

West Haven High School COVID Protocols



Dear Parents,

We are so pleased to welcome your students back for the 2020-2021 school year. This has been a difficult summer for all, and we are looking forward to a positive and uplifting school year. We at West Haven High School are committed to providing the best education possible in the safest environment we can provide. Included in this packet are specific protocols we have put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have designed our protocols under the advisement of medical professionals and in coordination with the public health officials. The protocols are fluid and may change based on new information.

MASKS and PPE:

- All students and teachers will wear masks. Regular mask breaks will be provided outside of the classroom. Students may take mask breaks individually in designated areas in the hallway. Teachers will also take students outside for breaks when possible.
- Classes in the “old building” will take increased breaks while it is still very warm outside. We understand this may interfere in some cases with the continuity of instruction, but students will learn more readily if they are comfortable.
- Masks are a requirement to attend school. Face shields may be worn in addition to masks if a student chooses, but do not meet CDC guidelines for a face covering.
- Students who refuse to wear a mask will unfortunately have to be removed from the classroom until a mask is worn. Students will be sent home if they will not adhere to mask guidelines.
- Bus transportation will not be provided to unmasked students. Continued refusal to wear a mask may result in a change to a Distance Learning program. This is for the safety of all staff and students.
- While it is the expectation that most students already have a mask, school staff will have masks to provide should a student not have a mask, or if their mask is

forgotten at home. The provided masks meet CDC guidelines for a face covering. Students seeking a medical exemption must submit appropriate medical documentation. This documentation must be reviewed and approved by the District Nursing Supervisor, so it should be submitted in advance of the school year. It can be emailed to jill.grego@whschools.org

Special Areas:

- Additional PPE may be required in certain special area classes. For example, per state guidelines, face shields should be worn in addition to a mask while singing.
- When additional PPE is necessary, the district will provide it.
- Choral and Band classes will still be available in small groups. Band will in general take place outside for the time being, with musicians spaced twelve feet apart, Or 9x6 feet apart depending on the instrumentation. Choral classes may utilize outdoor space, but will be limited to 30 minutes of singing in an indoor space per guidelines.
- Physical Education classes will take place outside as long as weather permits.
- Additional safety precautions such as goggles or plexi dividers will be used in classes that require a less traditional setup such as art or auto shop.

● CAFÉ / FOOD / DRINK:

- Meals for the time being will be “grab and go.”
- Students will be dismissed on a staggered schedule, and will pick up a lunch on the way out of school. There will be multiple locations for pickup. Breakfast for the next day will be included in the bag. Both meals should be consumed at home with the exception of athletes remaining after school for sports.
- Athletes remaining at school prior to practice will be allowed to eat outside before reporting to athletic study hall.
- Water fountains will not be accessible, but there are multiple bottle fillers throughout the building. Students should bring a bottle to school to utilize the fillers. We will have bottles available should a student forget his or her bottle. Students must be mindful to keep their distance from others when lifting masks

to take a drink.

MEDICAL:

- Parents should take their child's temperature daily before sending their child to school. Students with a fever should not attend school. The fever should be reported to the school nurse.
- Parents should closely monitor student symptoms at home and report any illness to the school nurse.
- Our School Based Health Center staff will be available for telehealth visits for symptomatic students.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

- Desks will be spaced as far apart as possible, which may result in a less aesthetic appearance in some classes (i.e. desks may be all the way against the back wall, pulled into corners etc.) Alternate space may be used (such as gym or auditorium) to allow for additional space. Physical barriers have been installed in classrooms that require a less traditional setup.
- Transitions will be limited to decrease exposure.
- Directional arrows will separate the flow of traffic in hallways.
- Security and administration will monitor the halls to discourage congregation and encourage social distancing.
- Students should avoid sharing materials. We have ordered an abundance of general supplies such as pencils and pens. Students will be able to access the calculator function on their laptop, but should bring a calculator if they are more comfortable with a separate calculator. Teachers will inform students of any other supplies they may need during orientation. If there are needed supplies that you cannot afford, please contact me and I will do my best to assist you. The economic impact of the pandemic is widespread and we are here to help.

CLEANING:

- Custodial staff will employ frequent and thorough sanitization of high touch areas and bathrooms throughout the school day
- The shortened day will allow for additional hours for cleaning.
- Custodians will be brought in for overlapping shifts to ensure thorough cleaning.
- Lack of lunch waves will free up additional staff for cleaning of high traffic areas.
- Additional staff has been hired to assist with cleaning.
- Security and Administration will monitor bathrooms to ensure they are cleaned and stocked.
- Hand Sanitizer will be provided in multiple locations.

FIELD TRIPS / ASSEMBLIES / SCHOOL EVENTS:

- PTA meetings will be held virtually/remotely.
- Parent meetings will also be held virtually via video conferencing platforms like ZOOM, Google Meet, or phone conferences.
- In certain instances, exceptions can be made with the approval of the administration and/or the superintendent.
- Most afterschool clubs and activities will take place virtually.

TECHNOLOGY:

- Each student will be assigned a laptop device for personal daily and home use as needed.
- This will not only ensure 'no sharing' of devices, but also promote online interaction and academics should the district need to shift to an alternate learning model.
- Technology will decrease the need to share materials

*Reminder- The Device Agreement available through Parent Portal must be signed before your child is assigned a laptop.

VISITORS:

- Only essential staff/employees will be allowed at this time
- Classroom observations/visits are postponed until further notice
- All visitors entering lobby for student pick up or drop off must wear a mask/face covering

ARRIVAL:

- Students will remain outside until 7:10 to discourage indoor congregating.
- Once students enter the building, they should proceed directly to their Block 1 class.
- The cafeteria will not be open. Students should not be eating in the hallways or classrooms. Security and Administration will circulate to discourage congregation and encourage social distancing.

DISMISSAL:

- Dismissal will be staggered to avoid crowding in lunch pickup areas.
- Students cannot be dismissed by parents between 11:25 and 11:50 except in case of emergency. If your child must be dismissed early, please make arrangements for this to occur prior to 11:25.

FAQ Health Related Reopening Questions

Positive Covid-19 Case Questions

Is the district consulting with a medical professional for guidance as the reopening plan is being developed?

Yes, Dr. Meredith Williams, Medical Advisor to West Haven Schools is providing ongoing consult throughout our reopening planning.

If a child or their teacher is diagnosed with COVID-19 will the entire school be on remote learning or just that classroom?

The district will consult with West Haven's Health Director regarding each positive diagnosis for contact tracing and to determine safety measures. Any child required to stay home from school will pivot to remote learning.

How will families be informed if a child or teacher is diagnosed with COVID-19?

Parents of students determined to be impacted by a diagnosed COVID-19 will be informed through an email and hard copy letter home, as well as phone communication by the School Health Department as necessary. Please keep in mind that the privacy of staff and students will be honored and names of anyone who has contracted the virus will not be shared.

What would happen if a student in the class travels to a hotspot?

Per Governor Lamont's guidance, the student would need to quarantine at home, while remote learning, for 14 days. This protocol will take effect if the trip took place within 14 days of the school opening or during the school year.

We have received many questions that address specific scenarios that we could encounter this year. Some of these scenarios are:

- **What if a child's parent tests positive - how can the school ensure that the child doesn't come to school?**
- **If a cohort has to quarantine because a member of it tests positive for COVID-19, do the siblings of any of the students in that cohort have to stay home/ quarantine as well?**
- **If a parent of a student tests positive for COVID-19 does that mean that the entire classroom cohort has to quarantine?**
- **What if a parent works in a hot zone or hospital?**
- **If a family has more than one child attending school will all of them have to stay home if one of them exhibits COVID like symptoms?**
- **What if the teacher has been exposed, but does not have symptoms or positive test results?**

We will work in collaboration with the West Haven Health Director to address each scenario that arises this year on a case by case basis and provide medical protocols to those affected.

Face Mask Questions

Is it a requirement for my child to wear a mask at school?

Yes, per Governor Lamont's reopening plan, it is a requirement for students and staff to wear masks at school.

What if my child has a medical condition that does not permit him/her to wear a mask?

The School Nurse must be contacted to obtain a Mask Exemption Waiver Form to be completed by the student's health care provider. Submission of the form does not guarantee approval of the exemption.

Can my child wear a mask from home?

It is recommended that parents provide cloth masks to their children. These masks will also allow for easy washing and drying to sanitize.

Should I start having my child get used to wearing a mask for periods of time?

Yes, we encourage parents to begin to help their child become comfortable wearing a mask, by gradually building up their comfort level. Practicing removing masks properly and encouraging children not to touch their masks will also help them become comfortable with these new routines. The link included here are some suggestions for [building mask tolerance](#).

Will my child get breaks during the day when he/she doesn't have to wear the mask?

Yes, under controlled conditions your child will be provided safe breaks while in school. In addition, increased distancing will allow for masks to be removed during physical education class and recess. These procedures will be reviewed with students. This will also include a student's ability to advocate for themselves when a break is needed. Additionally, the classroom teacher will periodically schedule mask breaks throughout the day to provide opportunities for students to take mask breaks as needed.

What if my child forgets their mask or it breaks?

The school will supply adult and child sized masks if a student does not have one or if his/her mask breaks. All children will be expected to board buses wearing a mask. We encourage all children to have an extra mask sent to school each day, if possible, to ensure that each child has a mask that fits them properly and they feel comfortable with if a replacement is necessary.

Health and Wellness Questions

How will I know if I should keep my child home from school because they are ill?

Parents will be provided with the West Haven Board of Education Daily Illness Checklist and request students be monitored for symptoms each day before school. Further health resources will be provided from the School Health Department.

Will my child's temperature be taken at school?

At this time, staff will not be assessing students' temperature as they enter the building. We ask that parents take temperatures at home before sending a child to school each day. When needed on an individual basis, the school nurse will take temperatures.

Please complete this short check **each morning** before coming to school.

SECTION 1: Symptoms

YES	NO	
		Temperature 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher when taken by mouth
		Sore throat
		New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing *For students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline
		Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
		New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever


SECTION 2: Close Contact/Potential Exposure

YES	NO	
		Had <u>close contact*</u> with a person with confirmed COVID-19 *Close Contact = within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes


SECTION 3: Travel

YES	NO	
		Traveled to or lived in a location included in CT's Travel Advisory, in the past 14 days https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/travel


IF **YES** to any question in Section 1 but **NO** to Section 2:

-  **1. Stay home from school**
- 2. Notify school
- 3. Contact healthcare provider for evaluation and management instructions.
- 4. Follow WH BOE When to Return to School Protocol

IF **YES** to any question in Section 1 and **YES** to Section 2:

-  **1. Stay home from school**
- 2. Notify school
- 3. Contact healthcare provider for evaluation and management instructions.
- 5. Follow WH BOE When to Return to School Protocol

IF **YES** to Section 3:

-  **1. Stay home from school**
- 2. Notify school
- 3. Follow State of CT Travel Advisory / WH BOE When to Return to School Protocol