

# **Hoboken Charter School Restart and Recovery Plan**

Approved by the HCS Board of Trustees on July 21, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted every aspect of our lives. As we look to the future and plan for students to return to schools in-person this fall, we must recognize and prepare for the ways the virus and necessary public health response has changed and will change the way students learn. This Restart and Recovery Plan provides educators and administrators with the information necessary to ensure that our schools reopen safely and are prepared to accommodate students' unique needs during this unprecedented time.

The Plan presents guidance related to four key subject areas:

1. Conditions for Learning
2. Leadership and Planning
3. Policy and Funding
4. Continuity of Learning

- 1. Conditions for Learning** - Conditions for learning must support students' and educators' basic physical safety needs, but also the social and emotional and environmental factors that can impact educators' capacity to teach and students' capacity to learn.

Critical Areas of Operation explored in this plan include:

- General Health and Safety Guidelines
- Scheduling
- Staffing
- Athletics

**General Health and Safety Guidelines** – In all stages and phases of pandemic response and recovery, HCS will comply with Center for Disease Control (CDC), state, and local guidelines. HCS will also provide reasonable accommodations for staff and students at higher risk for severe illness and promote behaviors that reduce spread, such as physical distancing, frequent hand washing, and the use of face coverings.

In all stages and phases of pandemic response and recovery, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends actions, which schools and districts should incorporate into reopening plans:

- Establishing and maintaining communication with local and state authorities to determine current mitigation levels in your community
- Protecting and supporting staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness
- Following CDC's Guidance for Schools and Childcare Programs

HCS will promote behaviors that reduce spread such as the following:

- Stay home when appropriate
  - Attendance and sick policies are being reviewed to support families and faculty and staff in making responsible decisions around staying home when sick or potentially exposed to COVID-19.
  - Any student exhibiting signs of sickness during the school day will be reported to the school nurse to be screened.
  - Families returning to New Jersey from other states should plan to quarantine if coming from a location that is on the NJ's list of states requiring a mandatory quarantine. This is required before the start of school and for during the school year, or until no longer required by NJ or the City of Hoboken.
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
  - The school nurse will continue to lead trainings with faculty and staff, students and families around best practices in these areas.
    - Students should wash hands for at least 20 seconds at regular intervals, including before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing.
      - Classrooms will build in the practice of handwashing throughout the day, during transition times
  - Hands-free hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) will be set up around entrance/egress points, throughout the building and at shared contact points (e.g. elevator, handrails, etc.).
  - Hands-free soap dispensers will be placed in bathrooms.
- Interactions between people will be limited as much as possible.
  - Visitors will be limited to those who are essential and when so, they must be masked.
  - Parent meetings, board meetings, conferences and open houses will be held virtually.
  - Interactions of people outside a designated cohort will be limited- mixed grade and whole class experiences will be remote as much as possible.
  - Teachers and staff will travel to homerooms when possible.

- There will be no field trips at this time.
  - Non-essential interactions between students and staff throughout the school day will be limited.
- Face coverings
  - School staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under two years of age. Face coverings will be worn in the building and in waiting for entry to the building. Extras will be kept on hand in the case that a staff member or visitor forgets to bring one. Any staff member or visitor refusing one absent medical exemption will be denied entrance to the school building.
  - Students are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the student's health. Face coverings will be worn in the building and in waiting for entry to the building. Extras will be kept on hand in the case that a student, staff member or visitor forgets to bring one. Any staff member or student refusing one absent medical exemption will be denied entrance to the school building.
- Physical Distancing
  - HCS will require physical distancing to the maximum extent possible. When physical distancing is difficult or impossible, HCS will work to use physical barriers such as plexiglass as much as possible to provide additional protection.
- Signage
  - Signs demarking six feet, encouraging hand and respiratory hygiene and directing traffic in one direction will be posted throughout and upon entrance to the school.
- Shared materials
  - Use of shared objects will be limited when possible or cleaned between use. Students will be given advance notice of materials to bring for class each day and each student will be assigned a chromebook to take to and from school daily.
  - Students' belongings will be separated from others' belongings.
- Temperature Checks
  - Staff and students will have a temperature check upon arrival to school. Any temperature of 100 degrees or higher will result in the staff member being sent home and a student to be sent to an isolation space, ideally outside, under the supervision of an adult in PPE until the caretaker can pick up the child. The student will also wear PPE. The parent will be directed to come immediately.

- Trainings with members of the community around prevention
  - The School Nurse will lead students, faculty, staff and families in training around Covid-19 prevention and screening protocols.

Reasonable accommodations should be provided for individuals that the Centers for Disease Control identifies as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including older adults (aged 65 years and older) and individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions, which may include:

- Chronic lung disease or asthma (moderate to severe)
- Serious heart conditions
- Immunocompromised
- Severe obesity (body mass index, or BMI, of 40 or higher)
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- Liver disease
- Medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- Students with complex disabilities with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- Students who require accommodations under a Plan in accordance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan).

## **Physical Space**

Implementing physical distancing practices in all instructional and non-instructional spaces is critical to ensuring the health and safety of students and staff. To that end, student seating in classrooms and other spaces will be separated by at least six feet to the maximum extent practicable, and where such physical distancing is not feasible or difficult to maintain with our space, protective measures such as physical barriers between students and the arrangement of seating will be used such that all individuals face the same direction to help reduce transmission. Plexiglass dividers will be used at student tables that do not allow for physical distancing as well as at teacher desks/workstations to allow for conferencing and between sinks in shared bathrooms when more than one student will be in the bathroom at once.

HCS will ensure indoor facilities have adequate ventilation, including operational heating, and ventilation systems where appropriate. Recirculated has a fresh air component. Air conditioning (A/C) will be used and in the case that the A/C is not operational, windows will be open. Filters for A/C units will be maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations.

HCS will prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) throughout the buildings, at entrance/egress points and by shared touch points.

### **Transportation**

HCS does not provide transportation to students and does not intend to plan field trips for the school year at this point.

### **Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas**

- HCS will establish the process and location for student and staff health screenings and communicate this information with all stakeholders.
- Signage and tape will provide physical guides to help ensure that staff and students remain at least six feet apart upon arrival to the buildings and within the buildings.
- Multiple entrances and exits will be used for arrival and dismissal when possible.
- Students will be directed to their classrooms immediately with staggered locker time if necessary. Otherwise, lockers will not be used.
- Arrival and dismissal times will be staggered and students will be expected to practice physical distancing upon arrival and dismissal outside the school building as well. Release time from classrooms will be staggered as well to allow for physical distancing.
- One-way routes will be used in hallways when possible.
- Physical distancing will be maintained in hallways and common areas.
- Staggered dismissal will support physical distancing.

### **Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms**

- HCS will screen students and employees for symptoms of and history of exposure to COVID-19 before entrance to the school building daily. This will consist of a temperature check. Health checks will be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. Results will be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed. Attention will be given to students with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students.
  - Students and employees may be asked to leave or not come into school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19, based on CDC guidance, that is not otherwise explained:
    - A fever of 100° F or greater
    - Cough
    - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Fatigue
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. Examples of screening methods in CDC's supplemental Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open as a guide for screening students and CDC's General Business FAQs for screening staff. The school will follow Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting. The symptomatic person and supervisor will be provided with PPE. Special consideration will be given to protection for staff members, such as school nurses, custodians, who will be in close contact with students or will handle waste materials. Gowns, face shields, masks, gloves and N95 masks will be available for them.

If HCS becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in one of our school facilities tests positive for COVID-19, a member of the HCS administration will immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality. The school would then follow guidance from the Department of Health regarding communication, cleaning, contact tracing and possible closure. HCS will follow NJ and CDC recommendations when deciding how long those who are exposed to COVID-19 will have to stay home and the implications on sanitizing the facility and determining who else in the school community may need to quarantine.

### **Contact Tracing**

Contact tracing is the process used to identify those who have come into contact with people who have tested positive for many contagious diseases, including COVID-19. It is a long-standing practice and is an integral function of local health departments. All HCS administrators, our school safety specialist, guidance counselor, nurse and any other staff deemed appropriate by the school will be provided with information regarding the role of contact tracing in keeping school communities safe from the spread of contagious disease. HCS will collaborate with the local health department and engage our school nurse to develop contact tracing policies and procedures, as well as educate the broader school community on the importance of contact

tracing. HCS's school safety specialist was trained in COVID-19 Contact Tracing this summer via Johns Hopkins University.

Upon notification that a resident has tested positive for COVID-19, the local health department will call to determine close contacts to whom they may have spread the virus, where close contact is defined as being within six feet for a period of at least 10 minutes. Trained professionals from the community will then get in touch with those close contacts to recommend next steps, such as self-quarantining, and to provide critical education and support in risk mitigation strategies.

- Methods to assist in contact tracing include:
  - records of groups/cohorts, assigned staff, and daily attendance;
  - continuous monitoring of symptoms;
  - readmittance policies consistent with Department of Health guidance and information for schools and Department of Health/Communicable Disease Service's Quick Reference Guidance on Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Home Isolation for Persons Diagnosed with COVID-19.

### **Facilities Cleaning Practices**

HCS will continue to adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise. HCS has developed a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfecting, especially of frequently touched surfaces and objects and between the use by different students and staff. Disinfecting products will be EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 and used according to manufacturer instructions.

Examples of frequently touched areas include:

- Classroom desks and chairs
- Door handles and push bars
- Handrails
- Bathrooms
- Light switches
- Handles on equipment
- Buttons on elevators
- Shared equipment and furniture
- Drinking fountains
- Shared classroom materials

Bathrooms will be sanitized daily and between use as much as possible. Teachers will only send one student to the bathroom at a time and students will be required to socially distance in line for the bathroom.

Doors will be propped to avoid touching handles when it would not disrupt privacy.

Physical barriers, such as plastic flexible screens, will be mounted between bathroom sinks if students cannot be at six feet apart in the bathroom.

Drinking fountains will be cleaned and sanitized regularly but staff and students will be encouraged to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains. Water coolers will be removed from the classrooms.

EPA-registered disposable wipes will be handed to each student daily to teachers and staff so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down before use.

Cleaning and disinfecting the school building after a person has been identified as Covid-19 positive:

- HCS may need to implement short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread of an infected person who has been in one of our school buildings. If this happens, CDC recommends the following procedures:
  - Close-up areas used by a sick person and do not use before cleaning and disinfection. Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible.
  - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
  - Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

## **Meals**

- Students will eat in their classrooms. A Grab and Go food program would be used with DoA approval if on am/pm schedule. Outside lunch allowances for grades 7 and up will need to be reviewed.
- Staff will ensure that students are not sharing food.
- Staff will encourage proper hand-washing before and after eating meals.
- Food staff must wash their hands immediately after removing gloves and after directly handling used food service items.



### **Recess/Physical Education**

- Classes will be held outside when possible, when not remote, with physical distancing practices enforced. There will be no contact sports.
- HCS will complete an inventory of outdoor spaces and mark off areas to remind students of separation between students where possible.
- Staff will disinfect equipment between uses in the case that there is shared equipment and students will sanitize hands upon return to the building.
- Recess will be staggered by groups when occurring during the pandemic.

### **Extracurricular Activities and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours**

- All extracurricular activities must comply with applicable physical distancing requirements and hygiene protocol.
- We will not allow outside agencies or groups (Girl Scouts, etc.) to use our building at this time to limit exposure.
- HCS will maximize the use of technology in online resources to continue some extracurricular activities without additional person-to-person contact.
- Sports teams will comply with regulations set by the state as to practices and games. If allowed, practices will be outside with no games until further notice.

In addition to taking steps to protect students' and educators' physical health, HCS is committed to the overall social and emotional well-being of all its members of its community.

### **Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Climate and Culture**

Social emotional learning (SEL) will be critical in re-engaging students, supporting adults, rebuilding relationships, and creating a foundation for academic learning. To this end, HCS is thoughtfully planning around the well-being of educators so it can support the social and emotional well-being and learning needs of their students, acknowledge and prepare for the potential trauma that staff and students have faced during the COVID-19 school closures, and recognize and empower educators' and staff's strengths. A committee of stakeholders has been working to support initiatives to support SEL and School Climate and Culture.

### **Educator Well-Being**

It is important that leaders thoughtfully plan for how to best support the well-being of educators. As educators' social-emotional state improves, they will be better able to support the social

emotional well-being and learning needs of their students. HCS will account for the well-being of its educators and staff as we develop our reopening plans.

- HCS will provide time and space for individuals to process traumatic events, re-establish connections with each other, and receive support that promotes their healing.
- HCS will prioritize educator self care and wellness.
- HCS will support educators to access mental and behavioral resources and encourage them to utilize these services.
- HCS will create opportunities for staff to regularly practice and reflect on their social and emotional competencies.

### **Trauma-Informed Social Emotional Learning**

HCS acknowledged the potential trauma that staff and students have faced during the covid-19 school closures. The full impact of the pandemic in the collateral consequences from isolation, fear, and economic hardship have yet to be fully realized. In addition, students and staff returning for the 2020-2021 school year will be faced with new and intimidating routines and circumstances. We must address these challenges head-on to ensure that social and emotional learning are infused into everyday school life.

- HCS will make deliberate efforts to communicate the importance of SEL and how it relates to student success at HCS to students and families.
- HCS staff will facilitate opportunities for connection and reflection among students, families and staff.
- HCS will establish systems that promote supportive staff:student relationships to ensure that all students have at least one caring staff member who checks in regularly with them and their family.
- HCS will provide professional development to support educators in the following:
  - Integration of SEL in their teaching, including the skills to foster a positive learning environment and techniques for embedding SEL into instruction
  - Understanding and utilization of trauma-informed practices.
  - Protocol for identifying and supporting students who may be experiencing social emotional, behavioral, and mental health challenges.
- HCS will be proactive in preparing access to mental health and trauma supports for adults and students, which may include establishing partnerships with outside entities and agencies.

### **School Culture and Climate**

Creating a positive school climate and culture will improve the conditions for learning for all students in any of the in-person, hybrid, or virtual instructional models. To optimize the learning process, students and staff need to feel cared for, re-engaged, and acclimated to the school community, so schools can deliver instructions most effectively. In order to improve School culture and climate, HCS will:

- Prioritize the health and emotional well-being of its staff and students above all else;
- Assess school climate to identify vulnerabilities and plan to implement evidence-based strategies to identify address identified needs; and
- Plan to provide and sustain instruction on social norms, relationship-building, and behavioral expectations beginning at the start of the school year.

### **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**

MTSS is a systematic approach to prevention, intervention, and enrichment in grades K-12 for academics and behavior that offers educators and families a mechanism to identify individual students who need extra support. Hoboken Charter School's Multi Tiered System of Supports will continue to provide academic, social and emotional assistance to all students who demonstrate a need for support. A comprehensive universal screening process will be administered in person, and/or remotely via a combination of web-based assessments and teacher administered assessments that measure student's current levels of functioning across academic and social/emotional domains. These screeners and assessments will identify students who need to recoup skills from the 2019-2020 school year. Academic support teachers, special education teachers, the school social worker and the school's behaviorist will provide instruction across all three tiers through a hybrid model to individuals or small groups of students.

### **Wraparound Supports**

Wraparound services differ from traditional school-based services in their comprehensive approach to addressing the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students with interventions both inside and outside of the school environment.

HCS will prioritize supporting the mental health of its community members and the school social worker will work to monitor the mental health of HCS students, provide universal supports for all students and families, share information with parents and educators regarding how to identify when a student may be struggling with a mental health issue, establish more intensive supports for students who are identified as at-risk for mental health and/or substance abuse and connecting members of our student community with individualized intensive support via agencies. Family engagement will be sought via surveys and opportunities to engage in committees.

- 2. Leadership and Planning** - Adjusting the school environment to ensure the health and safety of students and staff takes a collaborative approach. HCS has created committees to support this work as part of a greater Restart Team.

A Pandemic Response Team has been created to guide the creation of Hoboken Charter School's reopening plan, particularly around health and safety measures, and to provide safety and crisis leadership. The team consists of stakeholders across the school divisions including several parents who work in the medical profession (nurses, nurse practitioners and physicians). The team is responsible for the following:

- Providing feedback and expertise around the reopening plan in particular around health and safety measures
- Adjusting or amending school health and safety protocols
- Reviewing school level data regarding health and safety measures and the presence of COVID-19 and reporting accordingly.
- Developing and implementing procedures to foster and maintain safe and supportive school climates as necessitated by the challenges posed by COVID-19.
- Providing necessary communications to the school community.
- Creating pathways for community, family and student voices to continuously inform the team's decision-making.

Additionally, HCS has formed a Social-Emotional and Community Well-Being Committee. The team consists of stakeholders across the school divisions and includes the School Safety and Climate Team members. The team has been tasked with planning around the following areas:

- General community building- *How do we maintain a sense of a k-12 school community despite distance/isolation? What activities/experiences would support the HCS community? How do we find opportunities to amplify our mission during this time?*
- Educator well-being - *How can we support the social/emotional needs of educators and staff members during this time?*
- Social-emotional learning experiences - *What activities, lessons, or experiences should students have to promote positive social-emotional connections with their peers and teachers during this time?*
- Trauma-informed learning - *How can we support students experiencing negative thoughts/emotions through teaching practices and school support systems?*
- Covid-related communication - *How can we streamline communication around covid-related issues between all school stakeholders?*

## **Scheduling**

The governor and the NJDOE announced that public school reopening plans must account for resuming in-person instruction in some capacity. HCS has conducted a 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 as stakeholder input on the needs of our community members. HCS has made modifications to its attendance policy and schedules for the 2020-2021 result as a result.

HCS will begin implementing in-person and hybrid learning models in September but is also prepared to resume strictly virtual learning models if circumstances change to necessitate only remote learning. HCS is striving to share its schedule and plans with staff, families and students at least four weeks before the start of the school year to allow families to plan child care and work arrangements.

Students are expected to have their traditional 180 days of school. Hours of instructional time will not be defined as time spent in front of a teacher or in front of a screen, but rather engaged in standards-based learning under the guidance and direction of a teacher. The following core principles lead this work:

- Lead with the health safety and wellness of students and staff at the top priority.
- Maintain the continuity of learning.
- Facilitate equity and ease of access to communications and resources.
- Accommodate the needs and diverse circumstances of all learners.
- Incorporate educators, students, parents and board members and other community members in the local community in planning.
- Consider the unique needs of special education and ELL students as well as medically fragile staff.

HCS will accommodate educators who are teaching both in person, hybrid, and virtual learning in a way that allows all students to meet the required instructional hours for the day, which may include remote students completing independent work while other students receive instruction. Scheduling will support a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction which allows for contact time between educators and their students, as well as time for students to engage with their peers.

HCS will identify cohorts of students to keep together as much as possible and will limit mixing groups as much as possible with teachers traveling as much as possible to classrooms.

### **Staffing**

HCS will continue to clearly communicate with teachers regarding expectations and support for student learning. HCS will 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.

## **Athletics**

The New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (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. The NJSIAA is also convening a Sports Advisory Task Force that will be comprised of athletic directors from across the State and that will be charged with reviewing State and local health guidelines, as well as NJDOE guidance, regarding the 2020-2021 school year to determine, among other things, the extent to which changes may be needed for each interscholastic sports season. HCS will keep students and families abreast of developments that impact our student athletes.

### **3. Policy and Funding**

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a variety of fiscal challenges related to the delivery of instruction and related services to students. Readyng facilities, purchasing supplies and feeding students will look drastically different in the upcoming school year than in past years. Policy and funding considerations include:

**Purchasing** – HCS has begun to purchase items not needed in the past (e.g., personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, thermometers, etc.) and is cognizant that we may experience increased demand for previously purchased goods and services. HCS will collaborate, when possible, to create new arrangements that will allow us to purchase items at a lower cost.

**Use of Reserve Accounts, Transfers, and Cashflow** – To the greatest extent possible, HCS will consider making expenditures from various accounts or over budgeted line items to meet unanticipated costs and to manage its cash flow.

**Costs and Contracting** – HCS will explore ways to procure technology and connectivity services via cooperative contracts available from the State of New Jersey, New Jersey School Boards Association, County Cooperative Contracts, and County Educational Services Commissions.

Additionally, HCS has applied for funds via Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund to support areas impacted by COVID-19. These funds may be used for allowable costs incurred starting March 13, 2020 and must be obligated no later than September 30, 2022. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the Public Assistance program, which reimburses 75 percent of eligible expenses that are a direct result of the declared emergency (in this case, the COVID-19 outbreak). HCS will apply for assistance to support the costs of reopening safely.

## **State School Aid**

In the wake of the COVID-19 public health emergency, State revenues have declined precipitously. This revenue loss necessitated modifying the State school aid proposal for the upcoming school year that had been released on February 27, 2020, but the total amount appropriated for K-12 State aid is essentially unchanged from the 2019-2020 school year. While HCS has been advised to 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, 2020 and the FY21 State budget, which must be adopted by September 30, 2020. The NJDOE will provide more detailed accounting guidance after the appropriations act is adopted and we will potentially need to amend our budget accordingly.

## **4. Continuity of Learning**

Ensuring continuity of learning is critically important during this time of great stress for families, educators, and students. HCS will work closely with our stakeholders to ensure decisions are made collaboratively and transparently and prioritize safely returning students who are most in need of in-person instruction. The NJDOE recommends districts focus on the following areas when crafting their reopening plans to ensure continuity of learning:

### **Ensuring the Delivery of Special Education and Related Services to Students with Disabilities**

Schools must continue to meet their obligations to students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible. Specific strategies and considerations for students with disabilities have been critical points of discussion for every return-to-school scenario at HCS. HCS will continue to meet the needs of students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, as outlined in student IEPs. Students who receive in class support or resource room programming will engage in a hybrid program where the special educator provides direct instruction during live classes, and is available for live support on remote days for individuals and small groups of students. Occupational and Physical Therapy will take place on days where students are physically present in the building and follow physical distancing protocols, while speech and educational counseling will continue remotely according to IEP mandates. Evaluations will be conducted in person, while IEP meetings will be held via zoom to minimize the amount of visitors to the building. All services would revert to remote instruction should the need arise.

### **Technology and Connectivity**

HCS is committed to ensuring that every student has access to a device and internet connectivity. HCS will again conduct a needs assessment and determine the number of students that will require HCS-provided devices and or internet access in order to access remote education. HCS

will consider the technological needs of all students, including those with learning disabilities, assistive technology needs and language barriers and will provide mechanisms of support for students and families struggling with the technology.

### **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessments**

In planning curriculum, instruction, and assessment for reopening, HCS will continue to build staff capacity to deliver highly effective instruction in hybrid environments as well as prepare them to address any learning gaps that might prevent students from meeting grade-level New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). HCS will use this time as an opportunity for innovation: new approaches to customize learning, new ways of relationship building in smaller cohorts with smaller teacher:student onsite ratios; new forms of adaptability and flexibility; more robust usage of myriad forms of technology; and new types of partnership with family members, caregivers, and community stakeholders.

HCS teachers will structure the curriculum to account for any loss of learning that may have resulted from the extent of school building closures in the spring 2020. Teachers will provide students with grade level materials, tasks, and assignments along with the appropriate support necessary to fill the most critical gaps and learning. Before the closure, HCS teachers had engaged in professional development with TNTP around learning acceleration which supports this critical work. This training supported our teachers to execute the following:

- prioritizing the most critical prerequisite skills and knowledge for each subject area and grade level now.
- evaluating students' unfinished learning and providing acceleration support
- diagnosing students on unfinished learning in prerequisite content knowledge and prerequisite skills.
- Monitoring students' progress on grade appropriate assignments and addressing and adjusting supports for teachers and leaders based on student results.

Teachers will continue to conduct pre-assessments at the beginning of each unit to inform planning and instruction and will track growth via their student growth portfolios as well as data of ongoing formative and post-unit summative assessments.

### **Virtual and Hybrid Learning Environment-Instruction**

In crafting instructional plans, HCS will consider the following:

- We must be ready to deliver instruction remotely and onsite and be adaptive and flexible to address changing circumstances. With minimal notice, we may need to switch from an onsite/remote hybrid model to fully remote to fully onsite.
- An understanding of clear learning expectations must be communicated to all stakeholders.



- Trauma and other challenges related to students' social and emotional needs can impact learning and we must be prepared to support the members of our community so all can meet their potential.
- We now more than ever must plan for
  - student engagement
  - student ownership of learning
  - student voice and choice to promote engagement and independent learning
  - the leveraging of student strengths
  - the use scaffolding to meet the unique needs of all students and accelerate learning without sacrificing grade level material
  - differentiation of student learning
  - the use of effective feedback to support student academic growth
  - the incorporation of self-reflection, pre-assessment at the start of the units, and formative assessments throughout units.
  - The development of skills around collaboration, self-regulation, time management and goal setting

### **Professional Learning**

It is imperative that districts provide professional learning that will better equip leaders, staff, substitutes, students, and parents/caregivers to adapt to altered educational environments and experiences. Among the most critical focus areas are training to address the learning loss for the most vulnerable populations and preparing and supporting educators in meeting the social emotional, health, and academic needs of all students. Professional development will occur around all of these areas this year with the reengagement of TNTP for ongoing support work.

### **21st Century Life and Career Standards and Career and Technical Education (CTE)**

CTE programs and the postsecondary credentials and opportunities they provide serve as key momentum points for individuals, especially for those from underserved communities.

Additionally, coursework that addresses 21st Century Life and Career Standards support our students in preparing for college and beyond. HCS will continue to engage its students in career explorations and opportunities for dual enrollment coursework.