

Executive Summary

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ConVal School District has devised the following school reopening plan for the 2020-2021 school year. The central aim of the plan is to bring as many students as possible back safely in order to resume in-person learning.

School-based attendance will allow students to experience a sense of normalcy during a time of national crisis, make social and emotional growth, get healthy meals, as well as receive mental health support and other services that cannot be easily replicated online. From its very inception, the plan has taken into account the [Guiding Beliefs](#) that were developed by the ConVal School Board.

The reopening plan addresses the challenges and opportunities of delivering effective instruction in a manner that can be operationalized safely — both under current and future public health conditions in the ConVal school communities.

Basic Premise and Starting Point

The expected starting point for the safe return of students and staff to ConVal schools is the “green level” operating conditions. When school is operating at the green level (minimal to moderate community transmission, moderate mitigation measures, see p. 9), school buildings will be open for in-person instruction. The district’s COVID-19 Monitoring Team will assess conditions for school operation daily. Significant shifts in operating conditions, e.g. those that would warrant a transition from the green to the orange level, will be communicated to the public by the Superintendent upon approval by the School Board.

Student Cohorts, Routines, and Precautions for School Operation

While the Reopening Plan is differentiated by level (elementary schools, middle schools, high school), one common feature is the creation of student cohorts. Cohorts or “pods” will allow for physical distancing between different segments of the student population. They will minimize the risk of community spread of the coronavirus and help limit the number of students and families that could be affected by the need to quarantine.

Common precautionary routines will be followed by all students and staff. Clearly delineated before-school, in-school, and after-school routines will help keep everyone safe. Precautionary measures include: daily screening protocols, temperature checks upon entry into school buildings, the wearing of face coverings (masks) on the bus and at school, and the observance of physical distancing at all times. Mitigation strategies at the broader level of school operations include, among others, the reduced number of students in classrooms, properly distanced desks in accordance with new room occupancy guidelines, the institution of one-way traffic in

hallways and on stairs, increased indoor ventilation, the use of outside classrooms (tents), and enhanced cleaning routines by custodial staff.

School-level details about student groupings, curricular programs, scheduling, attendance, and grading can be found for elementary schools (p. 23), for middle schools (p. 31), and for the high school (p. 38).

Blended Learning Option

The in-person reopening model is complemented by a resource-rich blended learning model. Live video communication technologies will allow students to attend class in real time from remote locations while asynchronous learning opportunities will ensure that learning can also take place outside of regular school hours.

The key goal of the blended learning option is to offer an alternative to in-person learning and to provide family choice and student voice. Incorporating blended learning strategies from the beginning also ensures that all students and parents will be familiar with the system of digitally-enabled instruction, in case the District has to pivot to remote-only instruction as it did in the spring.

Adoption of a New, Segmented 2020-2021 School Calendar

Key to the success of the reopening plan is the adoption of a new, segmented calendar for the 2020-2021 school year. The calendar provides breaks from in-person instruction and switches to scheduled remote learning periods whenever travel and extended family contacts can be anticipated. This applies to holidays as well as scheduled school vacations (for details, see p. 10).

In conclusion, this document outlines our concerted plans for instruction and learning during the 2020-2021 school year. However, we are cognizant of the fact that the unpredictable nature of the coronavirus pandemic may force us to make adjustments to these plans.

Having devised a model that is comprehensive, flexible, and adaptable to different circumstances, it is our sincere hope that the ConVal School District will continue to operate successfully during any health emergencies that may arise during the 2020-2021 school year. As always, we will remain responsive to the needs of individual families and receptive to community feedback in an effort to achieve the best possible student outcomes.