

DATE	NAME	COMMENT
6/26/2020	Chelsea Braxton	Question for discussion: If we reopen as either fully or hybrid. What would we do about the staff and students who might be considered compromised or high risk? Would staff be able to use FMLA or stay home and do remote learning? Would the students be able to do remote learning? I was hoping you would be able to talk about that as well and address that with the Governor. Thank you
6/26/2020	Rupa Abraham	Dear Sir /madam , I'm one of a nurse who is recovering from this dreadful virus , it has been an intense struggle . Please consider factors like : 1. Kids & staff with asthma & other immunity compromised health history and how can you ensure their safety. 2. Kids and staff with parents or spouse in healthcare (who are exposed everyday) . Being a family , you cannot social distance . 2. Consider a good software for remote learning like Google where the teachers can have online classrooms , check their work and also submit assignments with deadline . The Pennsylvania & NJ state did an amazing job of remote learning , so please consider utilizing ideas from other states for the same . 3. Being a nurse , please please consider the safety of everyone and plateau this virus . 4. Elementary kids won't be able to wear mask at all times , it is just unrealistic. 5. Consider remote learning untill a good treatment or vaccine that is effective is out . Thankyou
6/27/2020	Karen Angell, MD, MPH, FAAFP	Good afternoon Dr. Haberstroh and the School Reopening Health and Wellness Working Group, I have been virtually attending the School Reopening Work Group: Health and Wellness meetings and reviewing the agenda and draft document on reopening plans, and I wanted to share a perspective from the School-Based Health Centers. I serve as the Medical Director for the School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) that ChristianaCare staffs in 20 Delaware public schools. We serve a large number of students in each school, providing episodic and preventive medical care, mental health services and nutrition services. Our providers complete school and sports physicals, provide counseling and offer vaccines and pediatric care in 18 high schools and 2 elementary schools. We offer reproductive health services in all high schools, including STI testing and treatment and contraception. We see students with acute illness and chronic conditions such as asthma. As I communicated previously, many of our patients' families have few resources and rely on the SBHC's for medical and mental health services that they would otherwise be unable to access. We have been able to provide some mental health and medical services via Telehealth, but are very limited by not having access to schools and our records and supplies at each site. I want to emphasize the importance of continuing to provide access to school buildings for SBHC providers even in the case of school closures due to substantial spread. Primary care and mental health care will continue to be necessary services, and even though our sites have expanded telehealth services, students may still have to come on-site for scheduled appointments at the SBHCs. The SBHCs are working to partner with individual schools to design plans for enacting evaluation and isolation of ill students, and for monitoring and evaluating ill students before they return to school. This will be critical to prevent spreading of infection within school facilities. I am available to provide any input or follow up via email at kantell@christianacare.org or phone at 302-723-3132, and I look forward to providing any information that would be helpful, so feel free to reach out to me. Thank you so much for your attention to this important work,

6/27/2020	Aaron Lefort	<p>Dear School Reopening Working Group members,</p> <p>As a parent of a school-age child, I have some thoughts on the school reopening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go back to school without masks, but encourage hand washing. • No social distancing. • If kids are symptomatic, isolate them, and send them home. <p>Kids need to go back to school without worrying about wearing a mask and staying 6 feet away from people.</p> <p>Kind regards,</p>
6/27/2020	Eileen Reynolds	<p>Thank you for the difficult work you are undertaking on behalf of the children's return to school.</p> <p>If you've been out and about, you'll notice the distortion of people's voices through their masks. It is easier to understand if the person is wearing a clear shield to help clarify through facial and speechreading clues, not to mention that seeing the fuller view of the face is psychologically more comforting.</p> <p>I believe visual accessibility is helpful for all, but essential for use with all students with any degree of hearing impairment, any student with attention, listening, or language weakness or challenges, including those with ESL needs.</p> <p>So essentially I believe clear should be the norm if teachers are going to be required to utilize them and to provide equitable instruction.</p> <p>Shields are preferred if assistive listening with a remote mic is utilized. With the use of facial protections, more students will be requiring this.</p> <p>Not certain at what level, the standards will be set, but I wanted to supply you with some documentation to support this recommendation.</p> <p>As I learn more about what other hearing specialists are discovering about pros and cons, or specific suppliers and brands, I will pass the info along hoping it will be disseminated to the proper purchasing agents.</p> <p>Please let me know if there are others this should be shared with.</p> <p>https://www.acialliance.org/page/consideration-of-face-shields-as-return-to-school-option?fbclid=IwAR3VZmtvujaSsmmpcf7U4Ek0oqBchqsQLfwNgXdYt3X66Lbr5EntRx9etzs</p>
6/27/2020	Susan Eveland	<p>Hello,</p> <p>Thank you for all the workgroup sessions available to the public and taking comments.</p> <p>I have a suggestion that DOE reopening phases be termed the same as Governor Carney's. The Operations and Technology Group has used Phase 1 as Minimal Spread. As I understand it the Governor's Phase 1 was stay home/shelter in place.</p> <p>Another idea from a neighboring state is to use traffic light colors to name the phases. Red being most severe measures taken, Yellow, moderate measures taken and Green, Least amount of change.</p> <p>Thank you</p>

6/28/2020	Jeff Hall	<p>Hello,</p> <p>Thank you for collecting and considering comments regarding school reopening.</p> <p>From the discussions that have been chronicled in the newspaper so far, there has been talk of hybrid classes - sometimes the students will be physically in the classroom, sometimes learning from home.</p> <p>Please keep in mind that the parents of these students have jobs and the economic condition of Kent County is such that many people have multiple jobs to makes ends meet. There may be a large number of households who simply cannot support students at home - especially managing multiple students in different grades (maybe at different schools - some in elementary, some in a middle or high school) while also being expected to show up for work, perhaps even working shift work. Another barrier to long-term at-home teaching is the lack of availability or affordability in broadband Internet access. Building towers and expanding service is a commercial enterprise that takes years for approvals and construction. So, even if the state supplies computers students may not have connectivity, may not be able to afford connectivity, or may not be able to support multiple Zoom sessions occurring at the same time on the same network. And, it's not like the federal or state government has continued to provide financial relief so many families may have needed to cut Internet service for lack of income.</p> <p>The students in K-12 are - so far - the least impacted by the virus, even when they contract it. The at-risk populations involved in re-opening are teachers, staff, and bus drivers.</p> <p>Idea: Just like students must show proof of a physical and immunizations in order to attend school, require students and staff to have proof of a COVID-19 test (negative results) taken within a month of school starting. Then, require retesting every month through December. This would provide a baseline level of comfort that the majority of the students and staff are clear of the virus.</p> <p>The initial quarantine actions in the spring of 2020 - where students and employees all participated in the lockdown - may give a false signal of what is possible this fall. While schools may be planning on maximum flexibility and parents ready at home to support education, now employers will be trying to restart and maintain business operations and relying on those same parents to show up and be ready for work, be ready for changes in shifts, be ready for overtime...it will not be the same quarantine landscape as the lockdown.</p> <p>I believe the working assumption should be: if students are not in the classroom, they won't be learning. While "daycare" is not formally recognized as a mission of any education institution, it is nonetheless a foundational role upon which two-income families rely. The idea of hybrid learning may be a direct threat to those two-income situations or, in worst case scenarios, students are simply home alone - not learning - while parents work.</p> <p>Thank you,</p>
6/28/2020	Andrea Creed	<p>Hello</p> <p>████████████████████ is non verbal & on the autism spectrum. He requires staff to be in close proximity for safety (his & others), learning/use of his speech generating device & so he can access FAPE. He also has behaviors where keeping spit to himself is difficult & he may not be able to consistently wear a mask. He also can have difficulty keeping personal space. He has sensory processing difficulties & puts objects & his hands in his mouth. All of these things are not uncommon for children on the spectrum & should be considered & planned for when planning for a safe reopening.</p> <p>Thank you,</p>

6/28/2020	Eileen Reynolds	<p>Hope this spreadsheet is helpful for finding products most suitable for the children .? https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XKkCgt2p-ICN-Q6M9d9qTytpZbU34seuQjsLu5fhQ/htmlview</p>
6/28/2020	Sue B. Smith, RN	<p>Collaboration of invested employees and families.</p> <p>In first and second scenario: desks facing forward to decrease airborne exposure of droplets..</p> <p>Spacing: nurses office: identified rooms, isolation area for care of students with trachs, vents, nebulizers, resp.issues and isolation of symptomatic students. Room with closed door, area for isolation/ separate from other students Separate ill students from students receiving daily medications, daily procedures concern: care of students with medically complex disease processes that required: oxygen, suctioning, aerosol treatments, tracheostomy's and ventilators How can the release of aerosol transmission be controlled so that it does not affect other students.</p> <p>Nurses office: small, lack of room to social distance students, may need to consider relocating the nurses office Resources in the nurses office: bathroom/ sink/ isolation area</p> <p>Designated area for quarantine: need area with supervision.</p> <p>Classrooms: suggestion: staff purge their classrooms to enable more student desks: remove furniture that was not school issued. also remove any items that can not be wiped off daily: rugs, cloth chairs, toys, etc.</p> <p>Guidelines for follow up: when parent calls to report: parent or child have tested positive</p> <p>Guidelines for masks: Do we follow DPH guidelines: 3-12 highly recommended over age 13 required</p> <p>Mask: mask with clear center: may be recommended for teachers and or students. Parents provide mask for their children.</p> <p>Education regarding masks properly fitting: if every time that you speak your mask is coming down off of your nose and you need to readjust: the mask is not a good fit.</p> <p>Consistency with cleaning: N95 required for all cleaning vs required for when a positive case is identified. Results will not be available in a timely manner: currently takes approx. 90 mins for a rapid test.</p> <p>Entering buildings; no more than 2 access: consider, enter multiple access depending on the building: ex: some buildings have grade level areas whereas students could enter, decreasing students in the hallways</p> <p>Screenings: temp checks during the day: students with elevated temp, should be evaluated by school nurse: not all temps, will be COVID related.</p> <p>PPE: Gloves: add to be used when assisting students with personal hygiene</p> <p>PPE supplies: from DEMA and State of Delaware: recommendations regarding use of the supplies:</p>

Need to educate that gloves give a false sense of security; People wear gloves, but do not properly use them> they touch everything, they do not wash their hands after wearing them, they do not know how to remove them(need education regarding gloves: proper use)

Hand hygiene is very important: education regarding appropriate hand hygiene.

Contact tracing: Public health: same as with TB tracing

When schools are closed or open(with limitations)
assessment of family needs related to virtual learning
technology availability

Busing and Transportation;
Encourage parents that can transport their child/children to do so.

Reevaluation of attendance policies for students and staff: due to COVID 19 , may be out of school for greater than 14 days, need to adjust as to not penalize students and staff, due to this virus is unpredictable and could cause multiple days of absenteeism

Academics: Parent should have a choice, if they do or do not want their child to attend and districts should have an educational plan: to accommodate students for virtual learning.

Elementary: need the teacher interaction
Secondary: could continue virtual

biggest challenge is child care: students under the age of 12 should not be left home alone: students 12 and over, may stay home without parent/guardian supervision if being unsupervised is safe.

Encourage consistency in the State:
Communication to families ASAP, regarding plans for reopening.

Annual Screenings per regulation: Request Governor give an extension till June 2021 to give school nurses time to individually complete screenings as opposed to mass screenings Or request waiver for this year for screenings; with exception of parent or teacher requests for hearing or vision screenings: individual basis.

Physicals and immunizations regulations will not be adjusted, required per Regulations.

Regarding: COVID immunization: will it be required or will parents be able to religiously or medically exempt their child.

All students are vulnerable: when our students return to school, it will be then that we will hopefully identify, who is struggling and possibly why.

Consideration of Cohorts when considering attendance plan for hybrid model.

The A/B schedule of one day on and one day off, considered difficult to manage for parents regarding daycare, to many variables

		<p>with daily changes: When in school full time and doing an A/B schedule, was confusing enough for some and they were coming everyday. Attending one day on and one day off, is not a preference for many of our parents.</p>
6/29/2020	Tina Alinskas	<p>Hello.</p> <p>I know that there is a decision forthcoming regarding physical attendance at schools this Fall.</p> <p>I sincerely hope that schools will maintain and perfect the already incredible job that they are doing with digital learning. Keeping our students ...and just as importantly their families...safe is of primary importance.</p> <p>If there is to be a physical attendance option this Fall please, please make it just that...an option.</p> <p>Several school districts in the South...Georgia for instance...have just announced physical attendance protocol for the Fall with optional digital learning.</p> <p>In my opinion their physical protocol is severely lacking but they may not be able to change so much of their structure to support a better and more proven plan. With digital learning as an option each family is given a chance to weigh their particular risks and circumstances and decide what is best for their family as a whole.</p> <p>There is no question in my mind that I would choose digital learning if it is an option because I seriously doubt that our own school district can be retrofitted to accommodate not only the CDC recommendations but the examples displayed in other countries that have kept the spread of the virus down:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reducing bus capacity - spraying down backpacks before entry - disinfecting shoes before entry - throwing away travel gloves and masks and providing new for each student upon entry - sanitization stations inside and outside of each classroom - extended time between each class to wash hands - meals eaten at desk in protected shell - additional staff for cleaning and sanitizing throughout the day <p>Without the implementation of these types of protocol it is not possible to keep the students and their families safe. It is also a hazardous situation for teachers.</p> <p>We are all struggling to balance how to stay safe and how best to return to normal...but again...I sincerely request...make physical attendance in schools optional in the Fall.</p> <p>I appreciate the significant burden this decision is on the entire educational team. But ultimately lives matter before all else....the teachers are doing an excellent job in the digital environment...and many kids are thriving.</p> <p>Physical attendance either not at all or optional.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Best Regards,</p>

6/29/2020

Patrick Swier, MD

Dear sir, madam,

I have recently sent an email to the superintendent and Dr Hanwell, about using the “flipped classroom model” as a model moving forward to keep our children safe in smaller groups and improve their instruction at the same time. I have copied the email below and following this letter I am suggesting a way to implement this plan.

Dear Mr Fulton

Supporting Cape High School Graduates, as the first donor to the Brittingham Educational Scholarship fund,

[REDACTED], I am fully invested in and supportive of my children’s education [REDACTED]. I realize I am writing you during possibly the most challenging times in the history of public education and would like to offer some ideas for your consideration as we embark on the unprecedented future of the school district. Former president Obama once said that a crisis is also an opportunity for change, and as we adapt to a changing public school instructional model for the near future and worry about maintaining and improving the quality of classroom instruction, we may as well take this opportunity to consider research supported improvements to the existing educational model. There is an instructional model that I continue to learn about that may be of assistance to the district. Possibly, some of the instructional staff are currently using parts or all of this model. The “flipped classroom” was a model of teaching which was introduced several years ago. I remember listening to an NPR host congratulating two teachers who won the innovative national “teacher of the year award” who had introduced the “flipped class room”. I am sure you are familiar with the concept, which involves “flipping” the traditional “teaching in front of the classroom method” to watching a video of this lecture at home and coming to class the next day to have individualized help with questions regarding the lecture and solving problems regarding the taught material. I have learned that a school district in Michigan is successfully using this model (1) Further, there is a research study that provides support data about the effectiveness of this model (2) and it is actively being considered in England (3) and has been implemented in my home country, the Netherlands already.

In this model, a teacher will be much better able to individualize his or her teaching, and be able to give students the level of attention they need. In theory, kids would be better able to progress at their own speed, and move through the prerecorded course material while staying in their own classroom, without having to move up to an advanced level course in a different class. During this pandemic, which may very likely last another school year until everyone has been vaccinated, the movement of children will be restricted. Social distancing will remain a classroom organizational challenge. Questions remain regarding whether or not the quality of classroom instruction will be negatively impacted . The flipped classroom may be an instructional model that would allow students to get through the lecture material at the required pace while also providing flexibility with how a school day is organized and keeping in mind state mandated school day requirements. .

So, I offer embracing this opportunity for change and memorializing the death of so many Covid-19 patients this weekend by starting a public-school instructional model supported by good research. You can argue that the pandemic is forcing your hand and ask for government help for internet access for everyone and a standardized lecture series library by the best teachers in the public school system, smaller classrooms and the other things you are forced to have now, but were always on the wish list but were out of reach. I hope you will seize the moment, and that the pandemic will be the impetus for change in public school instruction for the better.

Please feel free to contact me or encourage staff to contact me to discuss how I might be of help supporting the improvement of classroom instruction. Possibly we could consider a pilot study to learn more about the efficacy of this model for our district. Thank you in advance for your leadership in improving the future for our children, youth, and families.

Happy Memorial Day weekend and best wishes

Patrick Swier M.D.

(1) <https://www.educationdive.com/news/amid-limited-research-educators-find-success-with-flipped-classroom-model/564542>

(2). <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2332858419870489>

(3) <https://www.theguardian.com/the-abcs-of-recruiting-teachers-remotely/2020/may/01/teacher-training-how-do-you-prepare-to-teach-a-new-class-during-lockdown>

The way to implement this plan, I think would be to divide the school day in 3 blocks of 2.5 hours. The activities during these blocks will be in different locations: the class room, the library and sports activities.

The classroom block will be used for problem solving in small groups under guidance of a teacher, the library block will be used for watching instructional videos on iPads with headphones, the sports block will be used for the various sports activities in smaller groups.

If a typical classroom with 30 students can be divided in groups of 10 students each it will allow for groups of 10 with plenty of distancing to undergo problem solving in Algebra, Chemistry, History, English and Art/music of 30 min each in 1 class room with the teachers rotating rather than the students, with 5 min between 30 min classes.

The classroom will empty into the library for video watching in preparation of tomorrow's class, with sports at the end of the day. The other 2 parts of the class will rotate as well just in a different order.

The prerecorded classes will be from the best teachers in the public educational system or other sources like Kahn academy. I believe over time it should be possible to build a world class library of video instruction, particularly if there is a collaboration between public schools within Delaware and eventually between states. In countries where this has been implemented, like in Singapore and South Korea, some of the best instructors in the country have millions of followers and take on legendary status on social media. With the availability of iPads with headphones in the library with good wi-fi with texting, airdropping and social media disabled, the students can concentrate on the lectures they have to watch, while minimizing distractions and maintaining social distancing requirements. Additional resources are available in the library for research and this should circumvent the problem of not all students having iPads or wifi available. Cleaning the iPads between use with alcohol should be easy, notes can be stored in each students' iCloud or Google drive.

The classes will be shorter and in smaller groups to allow for more space between the desks. The shorter classes are just for trouble shooting, problem solving and not for lecturing. If there is not enough time for just problem solving and or essay writing you can always give once a week home work for over the weekend for students to do some extra work safely at home on their computer / laptop at home, or go to 4 classes per day rather than 5. Also, some classes can be taught using the "Harkness method", made famous at Phillips Exeter, where students sit around a table and debate certain topics, learn from each other, which would fit with the problem solving purpose of class room instruction guided by the teacher.

Sports will have to be taught in smaller groups to allow for better social distancing. I think the utilization of the above mentioned block schedule should allow for that.

Anyway, these are just some thoughts and I hope it helps getting things going again.

Best wishes

6/29/2020	Kerri Best	<p>Greetings:</p> <p>I sent another email a couple weeks ago asking for strong consideration to having kids go back to school normally allowing the parents that choose that chose this option, to take this risk. For those that are concerned about sending their children back to in-person school, there should be a strong focus on offering online options. I am attaching an article from USA Today that discusses this very thing. In the article it references a school district in FL that will have normal instruction but then is offering two other options: a virtual option from the students home district and an option to attend a virtual charter school. I hope that you will read this article and research these innovative options that other districts are trying. All parents in the state should have options that best meet the needs of their particular children and their individualized perceived risk.</p> <p>Thank you, Kerri Best</p> <p>'This is hell': Parents and kids hate online classes. Going back to school likely will include more of it. America's teachers know little about how to improve online classes. They're spending almost no energy trying to figure it out before back to school.</p> <p>Read in USA TODAY: https://apple.news/AgfGO5BCHT6KUAP2GAnU15A</p> <p>Shared from Apple News</p>
06/29 2020	Barrie Rudnick	<p>In the event that Delaware is trying to reopening schools, but struggling to meet guidelines for safe distancing, I would like to suggest the following plan for Delaware schools:</p> <p>Since high schoolers are over the age of 13, they are in the best position to safely remain home alone, and the best equipped to be able to benefit from distance learning. I recognize that the ideal is to have everyone learning in person, however, if we have only the high schoolers doing distance learning, that frees up resources that can be spread among the other students. It also places parents in the best position to be able to go to work without endangering the children.</p> <p>We could use the high school buses, high school buildings, and high school cafeterias for the 4th, 5th, and 6th graders, thereby allowing more room to spread out kindergarten through 8th grade students, providing more room to distance in the elementary and middle school buildings. This also provides more room between children on the buses.</p> <p>Perhaps we could bring the high school children into school for a week to have them meet their teachers and get supplies, and then have them continue with distance learning, until it is safe to have all students in the schools again. Perhaps we could utilize the field trip buses and find a location for the high schoolers to meet in person periodically.</p> <p>I hope that you can find a solution that can address the physical and mental health of Delaware students. Thank you.</p>

6/29/2020

Beth C

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Allow older/at risk teachers to take a year off without having to retire or lose their job/or be allowed to virtually teach
- If mask are mandated in school, strongly encourage classrooms to have some outdoor time where they can take their masks off or an area for people outside similar to a bathroom break
- Have teachers switch classrooms instead of the students as this will reduce close contact in the hallways and students will be exposed less to other students (this will not work in many HS but maybe with some really lengthy planning could work with some)
- Flex schedules: Two shifts; many schools used to have AM/PM kindergarten-a good portion of MS/HS could probably do this with virtual classes, will be more difficult for ES
- offer online programs modeled after all of the other states that have done it ahead of us
- allow parents such as my family to be able to purchase catastrophic health insurance for their kids (yes, I understand the state has a program but apparently we are "rich")
- the Governor needs to sign orders that being with your family is a human right since apparently it isn't. My child will not be attending school under the possibility of getting sick and me not being able to be with my child. Many people have disgustingly died alone due to ridiculous, tyrannical overreach under the guise of health and safety.
- start programs for families that want to co-op home school. This can offer another mechanism for parents with children that have compromised immune systems or special needs to still be in a group even if it is smaller. I personally could homeschool 1-2 full days a week but would still work. Some other parents have this flexibility. I've looked into this and other parents ARE interested in doing this but putting it all together and finding out who in your town with similar ages is quite difficult and time to register is running short
- get rid of overpaid administration positions
- consolidate the school districts and cut the overhead

6/29/2020

Christina
Koutsourades

Good morning,

Please find the following rapid-turnaround study, "Considerations for Reopening Pennsylvania Schools," that is informing Pennsylvania's school reopening plan. In addition, there is a webinar about the study forwarded below.

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midatlantic/pdf/ReopeningPASchools.pdf>

I hope this group can use this new information to make informed decisions for Delaware's reopening.

Best,

Christina Koutsourades

Christina Koutsourades, M.Ed.
Education Specialist
Office of Early Learning
Delaware Department of Education
Townsend Building
401 Federal Street, Suite #2, Room #130
Dover, DE 19901
Phone: (302) 735-4241
Christina.Koutsourades@doe.k12.de.us

From: REL Mid-Atlantic at Mathematica <communications@mathematica-mpr.com>
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 4:35 PM
To: Koutsourades Christina <Christina.Koutsourades@doe.k12.de.us>
Subject: [External] Free Webinar on Reopening Schools Safely: New Evidence on Mitigating COVID-19 Spread

WARNING: External Email - This email originated outside of the State email system.
DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you recognize the sender and are expecting the email.

This message contains graphics. If you do not see the graphics, click here to view

REL Webinar: Reopening Schools Safely: New Evidence on Mitigating COVID-19 Spread
July 6, 2020, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Eastern Time

Join REL Mid-Atlantic for a webinar that will discuss considerations for reopening schools safely. This webinar will share lessons learned from a rapid-turnaround study in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Education to inform their guidance for reopening schools in the fall. Presenters will discuss 1) input from stakeholders, 2) lessons from a rapid review of emerging evidence on the COVID-19 pandemic and best practices in blended and remote learning, and 3) lessons from an agent-based modeling simulation that estimated the level of COVID-19 transmission in schools under various scenarios and mitigation strategies.

Presenters include:
• Brian Gill, REL Mid-Atlantic

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravi Goyal, REL Mid-Atlantic • Jacob Hartog, REL Mid-Atlantic • Danielle DeLisle, REL Mid-Atlantic • Adam Schott, Special Assistant to the Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Education <p>The webinar is open to the public. This webinar is for school, district, and state-level educators and community partners. Submit your questions for the presenters in advance by emailing RELmidatlantic@mathematica-mpr.com. You can also ask questions during the webinar.</p> <p>Reopening Schools Safely: New Evidence on Mitigating COVID-19 Spread July 6, 2020 1:30–2:30 p.m. Eastern time</p> <p>Click here to tweet about @RELMidAtlantic</p> <p>Click here to unsubscribe</p> <p>This work was funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES) under contract ED-IES-17-C-0006, with REL Mid-Atlantic, administered by Mathematica. The content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.</p>
6/30/2020	Carter Bowersox	<p>WARNING: External Email - This email originated outside of the State email system. DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you recognize the sender and are expecting the email.</p> <p>https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.npr.org%2Fsections%2Fcoronavirus-live-updates%2F2020%2F06%2F29%2F884638999%2Fu-s-pediatricians-call-for-in-person-school-this-fall%3Futm_campaign%3Dclevelanddotcom_sf%26utm_source%3Dfacebook%26utm_medium%3Dsocial&data=01%7C01%7Creopeningideas%40doe.k12.de.us%7C7ddae0741961496fe4f908d81d01d047%7C21b6d6867f08438dbdc6bd214d829bd2%7C1&data=7e6LALHgckjH7%2B1lxivjOSOoxlq2Vh3owSwNa%2FRyvo%3D&reserved=0</p>

6/30/2020	Jenn Ruebush	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I'm a parent of a college sophomore and a high school senior. I serve on the relationship sub-working group of our school's reentry group.</p> <p>I have a fewmsahyg questions I have for the health and wellness group as well as the entire group for the state.</p> <p>How are schools monitoring the mental and emotional wellbeing of students and adults?</p> <p>Will schools receive additional funding to provide more mental health services?</p> <p>Is the state prioritizing Social Emotional Learning in the curriculum? Is it training students and adults?</p> <p>Are there community agencies that can partner with schools to provide training and services?</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
6/30/2020	Sue B. Smith, RN	Emotion management K-6 recognize the significance of the effect of stress on children. 5/20/20 NASN
6/30/2020	Janet Zegna	<p>Good afternoon,</p> <p>I will begin by saying thank you for your work. As a first grade teacher thinking ahead to the beginning of the school year and the million minutiae details that I have thought of, I cannot imagine how you will all make decisions for all of us wanting to return in the fall.</p> <p>Because of my desire to be back in the classroom, I have thought many weeks about what I think would be the most ideal way to return to MY classroom. Of course, every teacher is going to have differing views and it is for us to meld them into the best possible scenario. That is why I offer these thoughts:</p> <p>For the K-2 students returning in the fall, I recommend having the structure of school be like the old half-day kindergarten Monday through Thursday, with Fridays being used for video-conferencing as a whole class, meeting individually with students or families, grading, and planning/prep for the following week. Parents should have a selection of morning or afternoon. This may help them with their work schedules. Additionally, families should be able to have siblings in different grade levels attend at the same time of day. This may also help with bussing because families can sit together on the bus and their would be half as many students to deliver each time.</p> <p>In my case, I should have 22-24 students. This would mean that ideally 11-12 would attend in the morning and 11-12 in the afternoon. My recommendation would be that for the children of those parents who don't actively choose a morning or afternoon session, those children are placed in whichever session is less full in order to have an even balance for morning and afternoon.</p> <p>Lunch would be eaten at home, with the cafeteria staff providing packaged breakfasts and lunches to those who would like them prior to them heading to buses or classrooms. This time would be used for teachers to have their lunch and brief planning and for custodial services to sanitize classrooms between sessions.</p> <p>Teachers would teach those lessons AT SCHOOL that do not translate well to video conferencing or online. Thinking about my</p>

lessons, these could be those small group lessons where we meet with the students at their level. Whole group reading, spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and writing instruction could be done via remote learning (teacher videos or other online resources) the day before and then when the teacher meets with students in the classroom is when they can address those specific needs. Math instruction is so discussion based, my recommendation would be to teach those lessons in the classroom with student level-based work being done remotely. Science again is so hands-on (if done as it should be) this would need to happen at school, but social studies can be taught remotely.

Students will need individual tools, books, and manipulatives for their studies. My team and I have already begun discussing what items they would need. Additionally, our math curriculum company has also begun planning for that inevitability. If students come to school each day, they will have access to those tools that they need both at school and at home. We fear that if we are all-remote, there will be families/students that do not have the tools they need to complete task successfully. Also, meeting face-to-face in some capacity will give us the opportunity to check with each student to see how they are faring (without a parent hovering over them and answering the questions for them as has been the case with several families this past spring). That also leads me to say that assessments can be done when the students are in the classroom as well.

Having half a class in the room at one time also eliminates their belongings being mixed together. As it stands now in many classrooms, students share cubbies places to store backpacks and outerwear during the day. By limiting the number of students in the room to half, there is plenty of space for those items to be separated.

Those students who are not with the teacher during that half a day can be watching recorded lessons, doing their “seatwork” at home, as well as using online resources as support/enrichment. We can continue to have them complete the work on Class Dojo portfolios or Schoology assignments which are very useful tools for keeping track of their work.

I know it’s a lot! Thank you for providing teachers as well as the public a place to offer their insight. I know that you will be making decisions based on the science and I am hopeful that we can see some return to the classroom, even if for an abbreviated period. I miss my students and the interactions that come with teaching little people!!

Respectfully,

6/30/2020

Lisa McCulley

Dear Dr. Bunting and all of those concerned,

The group Stand Up Delaware has formed a Reopen Schools Committee with the goal of composing best practice recommendations to reopen our schools safely and effectively with feasible, common sense solutions.

After several weeks of research and discussion, we have completed it for your examination. It is respectfully and urgently requested that you read, review, and strongly consider [our approach](#).

We also welcome the opportunity of meeting with you or a designee to discuss our report and how it could be incorporated in the reopening schools process here in our State.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

6/30/2020	Ame Seven	<p>Honestly until there is an approved vaccine, presumed to arrive early 2021, many parents and employees will not feel safe returning to crowded working conditions.</p> <p>Spacing in class rooms and on buses is just not possible...they are already over crowded.</p> <p>Schools should reopen ONLY for those students that do not have the technology to continue classes via Zoom AT HOME, or that require special assistance/classes due to IEPs, OT etc., that cannot be done remotely.</p> <p>Only staff needed to support these students, should be allowed in the buildings.</p> <p>Possibly hire additional teachers or aides with bonus to work in person with these students. Maybe even have access to the zoom meetings the rest of the students are experiencing. (ZOOM at school)</p> <p>Masks and distancing should be mandated for those in the buildings.</p> <p>Meals should continue to be distributed as they have been to assist those populations that need it.</p> <p>Basically... REDUCE those that are in the building, and keep equity amongst all students by offering a choice to either return to school IF truly needed, in order to access the Zoom meetings, or continue via Zoom from home.</p> <p>We should NOT force anyone to risk their and their loved ones lives or have to pick between their career and health.</p> <p>Better to continue virtually vs. present an opportunity for the virus to re-spread and potentially mutate and become worse.</p> <p>Majority of students already interact virtually with friends, even while IN school, they are Not missing out on socialization. They have been "online" longer than many adults. Many are actually thriving academically via zoom as it provides good experience in responsibility.</p> <p>DO NOT mandate opening before the Vaccine in 2021.</p> <p>Thank you,</p>
-----------	-----------	--

6/30/2020

Karen
Jernigan

Good Afternoon,

My name is Karen Jernigan. I currently have three children in the brandywine school district. Honestly, I enjoyed remote learning as my children seemed to excel and grace through the curriculum with ease. When asked, my children informed me that they were more focused because of non distractions of peers and one on one instruction. Personally, I felt safe in secure knowing that my children did not have to face the anxieties of the current pandemic.

My suggestion is to let parents have the preference of sending children to school buildings physically or remote learning until they feel secure enough. My fears are that our young students may not fully adhere to social distancing and as we globally face a second wave, will it indeed be safe for our children to return to school physically. If students are forced to go to a school building for the upcoming school year, how will it affect the social environment. Will students be ostracized during lunchtime, recess, instruction time?

In a society where children already are faced with adversities such as bullying, and indifference, will wearing masks become just one more thing to mock? In conclusion, I believe that there should be resources for parents who choose to continue remote learning as I am in 100 percent agreement with my children staying home in order to continue to be safe. I understand that this opposite may not be feasible for every parent and that's ok as long as there is a option without consequence.

Sincerely,

7/1/2020

Linda Shock

To Whom it may concern,

As a grandparent that had the task of teaching my 8 year grandson the remainder of the 2020 school year I have great concerns on the upcoming starting of school. There were many things that were out of the schools control but there are many things that need to be corrected before the new school year.

1. The lessons needs to be taught everyday in the Elementary schools. I feel the students in Elementary schools were the least prepared to handle the teaching.
Zoom every couple of weeks is not teaching. It was only the last week of school that I felt the teacher connected with her class. This should have happened from the beginning.
2. The lessons need to be taught by a teacher EVERYDAY and the students needs to have the materials in their possession before hand. Many times we didn't have the lessons when needed or it was incorrect. Several times I had to call and report mistakes!
3. Most of the work sent home was busy work. I pulled more information from the internet to keep my grandson on track for his 2nd grade curriculum.
4. All books that are to be used in class need to be given to the student to follow along with the lessons. All workbooks need to be in the students hands before school starts.
5. I feel if school is not going to as a normal school year parents should have the choice of homeschooling Without having to withdraw them from their home school.
6. Our students need to be able to get any and all instruction available by any means until the schools get their acts together.
7. Kids need to be able to socialize with their classmates at this young age. You are doing so much harm to each child the longer you keep them away from a classroom.
8. Teacher led lessons on zoom need to be recorded so parents that work can pull them up when they get home from work and help their child.
9. You as a district are creating more problems that are putting more mental stress on already stressed families. Get your act together and get the kids back in school by September!
10. My grandchild was a student in the Capital School District.

Sincerely,

7/1/2020	Christy Gallagher-Krezel	<p>Hello</p> <p>I wanted to share this with the committee making decisions/arguing the reopening of DE schools? I feel it's a well thought out, realistic approach based on science not political motive By a prominent county in PA.</p> <p>http://www.buckscounty.org/docs/default-source/coronavirus/faq-bucks-county-school-guidelines-final.pdf?sfvrsn=1dbc0fef_4</p> <p>Best,</p>
7/1/2020	Lisa Marie McCulley	<p>Dear Dr. Bunting and Reopen Schools Groups:</p> <p>An excellent report was released yesterday from the group, Stand Up Delaware. They formed a committee of teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, doctors, nurses, school nurses, etc. Experts in their field and residents of Delaware. In case you did not receive it, it is attached to this email.</p> <p>Also, Bucks County PA released guidelines. Please consider these two documents for safe and feasible suggestions for our schools and our children.</p> <p>http://www.buckscounty.org/docs/default-source/coronavirus/faq-bucks-county-school-guidelines-final.pdf?sfvrsn=1dbc0fef_4</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
7/1/2020	Amanda Longo	<p>Good Afternoon,</p> <p>A friend sent me this email after a Facebook post I wrote with a list of concerns I have for the upcoming school year.</p> <p>I am a mother of four, and under normal times my husband and I both work full time outside of the home. He is an essential employee with the state and works Monday-Friday 10a-6p, I have been working extremely part time, but once we open up fully and get more busy, I would have to return to work full time. Our current state in our home is my youngest (age 4) returned to daycare mid June when daycare's were allowed to reopen, my other three children (ages 12, 10, and 6) stay home alone for a few hours while I work. During the hours that I am gone, my youngest mostly just watches TV, as my girls are really not equipped to do activities and such with him. I understand that this is frowned upon, but I really do not have any other options without having family in the area.</p> <p>I have heard talk about half in school and half virtual, or even all virtual. I just do not know how that can be feasible for families where both parents work, especially parents of elementary aged children. Who is going to help the kids with their school work on the virtual days? Who is providing the childcare for these children while their parents work? There is simply not enough "daycare" settings for elementary aged children. And any daycare that does provide care to children of this age will have to follow social distancing guidelines. Thus leaving A LOT of children and families with nowhere to go. I understand having to make these decisions is hard, but I just can't see how doing anything virtual, especially at the lowers levels is feasible.</p> <p>I am extremely concerned with the social development of my six year old. He is already somewhat socially awkward and this has</p>

		<p>already set him back with the 3.5 months that we're currently at and not being able to do certain things, including not finishing the school year in person. He did not receive any benefits from virtual learning, and we tried to keep him engaged, but it was not the right setting and frankly, none of it was "teaching." I am not a teacher, and to just give him a few worksheets every day is hardly teaching him, even though I can try my best, it is not my skill set. If he were to have to do virtual learning, I imagine most of his days would continue to be spent watching TV while I worked. On that note, what if my daughter and him had opposite "in school" days? Then what? I understand you don't have the answers right now, but these need to be things that are being discussed and thought about. How does this impact the children later down the road? How far behind will they be? Are they ever going to catch up?</p> <p>I would imagine by now you have seen the recommendations by the AAP encouraging schools to have the children back to school in the fall, and I can only hope you are going to follow those recommendations. If some families are scared and have the means to home school or do virtual learning, then they should be able to do so, but there is a large part of the workforce that simply cannot afford to stay home if their children are not in school.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
7/1/2020	Jetta Sargent	<p>To: Delaware School Reopening Working Groups From: Concerned Essential Working Parents</p> <p>After reading the questions posted from parents on-line in regards to public schools opening in the fall, I too have some concerns, comments and questions.</p> <p>We are parents of one entering kindergarten and one entering 4th grade. At this time, we paid money and enrolled both of our students into a private school with very small class sizes for the 2020-2021 school year. Yes, we are fortunate enough to be able to pay for this as an option, but on the other side of that it will greatly effect our budget.</p> <p>This was not for reasons of "want" but for the simple fact that we needed a backup plan for all of the unknowns within the public school decisions of business as usual for the upcoming school year. Basically for them to have childcare with the bonus of learning because we need care for them 5 days a week from 8-10 hours a day. I am in healthcare and my husband is a police officer.</p> <p>When schools closed in March, like I have seen many families comment and say, it was a disaster.</p> <p>After the first six weeks of paying whoever we could to watch our children, we had to find some structure and were lucky enough that an essential place of care was provided through my employer.</p> <p>Our concerns during that time were not participating in the online school activities and doing the assignments, they were how to function as a family who has two working parents while providing structure in a safe environment for our children. I give teachers a lot of credit, and we as parents are in no way able to teach our children at home in the same effective manner. We as households with full time working parent(s), made the best efforts to complete the assigned on line work and watch the recorded Zoom virtual lessons.</p> <p>Q: During the state of emergency that began in March, schools and child care providers and child care centers were closed. Some centers and providers were then able to apply to stay open for essential families. This was widely appreciated by essential parents, my household being one of them. If schools make the decision to not open fall 2020, and we are not currently in a state of emergency, what are working parents supposed to do ?</p> <p>Q: If the PUBLIC schools determine they cannot accommodate all the requirements to be able to open schools in the fall because of the volume of students, will the PRIVATE schools with much smaller class sizes who can accommodate all of the recommendations be able to open their school year "business as usual"?</p> <p>Q: What is the reality of having elementary students, particularly kindergarten students successfully starting the school year outside</p>

		of the face to face classroom structure?
7/1/2020	Keri Johnston	<p>Dear Dr. Bunting and Reopen Schools Groups:</p> <p>I am in favor of opening schools back up completely and taking the same precautions as we do with many other communicable diseases as well as a few extra steps to keep Covid 19 to a minimum. We can NOT put our lives on hold and have our children regress by not having face to face learning in the classroom. Bucks County PA released guidelines. Please consider these two documents for safe and feasible suggestions for our schools and our children.</p> <p>http://www.buckscounty.org/docs/default-source/coronavirus/faq-bucks-county-school-guidelines-final.pdf?sfvrsn=1dbc0fef_4</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>

7/1/2020	Emily S. Klein, Ed.S. NCSP	<p>First, I wanted to thank the Academics & Equity committee for revisiting the language in the recommendations in regards to students with IEPs (shown below). The updated language is much clearer!</p> <p>However, I did want to ask about bullet #4 on this slide – is it the committee’s intention to recommend that we convene an IEP meeting for every student with an IEP upon return to school, as indicated here? Or, is it only those students whose data upon return to school indicates that they have regressed and not recouped? I work in a school building where we have ~175 students with IEPs, and I can say with certainty that it would be a tall order to squeeze in that many meetings twice a school year (i.e., once we return to school and then again when we develop their new IEP at their annual meeting). Certainly, it seems reasonable to recommend that any student who has regressed during remote learning and not recouped the skills once returning to in-person learning should trigger the convening of the IEP team, as should the request of any team member (parent, related services provider, teacher, etc.) who wanted to revisit the IEP. But if that analysis of multiple data points does not indicate any concerns about the student’s progress, and no member of the IEP team has any concerns, I’m having some difficulty understanding why this would necessitate an IEP meeting. Why would we want to pull teachers or students from the classroom (I’m in secondary, so students participate in their meetings) if we don’t need to?</p> <p>We’ve got a lot to do when we get back – just making sure that we’re utilizing our time in the most effective ways possible. J</p> <p>Thank you,</p>
7/2/2020	Meghan Guehler	<p>Dear Dr. Bunting and Reopen Schools Groups:</p> <p>An excellent report was released yesterday from the group, Stand Up Delaware. They formed a committee of teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, doctors, nurses, school nurses, etc. Experts in their field and residents of Delaware. In case you did not receive the press release with these recommendations, it is linked below.</p> <p>https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_ZDp90CQ4Lr7FhN64cNgfvGT2ZxUbbHq/view</p> <p>Also, Bucks County PA released guidelines. Please consider these two documents for safe and feasible suggestions for our schools and our children.</p> <p>http://www.buckscounty.org/docs/default-source/coronavirus/faq-bucks-county-school-guidelines-final.pdf?sfvrsn=1dbc0fef_4</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>

7/2/2020	Shamina Chasteen	<p>Good morning,</p> <p>My proposed idea of re opening in the fall includes a shorter in person school day as well as smaller class sizes. For example, each grade could have certain day where they attend the physical school building, but only for 3 hours. So if Monday were an eighth grade day, half of the eighth grade class would attend from 8-11, and half would attend from 12-3 (this ensures distancing on the buses as well, but there may need to be more time in between sessions to allow buses enough time to unload and then pick up students). To account for the other half of the school day, students could be given online work to complete. The schedule could be switched monthly (weekly might be too confusing for some parents and students) so that different grades have a different number of days in school each month. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
7/2/2020	Caitlin Knieriem	<p>Dear Dr. Bunting and Reopen Schools Groups:</p> <p>An excellent report was released yesterday from the group, Stand Up Delaware. They formed a committee of teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, doctors, nurses, school nurses, etc. Experts in their field and residents of Delaware. In case you did not receive the press release with these recommendations, it is attached to this email.</p> <p>Also, Bucks County PA released guidelines. Please consider these two documents for safe and feasible suggestions for our schools and our children.</p> <p>http://www.buckscounty.org/docs/default-source/coronavirus/faq-bucks-county-school-guidelines-final.pdf?sfvrsn=1dbc0fef_4</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
7/2/2020	Jessica Miller	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I wanted to share a comment in regards to our schools reopening. I read an article that the team is proposing different scenarios of what school reopenings will look like based on the virus spreading. I just wanted to add that before the virus begins to spread in schools, because it most likely will, we should be on the proactive side and only have schools functioning where the virus does not have a great chance of spreading which would mean schools operating very differently than normal (staggering kids receiving in person learning, online learning, spreading kids across different schools, giving parents choice, giving essential workers/special Ed students/K and 1st students priority for in person learning, etc). The only way we can have schools operating almost back to normal is when there is a vaccine. I hope Delaware will have a cohesive plan across all schools no matter if they are private, public, or charter so that we aren't putting any staff or students at varying risks.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>

7/2/2020	Jacqui Morris	<p>Dear Dr. Bunting and Reopen Schools Groups:</p> <p>An excellent report was released yesterday from the group, Stand Up Delaware. They formed a committee of teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, doctors, nurses, school nurses, etc. Experts in their field and residents of Delaware. In case you did not receive the press release with these recommendations, it is attached to this email.</p> <p>Also, Bucks County PA released guidelines. Please consider these two documents for safe and feasible suggestions for our schools and our children. https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.buckscounty.org%2Fdocs%2Fdefault-source%2Fcoronavirus%2Ffaq-bucks-county-school-guidelines-final.pdf%3Fsfvrsn%3D1dbc0fef &data=01%7C01%7Creopeningideas%40doe.k12.de.us%7Ccca1d1ca7b104fdb6e4e08d81e947308%7C21b6d6867f08438dbdc6bd214d829bd2%7C1&sdata=Em6uwPJrH8aD0nLhax5o9RMv9ZPctanSJe4p3Jtdn04%3D&reserved=0</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
7/2/2020	Barrie Rudnick	<p>I am seeing many statements indicating that students will not be required to wear masks when they return to school because this will be difficult to enforce. Requiring everyone to wear masks would help protect the health of our teachers, staff, and students.</p> <p>Currently there are dress code regulations for Delaware schools that require students to remove hats in the building, to not wear tight revealing clothing, to wear specific colors and uniforms for middle school, to wear shoes, etc.</p> <p>Are we also going to be removing all of those regulations? I do not understand why it would be easier or more important to tell a student that they are required to wear a red polo shirt than to tell a student they must wear a mask. I do not understand why we can take disciplinary action against a student who removes their shirt in the hallways but not against a student who removes their mask in the hallways.</p> <p>If the mask is made part of the dress code, then the procedures for enforcing it are already in place. There are already ways to get exceptions in the dress code policy for students with special needs. This process already exists.</p> <p>Why can't masks just be added to the dress code and enforced the same way?</p>

7/2/2020	Shannon Lloyd	<p>I have a 4 y/o that won't go to kindergarten until the 21/22 school year, but as a parent and someone in my position that is seeing and hearing about different children's current experiences....there are parents who aren't able to manage education of their children at home. There are parents that are simply uneducated or learning disabled and can't assist with "teaching" their children. Others simply won't do it for whatever reason. Many families struggle with access and not understanding technology. There are many children of all ages who refuse to do school work at home and no one can judge and claim that comes down to parenting. I like to think I'm a pretty good parent and my 4 y/o tests me and "wins" every day! LOL! I have a very headstrong child and use different techniques to gain her cooperation...but when she has her mind set that she is not doing something, that's it...no privilege removal or other discipline tactic works. It's very frustrating, but there are other children out there just like my girl, and what do you do? Educating kids was designed for teacher instruction in a structured setting for a reason. Teachers that I know want to be in the classroom with their students. I know we all want to keep health and safety in mind with any plan, but I don't support long-term closure of schools again, unless ordered by the Governor with just cause. I think an odd/even schedule to minimize the number attending each day is a good idea....taking temperatures and asking an adult caretaker, at the bus stop or before school entry for parent drop offs, the precautionary questions would be a good idea. All I know is this year did not end well for many reasons to no one's fault. The upcoming school year we need as much direct teacher instruction as safely possible for optimal learning for all students. I don't even know what to say about sports, but it's just sad for those that just enjoy the sport and those relying on a college scholarship.</p> <p>I don't know if I've given any helpful input but I'm a parent and a professional sharing ideas and concerns.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
7/2/2020	Anonymou s	<p>Would like to offer input., I am an RN of over 25 years- no longer frontline.</p> <p>I have an upcoming senior and freshman. The senior has been doing fine as she drives and worked through the pandemic. The graduated 8th grader I am worried for. They missed a crucial quarter and invaluable memories that should have been created , I can see a general change and motivation level that the isolation caused several months ago. Virtual friendships only take you so far. i implore you to let these children get back to school. There should be a virtual option for those who for whatever reason have a vulnerability with themselves or at home. We must let them continue to build up their own immune systems as normal. I do not believe masks are reasonable for children and teens in school. Thank you</p>
7/2/2020	Shirin Skovronski	<p>My name is Shirin Skovronski, and I am a counselor at Newark High School. I also taught math for 15 years in the district. I have several ideas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divide the population of the school into fifths. 20% of the students would attend school each day. These students would check in with all their teachers on that day, and get their work for the next week, then take that work home to do during the next 7 days. This ensures smaller class, lunch, and bus populations and lets students who need paper packets come in to get them and to get help on whatever they could not understand or access at home. A variation could be 25% come in on each day from Mon - Thur, and Fridays are available for any students who need extra help with any work. 2. Another option would be like Salesianum is planning: half the students come to school 2 days, the other half the other 2 days, and the last day is for extra help. When half of the students are in class, the other half is remote learning: participating in the same class while the other half are in the room. This means the students are still in the same classes with all their classmates, but half are online to reduce the actual classroom population. <p>I hope these are helpful ideas, and that I contacted the correct people.</p> <p>thanks,</p>

7/2/2020

Sue B.
Smith, RN

Use of N95 mask: consistent use recommendations: N95 are used in the medical field for confirmed cases of COVID and also for rule out COVID 19. (Rule outs: being symptomatic with more than one symptom and a history of not being well for more than two days, a week of not feeling well: coughing, shortness of breath, fatigue.) CDC and public health recommendations are conflicting, after reviewing multiple state plans and CDC and public health, we need a solid recommendation, for the use of N95 masks.

I am also aware that multiple state plans have been reviewed:

North Carolinas plan: seems to be the clearest and most precise plan, using the three scenerios.

We are looking for consistency state wide and recommendations should be from the Science, therefore, recommendations should be from the Medical field(CDC and Public Health)

Our families often relocate during the school year and families need consistency.

Our State needs consistency and also our buildings within our districts.

We need to proactively strive for prevention of spread: therefore: mask(public health recommendations? age 3- 12 highly recommended, age 13 and older required: daycares are not currently requiring masks for children age 3-12, due to highly recommended, if a parent wants their child to wear a mask, they do allow it. , they work mostly on social distancing), social distancing, stay home if you are ill, wash your hands/ use hand sanitizer: with minimal or moderate spread, we need to be proactive.

Youth sports: same guidelines for extra curricular activities and sports teams outside of the school realm, consistent with school guidelines.

7/2/2020

Rob &
Dawn
Matthews

To whom it may concern,

With the increase in COVID cases in the past few days, we wanted to make the effort to contact you with more research and thoughtfulness as to some suggestions for how the public schools in Delaware should move forward. Unfortunately, we only happened upon your website today and it says the deadline for ideas is tomorrow. That being said, we wanted to send some personal thoughts for your focus groups to consider.

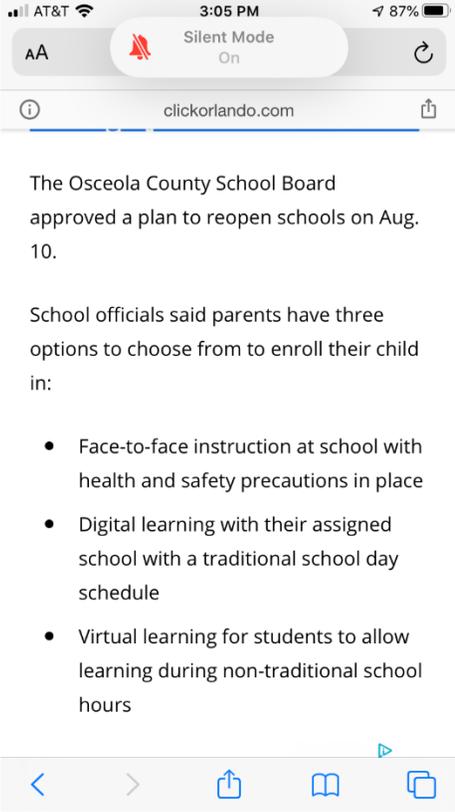
We have [REDACTED] in the Red Clay School District. Our kids absolutely loved distance learning this spring! We had often toyed with the idea of homeschooling for many reasons, but [REDACTED], we opted to put them both in public school until we could figure out why academics (even at a preschool level) were so hard [REDACTED]. Now, with [REDACTED] and a note home from the teacher [REDACTED] we now have more options available.

We have been very interested in the online public school that Pennsylvania has. Is this something Delaware would consider? We can't speak for other families but we would be very interested in this as an option! We would appreciate the curriculum setting and oversight from the board of education and the subject expertise from experienced teachers. However as parents, we would be happy to facilitate at home. We're not sure how this would be received by other families but we would be thrilled if it could be offered as an alternative option for those interested.

The most compelling reason for this request is because one of us (i.e. the students' parents) is at high risk for COVID 19 complications and the thought of sending our kids back to school due to the current infection rate feels almost lethal to us - not to mention the percentage of kids that develop complications like Kawaski Disease (KD). We realize the KD infection rate is small but it would still impact our schools and we don't want to see the consequences to the families of those personally impacted. Their children are more significant than just being a statistic.

We would like some options to provide a safe environment for our kids to get an education without infecting our family with COVID19. We understand this is something that these task forces have been created to try to avoid but given how cavalier people in this country have been with the safety of themselves and others, it is a big ask to require us to send our kids back to public school with the current state of things. We would appreciate it if you would carefully consider our request.

7/2/2020	Karen Cloud	<p>Good evening,</p> <p>I am not sure if this suggestion has been made. I suggest that student desks be surrounded on three sides by plexiglass as has been done in businesses/stores. It would be easier to do this than require masks all the time.</p> <p>As a teacher, I am happy to wipe down with Lysol wipes for cleaning purposes.</p> <p>Additionally, please consider the need for supplies to keep things clean during the day. I buy supplies for my classroom, including tissues. I would expect that it be provided towels, Lysol wipes, etc.</p> <p>Thank you!</p> <p>Regards,</p>
7/2/2020	Corryn Nikodemski	<p>Dear Committee Members,</p> <p>I am writing as both a public school teacher and a parent to share my concerns and recommendations regarding the reopening of school.</p> <p>As a secondary teacher, I am in full support of attending school face-to-face and full time. Students who are sick should be encouraged to stay home and we should continue to educate students on self- hygiene best practices.</p> <p>It is vital that students have the opportunity to socialize and build knowledge by interacting with a diverse group of peers and adults. My experience with remote learning was that the majority of my students disengaged and did not participate in academic opportunities OR online social opportunities we provided. I am unable to do my job effectively when students are not in my classroom since I can not build relationships with them through the many small, daily interactions we have. In addition, students are unable to develop strong peer relationships and are provided even less opportunity to interact face to face, which leads to their inability to effectively communicate and resolve conflict appropriately. The work in our school is focused on helping students build relationships with adults and amongst these others. The virtual world simply does not allow for human relationships and empathy to flourish. Not providing students will opportunities to interact with other people may not present an immediate crisis in our society, but, if the current school situation continues, there will be negative impacts in years to come.</p> <p>In addition, as a parent, I am also in full support of attending school face-to-face and full time. My children are entering 1stand 3rdgrade. For the same reasons as listed above, I want my children in school full time. In addition, I have very strong concerns about the idea of letting kids who “need the most help” have the opportunity to attend school full time while other young children are to sit at home and do remote learning. A huge concern of mine is how the students will be identified. I was told that [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] Teaching remotely full time left me little opportunity to provide the attention and extra time necessary [REDACTED].</p> <p>What is the plan to “identify” students who are “high need” if we are remote or hybrid learning? How will we deem these students as needing the “face-to-face” but other students don’t make the cut and have to make do with online learning? What if students have parents working full time and are unable to be the “teachers” at home? Doesn’t that create a problem of inequity if we allow some students to get face-to-face instruction, but others don’t? Will parents be allowed to override a school’s decision and send their student to school?</p>

		<p>Overall, my support is for schools to be back in session. Virtual learning was a temporary fix, however there are far greater risks to overall student mental health and academic well-being than the Covid-19 crisis presents.</p>
<p>7/2/2020</p>	<p>Kimberly Johnson-Muffley</p>	<p>Delaware should consider the same approach:</p>  <p>The Osceola County School Board approved a plan to reopen schools on Aug. 10.</p> <p>School officials said parents have three options to choose from to enroll their child in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face instruction at school with health and safety precautions in place • Digital learning with their assigned school with a traditional school day schedule • Virtual learning for students to allow learning during non-traditional school hours
<p>7/3/2020</p>	<p>Caitlin Knieriem</p>	<p>We need to hear what plans and steps you have for opening schools why haven't we heard anything? We need to mentally prepare our kids for whatever it will be. Make a decision!</p>
<p>7/3/2020</p>	<p>Ms. Della Scipio Troy</p>	<p>Questioning Normal Open Provocation to Governor Carney, State Board of Education, Secretary of Education Bunting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why return to a normal (before COVID-19) education system that grapples to serve all students well? • How are inequitable learning experiences, particularly for nonwhite, nontraditional and poor students, factored into the design and implementation of remote learning plans? Will we perpetuate or eliminate opportunity gaps during and after this COVID-19 crisis? • Do a majority of teachers and educators feel prepared to create meaningful learning experiences in a virtual environment? If not, what's being done to help educators adjust their prep and practice? • What's really different during today's pandemic versus yesterday's reality in terms of the digital divide, socio-economic disparities, unequal access to quality healthcare, and the prevalence of conspicuous food deserts in our communities? Will the new reality be

		<p>much of the same or radically different in a post-COVID-19 world?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those who struggle and stress the most, is the current outpouring of charitable [relief] resources a short-term handout or a life-changing hand up? • Who is succumbing to the pressure that adapting to a virtual educational environment is hard (hard for the adults or the kids?) and who is exercising extraordinary leadership to try bold new things in prep for the new reality? • How will student learning and proficiency be assessed in the absence of a traditional normal classroom? • When will we stand up and speak out for a "new normal" that genuinely embodies, "we rise and fall together"? • What is so great about the pre-COVID normal? Who could benefit the most from a "new normal"? Who would benefit the least (losses outweigh the gains) from a new normal? • Have we embraced that racism and many other "isms" are more than individual acts, but are also structural, systemic policies and "normal" practices? Are we now awakening to the reality that the same biases that facilitated the murder of George Floyd are denying our children their rightful opportunity for an excellent education in Delaware and across America? <p>Governor Carney, State Board of Education, Secretary of Education Bunting, district and charter leaders, Delaware educators and teachers, parents and students – are you questioning normal? Are you asking what must be different for all students, inclusive of nonwhite, nontraditional and poor, to be successful? Will the upcoming school year 2020-21 be a return to a normal that already doesn't serve all students well, sometimes downright harming them and their families, or will it be a transformative step forward to educate and uplift all children?</p>
7/3/2020	Jessica Auck	<p>Hello,</p> <p>Should we even be re-opening schools in the first place? There is minimal data on how children pass the disease to others and there is also little data on how the disease really affects children. Children are going to suffer complications from the virus and it's going to take something terrible happening like children dying for people to realize that we shouldn't have reopened schools in the first place. The virus is still here in full force and no matter what precautions you take, there will be outbreaks because of the nature of school. We should consider being proactive and only offering online learning.</p>
7/3/2020	Sue B. Smith, RN	<p>As assessments are established : not only adding grief counseling, but possibly, additional awareness for screening students; related to increase use of self medicating, vaping and use of illegal substances: non prescribed medications and alcohol, etc., during these times of unstructured free time and decrease in supervision.</p> <p>Resources and education for students in the school and community setting, also consideration for students to sign up for group counseling.</p> <p>Staff self assessments via google docs for daily check in, not only helps to maintain accountability but also assists with contact tracing of staff and visitors in a building: if unable to complete via google document, forms available when entering the building, for completion. to be completed for minimal and min to mod, to assure accountability and contact tracing.</p>

7/3/2020

Juliana
Rahmer,
NP

Hello,

Thank you to all who sit on the working groups for trying to investigate ways to open schools safely and effectively. I am writing to you as a Red Clay parent and a healthcare professional. I do have some thoughts/concerns:

1. I know in recent meetings, there has been great debate on whether children/staff should wear masks while in school. I strongly encourage your messaging to imply that all children/staff that are physically able to wear masks should do so while inside. I understand you may have difficulty in actually reinforcing this, however it would not be prudent to not to at least set that expectation. The majority of other indoor places currently require people to wear a mask to enter; school should be no different. They have implemented this in other countries with success. Masks undoubtedly decrease risk of transmission. The messaging should be the same on buses, where the children are even more at risk in an enclosed space. Consider a reward system for mask compliance.
2. In the most recent health and wellness meeting; there was a comment that alluded to the fact that the incidence of multi-system inflammatory syndrome in children from Covid is low. This is true, however it seemed to be implied that the overall risk/consequences of the virus is low. Thankfully, children do not seem to be as severely affected, but please remember that the biggest issue with this pandemic is the potential to completely overwhelm our health care systems. We need to take careful, adequate steps to slow the spread, or the virus has great potential to be detrimental to our local public health and the economy as well. As we have seen with our federal response, doing things haphazardly or halfway is not sufficient. Please keep in mind that this isn't just about keeping the kids that are in the school healthy...it is about making sure our immunocompromised and elderly family members/friends are safe. It is about having specialized critical care trained providers caring for your loved ones in the hospital, instead of having providers working outside their speciality caring for them when hospitals are overwhelmed.
3. There was discussion during multiple meetings if wearing face shields would be a comparable alternative to masks. They are absolutely not (although I wish they were), please research this via evidenced-based sources. Of course, something is better than nothing. Please consider having someone with an infection prevention, epidemiology, or infectious disease background involved in future discussions, as they may be able to answer these types of questions in real time.
4. Contact tracing is a HUGE part in mitigating the spread of a pandemic. I am very concerned that there is no substantial plan in place for contact tracing when there are positive individuals in our school systems. This will require extra workers, and is very time consuming. It was mentioned in the meeting that it was possible that DPH would " maybe" work with the schools on this. It is commonly and rightfully understood that DPH is overwhelmed, and has outsourced many of its contact tracers to an outside company. The people that they started to hire in May for contact tracing have not even started working yet. Please make sure there are adequate resources for this.
5. Staff screening is important; consider a questionnaire via app that staff have to use before they enter the building daily. Consider formulating a plan for expedited testing for teachers and direct caregivers of children (similar to ones in place for hospital workers), so that if positive, known contacts can be notified in a timely fashion. If staff tests positive, what will be the criteria for returning to work? Two negative tests? Symptom free for 10 days? Consider altering your staff attendance policy (and increasing substitute pool), so that staff do not report to work ill because they have no days off left.
6. Will there be policies in place for children who present to school with mild illness? Typically, kids are only sent home/urged to stay home from school when they have a fever, are vomiting, severely ill, or have another potentially contagious disease (ex. conjunctivitis). Covid-19 symptoms are a huge wide range. Will teachers be able to send kids to the nurse's office for just a dry cough, diarrhea, runny nose, or a headache? Will parents be mandated to pick them up? Is it fair for a child to sit next to another child with an intermittent cough, although otherwise healthy? Does each nurses office have the capability to separate/isolate

children with illness from children from injury (sprained ankle, etc.)? Unfortunately, there is no way to differentiate covid-19 from a common cold. This will likely cause huge issues both in school and home. I don't have the right answers, but I am very concerned that this is not being discussed.

7. Consider having children as spaced out as possible; I know DOE is looking at a multitude of ways to do this. Consider having kids all facing the same direction in class (vs sitting in groups). Utilize large spaces including gymnasium, cafeteria, auditorium, etc. for classes. Please refer to the American Academy of Pediatrics guidance on school reentry.

8. Although I fully understand it would be a huge undertaking, please explore having livestream options for classes, so that kids who are mildly ill with cold symptoms at home are able to participate. This would require coordination with internet providers, as well as assurance that all children have a mobile device that they are able to work from

9. During normal winter months, hospitals and ICUs frequently run at max capacity or close to that due to influenza and other illnesses. If the Covid spread is not mitigated and we have a moderate-severe flu season, I would encourage you to expect and plan for more possible school closures during the winter season.

10. Sanitation practices will need to be stepped up in all areas including buses, although it does sound like there are likely plans in place to do this. Please ensure you have an adequate pipeline of supplies (sanitizer, disinfectant, etc.).

11. I understand that DOE is exploring in-school options for half day schooling, partial week schooling, or alternate week schooling. Please give families who have children at more than 1 school in a district the choice to align all kids on the same schedule for childcare/transportation purposes.

Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts. I want our kids back in schools with face-to-face learning as safely as possible. Also, a huge THANK YOU to the teachers and administrators who worked so diligently this spring with at-home learning on such short notice. I know these decisions are very involved and difficult, and deeply appreciate everyone's efforts on this.

Sincerely,

7/3/2020

Paulina
Kulekey

Hi,

Thank you all so much in the working groups for your dedication to this project. I see the documents shared shared are really thorough and informative.

My thoughts are

1. With the minimal spread scenario, if school buildings are opened and some parents decide to OPT OUT due to the absence of a vaccine, how will that work since what I saw in the document was more about students who cannot return due to medical reasons. If the only reason to OPT OUT is absence of a vaccine how will that work?

2. I hope you are also considering laying out procedures for when a student or educator is exposed to the virus / tests positive. Steps on how that will be dealt with.

3. If schools are opened due to minimal spread, will some schools have a shift system since some of the schools might not be able to accommodate all students in the same classroom with the 6ft apart rule especially in schools that might have more kids in some classes.

4. What about recess when most younger kids play closer to each other. Will they be required to wear masks in that scenario?

5. Will the students and educators temperatures be taken every day?

Best Regards,