

# Newcomerstown Exempted Village School District



## **COVID -19 HANDBOOK** **2020-2021 School Year**

*Disclaimer: This is a fluid document, that may require revisions depending on situations that arise during the school year. This document was created cooperatively by members of the Newcomerstown Board of Education, Administration, Newcomerstown Teachers' Association and the Newcomerstown Classified Association.*

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2020-2021 School Year

# Guiding Principles for Reopening Schools



## Introduction

Recent events have challenged our community, state, nation, and world. In rising to meet those challenges, school districts in our seven-county region responded immediately. Fueled with the commitment to serve students, faculty, and staff, we used determination, flexibility, and creativity to identify and meet the needs of students and their families. To ensure the continuation of our mission in education, which extends far beyond ABCs, we need to plan now.

As we look to the upcoming school year, the health and safety of our students, staff, and families are of utmost importance. When the 2020-2021 school year begins in our districts, school will look much different than in previous years due to new health and safety measures. Each district will develop plans to reopen schools based on guidance from public health officials and state agencies. There is no "one-size-fits-all" solution for this work, and districts will plan with the realization that guidelines are "subject to change." The plans will be updated as the situation and guidance evolves from our local, state, and federal leaders.

Notably, district plans will focus intensely on academic instruction to enhance student performance, addressing the specific needs of every student. At the same time, districts also will endeavor to address the social, emotional, and physical needs of all who learn and work within our system.

*July 2, 2020 - MVESC Member School Districts*



# Considerations for Reopening Buildings

## Health-Safety

- Continue to consider guidance from the Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Education, Ohio High School Athletic Association, and our local health departments.

## Educational-Learning Possibilities

- Provide in-person instruction for all attending students as much as possible.
- Provide remote learning options for at-home situations.
- Prepare to return to remote learning at any time due to COVID-19.

## Social Emotional

- Support social learning and interaction to the fullest extent even while we are physically distancing.

## Operations

- Resources
- Facilities
- Transportation
- Child Nutrition
- Student Activities
- Family Needs
- Technology

## Health-Safety Considerations



We will continue to consider guidance from the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), Ohio Department of Education (ODE), Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA), and our local health departments on items including but not limited to:

- Safety and social distancing
- Restrooms
- Drinking fountains
- Books, devices, supplies
- Classroom spacing
- Cleaning protocols
- Clinic
- Protocol for suspected/confirmed COVID-19 cases
- Student and staff safety
- Student and staff safety drills
- Transportation
- Visitors



# Educational- Learning Possibilities



When schools resume in the fall, each district will reopen using learning options that are based on their specific community needs and available resources. Those choices may come from the options you see below and could include some, all, or a combination of these possibilities. Check with your local district to confirm their educational plans for reopening.

## Provide face-to-face/in-person instruction

- In-person instruction
- Maximize learning spaces
- Modified school schedules could include:
  - Smaller groups of students (i.e., one group on Monday/Wednesday, the other group on Tuesday/Thursday with both groups alternating every other Friday).
  - Half-day schedule (i.e., half the students attend class in the morning while the other half attends in the afternoon).
  - Stagger schedules (i.e., staggered start and end times within a day, staggered lunch schedules)
  - Block scheduling at the high-school level to reduce passing periods and possible points of contact in each classroom.
  - All students with safety protocols in place.

## Provide remote learning options based on House Bill 164 requirements.

- Remote learning should continuously support whole-child success and meaningful academic opportunities, while protecting the health and safety of students, parents, caregivers, and educators.
- Each student experiences a learning opportunity that follows a master schedule that is supported by an educator who is in a different location.
- An educator might deliver instruction by using a device and checking in with students regularly.
- Remote learning also could include video or audio instruction delivered online or by television, video, telephone, or another method that relies on computer or communications technology.
- Remote learning also could include the use of printed, paper-based materials that incorporate assignments that engage and seek feedback from students.
- Powerful remote learning also could occur through thoughtful, offline lessons that encourage students to explore the natural world and engage in interdisciplinary and artistic hands-on learning.
- All staff members are prepared to return to remote learning if COVID-19 outbreaks increase dramatically.



## Social-Emotional Considerations



### Attending to the social emotional well-being of our students will be a top priority as they return to school

District and school staff are committed to supporting students' social emotional wellness and offering resources to ensure students transition back to school smoothly. Support may include social emotional learning, building relationships, community-building activities, and increased access to mental health/wellness services. Families and schools will need to work together to monitor how students are feeling and assess their individual needs to provide the support they need during these challenging times.

## Operational Considerations



### Resources

- Use current budgets and staff to the fullest extent while serving the needs of all students.
- Allocate CARES funding to fill budget gaps.
- Keep disruptions to building assignments to a minimum while ensuring safety protocols.
- Maintain commitment to fiscal responsibility.

### Facilities

- Continue to consider the guidelines set forth by ODH, ODE, and our local health departments to ensure safety and cleaning protocols.

### Transportation

- Continue to consider guidance set forth by ODH, ODE, and our local health departments to provide the fullest extent of transportation possible with our buses.
  - This may impact capacity and could require a return to state-minimum busing in some districts.

### Student Activities

- Provide extracurricular activities, such as sports, clubs, etc., as much as possible while considering guidance from ODH, ODE, OHSAA, and our local health departments.

### Family Needs

- Understand that families need to know the structure of school for the fall ASAP to give them time to plan accordingly.
- Recognize that district plans must meet the needs of all children.

# Where Do We Go From Here?



## Next Steps

The Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center, its 18 member school districts, and the local health departments are committed to ensuring the health and safety of all students and staff. Our health department will continue to closely monitor the rates of infection in our community.

As public health guidelines change, we will work with our students and families to keep our children and employees safe as we transition to our new approach to educating the students of Newcomerstown Exempted Village Schools. Communicating our plans, once finalized and approved by our board of education, is a top priority to help our families prepare for the fall.

Thank you for being an active partner with Newcomerstown Exempted Village Schools during these challenging times!

*"Success is a journey, not a destination.  
It requires effort, vigilance, and reevaluation."  
~ Mark Twain*

*July 2, 2020 - Plans will be modified as public health guidelines are updated.*

## OVERVIEW of Learning Options for Students:

*\*\*Based on the County Health Dept. Issued COVID-19 Conditions\*\**

While it is our hope that school be as normal as possible for our students, we do have to prepare multiple learning options for our students. Learning options will follow state and local recommendations as listed in detail on page 4. **We will begin the 2020-2021 School year following the GREEN format.**

### LEARNING OPTIONS ARE:

- A. FACE to FACE Learning (in school buildings) *\*see formats below*
- B. Remote Learning (at home)

Face to Face Learning will follow one of two formats:

- GREEN - School will be 5 days a week (4 Days face to face and 1 Digital Day)
  - Monday will be ALL DIGITAL, students will remain at home for learning.
- YELLOW - Blended Schooling will take place (A/B Groups, 2 Days Per Week)
  - Monday will remain an ALL DIGITAL learning day.
  - Tuesday/Wednesday will be group A (face to face)
  - Thursday/Friday will be group B (face to face)

IF District Conditions constitute a RED format, Face to Face Learning will be suspended:

- RED - Remote Learning (Teachers report to work, students do NOT report to school)

### **MASK/FACIAL COVERING POLICY**

- ❑ All students will need to have a face covering/shield/mask on person.
- ❑ Students in grades PreK through 5 will be recommended to wear a face covering/shield/mask. They are required to have a face covering/shield/mask on person. We will be educating students on when and where to wear a face covering/shield/mask. We will be practicing wearing a face covering/shield/mask during school day transitions such as going to lunch, recess and restroom unless they are unable to do so for health or developmental reasons.
- ❑ Students in grades 6 through 12 will be required to wear a face covering/shield/mask entering the building, moving from class to class, going to the cafeteria, restroom, recess, etc. and leaving the building (any transitions) unless they are unable to do so for health or developmental reasons.
- ❑ Students in grades 6 through 12 will be required to wear a mask in the classroom in instances where six feet social distancing is not feasible. We will incorporate mask breaks in the classroom for students.
- ❑ All students will need to have a documented medical exemption for masks. **A face shield will be required.**

- Face covering/shields/mask guidelines were in consultation with the Health Department to meet the safety of our students, staff and community.

### **SANITATION EFFORTS:**

- Sanitation
  - Desks will be sanitized between each class session where new students enter the room.
  - Each room will be disinfected at the end of each school day by custodial staff.
- Multiple Hand-Sanitizer stations will be located throughout each building.
- Handwashing will be encouraged multiple times throughout the day for students and staff.
- High traffic areas:
  - Sanitized throughout the school day by school staff.
  - Disinfected after each school day by custodial staff.
- Playgrounds:
  - After every recess equipment will be wiped down.
- School buses:
  - Sanitized after each route (Morning & Afternoon).

### **Communications when a staff member/student has been diagnosed with a COVID-19 positive case**

- The health department will notify the district of positive cases as well as any contact tracing needs.
- The health department will be providing guidance on a case by case basis. Please understand that any and all of the information below is subject to change by the Health Department and/or CDC.
- Staff notification will follow as appropriate.
- The school district will cooperate with the Health Department's work in contact tracing (anyone within 6 feet of the positive case for longer than 15 minutes).

- ❑ A 14-day quarantine will be required of any staff member/student who tests positive with COVID-19. The staff member/student will need to provide evidence of a negative test prior to their return AND be symptom free for at least 72 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- ❑ Exemption from school will also include anyone who lives in the same residence as a person who has tested positive or is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 therefore they would not be able to attend school during this time if the family is placed under quarantine.
- ❑ Temperatures will be taken upon return. If a staff/student tests positive for COVID-19, they and their families will be quarantined for 14 days by the Health Department. The Health Department will perform all contact tracing.

**Staff/Student health issues that are NOT diagnosed as COVID 19**

- ❑ If symptoms of COVID-19 were present but not confirmed with a test, staff/students may return only after the following conditions are met: a negative documented test and symptom free for 72 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- ❑ To return to school the child must be transported to school by the parent and must be assessed by the school nurse or building principal.

**Staff/Students who become ill at school**

- ❑ Students who show symptoms of a possible COVID-19 case will be supervised in a separate room.
- ❑ Students WILL BE REQUIRED TO WEAR A MASK if showing symptoms/in isolation.
- ❑ Quarantined persons are required to remain home for 14 days from date of contact with a positive case.
- ❑ If a symptomatic person is isolated with a staff member and the symptomatic person tests positive, the staff member will be placed in quarantine for 14 days.
- ❑ Staff will be sent home by administration if exhibiting symptoms of illness.
- ❑ See Student Illness Form on Page 17.
- ❑ **You will be required to provide a minimum of 3 emergency contacts who are available during the school day for phone calls in regards to your child and their needs.**

## REMOTE LEARNING OPTION

- ❑ NEVSD will offer Remote Learning for parents who do not wish to send their child to school.
- ❑ **NOTICE:** Remote learning option requires that, if at any point in the year, you decide to return to FACE to FACE instruction, **you will not be permitted to return to Remote Learning.**
  - ❑ *If unforeseen circumstances arise, those will be handled on a case-by-case basis, by school administrator(s).*
- ❑ *NEVSD Administration and staff will make every effort to create a digital option for the majority of courses offered.*
  - ❑ *Understanding that some higher level courses such as Spanish I, Advanced Sciences, Mathematics, and English Language Arts may require students to be in the physical buildings.*
- ❑ *Digital Students will be given a “class schedule” and will be expected to:*
  - ❑ *Log-In/Communicate with the instructor daily.*
    - ❑ *This will count as “attendance” for the class/school day.*
  - ❑ *Follow all class requirements and deadlines for academic work.*
- ❑ *Students will be assigned letter grades for classwork completed on-line.*
  - ❑ *As much as possible, academic content will be parallel to in-class content, making for a smooth transition back to traditional school.*

## **DIGITAL DISCIPLINE**

*\*\*In an effort to maintain a safe learning environment, NEVSD will be requiring all parents requesting digital classes, to agree to the following “Digital Discipline Code of Conduct\*\**

*(See Digital Conduct Form)*

- Any disruption to the digital academic setting may result in the assignment of the following consequences, whether the offense is verbal, written, or implied:
  - Offense #1 - Warning and Phone Contact w/ Parents by Teaching staff.*
  - Offense #2 - Denial of On-Line class access for 1-3 days or sessions.*
  - Offense #3 - Denial of On-Line class access for 3-5 days or sessions.*
  - Offense #4 - Denial of On-Line class access for 5-10 days*
  - Offense #5 - Removal of On-Line access for the remainder of the grade term, with academic grading frozen from the day of the last consequence.*
  
- Building Administration reserves the right to skip the levels of consequences based on the severity of the infraction.*
  
- All Physical school code of conduct language applies.*

## **Transportation**

- Newcomerstown Ex. Village School District students who use school transportation, WILL BE REQUIRED to wear a face covering/mask.
  - Refusal to cooperate with District guidelines, will result in the refusal of transportation.**
- NEVSD will make every attempt to:
  - Seat siblings or those in the same household together.
  - Maintain the most distance possible during transportation.
  - Seating charts will be required. (contact tracing)
  - In the event State policies require school districts to use alternative schedules the district may adopt minimum requirements for transportation to reduce the number of students who are eligible for school district transportation.

### **Food Service**

*\*\* All Schools will offer food service.*

*Logistics will be determined by each school in compliance with Health Department based on:*

- GREEN**- Food service as normal from the cafeteria (physical distancing apply in cafeterias, or other designated eating areas.)
  - No self-service
  - Individual condiments
  
- YELLOW** - Food service as below
  - 50% capacity/occupancy of the school cafeteria
  - No self-service
  - Individual condiments

- ❑ **RED** -Food Service will be pick up and delivery
  
- ❑ Students will be asked to maintain physical distancing while in the cafeteria.
  - ❑ Lunch Lines will be marked for proper distancing
  - ❑ Table seating will be marked for best possible distancing.

### **Visitors to School**

- ❑ Visitors are generally discouraged from being in school district facilities. If your child is sent home, you will buzz in and wait outside for your child to be brought to you.
- ❑ Discipline Hearings / Complaint Visits may be requested to be held at:
  - ❑ Board of Education Offices - 702 S. River Street, Newcomerstown.

### RECESS (PK-5)

- ❑ N.E.V.S.D. will make every effort to maintain consistency with other safety procedures.
- ❑ This may mean that the district may limit student access to certain pieces of playground equipment and restrict activities that are “high touch” and difficult to clean or maintain social distancing.
- ❑ Schools will work toward “structured” recess activities such as nature walks that limit students’ physical contact with others.
- ❑ Students will wash/sanitize their hands after recess.

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## REMOTE LEARNING OPTION FORM

To better serve our school community during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Newcomerstown Exempted Village School District will be offering Educational Options for students.

**Option A:** Face to Face Learning (in school buildings) **OR** **Option B:** Remote Learning (at home)

If you are choosing **Option B: Remote Learning**, please fill out the bottom portion of this form and return it to your child's school by August 1st, 2020.

**ONLY RETURN THIS DOCUMENT IF YOU ARE CHOOSING OPTION B: REMOTE LEARNING**

I am selecting **Option B: Remote Learning** (DIGITAL CLASS AT HOME) for my child.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Entering Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School Building: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2020

(If option "B" is selected, you are agreeing with the terms and conditions outlined.)

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### TRANSPORTATION OPT OUT FORM

**(This form is only for parents who are eligible for Newcomerstown Schools' Bus Services)**

The Newcomerstown Transportation department is committed to providing safe transportation for all students. We will make every effort to maximize seating space when possible.

As stated in our COVID handbook, Newcomerstown Exempted Village School District students who use school transportation, **WILL BE REQUIRED** to wear a face covering/mask.

In an effort to gain accurate information regarding bus seating, we ask parents of children who ride a school bus to fill out the form below if you are choosing **NOT** to allow your child to ride a school bus.

If you are choosing **NOT** to utilize Newcomerstown Bus Services, please fill out the bottom portion of this form and return it to your child's school by August 1, 2020.

My child will **NOT** be riding the school bus for the 2020/21 school year. I understand that I will be responsible for transporting my child to and from school.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Entering Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School Building: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2020

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## **STUDENT ILLNESS FORM**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your student was seen in the office today for: \_\_\_\_\_.

Temperature at school: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

According to school policy your student should not return until at least: \_\_\_\_\_ **AND** is symptom/fever free for \_\_\_\_\_ hours without medications. A fever is defined as a temperature 100.0 or greater.

OR. Your child will be required to have a doctor’s note to release you back to school.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Symptom Checklist for Sick Students

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Fever over 100.0

\_\_\_\_\_ Cough

\_\_\_\_\_ Sore Throat

\_\_\_\_\_ Shortness of breath

\_\_\_\_\_ Fever

\_\_\_\_\_ Chills/Shaking with chills

\_\_\_\_\_ Muscle Pain

\_\_\_\_\_ New loss of taste/smell

\_\_\_\_\_ Headaches

**If any of these symptoms are marked, the child will need to be masked and placed in the isolation room. Their guardian will be notified of immediate need for pick up from school.**

### **REMOTE LEARNING CHECKLIST**

- There will be (2) options for learning offered:
  - Face to face instruction as outlined to parents.
  - Remote Learning, following the structure released to students, parents and community.
  - The N.E.V.S.D. will strive to maintain educational continuity between physical classrooms and digital classrooms, as stated in the COVID-19 Handbook. **(HB 164 Requirements)**
- Instructional needs - will be met via keeping record of mastering Essential Standards/Content Learning standards for students.
  - These standards were devised from Ohio Learning Standards, when applicable.
  - Instructional plans will be made public to parents prior to the start of the school year, via a COVID-19 Handbook.
    - This plan will be make available on the Board of Education Website and handed to parents directly at the begining of the school year.
- Methods for determining competency and granting credit and promoting students to higher grade levels:
  - All expectations and requirements for promotion of grade levels, will follow Newcomerstown Exempted Village School District Board Policy for education promotion.
- School Attendance:
  - Students will be required to “log in” and participate in all district required educational sessions.
  - Daily Attendance will be taken at the opening of the first day.
  - This includes class session attendance, when applicable.
  - NEVSD will continue to follow the requirements set forth in HB 410.
- Student progress will be monitored daily and weekly by individual teachers and administration.
- Professional Development opportunities will be offered by the NEVSD.
  - PD opportunities will be geared towards High Quality Intruction and the betterment of on-line learning opportunities for Newcomerstown Students.
- NEVSD will be creating schedules for students in both remote learning and physicial learning.
  - K-5 schedules and 6-12 scheduling may differ.