

Public Employer Health Emergency Plan for the Hudson City School District

This plan has been developed in accordance with NYS legislation S8617B/A10832.

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Promulgation

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable.

This plan has been shared with all Collective Bargaining Units of the Hudson City School District who were provided the opportunity to provide recommendations to the District.

This plan has been approved in accordance with requirements applicable to the agency, jurisdiction, authority, or district, as represented by the signature of the authorized individual below.

As the authorized official of the Hudson City School District, I hereby attest that this plan has been developed, approved, and placed in full effect in accordance with S8617B/A10832 which amends New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable, to address public health emergency planning requirements.

Signed on this day: March 16, 2021

By: Dr. Maria Lagana Suttmeier

Title: Superintendent of Schools

Signature:  _____

Purpose, Scope, Situation Overview, and Assumptions

Purpose

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable. These laws were amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020, requires public employers to adopt a plan for operations in the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. The plan includes the identification of essential positions, facilitation of remote work for non-essential positions, provision of personal protective equipment, and protocols for supporting contact tracing.

Scope

This plan was developed exclusively for and is applicable to the Hudson City School District. This plan is pertinent to a declared public health emergency in the State of New York which may impact our operations; and it is in the interest of the safety of our employees and contractors, and the continuity of our operations that we have promulgated this plan.

Planning Assumptions

This plan was developed based on information, best practices, and guidance available as of the date of publication. The plan was developed to largely reflect the circumstances of the current Coronavirus pandemic but may also be applicable to other infectious disease outbreaks.

The following assumptions have been made in the development of this plan:

- The health and safety of our employees and contractors, and their families, is of utmost importance
- The circumstances of a public health emergency may directly impact our own operations
- Impacts of a public health emergency will take time for us to respond to, with appropriate safety measures put into place and adjustments made to operations to maximize safety
- The public and our constituency expect us to maintain a level of mission essential operations
- Resource support from other jurisdictions may be limited based upon the level of impact the public health emergency has upon them
- Supply chains, particularly those for personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies, may be heavily impacted, resulting in considerable delays in procurement
- The operations of other entities, including the private sector (vendors, contractors, etc.), non-profit organizations, and other governmental agencies and services may also be impacted due to the public health emergency, causing delays or other disruptions in their services
- Emergency measures and operational changes may need to be adjusted based upon the specific circumstances and impacts of the public health emergency, as well as guidance and direction from public health officials and the governor
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'non-essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is not required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job

Concept of Operations

The Superintendent of Schools of the Hudson City School District, her/his designee, or her/his successor holds the authority to execute and direct the implementation of this plan. Implementation, monitoring of operations, and adjustments to plan implementation may be supported by additional personnel, at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.

Upon the determination of implementing this plan, all employees and contractors of the Hudson City School District may be notified by phone, email, or any other means determined to be necessary, with details provided as possible and necessary, with additional information and updates provided on a regular basis. Parents, students, and other community members will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of email notifications, social media messaging, and local news outlets, amongst others. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by phone and/or email as necessary. The Superintendent of Schools or her/his designee will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

The Superintendent of Schools of the Hudson City School District, her/his designee, or her/his successor will maintain awareness of information, direction, and guidance from public health officials and the Governor’s office, directing the implementation of changes as necessary. Updates of this plan will be published on the District Website and posted conspicuously in all school buildings.

Upon resolution of the public health emergency, the Superintendent of Schools of the Hudson City School District, her/his designee, or her/his successor will direct the resumption of normal operations or operations with modifications as necessary.

Mission Essential Functions

When confronting events that disrupt normal operations, the Hudson City School District is committed to ensuring that essential functions will be continued even under the most challenging circumstances.

Essential functions are those functions that enable an organization to:

1. Maintain the safety of students, employees, contractors, and our educational community
2. Provide vital services
3. Provide services required by law
4. Sustain quality operations
5. Uphold the core values of the Hudson City School District

The Hudson City School District has identified as critical only those priority functions that are required or are necessary to provide vital services. During activation of this plan, all other activities may be suspended to enable the organization to concentrate on providing the critical functions and building the internal capabilities necessary to increase and eventually restore operations. Appropriate communications with students, employees, contractors, our educational community, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential functions are prioritized according to:

- The time criticality of each essential function
- Interdependency of a one function to others
- The recovery sequence of essential functions and their vital processes

Priority 1 identifies the most essential of functions, with priority 4 identifying functions that are essential, but least among them.

The mission essential functions for the Hudson City School District have been identified as:

Essential Function	Description
Information Technology/Continuity of Operations and Instruction	Provides hardware and software for staff and students to facilitate continued education in remote learning environments necessary for continuity of instruction and education. Also responsible for troubleshooting technical issues that may arise during the virtual learning process, the offering of best practices in communication

	to ensure that students are able to access curricular materials, and for helping staff members disseminate information related to both academic and social-emotional education.
Buildings and Grounds	Continues to upkeep the campus during remote work and learning and ensures that all buildings and grounds are properly maintained, regularly cleaned, and disinfected as necessary to ensure the safety of school community members.
District Office	Oversight and management of the functions performed by employees in the superintendent's office, the assistant superintendent's office, the business office, special education, and the human resources office to ensure that regular business operations and services continue as necessary and/or mandated. Appropriate communications with students, families, employees, contractors, educational community, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.
Health Office/Health Services	Upon consultation with the district physician and the Columbia County Department of Health, school nurses may be responsible for assessing ill students and staff, providing consultation to the district office, following up with healthcare providers, and providing assistance with contact tracing efforts as necessary.
School Building Main Office Staff	Oversight of mail, phones, sign-in procedures, and building utilization and operations.
Food Service	Ensure that food is prepared and distributed to students.
Transportation	Ensure that meals are distributed to students
Building Administrators	Oversight of all building operations. Appropriate communications with students, families, employees, contractors, educational community, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential Positions

Each essential function identified above requires certain positions on-site to effectively operate. The table below identifies the positions or titles that are essential to be staffed on-site for the continued operation of each essential function. The District maintains that while the following positions or titles are considered essential, the District will determine staffing needs, and may decide that not all such employees will be required to report to work on campus. Note that while some functions and associated personnel may be essential, some of these can be conducted remotely and do not need to be identified in this section.

Essential Function	Essential Positions/Titles	Justification for Each
Information Technology/Continuity of Operations and Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT Manager 	Responsible for overseeing the local area network and the subsequent ongoing maintenance of this network for the district. Oversees the district's internet access.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT Support Staff 	Responsible for providing support to staff, teachers and students in regards to computer hardware and software. Will respond to "help desk" and troubleshooting concerns.
Buildings and Grounds	Head Maintenance Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for overseeing and providing direction to the B&G department and employees to ensure a safe working environment. Maintains the operation of all District phones.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Custodial Staff Maintenance Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for routine cleaning, disinfecting, and maintenance tasks.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for performing a wide variety of tasks related to the maintenance and upkeep of campus grounds, parking lots, and fields.
District Office	Superintendent of Schools	Responsible for making day-to-day decisions including but not limited to the safety of opening schools, educational programs, teaching and learning models (e.g., remote, hybrid, in person), budget/spending, staffing, essential operations, communications, Board relations, and facilities.
	Assistant Superintendent for School Improvement	Responsible for assisting the Superintendent in the administration of educational programming, staff development, and the development of goals to maintain all elements related to quality teaching and learning.
	School Business Administrator	Responsible for assisting the Superintendent in the administration of business affairs in such a way to provide the best services with the financial resources available. In addition, oversees operation of buildings and grounds, food service, IT and transportation.
	Human Resource Manager	Responsible for assisting the Superintendent as a liaison to the Columbia County Department of Health, district personnel, providing guidance for personnel functions, and ensuring the complete and effective compliance with personnel policies and state regulations, safety protocols, collective bargaining agreements and district practices.
Health Office/Health Services	School Nursing Staff	Assists building and district administrators by communicating with the Columbia County Department of Health for guidance specific to students, may act as the liaison to the school physician, and assisting ill students and staff.
School Building Main Office Staff	School Secretary	Responsible for answering phones, providing support to building administrators, responding to emails, greeting visitors, assisting in building sign-in procedures, accepting deliveries, and helping disseminate mail and learning materials as necessary.
Food Service	Food Service Manager	Responsible for overseeing the preparation of meals and ensuring that meals are distributed.
	Food Service Employees	Responsible for the preparation of and distribution of meals for students.
Transportation	School Bus Dispatcher	Responsible for the safety and efficient operation and maintenance of the transportation department. Coordinates with the Food Service Manager on meal deliveries.
Building Administrators	Building Principals Associate Principals	Responsible for overseeing the day-to-day functioning of the school community and supporting the academic success of students,

		promoting a positive school climate, and assisting educators. Associate Principals will assist Principals in all areas of the school system as designated.
Instructional Staff and Paraprofessionals	Teachers Teaching Assistants Teacher Aides After School Program Staff	Responsible for providing direct instruction, instructional support, and supervision of students necessary to meet the educational needs of all HCSD students. Additional duties as assigned to ensure the health and safety of all individuals.

Reducing Risk Through Remote Work and Staggered Shifts

Through assigning certain staff to work remotely and by staggering work shifts, the Hudson City School District can decrease crowding and density at work sites.

Remote Work Protocols

Non-essential employees and contractors able to accomplish their functions remotely will be enabled to do so at the greatest extent possible. Working remotely requires:

1. Identification of staff who will work remotely
2. Approval and assignment of remote work
3. Equipping staff for remote work, which may include:
 - a. Internet capable laptop
 - b. Necessary peripherals
 - c. Access to VPN and/or secure network drives
 - d. Access to software and databases necessary to perform their duties
 - e. A solution for telephone communications
 - i. Note that phone lines may need to be forwarded to off-site staff

Approval and Assignment of Remote Work

Work from home accommodations must be approved by the Superintendent of Schools or Human Resource Manager. The Superintendent of Schools or Human Resource Manager will consult with the respective Building Principal/Supervisor in making all determinations on a case by case basis.

There may be some staff who will not be able to work remotely nor will they be needed to work on campus. The need for these staff will be determined on a case-by-case basis and by job title.

The Human Resource Manager will notify payroll of such decisions to ensure employee time and attendance is tracked accurately.

Equipping Staff and Students for Remote Learning

The Hudson City School District shall work with their IT Manager to support employees and students during an extended school closure. In order to support this, students K-12 and instructional faculty and staff shall be provided with Chromebooks/laptops as possible to ease the transition to remote learning/working.

Non-instructional staff who work remotely will have access to Chromebooks/laptops based on their individual needs for them to effectively perform their job duties remotely. In addition, the IT Department is responsible for the repair of Chromebooks/laptops, as well as assisting in the procurement of internet access at an individual's home, if they do not have internet. The IT Department will also be responsible for assisting individuals in the procurement of VPN or other secure network drives as is deemed necessary and for providing access to software and databases that are deemed necessary for employees to effectively perform their duties.

Staggered Shifts

Implementing staggered shifts may be possible for personnel performing duties which are necessary to be performed on-site but perhaps less sensitive to being accomplished only within core business hours. As possible, management will identify opportunities for staff to work outside core business hours as a strategy of limiting exposure. Regardless of changes in start and end times of shifts, the Hudson City School District will ensure that employees are provided with their typical or contracted minimum work hours per week. Staggering shifts requires:

1. Identification of positions for which work hours will be staggered
2. Approval and assignment of changed work hours

The Human Resource Manager, in collaboration with the Building Administrator/Supervisor, shall examine opportunities for staggered shifts as appropriate. Staggered shifts must be approved by the Human Resource Manager and must be in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreement(s) or agreement by respective collective bargaining unit(s).

Personal Protective Equipment

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce the spread of infectious disease is important to supporting the health and safety of our employees and contractors. PPE which may be needed can include:

- Masks
- Face shields
- Gloves
- Disposable gowns and aprons
- Barriers

Note that while cleaning supplies are not PPE, there is a related need for cleaning supplies used to sanitize surfaces, as well as hand soap and hand sanitizer. The Coronavirus pandemic demonstrated that supply chains were not able to keep up with increased demand for these products early in the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. As such, we are including these supplies in this section as they are pertinent to protecting the health and safety of our employees and contractors.

Protocols for providing PPE include the following:

1. Identification of need for PPE based upon job duties and work location
2. Procurement of PPE
 - a. As specified in the amended law, public employers must be able to provide at least two pieces of each required type of PPE to each essential employee and contractor during any given work shift for at least six months
 - b. Public employers must be able to mitigate supply chain disruptions to meet this requirement
3. Storage of, access to, and monitoring of PPE stock is a function of Buildings & Grounds
 - a. PPE shall be stored in a manner which will prevent degradation
 - b. Employees and contractors must have access to PPE in the event of an emergency
 - c. The supply of PPE must be monitored to ensure integrity and to track usage rates

Identification of Personal Protective Equipment Based on Job Duties

Each building shall be provided with a supply of disposable masks and hand sanitizer for use by students, employees, contractors, and/or visitors, as necessary. The Head Maintenance Worker shall be responsible for monitoring and replenishing those supplies as necessary. Individuals with a medical necessity and an approved reasonable accommodation will be provided N-95 respirators as necessary.

Given the nature of their work, buildings and grounds staff and health office staff will be supplied daily access to disposable masks, disposable gloves, face shields, and gowns as necessary. Individuals who have a job position that requires the wearing of an N-95 respirator shall be entered into a respiratory protection program, fit tested, medically cleared, and provided N-95 respirators as required.

Procurement of Personal Protective Equipment

The Building Principal or her/his designee shall track PPE inventory in their building in the form of an inventory report that will be submitted to the *Head Maintenance Worker* for review each week. When inventory gets low (i.e., having less than two pieces of PPE for each essential employee for at least a six-month period), the Head Maintenance Worker will notify the Business Administrator who will contact one or more of the vendors on the District-approved supplier's list to procure the necessary PPE. The district maintains a supplier list with backup suppliers listed in an effort to mitigate any supply chain disruption. For unforeseen disruptions or shortages, the district shall work with the BOCES and/or Columbia County Department of Health for assistance. Personal protective equipment shall be stored within the buildings where they can be tracked and accessed in the event of an emergency, and maintained in a way that prevents degradation.

Staff Exposures, Cleaning, and Disinfection

Staff Exposures

Staff exposures are organized under several categories based upon the type of exposure and presence of symptoms. When a staff member is exposed, the District will follow applicable Columbia County Department of Health, New York State Department of Health, and CDC guidelines as is required and best practices.

The Hudson City School District recognizes there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, symptomatic persons, and those testing positive for a communicable disease. As stated above, the District will follow CDC/public health recommendations and requirements and coordinate with our local public health office for additional guidance and support as needed.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

CDC/public health guidelines will be followed for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces/areas. Present guidance for routine cleaning during a public health emergency includes:

1. As possible, employees and contractors will clean their own workspaces in the beginning, middle, and end of their shifts, at a minimum.
 - a. High traffic/high touch areas and areas which are accessible to the public/constituents will be disinfected according to a preset schedule that emphasizes their cleaning and disinfection.
 - b. Buildings and grounds staff, with possible assistance from other staff, will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting common areas, based on the requirements of each individual situation and influenced by factors such as frequency of use, the specifics of the communicable disease, and recommendations from local, state, and federal authorities.
2. Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas will be issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.
3. Soiled surfaces will be cleaned prior to being disinfected.
4. Surfaces will be disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria for use against the virus in question and which are appropriate for that surface.
5. Staff will follow instructions of cleaning products to ensure safe and effective use of the products.

Documentation of Work Hours and Locations

In a public health emergency, it may be necessary to document work hours and locations of each employee and contractor to support contact tracing efforts. Identification of locations shall include on-site work, off-site visits. This information may be used by the Hudson City School District to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

Employees' entrance into each building shall be recorded either electronically (through the District's electronic identification system) or by a designated employee at main entrances of each. Employees daily schedules shall be maintained by their immediate supervisor, including but not limited to, building assignment, classroom assignment, or office location. Employees shall be responsible for daily tracking of their own movement throughout the building daily.

Housing for Essential Employees

There are circumstances within a public health emergency when it may be prudent to have essential employees lodged in such a manner which will help prevent the spread of the subject communicable disease to protect these employees from potential exposures, thus helping to ensure their health and safety and the continuity of the Hudson City School District's essential operations. If such a need arises, the school district shall work with local and state authorities to help identify and arrange for housing needs.