to sanitize or wash their hands on a frequent basis.</p> <p>Beginning on September 1, 2021, the following procedures were put in place for handwashing and respiratory etiquette to support the health and safety of the school district community.</p>

- Hand sanitizer will be available in common areas, hallways, by doorways leading to and from playgrounds and/or in classrooms where sinks for handwashing are not available.
- Post signage for health protocols in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms in elementary classrooms by all sinks, fitness room, nurses' offices, by the doors of playgrounds) detailing how to stop the spread of COVID-19 properly washing hands, and promotion of everyday protective measures.
- Recommend all individuals to sanitize/wash hands before and after eating.
- Develop protocols for handwashing on entry to all schools with soap and water and/or hand sanitizer. Free standing hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed in entryways and recess exits.
- Post signage for proper hand washing and hygiene practices in bathrooms and in cafeterias and other visible locations.
- Teach handwashing and cough and sneeze etiquette at all grade levels and reinforce on an ongoing basis.
- Include messages about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families such as on school websites, emails, and social media accounts.
- Outside organizations will be permitted to rent district indoor and outdoor facilities through the established district permitting process, but will be required to comply with the established district Health and Safety Plan.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outside visitors will not be permitted in the school district unless they have a direct connection to school district curriculum and programming.
<p>d. <u>Cleaning</u> and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving <u>ventilation</u>;</p>	<p>Beginning on September 1, 2021, the following procedures were put in place for cleaning to support the health and safety of the school district community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clean and disinfect all high touch surfaces daily (water bottle filling stations, door handles, light switches, etc.) following EPA/CDC/manufacturer guidelines ○ Clean desks on a frequent basis following posted EPA/CDC/manufacturer guidelines, as feasible. ○ Students will be permitted to bring their own disinfecting wipes and at the secondary level will be prompted to wipe down shared learning spaces at the start of each class period. ○ The cleaning will be done after each shift (am and pm) and at the end of the day for buses that are out beyond the normal school day. ○ Establish regular cleaning regimens and train the custodial staff on the proper procedures and protocols for COVID-19. ○ Ventilate all classrooms and common areas when available/possible using windows. Recommend air circulation patterns that push inside air towards open windows. ○ Ensure all ventilation systems operate properly. ○ Open windows and doors to maximize the amount of air

	<p>circulation in classrooms and buildings, where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Audit necessary cleaning and disinfecting materials to maintain sufficient supply for district needs.○ The fitness room individual equipment will be cleaned by the student after each use.○ Individual therapy equipment will be cleaned by student/therapist after each use.○ Sensory rooms/areas will be cleaned by the student/staff after each use.○ Where feasible, specialists' rooms will be cleaned between classes.○ Musical equipment will be sanitized after each use by the individual.○ Sanitize materials and equipment used in recess and physical education class, when feasible. Cleaning should be completed after each recess and physical education activity.○ Cafeteria tables will be cleaned between each use.○ Cashiers will enter student identification information into the computer to minimize student contact in cafeterias at the LES.○ School buses will be sanitized after each daily run.○ Physical education classes will be conducted outside when feasible and weather permitting.○ For items which must be shared they will be sanitized between uses, to the extent possible.○ Increase ventilation on vehicles by opening windows, when feasible.○ Water fountains will remain disconnected, and faculty/staff and students are encouraged to bring water bottles from home and use filling stations.
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<p>e. <u>Contact tracing</u> in combination with <u>isolation</u> and <u>quarantine</u>, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;</p>	<p>The New Hope-Solebury School District will continue to work in partnership with the BCHD for all COVID-19 related case investigation and contact tracing.</p> <p>Per the BCHD, beginning on June 19, 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents should report positive COVID-19 test results to the school nurse. ● Employees are required to report positive cases of COVID 19 to their building nurse, building principal and the Director of Human Resources as soon as test result information is received. ● The school district will no longer be engaged in case investigation as of March 2, 2022. ● The NHSD will consult with the BCHD in the event of any public health-related questions or concerns for guidance. This includes COVID-19. ● The BCHD may recommend temporary disease mitigation strategies (such as increased physical distancing, masking, etc.). ● In accordance with the CDC whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate for a minimum of 5 days as both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals can transmit the virus during that time. If after five days, the individual is asymptomatic and fever free, they can return to work/school. Upon return to school/work the individual must continue to wear a mask for an additional five days.

- NHSD will no longer notify close contacts of any positive case but will send a letter to the classroom level at the elementary level and at the building level at the elementary and secondary level affected about a newly identified case.
- NHSD will continue to notify families of cases within the school/district through the listserv system maintaining confidentiality of individuals as required through FERPA and HIPAA.
- The BCHD will not require the NHSD to continue to maintain a dashboard. As such, no such dashboards will be maintained.

Beginning on September 1, 2021, the following procedures will be in place for isolation and quarantine to support the health and safety of the school district community.

- Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. All school staff and families should know who this person is and how to contact them. The school district nurses will be responsible for this task at this time in concert with the school building administration.
- Require an individual (one who becomes sick in school to wear a mask.
- Require an individual (one who becomes sick in school to report immediately to the nurse's suite or other designated area.
- Separate any students/staff who demonstrate symptoms of COVID-19 from other students and staff.
- Provide appropriate PPE to staff and students in the nurse's suite and to those interacting directly

	<p>with such an individual (one who becomes sick in school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Isolate an individual (one who becomes sick in school or demonstrates a history of exposure) within the nurse’s suite or other isolated area until he/she is dismissed from school. Clean and disinfect the spaces utilized by the individual within 24 hours.○ Use an area for isolation that is separate from others, is well-ventilated, and is easy to disinfect.○ Whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate for 5 days as both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals can transmit the virus during that time. If after 5 days the individual is no longer symptomatic and fever free, they can return to school/work but must continue to wear a mask for five additional days.○ Notify the Superintendent, Director of HR (employees), and Supervisor of Student Services (students) of any suspected COVID-19 cases as soon as possible.○ Consult with the Bucks County Department of Health on any decision related to the closure of classrooms, schools, or districts.○ Close a classroom, school and/or district if the Bucks County Department of Health indicates to the district the necessity or requirement to do so. This may be done as a result of significant staffing shortages related to the pandemic or evidence of significant community spread in a school or the school district.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limit the public release of COVID-19 impacted student and staff names to be in compliance with FERPA and HIPAA.
<p>f. <u>Diagnostic</u> and screening testing;</p>	<p>At the recommendation of the BCHD, the NHSD will not require individuals to attest formally to symptom tracking for COVID-19.</p> <p>The NHSD will instead regularly communicate best practices for health and personal hygiene to all stakeholders in an effort to reinforce healthy instructional and work environments.</p> <p>Beginning on September 1, 2021, the following procedures were put in place for diagnostic and screening testing to support the health and safety of the school district community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Educate all stakeholders (students, staff, parents/guardians) on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 at home before sending children to school and/or reporting to work. ○ Engage in robust information campaigns on the following school/public health issues such as immunization requirements for school enrollment and promoting flu vaccination as a proactive measure which parents and employees can take to lessen the likelihood of school closures due to the combined impact of seasonal flu and COVID-19. ○ Educate parents/guardians on the importance of keeping symptomatic children home from school. Parents should contact the school to self-report if they or their student have symptoms of COVID-19 or received a positive test for COVID-19

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide remote assignment options, if feasible, for students who are unable to attend school due to prolonged illness. ○ Require any individual who discloses symptoms to wear a mask, if feasible, and report to the nurse for examination and documentation of symptoms. ○ Have the nurse or designated school employee evaluate any individual who presents with symptoms. ○ Take the temperature for only those individuals who present with symptoms. ○ Google link is on all teacher devices K-12 to allow teachers to also make a request on behalf of any student. ○ Use of an online form for staff to request an appointment for students to meet with his/her counselor. This form will be a link on all teacher devices. ○ Although the flu vaccine and COVID vaccine are not required for school attendance or employment, it is highly encouraged for all students and staff to get the flu vaccine and COVID vaccine.
<p>g. Efforts to provide <u>vaccinations to school communities</u>;</p>	<p>The New Hope-Solebury School District will continue to work with federal, state, and local health care agencies to promote and offer opportunities to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. Specifically, the NHSD will work with the Bucks County Department of Health to provide opportunities for students and community members to receive vaccinations.</p> <p>The District will communicate and distribute information regarding</p>

	<p>vaccination clinics and designated hours and locations.</p>
<p>h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and</p>	<p>The NHSD provides services for individuals with disabilities in accordance with the IEP/504 process and the multi-tiered, multi-domain system of support model. The NHSD will continue to design and follow any individualized health and safety plan for the students we serve.</p> <p>Beginning on September 1, 2021, the following procedures will be in place for students with disabilities to support the health and safety of the school district community:</p> <p>The New Hope-Solebury Supervisor of Student Services, IEP case managers, school nurses, principals and counselors will work with families to develop a student-specific education plan for students with complex needs.</p> <p>The district will also collaborate with the Bucks County Intermediate Unit and other support providers to coordinate plans for students with complex needs.</p> <p>The district will identify students who are medically fragile or at higher risk for COVID-19 and work with school nurses to obtain medical information about students to best understand each student’s unique medical needs and develop individualized health care plans to support their needs.</p> <p>The NHSD will continue to train staff and contractors on Universal Precautions.</p> <p>The NHSD will regularly communicate best practices for health and personal hygiene to all stakeholders in an effort to</p>

	<p>reinforce health instructional and work environments.</p>
<p>i. Coordination with state and local health officials.</p>	<p>The NHSD will rely on best practices, informed by federal, state and local guidance, to design and implement high-quality, student-centered instructional environments.</p> <p>Specifically, the NHSD will rely on local health authority guidance to design safe instructional and workspaces for all individuals.</p> <p>The school district will continue to maintain ongoing communication with the Bucks County Department of Health, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education to make necessary revisions to the school district health and safety plan based on new guidance from these agencies and the CDC.</p>

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **New Hope-Solebury School District** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **March 24, 2022**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

Yes
 No

Affirmed on: **March 24, 2022**

By:

(Signature of Judeth Finn, Board President)

(Print Name of Judeth Finn, Board President)

*Electronic signatures on this document are acceptable using one of the two methods detailed below.

Option A: The use of actual signatures is encouraged whenever possible. This method requires that the document be printed, signed, scanned, and then submitted.

Option B: If printing and scanning are not possible, add an electronic signature using the resident Microsoft Office product signature option, which is free to everyone, no installation or purchase needed.