“Work Session”
MTPS Reopening of Schools

July 14, 2020
Tonight’s “Work Session” Agenda Topics

- The **NJDOE Road Back Plan** - Includes guidance related to “four key subject areas” (listed below) and many "anticipated minimum standards" that should be **definite components included in the district's plan**:
  1. Leadership & Planning (slides #5-9)
  2. Policy & Funding (slide #10)
  3. Conditions for Learning (slides #11-28)
  4. Continuity of Learning (slide #29-30)
    - Update on ESY (extended school year) program for identified special education students
    - Update on SEL (social emotional learning) opportunities for all students
    - Update on other summer learning opportunities for all students

- MTPS Caregiver and Staff Survey results *(slides # 31-33)*

- Next steps and timelines *(slide # 34)*
“What We Know” as per NJDOE, pg 46

● The public health **data and trends as it currently stands** support the reopening of schools for in-person operations in fall 2020.

● Absent a shift in the public health data, schools and districts must reopen **for modified in-person instruction and operations** at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, in accordance with the guidance and standards described in this plan.

● **Pursuant to this plan, and the health and safety standards contained herein, many schools and districts will have to operate school buildings at reduced capacity.** This might necessitate the establishment of “hybrid” learning environments, where schools and districts deliver both in-person and remote services.

● **Districts need to be prepared to pivot to remote instruction at any time** during the 2020-2021 school year.
“What We Don’t Know” as per NJDOE, pg. 46

- The nature and extent of future shifts in the public health data related to vulnerability to COVID-19.
- Whether shifting public health data will require any modifications to the standards and guidance described in this plan.
- Local circumstances and constraints: districts will have to plan schedules and other areas of operation in a manner that meets students’ local needs and complies with the standards set forth in this guidance.
- Whether schools will be required to close for in-person instruction and transition back to entirely remote programs at some point in the 2020-2021 school year due to shifting public health data.
Prior to the release of the NJDOE’s guidelines, the district had already identified the need for a Reopening of Schools Committee comprised of various stakeholder groups including, district and building administrators, department managers, teachers, educational specialists, secretaries, computer specialists, custodial/maintenance staff, paraprofessionals, community partners (YMCA), private contractors (transportation and food service), parents (school PIC representatives) and Board of Education members.

- The MTPS Reopening of Schools Committee consists of eight subcommittees dedicated to reviewing the NJDOE, both anticipated minimum standards and considerations, and make recommendations, as appropriate, for inclusion in the district’s reopening plan.

- As per NJDOE guidelines, School-based Pandemic Response Teams are currently being formed. School-based Pandemic Response Teams will be established in each school, “to centralize, expedite, and implement COVID-19-related decision-making. Each school team should have a liaison that reports to district-level administrators to ensure coordinated actions across the district.”
Each school’s Pandemic Response Team is responsible for:

- Overseeing each school’s implementation of the district’s reopening plan, particularly health and safety measures, and providing safety and crisis leadership.
- Adjusting or amending school health and safety protocols as needed.
- Providing staff with needed support and training.
- Reviewing school level data regarding health and safety measures and the presence of COVID19 and reporting that data to the district as required.
- Developing and implementing procedures to foster and maintain safe and supportive school climates as necessitated by the challenges posted by COVID-19.
- Providing necessary communications to the school community and to the district.
- Creating pathways for community, family, and student voices to continuously inform the Team’s decision-making.
Leadership & Planning, continued...

- **Scheduling** – “Reopening plans must account for resuming in-person instruction in some capacity. Scheduling decisions should be informed by careful evaluation of the health and safety standards and the most up to date guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), as well the stakeholder input on the needs of all students and the realities of each unique district…”

- **Staffing** – “School districts should clearly communicate with teachers regarding expectations and support for student learning. School reopening plans and decision-making throughout the school year should consider unique needs of each staff member, such as access to technology, social and emotional health, and child care concerns. Staff roles will also have to expand to accommodate new health and safety regulations. Districts should consider leveraging staff to monitor student movement, hallway traffic, and maintain safety according to guidelines…”
Scheduling/Staffing Considerations...

As per the NJDOE, scheduling should support a combination of **synchronous instruction** (online learning that occurs in “real time”) and **asynchronous instruction** (online learning that occurs without “live” instruction) which allows for contact time between educators and their students, as well as time for students to engage with their peers. The NJDOE encourages districts to evaluate instructional activities based on what is developmentally appropriate for each grade band, pg. 50-51:

- **PK-5**: A district’s youngest learners will require more structure and an established pace in their learning activities. However, they will also require much more supervision and guidance from an adult. Consider detailed guidance for parents and guardians and include flexibilities that allow for ease in meeting the instructional time requirements.

- **6-8**: As learners become more independent, **districts may gradually phase in asynchronous learning activities**.

- **9-12**: High school students may **engage in both synchronous and asynchronous work** that allows for the most flexibility and choice.
Additional Scheduling/Staffing Considerations...

NJDOE guidelines regarding “Cohort Models”, pg. 51-52:

- Identifying small groups and keeping them together (cohorting) to ensure that student and staff groupings are as static as possible by having the same group of children stay with the same staff (all day for young children, and as much as possible for older children).

- Limit mixing between groups if possible. This may include scheduling to accommodate cohorts of students to have recess and lunch together, passing time together, etc. or rotating teachers instead of students in order to reduce contact.

- The Cohort Model can also be utilized to facilitate **hybrid instruction** (combination of face-to-face and online instruction).
The NJDOE Road Back Plan - Policy & Funding

● As per the NJDOE, “While districts should use the most recent State aid figures for planning purposes, that information is not final, but represents a proposal that could be modified by the Legislature when it considers the extended FY20 budget, which must be adopted by July 1, and the FY21 State budget, which must be adopted by September 30. The NJDOE will provide more detailed accounting guidance after the appropriations act is adopted.”

● District policies/regulations will need to be revised and/or created based on NJDOE guidelines, examples include, student and staff health screenings (new), student and staff attendance (revised) as well as other policies that may need to be altered to reflect new legislation such as the Family First Coronavirus Response Act.
The NJDOE has identified **ten Critical Areas of Operation** that schools must address in their restart plans:

1. General Health and Safety Guidelines
2. Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas
3. Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms
4. Contact Tracing
5. Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms
6. Facilities Cleaning Practices
7. Recess/Physical Education
8. Meals
9. Transportation
10. Extracurricular Activities & Use of Facilities

- Health & Safety Subcommittee (slides #12-25)
- Facilities & Operations Subcommittee (slide #26)
- Transportation Subcommittee (slide #27)
- Athletics, Co-curriculars & Before/Aftercare Subcommittee (slide #28)
Health & Safety Subcommittee Update

1. **General Health and Safety Guidelines** - “**Schools must comply with Center for Disease Control (CDC), state, and local guidelines.** Schools must also provide reasonable accommodations for staff and students at higher risk for severe illness and promote behaviors that reduce spread, such as social distancing, frequent hand washing, and the use of face coverings.”

2. **Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms** - “**School districts must adopt a policy for safely and respectfully screening students and employees for symptoms of and history of exposure to COVID-19. Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others...**”

3. **Contact Tracing** - “**School districts should collaborate with the local health department and engage their school nurses to develop contact tracing policies and procedures, as well as educate the broader school community on the importance of contact tracing.**”

4. **Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas** - “**Establish the process and location for student and staff health screenings. This should include providing physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to help ensure that staff and students remain at least six feet apart. When it is not possible to maintain physical distancing, schools must require the use of face coverings.**”
We all have a role to play for a safe return on the Road Back to our Schools.
The overarching goal is to create an environment of health & safety where staff & students can create an engaging learning environment.

Information and guidelines regarding COVID-19 are constantly changing.

There are a number of essential tools to help protect our school community against the spread of COVID-19 & other contagious illness, including:

- Social Distancing
- Face Coverings
- Hand Hygiene
- Respiratory Etiquette
- Staying home when sick
- Contact Tracing
Screening must be completed daily prior to arrival on school grounds by

- Parent/guardian for each student
- All staff & substitute personnel

- Screening includes symptom tracker & temperature check
- Those with a positive screening should stay home & contact their school nurse
- Those with a negative screening may attend school & must provide proof of symptom screening completion upon arrival to school to designated school personnel

Utilize designated entry/exit doors, monitored by school personnel
Flow, Entry, Exit, & Common Areas

➢ Social distancing signage at entrances, common areas, hallways & exits
➢ Face coverings must be worn in areas that social distancing can not be maintained:
  ○ School staff are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual’s health
  ○ Hallways, lines for entrance to buildings
  ○ Gathering places
➢ All visitors to the building are by appointment only
➢ Limiting non-essential visits to the health office:
  ○ Encourage healthy habits through PE/health curriculum including adequate sleep, healthy eating & stress reduction strategies to decrease non essential health office visits
  ○ Utilize other personal for social-emotional care of students that sometimes end up in the health office
➢ Educate staff, students, and their families at the same time and explain why this is important
MTPS COVID-19 Symptomatic Students & Staff Procedures

➢ Any student/staff presenting COVID-19 related symptoms will be sent home immediately

➢ Parent & emergency contacts must be up to date & able to arrive quickly

➢ Each school will have a designated isolation space. Symptomatic individuals will:
  ○ Remain in isolation space with supervision & care until picked up by an authorized adult (staff until leaving facility)
  ○ Wear a medical grade mask while on school grounds
  ○ Be released via designated school exit

➢ 911 will be called in emergency situations

➢ All symptomatic students & staff will be advised to seek medical care
Those reporting positive results for COVID-19 or having close contacts positive for COVID-19 will follow NJDOH isolation & quarantine guidelines as applicable.

- VHI will be available for students following isolation/quarantine protocol.
- Staff members following isolation/quarantine protocol will refer to human resources.
- Methods to assist in contact tracing (i.e. records of groups, assigned staff, daily attendance) will be implemented & outlined in the MTPS contact tracing protocol.
- Student/staff will be readmitted to school per DOH guidance & information for school & Department of Health/Communicable Disease Services Quick Reference.
What if I have symptoms? Stay home and isolate!!!!

Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care.

Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.

Self-isolate if you are sick. Isolation helps to decrease the spread of illness by separating those who are sick from those who are not sick.

Take care of yourself. Get rest and stay hydrated.

Stay in touch with your healthcare provider.

Call before you get medical care.

Be sure to get emergency care if you have trouble breathing, have any other emergency warning signs (such as pain or pressure in the chest or confusion), or if you think it is an emergency.
If a student or staff member has symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19 they must isolate at home until:

- a **minimum of 10 days** have passed from onset of symptoms
- 3 days no fever & improving symptoms
- or
- 10 days has passed since date of test for asymptomatic individuals.
A Close Contact is defined as:

Anyone being within approximately 6 feet from person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time, or
having direct contact with infectious secretions of a person with COVID-19 such as being coughed on.
Quarantine for Close Contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19

All those deemed close contacts must stay home for 14 days and observe for COVID symptoms!

COVID-19 testing is recommended but will not shorten the quarantine!
School Isolation and Quarantine Scenario

One person tests positive for COVID-19. Isolate for minimum of 10 days plus 3 days no fever and improving symptoms.

All those deemed close contacts must quarantine for 14 days.
Return to School Procedures

All staff and students will have a reentry meeting with the school nurse/designated personnel for clearance for in-person school attendance

- Follow the NJ-DOH guidelines for isolation and quarantine.
- Those students/staff who would like to return to school before the end of isolation period must present proof of a negative COVID test and medical note with alternate diagnosis.
- All close contacts must complete the full 14 day quarantine.
- Please notify your school nurse if you become symptomatic during your quarantine period.
Additional Resources

The Road Back

Considerations for K-12 Schools: Readiness and Planning Tool

CDC: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

NJ Residents with positive COVID-19 Test: Instructions & Next Steps

NJDOH COVID-19
Facilities & Operations Subcommittee Update

1. **Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms** – “Must allow for social distancing to the maximum extent possible. When social distancing is difficult or impossible, face coverings are required, and face coverings are always required for visitors and staff unless it will inhibit the individual’s health…”

2. **Facilities Cleaning Practices** – “Must continue to adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise. School districts must also develop a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfecting, especially of frequently touched surfaces and objects…”

3. **Recess/Physical Education** – “Must complete an inventory of outdoor spaces and mark off areas to ensure separation between students. Recess must be staggered by groups… School districts should also consider closing locker rooms and encouraging students to wear comfortable clothing and safe footwear to school…”

4. **Meals** – “If cafeterias or other group dining areas are in use, school districts must stagger eating times… Additionally, districts must discontinue family-style, self-service, and buffet-style dining and maintain social distancing…”
Transportation Subcommittee Update

As per NJDOE guidance, “School districts should maintain social distancing practices on buses to the maximum extent practicable and adopt best practices for cleaning and disinfecting all vehicles used for transporting students. If maintaining social distancing is not possible, all students who are able must wear face coverings while on busses.”

- The district has determined that 6 ft social distancing on school busses is not feasible in order to schedule routes and meet the transportation needs of students. Therefore, all students utilizing district transportation will be required to wear facial coverings (masks) at all times while on the bus.

- Through its discussion with transportation subcontractors, the Committee has concluded that maintaining transportation will be a challenge under any in-person instruction schedule due to the uncertainty of driver availability.
Extracurriculars & Before/After Care Subcommittee Update

As per NJDOE guidance, “All extracurricular activities must comply with applicable social distancing requirements and hygiene protocol. External community organizations that use school facilities must follow district guidance on health and safety protocols.”

- Athletics - NJSIAA has established a COVID-19 Medical Advisory Task Force (MATF) responsible for providing guidance to allow New Jersey high school student-athletes to return to athletics as soon and as safely as possible.

- MTPS phased return to safe extracurricular (athletic and co-curricular) practices and competitions.
  - NJSIAA Phase I Return to Play
  - NJSIAA Phase II Return to Play
The **NJDOE Road Back Plan** - **Continuity of Learning for All Students**

As per NJDOE guidelines, the district shall:

- **Ensure the delivery of special educations and related services to students with disabilities.**
- **Ensure student access to a device and internet connectivity.**
- **Build capacity of staff to deliver highly effective instruction in hybrid environments as well as preparing them to address any learning gaps that might prevent students from meeting grade-level New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).**
- **Assess English Learners’ levels of engagement and access in an in-person, virtual, or hybrid learning environment.**
- **Provide meaningful professional development for all staff related to SEL, virtual/hybrid instruction and health & safety protocols.**
- **Develop meaningful assessment strategies/expectations to identify learners’ unique needs and learning gaps, when present.**

School-based teams will analyze school/student data and support staff in addressing students’ academic and social-emotional needs, e.g. I&RS, CST, Learning Design Teams (LDTs), etc.
MTPS Summer Programs to Support Continuity of Learning...

- Special education - Extended School Year (ESY)
- Social Emotional Learning activities/meetings
- Tiered system of support - Summer Opportunity for Academic Readiness (SOAR)
- Summer Advanced Placement (AP) program
- Algebra 2 Jumpstart program
- Student/Teacher Book Clubs
MTPS Caregiver Survey

- Survey responses were reviewed to eliminate duplicates/erroneous submissions and have been analyzed to identify trends and community priorities (districtwide, by grade level, etc.).

- The MTPS Caregiver Survey was developed to gauge stakeholder attitudes about health & safety measures, the district’s virtual instruction model, returning students to in-person and on-campus instruction, and alternative scheduling models (in the event regular schedules are not feasible once the district implements NJDOE, CDC and Department of Health guidelines).

- The survey also asked participants to identify needs for technology/internet connectivity, transportation and childcare.
MTPS Caregiver Survey Data

- **Total PreK-12:** 6,661 recorded and verified submissions
  - [Total Data Summary](#)

- **PreK-Grade 5 Submissions:** 3,069 submissions
  - [Pre-K-Grade 5 Data Summary](#)

- **Grade 6-8 Submissions:** 1,557 submissions
  - [Grade 6-8 Data Summary](#)

- **Grade 9-12+ Submissions:** 2,035 submissions
  - [Grade 9-12+ Data Summary](#)
STAFF SURVEY

It should be noted that responses below were informed by the statement that expresses the conditions that would be met and the guidelines that would be followed when school opens in accordance with NJDOE guidelines.

- Results to survey question that asks if staff member will be able to return to school/work, in-person and on campus under the CDC Guidelines with no additional accommodation required:
  - NO additional accommodations will be required - 78%
  - ADDITIONAL accommodations will be required - 22%

- Results to survey question that asks if staff member will not be able to return to school/work, in-person and on campus under the CDC Guidelines even with additional accommodations:
  - ABLE to return in-person with/without need for additional accommodations - 90.5%
  - UNABLE to return in-person even with additional accommodations- 9.5%

Note: approximately 930 out of 1450 possible responses were recorded - (64%)
Next Steps & Timelines

- The NJDOE Roadback Plan states that districts, “Should strive to share their scheduling plans with staff, families, and students at least four weeks before the start of the school year in order to allow families to plan child care and work arrangements.”

- Multiple in-person and on-campus schedules as well as full virtual options are being vetted by central office and building administrators to determine which are most feasible and instructionally effective, given the restrictions presented by the NJDOE, CDC and NJ Department of Health guidelines.

- Final schedule options will be shared with parents in order for them to register their student for a model that either includes or does not include in-person instruction.

- The 2020-2021 District Calendar is being reviewed for possible revisions, e.g. need for additional Staff PD activities in September, as per NJDOE guidelines.

- The district’s reopening plan will be submitted to the Executive County Superintendent as required.