



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING - MINUTES
713 WASHINGTON STREET
HOBOKEN, NJ 07030
SEPTEMBER 20, 2022

The Hoboken Charter School Board of Trustees meeting scheduled for September 20, 2022 began at 5:40pm and went immediately into closed session. The closed session topic was an overview of good board governance presented by two members of the New Jersey School Boards Association, Mary Ann Friedman and Patricia Rees.

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Joy Wheeler at 5:40.

2. **Reading of the Open Public Meeting Statement**

The New Jersey Open Public Meeting law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed and acted upon. This is a public meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Hoboken Charter School. At the public meeting, action will be taken on a variety of motions.

In accordance with the requirements of the Sunshine Law, the meeting was announced on September 9, 2022 via notification to City Hall, the City Clerk's Office on Washington Street, *the Bergen Record* and the *Jersey Journal*.

Roll Call

TRUSTEE	PRESENT	ABSENT
John Berger	X	
Lauren Calmas	X	
Amanda Grant		X ^a
Lisa McIntyre	X	
Kelly Pansy		X
Christine Sheedy	X ^b	
Mark Silberberg	X	
Joy Wheeler	X	
Dana Wissing	X	

Deirdra Grode, Executive Director

Steve Literati, CFO and Board Secretary and Board Treasurer

^a Amanda Grant arrived at 6:32

^b Christine Sheedy left the meeting at 7:07

Additionally in attendance in public session were Michael Tobin, Danielle Panizzi, Elizabeth Palma and Joanna Weintraub.

3. **Executive Session.** The board went into executive session at 5:44 following a motion by Mark Silberberg that was seconded by Lauren Calmas and approved unanimously by all board members in attendance.

4. **Board of Trustees Governance Training by NJSBA**

5. **Return to Open Session.** The board returned to open session at 7:07 following a motion by Lauren Calmas that was seconded by Mark Silberberg and approved unanimously by all members in attendance.

6. **Acceptance of Minutes for August 10, 2022**

Minutes of the previous public special Board meeting held August 10, 2022, are available for review and/or correction and acceptance.

Motion for HCS Board of Trustees to accept the minutes of the Hoboken Board of Trustees Meeting on August 10, 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE

TRUSTEE	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
John Berger		X			
Lauren Calmas		X			
Amanda Grant		X			
Lisa McIntyre	1	X			
Kelly Pansy					X
Christine Sheedy					X
Mark Silberberg	2	X			
Joy Wheeler		X			
Dana Wissing		X			

7. **Public comment/questions on agenda items for the meeting**

A 15-minute period of time is provided for the public to ask questions on agenda items or make statements to the Board of Trustees. If there are many speakers, the chair will ask for a 3-minute speaking limit per speaker. The Board may extend the public comment portion by motion if necessary.

8. **Board Business**

8.1 Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approves the HCS School Health-Related Closure Preparedness Plan updated for the 2022-2023 school year.

8.2 Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approves the LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Pursuant to the Federal American Rescue Plan Act, Section 2011(i), updated for the 2022-2023 school year.

ROLL CALL VOTE

TRUSTEE	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
John Berger	2	X			
Lauren Calmas		X			
Amanda Grant		X			
Lisa McIntyre		X			
Kelly Pansy					X
Christine Sheedy					X
Mark Silberberg	1	X			
Joy Wheeler		X			
Dana Wissing		X			

9. **Personnel**

- 9.1 Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approves Erick Peralta as Leave Replacement Teacher through November 18, 2022.
- 9.2 Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approves Jennifer Gates Feit as Academic Guidance Counselor for the 2022-2023 academic year starting September 21, 2022, subject to completion of a county sub license, certification and/or criminal background check.
- 9.3 Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approves Josefa Silva as Instructional Aide for the 2022-2023 academic year starting September 27, 2022, subject to completion of a county sub license, certification and/or criminal background check.

ROLL CALL VOTE

TRUSTEE	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
John Berger		X			
Lauren Calmas		X			
Amanda Grant		X			
Lisa McIntyre	2	X			
Kelly Pansy					X
Christine Sheedy					X
Mark Silberberg	1	X			
Joy Wheeler		X			
Dana Wissing		X			

10. Finance

- 10.1 Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approved the Treasurer's Reports for August 2022, as per the attached; and pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a), the Hoboken Charter School Board of Trustees secretary's certification, and after review of the monthly financial report (appropriations section) certifies that, to the best of its knowledge, as of June 30, 2022, no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(b), and that sufficient funds are available to meet the school's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- 10.2 Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approves the bills list from August 9, 2022 to September 16, 2022. (Attached schedule.)
- 10.3 Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approves the approves the following payrolls:

Date	Amount
August 15, 2022	\$54,668.09
August 31, 2022	\$40,357.41

- 10.4 Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approves appointment of McIntee, Fusaro, Del Corral, LLC and DeMeola, Zawacki, Mingione, LLC as auditors and tax preparers for the fiscal year 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE

TRUSTEE	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
John Berger		X			
Lauren Calmas				X	
Amanda Grant	2	X			
Lisa McIntyre		X			

Kelly Pansy					X
Christine Sheedy					X
Mark Silberberg		X			
Joy Wheeler		X			
Dana Wissing	1	X			

11. Enrollment

Enrollment as of September 20, 2022

Grade	Enrolled Students	Grade	Enrolled Students
K	22	9	26
1	23 (overenrolled)	10	25
2	22	11	25
3	22	12	24
4	22		
5	22		
6	23		
7	21		
8	22	Total Students Enrolled	299
		Total Funded Students	298

12. 2022-2023 HCS Strategic Plan Presentation

Annually, the School reports to the Board of Trustees its Self-Assessment Grade for the prior school year as determined by the SSCT. The score for 2021-2022 was 75/78. An explanation is as follows:

Explanation of the NJDOE ABR Self-Assessment Grade 2021-2022

Since its passage, Hoboken Charter School has implemented all of the requirements of in the *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* such as: publicizing and disseminating a Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying policy; establishing an Anti-Bullying Coordinator, Anti-Bullying Specialists and a School Safety and Climate Team (SS/CT); creating a Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying reporting and investigation procedure; creating a Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying training and prevention program; annually reevaluating the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying policy; implementing anti-bullying initiatives, character education/social emotional learning programming; and completing and submitting mandated reporting to the Board of Trustees and the New Jersey Department of Education.

While completing the 2021-2022 Self-Assessment, Hoboken Charter School has demonstrated strengths in the following areas: timeliness and thoroughness of HIB investigations; reviewing HIB policies and making appropriate changes to school-wide policies and procedures; providing ongoing, age-appropriate instruction on preventing HIB in accordance with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards; and creating and implementing school-wide programming to improve overall climate and culture of the school.

HCS identified two areas for improvement for the 2022-2023: involving all stakeholders (school staff, students, administrators, volunteers, parents, law enforcement and other community members) in establishing HIB programs and ensuring all members of the SS/CT were offered opportunities for professional development.

Additionally, the self-assessment helped Hoboken Charter School to prioritize expanding programming around climate, culture and character education programming offerings across K-12, as next year will include expanding the advisory program into Middle School and further implementation of the responsive classroom model in the Lower School.

As a result of the data analysis from the staff, student and parent surveys, as well as information disseminated through NJDOE broadcasts and statewide trainings, Hoboken Charter School is continuing to implement school wide character education/social emotional learning programs across its K-12 programs. These initiatives include: Week of Respect, School Violence Awareness Week, anti-bullying lessons from the NJ Bar Association, Upper School Advisory, peer mentoring, middle school transition support for rising 5th graders, Zones of regulation curriculum, mindfulness lessons. Through our school social worker and behaviorist, we have been able to offer a variety of social skills and peer support groups as well as individual counseling.

Executive Director Deirdra Grode was asked to highlight 2022-2023 strategic goals. The presentation included the priority areas below.

The following two vision statements serve as guiding points for the school's ongoing strategic work:

1. The HCS community will view the entirety of student learning through a lens of inclusion and social justice and a commitment to using the content knowledge and skills learned as vehicles to create positive change in the classroom and the world around them.
2. HCS will maximize use of a unified K-12 campus and the City to reinforce mission-critical pedagogy, particularly around innovative learner-centered practices, community building and collaboration.

The primary focus of the school's strategic work for 2022-2023 will be around the following five areas and include work as outlined for each below:

1. Creating a Culture of Mission-Alignment, High Expectations and Rigor via the K12 Curriculum:

- A. Teaching Practice
- B. Scope and Sequence
- C. Belonging
- D. Differentiation and Personalization
- E. Extend Learning Beyond Classroom

2. Living the Mission Beyond Curriculum:

- A. Identification of the Core HCS Values that Emerge from our Mission
- B. Access and Equity (program, staff, students)
- C. Implement Restorative Practices
- D. Recruitment and Retention of Staff
- E. Community-Building

3. Upper School Identity Work

- A. Unique Mission-Aligned Experience
- B. Personalized Experience
- C. Mastery-Based Shift
- D. Community Focused

4. Communicate School Identity

- A. Alumni Connections
- B. Dynamic and User-Friendly Information
- C. New Families Focus
- D. Portrait of a student at each division

5. K-12 Integration

- A. Cohesive and Fluid Experiences via K-12 Model

13. Lower/Middle School Report

The 2022-2023 had a strong start with staff orientation August 29-September 1. Training and professional development for staff focused on several new initiatives in the K-8 program: Responsive Classroom and Zones of Regulation in the Lower School and Advisory in the Middle School.

While HCS has had components of the model in the past, Responsive Classroom is a way of teaching that creates a safe, challenging, and joyful classroom and schoolwide climate for all students. The Responsive Classroom approach is one in which all of students' needs—academic, social, emotional, and physical—are important. Teachers create an environment that responds to all of those needs so that students can do their best learning. The Responsive Classroom approach focuses on four key areas:

- Engaging Academics—Teachers create learning tasks that are active, interactive, appropriately challenging, purposeful, and connected to students' interests.
- Positive Community—Teachers nurture a sense of belonging, significance, and emotional safety so that students feel comfortable taking risks and working with a variety of peers.
- Effective Management—Teachers create a calm, orderly environment that promotes autonomy and allows students to focus on learning.
- Developmentally Responsive Teaching—Teachers use knowledge of child development, along with observations of students, to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment.

The Zones of Regulation framework and curriculum teaches students scaffolded skills toward building awareness of their feelings/internal state and utilize a variety of tools and strategies for regulation, prosocial skills, self-care, and overall wellness. This includes exploring tools and strategies for mindfulness, sensory integration, movement, thinking strategies, wellness, and healthy connection with others. The Zones of Regulation provides a common language and compassionate framework to support positive mental health and skill development for all, while serving as an inclusion strategy for neurodiverse learners, those who have experienced trauma, and/or have specific needs in terms of social, emotional, and behavioral development.

On Fridays this year in Middle School, students will participate in an advisory program. Advisory is a time for teachers to meet with groups of students to advise them on academic and social issues. At HCS, students will meet in mixed grade (5-8) groups each week. About Advisory: Adolescence is a time when two tasks take on special importance: determining individual identity and figuring out where and how we belong. These themes of identity, membership, belonging, and participation are the cornerstones of the advisory curriculum. Built on a foundation of social and emotional learning, advisory helps build student-centered spaces where honest questioning, discussion, and social and academic growth can occur. Students who participate in this curriculum will build understanding and empathy; break down stereotypes; discover their voices; develop the skills necessary for academic and community success; and build civic agency and find new ways to participate in the school and local community.

Middle School students also started the year with new Artsbridge, Enrichment and Mission Lab electives. Some of the offerings include:

- World Drumming
- Guitar
- Dance
- Bringing Literature to Life
- Drawing and Paper Arts
- Art Exploration
- Art Journaling
- Engineering and History
- Future City
- Literary Magazine
- Debate

- Tech Projects/Math Challenge
- Sports and Society
- The Big Apple
- International Media
- Green Bosses
- Adaptation Book Club

Several K-8 teachers participated in curriculum writing over the summer to select read aloud books and develop lesson plans for monthly mission-aligned themes for each class K-4. Teachers met the first week of school to share their plans and themes with one another. The themes are:

- September- Hispanic Heritage
- October- Accessibility Awareness
- November- National Native American Heritage
- December - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- January - Activism, Civil Rights and Honoring of Dr. MLK, Jr.
- February- Black History
- March - Women's History
- April- Earth Day/Climate Justice
- May- Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage
- June- LGBTQ+ Pride

14. Upper School Report

We have had a great start to the year. The week before school, we welcomed students to school to tour, find their lockers, review their schedules etc. The 9th grade students were scheduled for a full orientation. Older students volunteered and attended this event as well.

We have again added courses to our offerings. Students have a choice of science classes this year including Environmental Science and Chemistry for Change. We are able to offer a Dance course as an Arts specials course. We have added a course in Quantum Computing through a partnership with The Coding School. We are again offering a wide assortment of electives as well. Electives focus on either 21st Century College and Career Readiness Standards or teaching a specific Social Justice Activist tool. For Marking Period 1, students are taking either Foundations, Forensics, Murals and Public Art Activism, Math Support Lab, Fashion Sustainability and Ethics, Equity and Travel, or Sustainability in the City.

On Thursday, 9/8, the entire Upper School spent the day at the Jackson St gym and Resiliency Park for community building activities. After some friendly competition in grade level games requiring communication and teamwork, students chose from a list of activities designed to share common interests.

We have added Mission Time to our schedule this year. Once a week, we provide time to engage in activities that are social justice or service oriented, or connected to a student's individual learning journey. This includes Student Leadership, service projects, and tutoring to name a few. This month, students took the initiative to plan activities in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Administration reported to the board regarding the graduation testing pathways for the Class of 2022. All 21 students in the Class of 2022 graduated and none were denied graduation due to failing to meet assessment requirements. The number of students who utilized passing a competency test, the total number who completed portfolio assessments and the number who met alternate requirements as stipulated in their IEP were reported.

15. Public Comments

16. Looking Ahead

Oct 18, 2022	Review of Long-Range Facilities Plan and funding recommendations.
Oct 18, 2022	Board review and approval of new employee health care plan
Nov 30, 2022	Current employee health-care plan expires

17. New Business/Report from Committees.

Dana Wissing shared that we will invite Jeff Tennenbaum, Friends of HCS President, to October's meeting.

18. Executive Session. The board went into executive session at 8:48 with a motion by John Berger that was seconded by Mark Silberberg and approved unanimously by all board members in attendance. The executive session involved a confidential student matter.

19. Return to Open Session.

The board returned to open session at 9:24 pm following a motion by John Berger that was seconded by Mark Silberberg and approved unanimously by all board members in attendance.

20. Adjournment of Meeting

Whereas, the business of the regular meeting has been concluded, now, therefore be it resolved that the HCS Board of Trustees adjourned their meeting of Tuesday, September 20, 2022.

It is hereby certified that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the HCS Board of Trustees, by the vote below indicated at the regular meeting held on Tuesday, September 20, 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE

TRUSTEE	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
John Berger	1	X			
Lauren Calmas		X			
Amanda Grant		X			
Lisa McIntyre		X			
Kelly Pansy					X
Christine Sheedy					X
Mark Silberberg	2	X			
Joy Wheeler		X			
Dana Wissing		X			

Certified by Board Secretary: Steve Literati

Date: October 14, 2022

Adjournment: 9:25pm

HCS School Health-Related Closure Preparedness Plan

Upon written notification from the NJ Department of Health or Health Department of Hoboken, the Hoboken Charter School will adopt the following Preparedness Plan:

1. Equitable Access to Instruction

a. Online Learning Plan

- According to the guidelines set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1, General Education students are to receive 5 hours of Instruction per week, and Special Education students are to receive 10 hours of Instruction. HCS will exceed that in providing its full course offerings, when possible, to all K-12 students throughout a closure.
- Lower School (K-4)
 1. Teachers will primarily deliver instruction via the Zoom platform. Additional asynchronous experiences will be provided via Google Classroom.
 2. Teachers will utilize pre-existing blended learning platforms for asynchronous learning opportunities.
 3. Teachers will use Google Classroom for posting assignments and streamlining communications.
 4. Students participate in live reading, writing, math, and 1 flex period each day led by the core teacher.
 5. Students will participate in daily live specials classes (art, music, PE, Spanish).
 6. Teachers will host a live morning meeting Monday-Friday.
 7. Teachers will hold daily office hours, focused on content support and one-on-one and small group support.
 8. Students will have an opportunity to participate in daily live virtual recess.
 9. Students qualifying for Tier 2 and Tier 3 academic support will participate in live small group lessons.
 10. Teachers will send home student workbooks.
 11. Teachers will create choice activity menus for various content areas.
- Middle School (5-8)
 1. Teachers will primarily deliver instruction via the Zoom platform. Additional asynchronous experiences including narrated PowerPoints, recorded lectures, flipped classrooms, videos, etc. will be provided via Google Classroom.
 2. Teachers will use Google Classroom for posting assignments and streamlining communications.

3. Teachers will lead live lessons daily in core content areas (ELA, SS, Science, Math).
4. Teachers will host office hours daily for additional support.
5. Students will participate in daily live specials classes (Spanish, PE, band lessons).
6. Students will have Mission Lab elective classes three days per week.

■ Upper School (9-12)

1. Teachers will primarily deliver instruction via the Zoom platform. Additional asynchronous experiences including narrated PowerPoints, recorded lectures, flipped classrooms, videos, etc. will be provided via Google Classroom. Teachers will assign work as Google Classroom assignments.
2. Teachers will provide extensive feedback to students and update grades in OnCourse frequently.
3. Teachers will be even more proactive than usual in reaching out to students' families when work is not submitted.
4. Teachers will provide support through regularly scheduled office hours, Google Classroom comments, email, etc.

b. Equitable Access - Technology Access & Support

- Students who do not have access to a home computer will be issued a Chromebook from school, which will be thoroughly disinfected upon return.
- Teachers will provide assignments to students that can be completed on the computer that do not require additional technology (e.g. printer).

2. School Nutrition

- a. HCS will conduct a survey to assess family need in continuing participation with the school food program.
- b. Students will participate in their local BOE food programs, when available, and at HCS when unavailable via BOE food program.
- c. The availability of ongoing services will be communicated with our families via email and social media.

3. HIB & Mental Health Services

- a. The school social worker will be available to provide counseling services to students who are struggling with stress, anxiety or other mental health concerns remotely via Google Hangout or a phone call. Mandated educational counseling will continue to be provided to students with IEPs.
- b. Resources have been provided to all students and parents to assist with coping strategies during this time, as well as referral information to community service providers.

4. Students with Special Needs

- a. According to the guidelines set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1, Special Education students are to receive 10 hours of Instruction per week. HCS will exceed that in providing it's full course offerings and supports to all K-12 students with special needs throughout the closure.
- b. Special education teachers will provide services consistent with the student's IEP to the fullest extent possible. Students will receive individualized and/or small group instruction

with special education teachers as outlined in the IEP according to service mandates. Assignments will be modified and accommodations will be implemented using a blend of assistive technology and live support via teleconference. Special education teachers will continue to monitor student progress in accordance with goals and objectives outlined in the IEP through the use of virtual meetings and evaluation of work samples. Communication with parents and students via email and surveys will be conducted regularly to assess the nature and severity of student needs during remote learning.

- c. IEP meetings will be held via teleconference with all relevant parties in attendance. Related services provisions in the IEP will be met through teleconference. Any outstanding compensatory services will be provided upon return to school.
- d. Extended School Year (ESY) - ESY services will be provided in person or remotely in accordance with the child's IEP, based on directives from NJDOE.

5. English Language Learners

- a. Services for English Language learners will be provided consistent with the approved ELL plan. Academic Support teachers will be available to provide supplemental virtual instruction. Staff will be available to provide translation support during virtual meetings with parents, as needed.

6. Roles for Instructional & Non-Instructional Staff

- a. HCS will conduct a technology access survey with all faculty and staff to assess their present level of technology capabilities at home, including access to the internet and access to a computer/laptop. Faculty/Staff who do not have access to a computer will be issued a laptop from school, which will be thoroughly disinfected upon return.
- b. Administrators and Office Support Staff will review their job responsibilities with the Executive Director or a building principal to ensure that they have what they need to continue all aspects of their job remotely.
- c. The custodian will return to school regularly as needed for cleaning and facilities work.
- d. Onsite work will be limited to work deemed essential such as checking on facility, mail review, technology exchanges, etc.
- e. Instructional aides and other contracted staff who do not meet the criteria above will be given tasks to support the operations of the school remotely.
 - K-8 instructional aides will be utilized to support the instructional program as follows: small group and one-on-one live teaching support, virtual recess, etc.

7. Communication -

- a. Throughout the closure, the Executive Director and building principals will provide updates on services and supports and programming opportunities as well as any pertinent information from the School or State Department of Education.

8. Facilities

- a. The custodian will return to school regularly for cleaning and as needed for facility maintenance.

9. Attendance

- a. Attendance will be documented through a combination of participation in online meetings, completion of online assignments, and completion of Attendance Forms.
 - K-4 students will be marked present if they:
 - 1. Participate in live classes
 - 2. Complete assigned work for a given day
 - Middle School – students will be marked present if they:
 - 1. Participation in live classes OR
 - 2. Complete assigned work for a given day
 - Upper School- students will be marked present through documentation of a combination of the following:
 - 1. Completion of assignments
 - 2. Participation in live classes and/or office hours
 - 3. Completion of an attendance form
- b. Attendance will be used to document student participation in online learning and to flag students who may be at risk. HCS will continue with at-risk procedures for students who are not considered present for online learning.
- c. Every effort will be made (including emails, phone calls, etc.) to contact families of students not participating in online meetings and/or assignments. Participation and attendance will be closely monitored and reported to the building principal. Non-responsive students and parents will be contacted via multiple methods of communication and referred to the school social worker for additional support.

10. Preventative Measures During a Health Emergency When School Occurs Onsite

- a. The custodial staff and teachers will follow protocol to disinfect surfaces such as doorknobs, computers, phones, desks, faucet handles, etc. throughout the school day.
- b. Students will be reminded to wash their hands before and after eating snack and lunch daily.
- c. Students and Staff will wear masks as recommended by the CDC and/or local Health departments. **At present time, masks are optional.**
- d. Staff will encourage students to distance as much as possible when eating, playing instruments and singing **when transmission levels are elevated. At this point in time, we are not distancing outside the case of a maskless student or staff member (during lunch) who has returned for school (days 6-10) with COVID.**
- e. Open windows and fans will be utilized to increase ventilation.
- f. The School Nurse will meet with all K-12 classes and communicate with all K-12 families and faculty/staff to review CDC and DOH recommended precautionary measures. Signs are posted around the school to remind the community of best practices around precaution. Practices are as follows:

- Children and staff should stay home when sick. Children must be fever and symptom-free according to the school covid protocols for 24 hours without the use of fever reducers before returning to school.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Please note- hand sanitizers are not as effective as washing your hands with soap and water.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - Cover your cough or sneeze with an elbow. When tissue is used, throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
 - Visit your healthcare professional if you are feeling ill and advise them of the symptoms so they can take necessary precautions.
 - Get vaccinated every year.
- g. School events and field trips that involve engagement with people outside our typical school community will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

11. Other Considerations

- a. Accelerated learning opportunities and credit recovery are critical for students who exhibit learning gaps. Coursework and protocols are modified to support students whose skills are impacted by covid closures and missed instructional time. The MTSS program and a differentiated model supports this work. Work is provided to quarantining students and zoom sessions are scheduled as well for quarantine instruction.
- b. Social and emotional health of staff and students, community building, extended student learning opportunities and extra-curriculars are critical to student development and HCS has prioritized maintaining such opportunities during closures. Experiences have included virtual clubs, recess and lunch hangs as well as opportunities to meet with the School Social Worker and Guidance Counselor remotely. Classwide, family and cross-division experiences have been valuable in supporting the social and emotional well-being of our community. We have implemented these in-person when safe to do so and have provided virtual experiences as well when in closure or transmission levels are high. We are also implementing new programs supporting student wellness, self-regulation and community-building including Advisory (grades 5-12), Zones of Regulation (grades K-4) and Responsive Classroom (grades K-4) as well as ongoing supports with our Behaviorist and the School Social Worker. Special guests and programs have also been integrated and continue to be into our program.



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service
Pursuant to the Federal American Rescue Plan Act, Section 2001(i)
Introduction and Background

As announced in the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE)'s [April 28, 2021 broadcast](#), in March 2021 President Biden signed the Federal [American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](#), Public Law 117-2, into law. The ARP Act provides an additional \$122 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) to States and school districts to help safely reopen, sustain the safe operation of schools, and address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation's students. As with the previous ESSER funds available under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA), the purpose of the additional funding is to support local educational agencies (LEAs) in preparing for and responding to the impacts of COVID-19 on educators, students, and families. Additional information on ARP ESSER may be found in the NJDOE's [funding comparison fact sheet](#).

Section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act requires each LEA that receives ARP ESSER funds to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website, no later than 30 days after receiving ARP ESSER funds, a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools (Safe Return Plan). A Safe Return Plan is required of all fund recipients, including those that have already returned to in-person instruction. Section 2001(i)(2) of the ARP Act further requires that the LEA seek public comment on the Safe Return Plan and take those comments into account in finalization of the Safe Return Plan. Under the interim final requirements published in [Volume 86, No. 76 of the Federal Register](#) by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), an LEA must periodically, but no less frequently than every six months through September 30, 2023, review and, as appropriate, revise its Safe Return Plan.

Pursuant to those requirements, **LEAs must submit to the NJDOE and post on their website their Safe Return Plans by June 24, 2021.** The NJDOE intends to make LEA ARP ESSER Fund applications available in EWEG on May 24, 2021 and LEAs will submit their Safe Return Plans to the NJDOE via EWEG. To assist LEAs with the development of their Safe Return Plans, the NJDOE is providing the following template.

This template incorporates the federally-required components of the Safe Return Plan. The questions in the template below will be included in the LEA ARP ESSER Fund application in EWEG. LEAs will submit responses to the questions within the LEA ARP ESSER Fund application in EWEG by June 24, 2021. The NJDOE hopes that this template will allow LEAs to effectively plan for that submission and to easily post the information to their websites as required by the ARP Act.

Note that on May 17, 2021, Governor Murphy [announced](#) that upon the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year, portions of Executive Order 175 allowing remote learning will be rescinded, meaning that schools will be required to provide full-day, in-person instruction, as they were prior to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The NJDOE and New Jersey Department of Health will share additional information regarding State requirements or

guidance for health and safety protocols for the 2021-2022 school year as it becomes available.

Template: LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

LEA Name: Hoboken Charter School

Date: **August** 2022

1. Maintaining Health and Safety

For each mitigation strategy listed below (A–H), please describe how the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks

Face coverings

■ **School staff, students and visitors are required to wear face coverings that cover their nose and mouth upon return to school days 6-10 of their own positive COVID result if their symptoms are improving. Otherwise, at this time, masks are optional.**

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)

Physical Distancing

■ **HCS will not require physical distancing unless a student or staff member is maskless (lunch) and within 10 days of their own positive COVID test result. In that case, a student or staff member will sit at least 6 feet from others.**

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

■ The school nurse leads trainings with faculty and staff, students and families around best practices in these areas.

- Students and staff are expected to wash hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitize at regular intervals, including before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing. Classrooms have built in the practice of handwashing and sanitizing throughout the day and during transition times
- Students and staff are instructed to cover their mouths and noses when coughing or sneezing and to use tissues and throw them away, wash hands or use a hand sanitizer every time one touches one's mouth or nose.

■ Tissues and hand sanitizing stations, mostly hands-free, with alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) are set up around entrance/egress points, throughout the building and at shared contact points (e.g. elevator, handrails, etc.).

■ Hands-free soap dispensers have been placed in bathrooms.

■ Faucets are hands-free.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Facilities Cleaning Practices

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.

Bathrooms are sanitized throughout the day. Students are expected to distance as much as possible in bathrooms.

Air Quality and Ventilation

■ One facility has a brand new HVAC system that brings fresh air into the classrooms and windows are

open. In the building without a modern HVAC system, all windows are open with window fans in classrooms to bring in fresh air/exhaust classroom air. HCS is in the process of making plans to install a new HVAC system to replace an aging system in the one facility that was particularly uncomfortable and wasteful in winter months.

- Filters for A/C units are maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations.
- TruSens air purifiers with HEPA filtration and an internal ultraviolet light feature to kill germs and viruses have been placed throughout the building.

E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments.

HCS administration has been trained in COVID-19 Contact Tracing via Johns Hopkins University and has received regular updated guidance via the State and local health departments. Names of students who test positive are shared with the DOH. **In the case that schools are directed by the NJDOH to engage in contact tracing again, HCS will comply.**

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

- **Students and employees are asked to leave or not come into school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, based on CDC guidance. If they exhibit symptoms, the family will report them to the school nurse to determine testing requirements and return to school.**
- **If a student or staff members tests positive for COVID, that individual is required to quarantine at home for 5 days following a positive test or onset of symptoms – whichever is earlier (positive test date/onset of symptoms is day 0). The individual can return as early as day 6 as long as their symptoms have improved and they are fever free 24 hours prior to their return date. The individual must continue to mask through day 10.**
- **We will be accepting home tests this year, in addition to PCRs and rapid-PCRs, if desired.**
- **Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 will be safely and respectfully isolated from others. The school follows Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting. The symptomatic person and supervisor are provided with PPE. Special consideration is given for the protection of staff members, such as school nurses and custodians, who will be in close contact with students or will handle waste materials. Gowns, face shields, masks, gloves and K95 or N95 masks are available to them.**
- **If HCS becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in one of our school facilities tests positive for COVID-19, the nurse immediately notifies local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality. The school then follows guidance from the Department of Health regarding communication, cleaning and possible closure.**

G. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies

Specific strategies and considerations for students with disabilities have been critical points of discussion for every return-to-school scenario at HCS. HCS continues to meet the needs of students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, as outlined in student IEPs. Evaluations are conducted in person while IEP meetings can be held via zoom per parent request. All services would revert to remote instruction should the need arise but at present services have resumed to in-person, onsite. With full-time onsite instruction, special education supports revert to being fully implemented in-person onsite.

2. Ensuring Continuity of Services

A. Describe how the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff's social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services. (1000 character limit)

Meals are available as usual with our food program.

Social emotional learning is critical in re-engaging students, supporting adults, rebuilding relationships and creating a foundation for academic learning. To this end, HCS has engaged in thoughtful planning around the well-being of educators and students and their impact on student learning and has acknowledged and prepared for the potential trauma that staff and students have faced during the pandemic through trainings, community building initiatives and partnerships with supportive outside agencies. Restorative practices have been a critical component of the program this school year. A behaviorist and school social worker have been conducting extensive work with our students and staff to support student learning and well-being. A Student Risk Screening Survey is administered for all students to ensure all who need social and emotional support are identified. For those who qualify for services, treatment plans are developed with both long and short term goals. Progress is monitored by the School Social Worker in consultation with the behaviorist. Grades, attendance, self and adult (parent, counselor, teacher/staff) referral and discipline data can also inform decision-making. is also being addressed.

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 is 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 identified students who needed to recoup skills from the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school year. Academic support teachers, special education teachers, the school social worker and the school's behaviorist provide instruction across all three tiers through a hybrid model to individuals or small groups of students. Significant attention around accelerating learning, prioritizing standards, Tier 1 and 2 interventions and "just in time instruction" is being explored by the school

Afterschool programming has resumed.

3. Public Comment

A. Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comment into account in the development of its plan. Note, the ARP requires that LEAs seek public comment for each 60-day revision to the plan. (1000 character limit)

A Pandemic Response Team was 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. This team has been consulted throughout the pandemic as we continue to revise the plan. A Social-Emotional and Community Well-Being Committee, a Town Hall, frequent schoolwide communications, monthly Board of Trustee and Parents Association meetings and survey opportunities allowed for communication and feedback. A COVID-19 information page can be found on the school website. Plans have been shared at public meetings and ample opportunities have been provided for feedback from diverse stakeholders.

B. Describe how the LEA ensured that the plan is in an understandable and uniform format; is to the extent practicable written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, will be orally translated for such a parent; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, will be provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent. (1000 character limit)

The school offers the opportunity for translation services and services for community members with disabilities to participate in all feedback opportunities.