

Helpful FAQs for the Narragansett School System Reopening 2020-2021

1. What is the current plan for the 2020-2021 School Year?

- The complete plan that was submitted to and reviewed by the Rhode Island Department of Education can be found on our dedicated reopening webpage. It can be found [HERE](#). Once we receive additional guidance from the state, we will be able to share more about what to expect for the first day of school on August 31, 2020.

2. Will there be an online option for any student who is not comfortable with in person learning?

- We conducted recent surveys to understand the needs of parents in this specific situation and to allow parents to choose the option that fits their needs best. Though anyone can opt for this, preference will be given to those with medical documentation to support their request. This option also may be appropriate for students who thrive in the remote learning environment. In addition, the district provided three plans to RIDE, one for full in person schooling (With the option for parents to opt into Distance Learning for their child), one for partial opening and one for DL for all students. Once RIDE makes the final determination for what fall will look like, we will know which plan we will be moving forward with. If the cases spike, then RIDE will direct the districts to move to either the Partial or Full DL plans.

3. Will there be a comprehensive list of supplies for each grade level available so parents can ensure students will start the school year successfully?

- Each school will send out their modified supply lists and guidelines to parents directly as well as shared on the website once they're available.

4. When will RIDE decide how we will open school? Also, what if NSS disagrees with RIDE's determination?

- RIDE and the Governor's office will announce the status of school opening the week of August 16th. Narragansett is obligated to abide by their determination of which phase of opening is allowed.
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- 5. Will there be a hybrid option containing both distance learning and in-person learning?**
- If a hybrid situation is determined by the school or mandated by the state, In a “partial return” scenario:
 - NPS and NHS shall alternate in-person learning days for students. This means that at NPS, days will alternate by team with Wednesday being a distance learning day for all students
 - At NHS, grades will alternate by grade level with Wednesday being a distance learning day for all students.
 - At a partial in-person return, grades PK-2 shall attend in-person MWF, and Grades 3-4 shall attend in-person T/Th, with the alternate days being distance learning days.
 - If we move to a hybrid model, consideration will be given for full in person instruction with limited movement in exposure to other students to our students who struggled with distance learning due to their disability. Students who attend in person may have some or all of their classes virtually from a stable setting.
- 6. Are you thinking about a staggered schedule for the high, i.e., maybe grades 9 and 10 attending two days in and three days out and the 11 and 12 grades, the opposite rotating weekly or every other week. I do not feel it is safe to have school completely open with all grades attending at the same time.**
- This will depend on the model the district moves forward with once we receive guidance from RIDE. Examples of the scenarios can be found in the above answer.
- 7. At the high school, if we return, will clubs and sports teams be available to the students?**
- We are still developing how extracurricular activities and sports will look if we’re able to safely offer them in some capacity.
- 8. How will specials (art, music, Spanish, library, P.E.) be taught?**
- Plans and schedules have been drafted at all schools to ensure students have safe access to special subject course work. This may include in person with social distancing, virtual, or a combination of all while following DOH guidelines.
 - **Narragansett Elementary School (NES)** UA teachers will be going into classrooms K-4 and providing students with lessons in the classroom at the same interval as 2019-2020. The students will be in their classroom stable groups for all UA instruction. The UA teachers will be distanced @ 6 feet from students to provide instruction.
 - PE may be utilizing the gym and outdoor field area(weather permitting). The NES gym has a wall that can be separated and equipment may be used minimally and sanitized after each use.
 - Art will be on a cart- one day lessons planned- no long term projects- artifacts will go home the same day. Technology may be integrated as well. Teacher showing art samples, books, works of art etc.
 - Spanish will be in class with an in-person instructor and technology- cultural and language lessons. Poems may be recited, vocabulary reviewed and taught.
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- Library/Media- may offer books, read books, utilize technology- continue lessons on internet safety, responsible use, may also give some guidance for accessing platforms to be used during virtual and distance learning etc.
- Music- may utilize in-person and virtual lessons. Focus may be on genres of music, instruments, modeling use of instruments, musical artists. Band and chorus may be offered virtually.

- **Narragansett Pier Middle School (NPS)** has established stable groups and a schedule to support that model. UA teachers, with perhaps the exception of PE, will go to the classroom the homeroom/group is in to deliver instruction. UAs will access students at the same frequency they had during the 19-20 school year. The only exception would be SOAR access as that would require "de-stabilizing" the pods. During SOAR periods, students will report to assigned classes within their stable pods only.
- **Narragansett High School (NHS)** will expand upon our existing system of flex schedule class offerings to run courses in music, theater, and physical education. During in-person instruction, students will meet within their assigned stable pods. When possible, music, theater, and physical education classes will be held outside. When held inside, appropriate social distancing measures as well as CDC and RIDOH protocols, will be put in place per RIDE guidance. Synchronous, and asynchronous learning opportunities will be available for students who are not able to participate in in-person learning. All other elective content within our course of studies may be offered virtually.

9. Is school closure- (moving to full time distance learning) decided on a district by district basis - or is it a whole state decision?

- School closure will be on a district by district basis as determined by the department of health.

10. Which grades are considered transitional?

- In Narragansett, Grades 5 and 9 are considered transitional. However, the size of our schools allows both transitional and other grades to attend in a partial opening scenario.

11. What courses will be considered non-essential?

- Some electives will not be offered this year. For example, Adventure Education in the PE department at the high school will not be offered.

12. If there is a chance we may have to do any type of virtual learning in the future, can the teachers provide feedback for parents such as what can parents do better, what did parents do well and what can parents do in order to better support our teachers if we have to do virtual learning in the future? Teacher feedback on student and parent performance would be extremely helpful.

- Absolutely. We have shared lessons learned surveys for both parents and teachers to share what worked and what we could improve on to ensure we're continuing to develop virtual learning across the board. To find a link to all the surveys currently offered, please click [HERE](#).



13. Who are on your reopening committees?

- The reopening committee includes individuals from school administration, staff, and parents volunteers. More information can be found [HERE](#).

14. Are students going to enter the school year on time and will they go to school 5 days a week?

- The start of the school year for students will begin on August 31st. Once we have final guidance on the model we will be opening with, that will be shared. The state wide calendar the district will be following can be found [HERE](#). If there are changes due to health conditions, we will be sure to communicate that as well as updates to the school year and any dates as it becomes available.

15. Can I update my student's learning choice at a later time if our situation changes?

- The Narragansett school district recognizes that your family situation may change at any point during the school year. Therefore at any point you can change your options for opting into and out of distance learning. We just ask for a short period of time to accommodate for that change safely.

Health and Wellness

16. Is the school taking any type of air purifying measures into consideration for the protection of our students and teachers?

- Yes, our air systems are set to the highest possible outdoor air ventilation, eliminating recirculation, with highest possible filtration.

17. How will you ensure and enforce proper mask wearing among teenagers?

- A training video will be shared with students, staff, as well as playing on a screen in the schools to help the community remember the proper way to wear a mask and why it's so important. Also, students will have training at each school regarding the health and safety requirements for reopening. The session will include a mask and face covering training video that will remind students of the daily requirement, and this will be repeated on the first day and regularly thereafter.

18. Will there be daily temperature checks?

- Temperature checks shall be conducted upon entry to each building through thermal imaging technology or other means of assessment. Should an individual be screened for a temperature over 100 degrees, he/she shall be isolated and further assessed by the school nurse before either being sent home or allowed to proceed to class.

19. Academic learning is important, but mental health is equally important. Is there a wellness plan to keep a close focus on this?

- The Narragansett School System is focused on the overall wellness of our entire school community as we developed our reopening plan. We have worked with national research, engaged our school support personnel and have attended sessions with outside agencies to brainstorm how to address these needs. Our school psychologists, social workers, student assistance counselors, school counselors, nurses, and our SEL
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coach will all be checking in with students through both the in person and distance learning models. We are also in the process of developing a resource page on our website for all stakeholders to use.

If you have a specific concern about your child's needs, please reach out to either your child's school psychologist, principal or our Director of Student Services, Melissa Denton. They will work with you to make sure that we have a plan to best meet your child's needs as we return.

There are some students who require an in person model even when others move to a distance learning format. We know their needs make them more vulnerable. If we should consider your child for this, please reach out to your principal.

20. How will you maintain student privacy (HIPPA) while being open about possible health risks to the population at large?

- Should there be a positive case in our schools, we will follow the direction of the Rhode Island Department of Health as we notify potentially exposed students and staff. As we will be acting under their guidance, the Federal relaxation of certain HIPAA provisions applies.

21. The list of symptoms to check for on a daily basis includes non-specific things like a runny or stuffy nose, which during cold season many students will have. How might this and the availability of COVID testing combined affect school attendance and participation?

- Our School Committee is working together to make adjustments to the attendance policy to account for this situation. It will be presented at the August 19th, 2020 meeting.

22. Will having classes outside be encouraged so the kids won't feel cooped up in the same classroom?

- When possible, we will use outdoor spaces for education and recreation purposes. Each use will be followed by a deep cleaning to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

23. Will there be required tests of students and teachers/staff prior to the start of school and will there be follow up testing to ensure that individuals with the virus are not attending?

- No, students and staff will not be required to have a Covid-19 test before re-entering school on August 31st. All students are expected to complete a daily screening before the school day begins through a verbal, written or web-based system. Any students experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 before the school day begins are expected to stay home.
 - If a student develops COVID-19 symptoms while at school, the child will be taken to the school nurse and the isolation room immediately. Parents/guardians should be notified to pick up the student within the hour. Parents/guardians should seek medical advice for the student within 48 hours and schedule a COVID-19 test as needed.
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- If the test result is positive, individuals must complete a period of isolation as directed by RIDOH. Symptomatic students will not be permitted to return to school until documentation from a medical provider indicates testing was negative and there are no other restrictions, there is no evidence of illness restricting attendance, or it is documented that the individual is no longer contagious.

Transportation and Operations

24. Will the high school students be in pods?

- Grade levels will be divided into 2 teams of 65-75 students who shall share teachers and classrooms. These teams will then be divided into class cohorts of 20-25 students.

25. Will the students eat in the classroom?

- Each school will implement changes within lunch to ensure the safety of all students and staff.
- At the high school, NHS has created a second location to eat lunch which is enclosed and on school grounds. Teams will have their assigned lunch space which will allow for social distancing between class cohorts.
- At the Pier School, two stable groups will rotate weekly from the cafeteria or a classroom/outdoor tent.
- At the Elementary School, students will eat in the classrooms. Allergy classrooms will be established.

26. Will all the kids pass in the hallways at the same time?

- There will be staggered passing times for students. Hallways will be divided in $\frac{1}{2}$ and each half of the hallway will be designated as one way. Clear markings will be used to allow all to follow safely. All must wear face masks in the hallways. Additional steps shall include:
 - Utilizing outdoor space for transitions and as make-shift hallways.
 - Staggering transition times between classrooms to allow time for hallways to clear before new classes enter.
 - Where possible, staggering arrival time for non-bus riders by grade to reduce congestion at entry points.

27. What is the plan for families with multiple children in different grades and different schools in regards to pick up and bus transportation?

- Our transportation survey sent out did encourage families to share if they had students in multiple schools as well as if they lived in the same house, which can help us arrange for students to be bussed together. Further details and opportunities to add more feedback will be available as we further develop the plan.
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28. Will transportation be increased to help ease the amount of people waiting in the pickup line, especially at the elementary school?

- The elementary school will be getting a secondary drop off point. It's anticipated that we will be able to accommodate grades 2,3,& 4.

29. Will there be Plexiglass at all desks this fall and will masks be required?

- We will not be using plexiglass at desks. We are however focusing on model classrooms in each school that have been laid out to maximize social distancing. In accordance with RIDE guidance, whenever possible, 6 feet of space between students will be maintained. These model classrooms shall be replicated throughout each school. Considerations include:
 - Determining if there are any moveable, non-essential furnishings in each room and removing these items. These may include: Bookcases, teacher desks, wall cabinets, etc...
 - Determining how much space the teacher will need to occupy in the room.
 - Determine desk "grid type". Schools can choose between two models:
 - Staggered desk spacing that creates a "lattice" pattern
 - Inline spacing with a right-angle pattern

30. What PPE does the school have available?

- We have acquired masks including KN-95 and three-layer disposable masks and a number of washable masks in various colors and sizes for students and staff in the Narragansett school system as well as proper quantities of necessary cleaning supplies. We will continue to work with our operations team to ensure each school and administrative offices has access to the items needed to keep our community healthy and safe. Bus drivers and "greeters" will have masks for students or family members who do not have one. The Main Offices will have face masks available for those who enter the building after school begins. Additional masks will be available in each classroom and main office of each building as the need arises.

IT/Technology

31. Will laptops be available to 2nd graders for distant learning?

- Yes we plan to extend 1:1 to grades 1-2 as long as we receive all of our new devices from Dell. If we are in full distance learning we can provide devices to anyone who does not have access to one at home

32. Will the school stream each class in real time this way if a child is sick or his or her family member is sick they can log on and attend each class as it happens and have the ability to participate in lessons and ask questions?

- This is something we are currently working to make possible throughout the year. We continue to look at live video/digital options for situations such as this. Right now, we are utilizing the programs such as PowerSchool Learning and Zoom, that have been instrumental in allowing us to teach virtually.
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Student Services

33. How will students with an IEP receive services when we return to school?

- Narragansett has been working closely with the state and other RI districts to explore the best ways to provide special education services upon our return. We will continue to be in full compliance with IEP services. Even though students need to be assigned a stable group, some students will require some small group or individual services. We will do this taking extra precautions to clean between students, socially distance when possible and wear masks. If your student will need to receive services in multiple settings we will be in touch with you to discuss your child's schedule. If we need to move to distance learning for some students, your child may still attend school daily. This will be reserved for students who struggled to engage in distance learning. On the days your child's class is assigned distance learning, your child will come to school and spend their day in a space designated as their work environment. They will be socially distanced from other students. They will participate in the distance learning tasks that their peers are engaged in at home. This will provide support for them to access distance learning. They will also have access to in person therapies if the therapist is able to work in person. If you feel this is needed for your child, please contact the Director of Students Services, Melissa Denton, at mdenton@nssk12.org.

If at any time, you feel your child's IEP is not being fully implemented, you have the right to an IEP meeting. Please contact your child's service provider or Melissa Denton to set up this meeting. At the meeting, we will review your child's IEP, current services and develop a plan to make adjustments as needed.

34. Will students with an IEP be able to attend daily if the school decides to split up the days?

- If your child is identified as being vulnerable to learning loss or not being able to engage in a distance learning format, your child may attend school even when his or her peers are at home. This will be determined individually based on data from this year's distance learning and your child's specific needs. In person instruction will be provided for as long as staff are available in person and Narragansett is allowed to have students in person. On the days that your child's class is in distance learning, most of your child's day will also be in distance learning from a designated area in his or her school. During the day, your child may receive some in person instruction and some distance learning instruction based on the staffing in school on that day. All students with IEP services will not come to school. There were many students

who were able to fully engage in learning from home and participate in all IEP services in a distance format. This plan will be determined over the beginning weeks of school so we are ready if the schedule changes. If you have any questions about how your child's IEP will be implemented this school year, please contact Melissa Denton, Director of Student Services at mdenton@nssk12.org.

35. Previously my child, who has an IEP, received services in both their general education classroom and another setting for services. How will this work with stable groups?

- It is our goal to keep students in a stable group. However, we know to be in full compliance with a student's IEP, we will need to have some staff enter the general ed classroom for a service or the student may need to leave for a service. RI Dept of Ed has provided this same guidance. Members of our staff who move from class to class or work with students outside of the classroom will wear a mask, social distance when possible to deliver a service, and will wash hands and clean surfaces between services. Please contact the Director of Students Services, Melissa Denton, if you have specific questions about implementing your child's IEP. She can be reached at mdenton@nssk12.org and 401-792-9426.
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