

Special Education COVID Hybrid Return Plan

Overview of Special Education Supports

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Special educators often have particularly close connections with their students; therefore, ongoing communication with students, and meaningful partnerships with families continues to be of paramount importance to us. As we move into the start of the new school year, special educators will be collaborating with related service providers, paraprofessionals, general educators, and others who support children in Special Education, ensuring that recommendations for activities/instruction are appropriate and accessible whether they occur in-person, remotely or both. The collaboration that took place during the spring closures will continue into the new school year to provide students with their IEP services.

Wareham Public Schools is dedicated to providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to our students, consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services. Students will receive their IEP services in the fall, with some in-person and some remote opportunities.

- In support of some of our more vulnerable populations, students in substantially separate programs will have the choice to attend in-person full time 4 days a week, number of days per week to be revisited as the Pandemic progresses..
- Resource students will receive support to access the curriculum both in-person and remote. Transition planning and services will continue.

Specialized Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided when the instructional needs require closer proximity. As we consider social distancing requirements, the District will factor in the additional special education personnel who enter classrooms to provide accommodations and modifications. All staff and students must wear face coverings or masks at all times, with the exception of those for whom it is not safe to do so due to age, medical condition, disability impact, or other health or safety considerations. In order to reduce the risk of contracting or

¹ Original Plan from Lexington Public Schools: modified by Wareham Public Schools Special Education Committee

spreading COVID-19, it is important to minimize close contact to the extent possible; however, when it is not possible, the use of protective equipment is required.

IEP meetings will be held remotely whenever possible to limit the number of people in a building, and the District will continue to work with families to meet timelines or agree to extensions for Initial Evaluations, Reevaluations, and IEP Meetings. The District will make every effort to maintain as much in-person instruction as is safely possible should a full closure once again be necessary.

Students with disabilities, along with their peers in general education, will be assessed to evaluate skill gaps. In addition, special education progress reports and data on levels of performance towards goals prior to closure will be reviewed for progress and regression post-closure. For students in the Extended School Year (ESY) program, progress reports and discussions on individual levels of current performance will be important in assessing skill gaps and regression. We will also be assessing the need for any additional services that may be recommended by the team as a result of the school closures, and will address this on a case by case basis.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Student Services with any questions or concerns. Please know that we are here for you, and we want to support you.

Districtwide Special Education Programs

Wareham Public Schools has several focused Special Education programs for students with specific learning profiles, as listed below. **Students within each of these programs will be invited to participate in full-time, in-person schooling**, although some services may be provided via teletherapy when appropriate. In the event of another full school closure, the District will plan on trying to maintain as much in-person (in school) therapies as is safely possible.

- The **Learning Centers at John W. Decas Elementary (including Preschool)** provides services to students with significant developmental delays or intellectual/neurological impairments in Preschool and grades Kindergarten through 2.
- The **Substantially Separate Autism Spectrum Disorder Classroom at John W. Decas (including Preschool)** provides services for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other related disabilities with intensive needs including deficits in language, social communication, play skills, abstract thinking, and behavior. The ASD Programs

provide highly individualized services involving behavioral approaches (typically based on Applied Behavior Analysis principles) to learning.

- **Therapeutic Learning Center at John W. Decas Elementary** Provides service to students with significant emotional impairment or other disabilities that may manifest themselves through difficulties with self-regulation. These students may or may not have associated learning difficulties.
- The **Learning Center at Minot Forest Elementary** provides services to students with significant developmental delays or intellectual/neurological impairments in grades 3 and 4.
- **The Substantially Separate Autism Spectrum Disorder Classroom at Minot Forest Elementary** also services students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other related disabilities.
- **Therapeutic Learning Center at Minot Forest Elementary** Provides service to students with significant emotional impairment or other disabilities that may manifest themselves through difficulties with self-regulation. These students may or may not have associated learning difficulties.
- The **Learning Center Middle School** provides services to students with significant developmental delays or intellectual/neurological impairments in grades 5 through 7.
- The **Substantially Separate Autism Spectrum Disorder Program Middle School** provides services for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other related disabilities with intensive needs including deficits in language, social communication, play skills, abstract thinking, and behavior. The ASD Programs provide highly individualized services involving behavioral approaches (typically based on Applied Behavior Analysis principles) to learning.
- **Therapeutic Learning Center Middle School** Provides service to students with significant emotional impairment or other disabilities that may manifest themselves through difficulties with self-regulation. These students may or may not have associated learning difficulties. (Stagger in starting with Grade 5)
- **High School Young Adult Program** provides services to students with significant developmental delays or intellectual/neurological impairments in grades 8 through 12.
- **The High School Transition Program** provides services to students with significant developmental delays or intellectual/neurological impairments in grades 12+ to age 22, including community learning and job exploration/skills.

- **The High School Connect Program** Provides services for higher functioning students with Autism Spectrum Disorder coupled with significant Social Emotional Needs
- **The High School Therapeutic Learning Center Program Lower (Grade 8 and 9 only)** services students with significant emotional impairment or other disabilities that may manifest themselves through difficulties with self-regulation. These students may or may not have associated learning difficulties.

The High School Therapeutic Learning Center Program Upper (Grade 10-12 only) services students with significant emotional impairment or other disabilities that may manifest themselves through difficulties with self-regulation. These students may or may not have associated learning difficulties. (Stagger in starting with Grade 10)The District will be working with our Transportation Department and all contracted transportation providers to implement proper safety protocols and capacity limits on the vans and buses we contract for our students, who attend both in-district and out-of-district programs, in accordance with State and Federal Guidelines.

In addition to reviewing routing options and bus/van capacities, we also are actively examining cleaning and sanitizing schedules, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements for drivers and riders, and ventilation protocols. If the State and Federal guidelines do not change, it will be impossible to transport the same number of students with disabilities with the current fleet of vans.

Families will be contacted by the school nurse (prior to the start of school) to confirm that we have up-to-date emergency contact information.

Parent Information Sessions:

Director of Student Services, Melissa Fay and Out of District and Programs Coordinator, Kathleen Curry Beaulieu, along with select Special Education COVID Task Force Committee Members, will host an optional Zoom session to answer any questions parents may have about in-person sessions. Parents may choose to attend one of the following times.

Zoom invites to follow.

1. Wednesday, August 26, 2020 - 9:00 AM
2. Wednesday, September 2, 2020 6:00 PM

Parent/Family Engagement

- The WPS and Special Education pages will be kept updated with new information
- Notifications from school will be provided through emails, all-call phone calls, and the district website
- Staff will maintain close contact with families and develop communication expectations with families of students on their caseloads

Parent/Guardian Feedback

- Ongoing feedback is always welcome. The Wareham Public Schools maintain the expectation that, if needed, follow-up from school staff to family communication will occur within 48 business hours.

Cohort Model: What does this mean for my child?

**All Sub-separate programs begin
Thursday, September 17, 2020**

Students receiving Services	Hybrid Model
<p>Special Education-Inclusion (80% of time in general education setting)</p> <p>Other high needs (ELL, Homeless, SEL)</p>	<p>Half the students come to school on a rotating basis. Remote learning services provided 3 days per week.</p>
<p>Special Education-Pull-Out Services (60% of time in general education setting)</p> <p>Other high needs (ELL, Homeless, SEL)</p>	<p>Half of the students come to school on a rotating basis. Remote learning services provided 3 days per week.</p>
<p>Special Education-Substantially Separate Services (no time in general education setting)</p> <p>Other high needs (ELL, Homeless, SEL)</p>	<p>All students come to school for half days (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday)</p> <p>Remote learning (students remain at home) will take place on Wednesday</p>

OPTION - HYBRID

Description Students return in person to school settings that are appropriately modified to accommodate the health and safety requirements.

Precautions

Planning includes ensuring that safety precautions are in place within the environment and ensuring that training for staff occurs prior to opening. The resumption of In-person (In School) programming requires that we have adequate staff available to work with the students who will attend and that we have appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available for the safety of staff and students. We are well on the way towards planning for the opening of school in the fall.

- Remote Learning: As we previously shared, summer Extended School Year will begin remotely for all students on July 6th
 - The program will run from July 6th to Aug 13th
 - Individual Learning Plan (ILP) has been updated for ESY and is available online
- Families will be contacted by the school nurse (prior to the start of school) to confirm that we have up-to-date emergency contact information.
- Families will be asked to attest to safety precautions prior to sending their child each day. This will likely include:
 - Daily temperature check at home to assure your child does not have a fever above 100.0°F
 - Daily check at home that your child does not present with a cough, difficulty breathing, diarrhea or other gastrointestinal I symptoms (outside of their normal baseline)

We ask families to follow these steps during in-person programming as we continuously refine safety guidelines and protocol.

- COVID-19 information
 - Please review information related to symptoms, spread, etc. is available on the CCC website and the CDC
 - <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Daily pre-screening at home - Daily Health checks
 - We ask that a family member take a daily temperature and check for a cough, respiratory; gastrointestinal symptoms, etc.
 - If your child is displaying any symptoms that are outside of their typical baseline (e.g. temperature over 100°F), please keep them home.
- Health Precautions
 - Given current guidance regarding COVID-19, please note that there will be minimal leeway for students presenting with symptoms related to COVID-19 (such as respiratory or GI illness and any student with a temperature over 100°F) to remain in school.

- You will be contacted and required to pick your child up at school should any questionable symptoms be identified. If we are unable to make contact, OR if a student is unable to be picked up within the hour (unless reasonable pick up time has been established), we may be required to call 911 (Emergency Medical) for assistance. Every effort will be made to contact all emergency numbers before 911 is called. Please advise your emergency contacts to be available for calls from your child's school offices
- We understand the hardship this may cause, but given the nature of an airborne virus such as COVID-19, this is necessary during this time.
- Attendance
 - We ask that you call in to report your child as absent if they will not be attending as planned.
 - Although not required, it is helpful to let the school nurse know if the absence is COVID-related. All confidentiality will be maintained.
- Contact Information
 - All families must have up-to-date contact and emergency contact information on file.
 - All students should have up-to-date health information on file.
 - Each individual School personnel OR Nurse/Health office staff will be reaching out to each family to review the information we have on file to ensure that we have accurate information.
- Visitors to the building
 - General visitors during the school day are not allowed at this time.
 - IEP meetings will be held virtually whenever possible in order to limit the amount of visitors in our buildings. This is for the safety of all students, families and staff.
- Items from home discouraged to the extent possible
 - Items from home that students bring to school are discouraged when at all possible.
- This does not include snacks or personal items needed for school.
 - Pillows / blankets or any soft items that cannot easily be wiped down should not be brought to school at this time.
- Food items/snacks will not be shared items within a classroom
 - When possible, please send snacks individually for your child free from tree and peanuts .
- We need to address airborne food allergies as kids will be eating in closed not well ventilated classrooms. Peanut/ tree nut/ etc free classrooms
- Masks
 - Many of our students will be able to wear masks, but some given their health and/or type of disability, may not be able or expected to wear masks.

- For those students that can, we ask you to send in at least 2 clean masks labeled in a zip lock bag daily for your child - one they will be wearing, and a 2nd for change after eating and/or if mask is soiled
- All staff will be wearing masks

The following links will aid families to practice proper mask protocol

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9cnxxsEKpk&list=PLvvp9iOILTQatwnqm61jqFrsfUB4RKh6J&index=2&t=0s>

Also practice during the upcoming weeks to eliminate the stress and gain comfort

- Physical Distancing
 - We will strive, to the extent possible, to maintain physical distancing.
 - Some students with cognitive disabilities may not understand the concept of physical distancing, even with direct instruction, and may not be capable of effectively or consistently physically distancing from other students.
- Hygiene / hand washing
 - Students will be instructed to wash their hands at multiple points throughout the day. Students may utilize a sink/water/soap or may be directed to utilize hand sanitizer (e.g. Purell).
- Some examples: Arrival, in between activities, before/after eating, before/after toileting, after coughing/sneezing, prior to dismissal.

The following link will guide you with safe hand washing protocols

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/hand-sanitizer-use.html>

- Transportation
 - Transportation will be arranged for your child if special transportation is indicated on their IEP
 - If you choose to drop off or pick up your child, we ask that you follow your individual building's pick-up and drop-off protocols, and a staff member will greet your child to walk into school.
- Please contact Jamie Andrews or Vanessa Coles in the Transportation Department if you have any questions at 508-291-3574.
- Safe Spaces
 - Our protocols will remain the same for students that need to be separated from an activity or a peer group due to interfering behavior

	<p>that is unsafe to themselves or to others or disruptive to the learning of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students will be asked to take a break in a designated area or walk to a break in another space/classroom. ○ Break areas will be cleaned and disinfected regularly. ● Physical Intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Our protocols will remain the same for students that need physical intervention when all other de-escalation techniques have not been successful and a student is a danger to themselves or others. Staff will continue to utilize strategies trained through the CPI (Crisis Prevention and Intervention) Model. Staff will utilize personal protective equipment such as gloves and masks and if necessary - (a gown or clothing covering and/or face shield). ● Staff will continue to utilize physical intervention as a last resort. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students that intentionally target staff with bodily fluids (e.g. spit intentionally at staff) will require a parent be contacted immediately. The purpose will be to determine if it is safe and appropriate at this time for the student to continue to attend school in-person. It may be that remote learning opportunities would be more appropriate as safety measures are further assessed. <p>**If you have any questions or concerns with the information, please do not hesitate to contact myself or Kathleen Beaulieu. We are moving ahead with our planning and will continue to make adjustments as new guidance and directives are given to us by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). We will send updated information as it becomes available.</p> <p>English Language Learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General education teachers that have a FEL (former English learner) in their classroom will still be required to monitor the student(s) ○ EL Teachers may utilize parent volunteers for translations if available and all parties agree
Preschool Program	<p>Hybrid Model for <u>Preschool</u></p> <p><u>DESE guidance (pp. 10-16 for preschool)</u> <u>http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/2020-0709special-ed-comp-guide-memo.docx</u></p> <p>Hybrid/Remote Learning Considerations for Preschool Children</p> <p>As described above, the Department recommends that young children be prioritized for in-person instruction. If remote instruction becomes necessary, balance screen</p>

time and non-screen time by considering shorter virtual sessions and consider providing flexible offerings of live, recorded, small group instruction. The hybrid model would be a combination of in school and in-person learning and remote learning.

- The preschool students would be divided into two cohorts. One cohort would attend two half days a week (Monday/Tuesday) and the other cohort would attend two different days a week (Thursday/Friday).
- Remote learning will be available the days that the children do not attend in-person learning
- Class size will be limited to 10 children, but will also be based on the actual size of the classroom.
- First week or two of school, only students on an IEP will attend to allow time to work on routines and expectations; if peers are allowed, they will start a little later.
- Provide consistent weekly schedules
- Maintain close communication with families
- Preschool students are not mandated to wear masks
- All staff will wear masks and use PPE as needed
- Therapies will be provided in-person when possible and remotely when appropriate, as dictated by a student's IEP and schedule.
- For those children who remain at home, remote services will be provided.
- Initial evaluations and 3 year evaluations can be conducted within this in-person model. Special Education evaluations will be conducted in-person whenever possible, whereas IEP meetings will be conducted remotely whenever possible, to limit the number of people in a building, and as agreed upon with parents and guardians. Parents who bring their child in for an evaluation will be asked to wait outside of the building.

Cleaning protocols

- If there are two sessions, there will be time to clean up between sessions.
- There will be time at the end of the day to clean supplies and toys, center areas
- A cleaning checklist will be created and provided for staff to use as a reference and for accountability.

Personal Care/toileting and feeding/ Hygiene, handwashing

- Feeding
 - Procedures will be developed and shared with staff and families
 - PPE will be provided

If we have full day kids they will have breakfast and lunch in the classroom.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Toileting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Procedures will be developed for diapering and toileting and PPE will be provided ○ Cleaning bathroom after each use <p>Recess</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preschool students may use the playground equipment if a procedure is in place for cleaning after each classroom uses the playground equipment ● The number of children outside will be limited to possibly half a class at a time. <p>Preschool Motor Groups</p> <p>*The preschool motor groups would take place indoors or outdoors in a designated movement area or movement pathway that would be one way in direction and would allow students to practice motor skills while maintaining social distancing. Classroom staff would assist in facilitating social distancing. Areas for gross motor activity would be sectioned off with the use of hula hoops or tape to delineate each student's motor area. If space becomes an issue, the PT will perform a class motor activity either in person in the classroom or with movement resources provided virtually.</p> <p>Family Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Document all communication ● Maintain ongoing communication ● Scheduled office hours ● pre-record lessons when possible for families view at their convenience ● Provide parent training about how to talk to the children and prepare them for what school will look like ● Provide social stories to students ● Encourage the parents to get the children ready for mask wearing by practicing at home
<p>Related Services and English Language Learners</p>	<p>Virtual Model</p> <p>The virtual model will be challenging to provide the level of prompting and support required during discrete trial sessions, however there are some alternatives that may be effective.</p>

- Incorporating the use of computer programs (Boom Learning, Ipad apps) that practice comparable skills in a systematic method may be developed and individualized by student teachers and used to supplement learning.
- It may be necessary to work individually or within small groups of up to two students via a zoom or google meets format and focus on skills identified via ABLLs.
- To ensure that prompting is immediate and effective it will likely be necessary that a parent assist with this type of model.
- Training regarding prompting, reinforcement, and shaping be provided to families. This model would require direct involvement of the parents for the lower grades. If the parents are overwhelmed with the virtual model, then they would be provided with the option of resources including printed activities that could be performed when they are able, based on their schedule. A weekly check in with the parent would occur to encourage compliance and to connect with the student.

Hybrid Model for Physical Therapy

The hybrid model for delivery of physical therapy services would involve a combination of the “in person” and remote models.

In Person Services (In-School) with Hybrid Model for Physical Therapy

- Students would participate in the “in person” model when in school, with adherence to the sanitizing protocol, as described below.
- Masks are to be worn by the physical therapist and the student, as indicated by grade level.
- The physical therapist would arrive at the student’s classroom door and indicate to the teacher that a given student has services. The student and PT would sanitize hands prior to leaving the classroom. Mask would be in place.
- The student and PT would walk through hallways to the therapy room or preferably outdoors while the weather is good. The student and PT would sanitize hands prior to entering the therapy room. Equipment to be used in a given session would be sanitized before and after each session.
- After the PT session and upon leaving the therapy room, the student and PT would sanitize their hands and return to the classroom.
- Prior to entering the classroom, the student will sanitize their hands.
- Some students are seen in groups of 2-3 persons. It is hoped that these small groups would continue provided the students are in the same classroom,

usually substantially separate classrooms. If this is not recommended, students will be seen on an individual basis

Remote Services with Hybrid Model for Physical Therapy

- With the hybrid model, if attendance is modified by alternating days or weeks of in school participation, then the student would receive virtual services during their “home” week. The goal would be to have contact with the student as recommended on their service delivery page.
- The remote aspect of the hybrid model for delivery of physical therapy services would involve the use of face to face zoom meetings or google meetings to address the individual needs of the student.
- Students will be seen on a scheduled basis and may need to be pulled from their virtual classroom time.
- This model would require direct involvement of the parents for students in the lower grades and for those students in higher grades who require assistance with online learning.
- If the parents or caregivers are overwhelmed with the virtual model, then they would be provided with the option of movement resources including printed motor activities and other resources that could be performed when they are able, based on their schedule.
- A weekly check in with the parent would occur to encourage compliance and to connect with the student.

Hybrid model for Speech and Language therapy:

If the hybrid model is chosen, the in person and virtual models will be combined. Students will participate in the in person model when in school. The sanitizing protocol will be followed. When not in school, students will receive virtual services as described above. The amount of combined time each week will add up to each student’s specified service delivery.

Hybrid Model for Occupational Therapy (OT):

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in concert with Special Education guidance suggests that all students who are present receive direct, in-person instruction. In conjunction with the J.W. Decas’ building safety plan and CDC guidelines, all direct OT services will be delivered in person within the educational setting as his/her attendance and schedule allows. The educational setting may vary from within the classroom to another location including outside if

	<p>deemed appropriate by the building principal. Weather permitting, the use of a personal, outdoor OT classroom area will be utilized. There may be cases when an online or virtual model is preferred by the parent particularly due to limited classroom time or attendance. As a result, parents will be contacted for their preference of service delivery. This may include live Zoom or Google Meet group instruction with classroom students, premade OT video lessons that may have occurred previously in school, co-teaching PreK teacher/staff and therapy lessons, individual facetime, or home base OT activities and consultation via phone or email on a weekly basis for access to OT instruction. The method of delivery will depend on the best interest of the student and family. OT virtual platforms will be designed and posted accordingly.</p> <p>Hybrid model for <u>BCBA consult</u>:</p> <p>The hybrid model would involve a combination of the in person and virtual model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observations will be attempted during in-person to obtain most accurate information and data. ● Strategies developed in the school setting may be modified and shared with families to incorporate into home sessions. ● Collaboration with in home behavior therapist/ behaviorist will continue <p>Hybrid model for <u>Discrete Trial Training</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The hybrid model would involve a combination of the in person and virtual model. Strategies developed in school the setting may be modified and shared with families to incorporate into home sessions. ● All attempts will be made to provide DTT in-person ● All protective and sanitization precautions will take place during in-person programming. <p>English Language Learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General education teachers that have a FEL (former English learner) in their classroom will still be required to monitor the student(s) ○ EL Teachers may utilize parent volunteers for translations if available and all parties agree
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.sickkids.ca/PDFs/About-SickKids/81407-COVID19-Recommendations-for-School-Reopening-SickKids.pdf • https://mailchi.mp/doi.mass.edu/commissioners-weekly-update-7-20-20-cvrf-grant-covid-19-protocoltwo-step-process-for-fall-reopening-plans?e=3f5233dca • https://www.mass.gov/info-details/learn-about-the-community-tracing-collaborative
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Individual building plans are as follows:

John W. Decas Elementary School:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1v1i4tvqNcGsXCa2TL3b6L2Z-5Fg4pMHi3oBw5X7BhoQ/edit?usp=sharing>

Minot Forest Elementary School:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qNhtLIHGTYTb35fQK7IjPhed89rh8vjaD5I20Q9v2v3I/edit?ts=5f203b85>

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aoNOmf6Z5v3AqLvEzviKeErQnDNUSxE_w6HEPZF4Tdc/edit?ts=5f203b70

Wareham Middle School:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GIIt3ymAOEKuDwL1k6uxDviH94hPTcGcv949K4P-oZjc/edit?usp=sharing>

Wareham High School:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DyfydhfxAGioV_dDo-I1dT0la2cx503hLpqeF42ZpP0/edit?usp=sharing

