

Northwood School District 2022-2023 Opening Plan v 5.0 (Reviewed 4.1.23)

Introduction and Guiding Goals:

This plan was designed to support the health and safety of everyone in the Northwood School District while maximizing educational opportunities. While this plan outlines 5 phases of operating during a pandemic, at this time, for the 2022-2023 school year, the Northwood School District will return to full in-person learning with many of the continued safety mitigation tactics which are outlined below at Phase 5. We will have an in-person five days a week schedule for the 2022-2023 school year. Recognizing the value and importance of in-person learning, the district will not be offering a remote learning option for the 2022-2023 school year. Families wishing to have students attend school remotely will need to enroll their children in an outside program, such as VLACS, or homeschool them.

This plan describes the guidelines and goals for ensuring a safe and productive in-person learning environment.

The Four Guiding Goals used in creating the Northwood School Opening Plan are:

1. Ensure Healthy Classrooms - Following safe practices in classrooms
2. Ensure Healthy Buildings - Creating routines and practices to promote an overall healthy building
3. Ensure Healthy Policies - Building a culture of health, safety, and shared responsibility
4. Ensure Healthy Schedules - Moving between rooms and locations safely

This plan also considers the four goals developed by Dr. Chan, NH State Epidemiologist:

1. Maximize the in-person educational experience
2. Minimize the risk of COVID-19 to students and staff
3. Build in flexibility to allow multiple learning options and movement between models
4. Continue to provide important community and social supports to families

The Instructional Phases in the plan move from Fully Remote to Fully In-School with minimal restrictions and are briefly defined below. **The instructional phases are listed in more detail starting on page 7.**

Phase 1 - Fully Remote Instruction

Phase 2 - Hybrid Model with High Risk Students receiving some in school supports

Phase 3 - Blended Remote Option/Full-In Model with modifications to mitigation protocols

Phase 4 - Fully In School Instruction with further modifications to mitigation protocols

- 4A - Indoor mask breaks will not occur unless medically necessary, masks not required outdoors
- 4B - Indoor masks breaks occurs with 6 feet of separation, masks not required outdoors
- 4C - Masks are optional (with the potential of targeted mitigation, such as increased social distancing, extra cleaning, and masks requirements)

Phase 5 - Fully In-School with minimal to no restrictions

It is important to remember that this document is a dynamic plan that may change as local, state, and national trends fluctuate. The Northwood School District will consult the most updated guidance from the US CDC and NH DHHS as well as other resources.

Operational Guidelines:

There are virus mitigation steps that we will maintain as standard practice moving forward, such as social distancing when possible and appropriate, HVAC monitoring, use of higher-grade air filters, asking staff and students to stay home when symptomatic, and allowing the use of masks.

Operational guidelines for the start of the 2022-2023 School Year, based on the current information we have from the NH DHPS and CDC, are as follows:

- **Parent/Student Home Screenings:** All parents will screen their children daily at home for symptoms of COVID -19. If any of the following symptoms are present, parents will keep children home from

school: fever or chills, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, cough, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting.

- **If your child is exhibiting symptoms of Covid 19:** Parents should screen their children for symptoms or risk factors daily before allowing the child to travel to school.
 - If your child is exhibiting symptoms consistent with Covid-19 at home, we recommend you consult your doctor. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-care-quick-reference.html> Students with minor symptoms (headache, cough, fatigue, achy sore throat, congestion, etc) to attend school. We recommend testing, but are not requiring it.
 - If signs and symptoms begin while at school, the student (or staff member) may either undergo a test here at school or must be sent home as soon as possible using personal transportation.
 - Sick students and staff will be kept separate from well students and staff. Contact with school staff will be limited as much as reasonably possible, while ensuring the safety and supervision of the sick student(s) until they leave.
 - Students and staff with fever greater than 100°F and no specific diagnosis should remain at home until they have had no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., Advil, Tylenol).
 - Guidance on what to do if you test positive for Covid 19 or have been exposed to Covid 19 is provided by the NH DPHS and can be found here: <https://www.covid19.nh.gov/>
- **Parents or Visitors in Buildings:** Visitors will be allowed into the school with the following protocol: Visitors with symptoms are allowed, as long as they aren't positive for covid.
- **Physical Activity:** Grade level recess schedules will be similar to pre-pandemic schedules and established so that students have the opportunity to be outside and stay active. Our physical education classes will have a similar practice in place which follows appropriate distancing when possible. Band and Chorus will resume as normal and may require social distancing as well as instrument shields for additional protection. Extracurricular activities will be returning in full, and we will look to the NHIAA for guidance for athletics programs. All other activities will follow school protocols.
- **Classrooms:** Classrooms will be arranged to facilitate effective learning and collaboration. In instances where clusters or trends indicate a need for social distancing and/or other precautions, staff will modify classroom arrangements accordingly.
- **Hand Washing/Hygiene:** Students and staff are expected to wash hands frequently and use hand sanitizer if washing hands is not possible. This will be emphasized in our classrooms and after times such as lunch and recess. All classrooms and offices will have hand sanitizer available.
- **Facility Precautions:** Frequent cleaning will occur in hallways and bathrooms throughout the day. Our HVAC systems will be checked and filters will be replaced more frequently to help promote clean air. Night time cleaning will be completed using normal cleaning practices along with ionized hydrostatic disinfectant spray or UVC lights. When possible, windows will be opened to help with the circulation of fresh air.
- **Facilities Use:** Facility use restrictions will be lifted for outside organizations (e.g. Recreation Basketball, etc.). Regular requirements will remain in accordance with the facilities use policy.
- **Masks:** Staff and students may elect to wear masks but are not required to do so. Any person entering our facilities has the option to wear a mask at any time due to any medical concerns they may have. The District will provide disposable masks upon request. All students and teachers are encouraged to wear a mask if they are feeling sick while at school. As this may shift due to covid 19 recommendations, we will follow the NH DHHS recommendations. *Please know that according to the new guidelines from NH DHHS, regardless of the mask status in the building, if you are returning*

after a 5 day isolation period, NHDHHS states you should wear a mask for an additional 5 days (or isolate for an additional 5 days). DHHS also recommends masking for 10 days after exposure.

- **Social Distancing:** There will be no enforced social distancing. However, the recommendation is still to have students 3 feet apart when possible and appropriate. The majority of classroom activities will resume as normal. Lunch will be served in the cafeteria.
- **Water Fountains and Bottle Filler fountains:** Water fountains will be utilized and cleaned regularly. Bottle filling stations will also be available. Parents are encouraged to send students to school with a refillable water bottle.
- **Remote Learning:** Using the tools and skills we have developed, we will continue to use remote learning strategies when the need arises. These needs may include weather related building closures, statewide closure mandates, health reasons, etc. Proper notice of the use of remote learning days will be at least 24 hours.
If there are multiple cases where students and/or staff need to quarantine or isolate, or if staff is not available to be in the building, it may be necessary to move a classroom, grade level, or student group, into the Full Remote instructional model for a short period of time. Such a move would not necessarily lead to a change in our school-wide model, as a move under this situation would be in effect until the situation was either resolved or mitigated.
- **Bus Transportation protocols:** In addition to the typical safety measures in place when riding buses, the following additional safety precautions will be in place for the start of the 2022-2023 school year:
 - o The bus company will follow a regular schedule to disinfect the school bus.

As in all aspects of the opening plan, bus ridership requirements are subject to change and will be discussed as part of any change in learning phases by transportation and school officials.

Moving between Instructional Phases:

The Superintendent and Building Administration along with members from the Covid Response Team (CRT) will meet weekly to monitor the situation, and if necessary, will make recommendations to shift phases at the regularly scheduled School Board meetings. The decision to change phases or further adapt our protocols, will be made by the Superintendent and the Northwood School Board in consultation with the CRT. **Any move to a different phase altogether would be done at the School Board level.**

Moving within Instructional Phases

The Superintendent, in consultation with the building CRT, will examine the various data points weekly and if needed make the decision to further adapt the building's Covid mitigation protocols within a current phase.

While the NH DPHS is our primary source for local Covid 19 information, the following factors will be used to inform the decision-making process*:

- State and/or National guidance (State Leadership, NHDPHS, CDC, DOE, etc.)
- Transmission within the school facility
- School community confirmed positive COVID results
- Ability to staff schools and safely supervise students

**See Northwood Covid Data Sheet*

2022-2023 Covid 19 Quarantine Protocols

DHHS has updated its guidance on quarantining. This new guidance will help us keep more students in person and reduce the number of students and staff needing to quarantine. This new guidance is also what allows us to have less restrictive cohorting. Please see our guidelines (below) for more information.

People who are exposed to someone else with COVID-19 are no longer recommended to stay at home and quarantine, but they should continue to follow CDC's recommendations.

All close contacts will be asked to monitor for any symptoms but will be allowed to attend school **if they are symptom-free**. If the school has three or more related cases of transmission DHHS will consider this a cluster, and at that time, large group quarantining (classroom, grade level, etc.) may once again be necessary.

DHHS will not mandate quarantine for staff or students at this time if positive cases occur in school (unless clusters occur), regardless of mitigation measures used (masks or no masks).

Remote Learning for students quarantined for longer than 5 days

We do not have a remote school option. When a student is out for an extended period, we will provide work (much like if a student went on vacation). Options will be personalized by grade and student and will depend largely on the amount of time a student will be out and what class/grade they are in. Should a long term remote option be needed, we have the capacity to work with tutoring companies (such as NE Tutors <http://www.netutors.com>) who can work with students virtually. If a large number of students from the same grade or cohort are out, we will look to create a more detailed remote learning option for that group.

WHEN *it is* RECOMMENDED TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL:

- Your child is experiencing any new or unexplained symptoms of COVID-19.
 - This will be one of the best ways we can minimize the spread of Covid-19 within our school buildings!
 - These guidelines apply to both *vaccinated and unvaccinated* individuals. * If you are unsure whether your child's symptoms are considered new or unexplained, please call or email the school nurse, Colleen Krochmal, at ckrochmal@northwoodschoollnh.org

The guidance regarding COVID-19 continues to change and there are many different variables to be considered. Parents and guardians are encouraged to work closely with the School Nurse and Principal to determine the need to stay home from school.

Resources:

The School Administration and School Board along with the leadership team referred to many documents when developing this plan. In addition to looking at numerous school based plans, the following resources have been used to inform this plan:

- Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines <https://www.covid19.nh.gov/resources/isolation-quarantine-information>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
- NH Division of Public Health Services <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/>
- Covid ActNow- New Hampshire: https://covidactnow.org/us/new_hampshire-nh/?s=2021940

It is important to remember that this document is a dynamic plan that may change as local, state, and national trends fluctuate. The Northwood School District will consult the most updated guidance from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services as well as other resources.

Phase 1 - Fully Remote Instruction

- Remote Instruction provided to all students
- Modifications (similar to last spring) made as applicable
- Instructional Staff will teach from the building whenever possible
- Some high risk students (e.g., special education students) may be allowed to receive services and tutoring 1-3 days a week in the school.
- Mask breaks would occur outside of the building or when students can be 6' apart and seated.

Phase 2 - Hybrid Model with High Risk Students receiving some in school supports

- Operate on an alternating day schedule with two cohorts in order to accommodate a 50% student population to ensure that we can manage proper social distancing, etc. Each cohort will be in school two days a week and remote the other three days. The school day and schedule may need to be adjusted to accommodate this alternative temporary reentry plan.
- Areas such as the gym and cafeteria may be altered to accommodate other uses (e.g., lunches, snack, etc.)
- Some students and staff who opt for fully remote instruction and learning will be accommodated.
- Mask breaks would occur outside of the building or when students can be 6' apart and seated.
- High Risk Students (e.g., special education students) will be allowed in the building to receive in-school services and tutoring 1-3 days a week.

Phase 3 - Blended Remote Option/Full-In Model

- Open daily to all students while maintaining a remote learning option for those parents who wish to keep their children home. The remote option may be provided by our staff or an outside program such as VLACS.
- Recommend that our classrooms maintain a minimum 3 foot social distance. Some Social Distancing protocols will need to be relaxed due to scheduling and class sizes (hallways, bus, etc.).
- RA Schedules, lunches, and other logistics remain the same as the Hybrid phase.
- Alternate locations for lunches may need to be identified.
- Mask breaks would occur outside of the building or when students can be 6' apart and seated.
- Bus capacity may be limited.
- Options for fully remote instructional staff will need to be identified.

Phase 4 (4A, 4B, and 4C) - Fully-In School Instruction with modifications

- PPE required
- RA Schedules, lunches, and other logistics would remain the same as the Hybrid phase.
- Mask breaks would occur outside of the building or when students can be 6' apart and seated.
- Bus capacity may be limited.

There are significant logistical implications and changes that the school may implement in order to meet expectations for all phases, including:

- Modification of the physical environment
- Changes in instructional model and practices
- Changes in classroom management practices
- Increased demands on staff members' time and workload
- Increased needs for professional development and training
- Changes in schedules and school calendar
- Changes to policies, procedures, and practices

Phase 5 - Fully In-School with minimal to no restrictions

- No enforced social distancing, recommendation is still 3 feet when appropriate
- No PPE required
- Personal hygiene encouraged
- School schedules as normal
- Classroom instruction with no restrictions
- Students will eat in the cafeteria - if needed by cohorts (grade levels and class groupings)
 - There will be limited seating available for students to sit at individual desks.
- Fully Remote Instruction moves to Homeschooling or VLACS options
- Continue increased disinfection procedures as necessary, increased hand washing/ sanitizing, and optional mask wearing.

Northwood Covid Data Sheet

School Data Points	
Current number of active cases at Northwood School	
Total cases in Northwood School (YTD)	

Defining Level of School Impact

The overall level of school impact should be assigned based on the **highest** level identified by any one of the following criteria.

Criteria	Level of School Impact		
	Low	Medium	High
Student absenteeism due to illness	<15%	15-30%	>30%
Student and Staff transmission <u>within</u> * the school by cluster*	1 or less	2 or more related clusters*	2 or more non related clusters*
Staff capacity to conduct classes and school operations	Normal	Strained	Critical

* Student and staff transmissions that occur outside the school setting may not count towards these totals if the students or staff did not enter the building and the transmission can be traced back to a different location, such as a restaurant or it occurred over a vacation.

* A cluster is defined as 3 or more individuals confirmed with COVID-19 who are part of a related group of individuals (e.g., classroom) who had the potential to transmit infection to each other through close contact.

* A non related cluster has no common connection among the positive cases

Additional Information on Moving between Instructional Phases:

As stated earlier in the plan, the Superintendent and Building Administration along with members from the Covid Response Team (CRT) will meet weekly to monitor the situation, and if necessary, will make recommendations to shift phases at the regularly scheduled School Board meetings. If there is a significant spike in statewide transmission the CRT may meet more frequently. **Any move to a different phase altogether would be done at the School Board level.**

Similar to any emergency, the Superintendent may close school in the event that the school can not operate safely due to Covid. At that point, an emergency School Board Meeting would be scheduled promptly to discuss how to safely shift to a more restrictive phase. Moving to Phases 1-4 may require approval from the New Hampshire Department of Education.

Moving between phases may require time to reconfigure the facility.