



Sullivan
BOCES

THINKING FORWARD

Opening and Contingency Planning

For the 2021-2022 School Year

*The Sullivan BOCES Thinking Forward document is a living document.
Sullivan BOCES will modify all practices and protocols to meet the current requirements and guidance set
by New York State Department of Health, New York State Department of Education, the Center for
Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics, and Sullivan County Public Health Services.*

Information in this plan applies to all facilities and programs at Sullivan BOCES - NY599000
CTE NY5990001001
Elementary Programs NY5990004001
Secondary Programs NY5990003001
Specialized Programs NY5990002001

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COMMUNICATION/FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Regular and frequent communication between schools, families, and the wider community has always been an essential element of effective family and community engagement. When families, schools, and communities work together and keep each other informed, students are more successful, and everyone benefits.

Sullivan BOCES will provide updates throughout the school year to keep all employees current and up to date as to what is happening at the BOCES. Our website, social media platforms, mobile app, automated email and calling systems, direct mail, and other print media are being utilized to provide relevant, current information about our planning and response to the pandemic to faculty, staff, administrators, parents, students, component school districts, community partners and other stakeholders. Information concerning current guidance, rule changes, instruction, health and safety tips, public health notifications, etc. have been made available and will continue to be made available using all of the communications resources available to Sullivan BOCES.

Wherever practical all communications and documentation will be made available in the predominant language spoken in each of our student's families households. Communications and documentation will be accessible to all and in compliance with ADA requirements as well.

Communications Plan

Our communications plan is to inform and update parents/guardians, students, faculty, staff, component districts, community partners, stakeholders, and visitors. The communication plan will include, but not be limited to:

1. Timely information on our plans for returning to school.
2. Train and prepare students and parents/guardians for the upcoming year, including adapting to social distancing requirements, properly wearing face coverings, and proper hand and respiratory hygiene.
3. Frequent reminders of instructional platforms and resources, technology, and mental health supports available to students, staff, and families.
4. Provide updates from New York State Education Department (NYSED), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Sullivan County Public Health (SCPH), and the Center for Disease Control's (CDC's) guidelines as they pertain to our programs for the 2021-22 school year.
5. In the event of closure, continue to communicate updates and information internally and externally throughout the closure.

This will be accomplished by:

1. Updating and maintaining our communication platforms to ensure all information is current.

2. Training staff on new communication platforms.
3. By creating prepared messages for parents/guardians, students, faculty, staff, component districts, community partners, stakeholders, with regards to the Sullivan BOCES opening plan and pertinent information as to the requirements and expectations for all constituencies with regards to the implementation of the plan.
4. Creating instructions, signage, and infographics for students and families to train and prepare for the upcoming year, including adapting to social distancing requirements, properly wearing face coverings, and proper hand and respiratory hygiene.
 - a. Signage will be posted throughout BOCES facilities and on all communications platforms. The signage will be consistent with DOH COVID-19 signage, regarding public health protections against COVID-19. The signage will be used to remind individuals to:
 1. Stay home if they feel sick.
 2. Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others or in accordance with any stricter policy implemented by the school.
 3. Adhere to NYSED, CDC, and NYSDOH guidance regarding the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), specifically acceptable face coverings, when a social distance cannot be maintained.
 4. Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
 5. Adhere to social distancing instructions.
 6. Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19, and how they should do so.
 7. Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
 8. Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

Training Protocols

Sullivan BOCES will create instructions, signage, and infographics for students and families to train and prepare for the upcoming year, this will include adapting to social distancing requirements, properly wearing face coverings, and proper hand and respiratory hygiene.

Use of Face Coverings

Sullivan BOCES will follow the recommendations of the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, New York State Department of Health, and Sullivan County Public Health regarding the use of masks and social distancing.

Visitation to our buildings will be limited. If you need to come into a BOCES building, please schedule an appointment.

Effective immediately, in accordance with the NYSDOH Commissioner's determination issued pursuant to 10 NYCRR 2.60, any person over the age of 2 (including all students, personnel, teachers, administrators, contractors, and visitors) must wear masks at all times indoors in P-12 school buildings, regardless of vaccination status. People with medical or developmental conditions that prevent them from wearing a mask may be exempted from mask requirements, as documented by a medical provider. People do not need to wear masks when eating, drinking, singing, or playing a wind instrument; when masks are removed for these purposes, individuals must be spaced six feet apart. All mask requirements must be applied consistently with any state and federal law (e.g., Americans with Disabilities Act).

Provisions will be made on a case-by-case basis for students and staff who are not able to tolerate face coverings due to medical reasons. Both staff and students will be provided with breaks in areas where they can remove their face coverings while maintaining social distancing. Staff will be encouraged to take students outside on a rotating schedule.

Additional Communications Considerations

In order to assure that all information pertinent to the Sullivan BOCES' opening plan is properly and thoroughly disseminated to all constituencies we will:

1. Update and maintain current communication platforms to ensure all information is up-to-date.
2. Train staff on new communication platforms.
3. Develop a protocol to reach parents who have fallen out of communication with the BOCES.
4. Update existing email school cluster/group lists.
5. Create a database of key community partners.
6. Create prepared messages for parents, staff, component districts, and stakeholders to relay BOCES reopening plans.
7. Establish internal communication protocols to ensure consistency of internal communications for all staff and administration. Messages will be clear and concise with predetermined distribution methods.

Questions regarding the Sullivan BOCES: Thinking Forward plan may be directed to the following:

communications@scboces.org

or

by calling (845) 295-4043

The Sullivan BOCES: Thinking Forward plan is a "living document" and will be continually updated with necessary revisions pertinent to the reopening of the BOCES. The plan resides in a

digital format on the homepage of our website www.scboces.org. Hard copies will be sent by regular mail on request by calling (845) 295-4043

The primary contact person (s) for questions or concerns regarding the Sullivan BOCES: Thinking Forward plan are:

Dr. Robert M. Dufour
District Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer
or
Gary Bowers
Health and Safety Coordinator

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of the children and adults in our schools is paramount. Health and safety considerations must always come first in every decision made and every action taken by our schools and districts. Schools have an important role to play in educating and communicating with school communities about the everyday preventive actions they can take to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The Sullivan BOCES follows the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), and the Sullivan County Public Health Services in developing its plans and continually monitors the CDC and DOH communication channels to keep current with the latest COVID information and guidance.

Prevention is accomplished by following the recommendations of health authorities in the following areas:

Occupancy

BOCES has limited interaction with outside contractors and visitors to essential visits only. BOCES has also suspended outside use of its facilities at the current time.

Health Checks

Protocol for identifying ill students

Daily Temperature Checks - Upon arrival at all facilities, students will be required to have a temperature of less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit. If a student has a temperature above 100 degrees he/she will be sent home. Students who arrive by bus will be temperature screened one at a time as they exit the bus (students will remain seated and exit one at a time). Screening sites will also be established outside of the building entrances for students who are dropped off or who drive themselves to school. If a student has a temperature above 100 they will be isolated from the general population and parent/guardian pick-up protocols will be followed.

Screening by parents

Parents will be provided with a variety of information materials regarding signs and symptoms of COVID-19, including but not limited to fact sheets, access to informational videos, website links, and robocall reminder messages from the school about expectations for parents/guardians to ensure that students who present with symptoms are not sent to school.

Healthy Hygiene Practices

BOCES has installed signage throughout all of its facilities regarding proper handwashing and how to properly wear face coverings. PPE, cleaning supplies, and hand sanitizer stations will continue to be readily available throughout the BOCES facilities. The BOCES has secured quantities of all necessary PPE for students and staff. Hand sanitizer, approved disinfectants, and other needed supplies are also currently in stock. All supply inventories will be monitored and replenished as necessary. Copier stations and other designated common areas will have disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer for before and after use of any shared equipment. The BOCES Parago system will be available for replacement and tracking of all needed supplies.

School health staff will continue to follow universal precautions guidelines and wear appropriate PPE. In addition, when caring for a suspected individual with COVID-19 a fit-tested N-95 respirator should be used, if available.

Social Distancing

Because of the importance of in-person learning, schools should implement physical distancing to the extent possible within their structures but should not exclude students from in-person learning to keep a minimum distance requirement. In general, CDC recommends people who are not fully vaccinated maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet from other people who are not in their household. However, several studies from the 2020-2021 school year show low COVID-19 transmission levels among students in schools that had less than 6 feet of physical distance when the school implemented and layered other prevention strategies, such as the use of masks.

Based on studies from the 2020-2021 school year, CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask-wearing to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully re-open while maintaining these distances, it is especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, such as screening testing, cohorting, improved ventilation, handwashing and covering coughs and sneezes, staying home when sick with symptoms of infectious illness including COVID-19, and regular cleaning to help reduce transmission risk. A distance of at least 6 feet is recommended between students and teachers/staff, and between teachers/staff who are not fully vaccinated. Mask use by all students, teachers, staff, and visitors is particularly important when physical distance cannot be maintained.

Social distancing strategies will include but not be limited to:

- Directional arrows and portable safety posts will be used to establish traffic flow patterns in the hallways and students will not be allowed to congregate in common areas.
- Student movement will be staggered and re-routed to avoid large group interactions.
- Award presentations, guest speakers and other larger in-person gatherings will be restricted.

BOCES will reduce classroom density to the extent feasible to satisfy social distancing requirements. Training will be provided to both staff and students on proper social distancing and the building patterns will be reviewed. In addition, the protocols will be reinforced periodically so both staff and students adhere to social distancing requirements.

Medically Vulnerable/High-Risk Groups

The following groups are at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 and may need added or alternative provisions for social distancing. Sullivan BOCES will make necessary accommodations to meet the needs of these students in the school community. Persons in these groups should consult with their healthcare provider regarding prevention:

- Individuals age 65 or older
- Pregnant individuals
- Individuals with underlying health conditions including, but are not limited to:
 - chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - serious heart conditions
 - immunocompromised
 - severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
 - diabetes
 - chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
 - liver disease
 - sickle cell anemia
 - medically complex children, who have neurologic, genetic, metabolic conditions, or who have congenital heart disease are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 than other children

Students with special needs or students who are medically fragile may not be able to maintain social distancing, hand or respiratory hygiene, or wear a face covering or mask. Sullivan BOCES will partner with parents/guardians to work with their child's healthcare providers so that an informed decision can be made on how best to meet the child's needs at school while protecting their health and safety.

To transition these students back to school, BOCES will plan and coordinate with school health services personnel, special education personnel, and pupil personnel services in the component

districts and administration, keeping in mind that such families are already under significant stress and COVID-19 has made their situations more critical.

These alternate plans may include additional PPE for staff caring for such students, assigning only one staff member to care for the student and/or, decreased students in a classroom, alternating schedules, and provision of related services in an individual instead of a group setting.

Finally, if the parents/guardians choose not to send their child back to school, schools will need to provide instruction remotely.

PPE and Face Coverings

Face coverings will be worn by students and staff at all times when they are inside instructional buildings and practice appropriate social distancing.

BOCES will create a training video for staff, students, and parents on how to properly put on, take off, clean and maintain face coverings. For BOCES staff and students, the video will be available on the Safe Schools portal. A video link will be provided to parents and the BOCES will also make alternate training available to families who do not have access to technology.

The BOCES has installed signage throughout the campuses regarding the proper use of face coverings, social distancing protocols and proper use of face coverings, and proper and frequent hand washing.

Mask Breaks for Students

Both staff and students will be provided with breaks in areas where they can remove their face coverings while maintaining social distancing. Staff will be encouraged to take students outside on a rotating schedule. Provisions will be made on a case-by-case basis for students and staff who are not able to tolerate face coverings due to medical reasons.

Plan for obtaining and maintaining adequate supplies of PPE

PPE, cleaning supplies, and hand sanitizer stations will continue to be readily available throughout the BOCES facilities. The BOCES has already secured face coverings, gloves, gowns, and aprons for students and staff. Hand sanitizer, approved disinfectants, and other needed supplies are also currently in stock. All supply inventories will be monitored and replenished as necessary. Copier stations and other designated common areas will have disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer for before and after use of any shared equipment. The BOCES Parago system will be available for replacement and tracking of all needed supplies.

Management of Ill Persons

Becoming Ill at School

Staff will be trained to be aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and MIC-C associated with COVID-19. Staff will report any illness of students or staff to an administrator or school nurse in compliance with FERPA and Education Law 2-D. If a nurse chooses to go to the classroom to make assessments of students, it will be done to protect the student's confidentiality.

Students with symptoms of illness will be sent to the health office where a school nurse is available to assess individuals, as chronic conditions such as asthma and allergies or chronic gastrointestinal conditions may present the same symptoms as COVID-19 but are neither contagious nor pose a public health threat. If a school nurse is not available, BOCES will isolate and dismiss any student or staff member who has a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19 that are not explained by a chronic health condition for follow up with a health care provider. BOCES will call for emergency transport in adherence to policy if a student shows any of the emergency warning signs of MIS-C.

BOCES administrators will work collaboratively with school nurses to determine if additional staff is needed to assist with non-nursing tasks such as student supervision, communication with parents, and completion of any paperwork not related to nursing documentation.

Isolation rooms will be created at both instructional campuses in conformance with guidance from all applicable government agencies. Protocols for the isolation rooms will be established. Students and/or staff who are suspected of potential COVID-19 cases will be placed in the isolation room. All students will be supervised by an individual wearing the appropriate PPE until a parent/guardian picks the student up. Both nurse's offices will be redefined to create sick and well child areas.

If a student or staff member reports having tested positive for COVID-19, BOCES will contact the Sullivan County Department of Health to determine the next steps for the schools and families involved.

Return to School After Illness

BOCES will follow current CDC guidance in consultation with the Sullivan County Department of Health regarding the return of students or staff members after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

COVID-19 Testing

BOCES will follow CDC guidance regarding COVID-19 testing. The decision to test will be determined by a healthcare provider or the Sullivan County Department of Health.

Contact Tracing

BOCES will cooperate with the NY and Sullivan County Departments of Health regarding contact tracing. To be of the greatest assistance, BOCES will keep accurate attendance records of students and staff members, ensure that student schedules are kept up to date, and keep a log of any visitors that includes the date, time, and area of the building visited.

BOCES has staff trained through the New York State Contact Tracing Program and will assist the Sullivan County Department of Health. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. BOCES will not make any decisions on who is to be excluded from school based on contact, without guidance and direction from the Sullivan County Department of Health.

School Closures

Sullivan BOCES will collaborate with the Sullivan County Department of Health to determine the parameters, conditions, or metrics (e.g., increased absenteeism or increased illness in the school community) that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level. School administrators will consider closing school if absentee rates impact the ability of the school to operate safely. Sullivan BOCES may choose to modify operations before closing to help mitigate a rise in cases, in consultation with the Sullivan County Department of Health when making such decisions.

Cleaning and Disinfection

The O&M staff will resume with regularly scheduled daily school cleaning and disinfecting routines. All areas of regular use will be cleaned and disinfected at least once each day. Areas of special concern, such as bathrooms, isolation rooms, and high touch surfaces will be cleaned as needed. In the event of a suspected illness, and after each school day, the BOCES facilities will be thoroughly ventilated and disinfected.

To fulfill the mission of enhanced cleaning protocols throughout all BOCES facilities, O&M staff will be required to complete a formal training program on proper cleaning procedures. In addition, O&M management will continue to work with staff, monitor adherence to the cleaning protocols, and offer refresher training sessions periodically. Other staffing needs, including the recruitment of additional substitutes for key positions, will continue to be addressed to ensure the safety and welfare of all students and staff.

BOCES maintenance staff will not utilize disinfectant products in the presence of students.

An Incident Response Team has been established and staff have been trained on the proper use of PPE, cleaning agents, and safety protocols. The Team is prepared to respond, contain, and remediate a potential COVID exposure on the BOCES campus.

Safety Drills

Fire (evacuation) Drills and Lockdown Drills are required by Education Law and the Fire Code, and they will be conducted without exception. Protocols for emergency drills will be maintained to ensure student and staff safety. Masks and additional hand sanitizer and gloves will be added to the current "To Go" buckets already distributed in all classrooms and designated common rooms to ensure adequate PPE is readily available. Fire Code Section 404 requires that schools maintain Fire Safety, Evacuation, and Lockdown Plans and these plans include how lockdown and evacuation drills are conducted. All required drills will be planned, scheduled, and conducted to maximize social distancing. These changes must be included in the Fire Safety plans.

Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

Initial Actions

Sullivan BOCES has established protocols for safely caring for a student, faculty, or staff member if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 as stipulated elsewhere in this document. These protocols include but are not limited to procedures to isolate individuals who screen positive, who become symptomatic, or require isolation as well as plans to support local health departments in contact tracing efforts. Sullivan BOCES will consult with Sullivan County Public Health on a case-by-case basis for suspected or confirmed cases to determine school closure recommendations, quarantining provisions, and returning/reopening protocols. The established protocols also include adherence to, and promotion of, hand hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection guidance set forth by DOH and the CDC.

Opening Protocol

Sullivan BOCES has established protocols for the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19. Such cleaning and disinfection includes, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high touch surfaces and following the NYDOH and CDC guidelines. Upon completion of cleaning and disinfection, schools will be reopened only after consultation with Sullivan County Public Health.

COVID-19 Safety Coordinator

Sullivan BOCES has identified Health & Safety Coordinator, Gary Bowers, as the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator. Mr. Bowers will work with the BOCES administration to ensure continuous compliance with all aspects of the BOCES opening plan.

FACILITIES

When students and adults return to their school buildings, it will be vitally important that the physical spaces they occupy are configured and maintained in a way that provides the maximum possible protection from spreading the coronavirus.

BOCES will limit staff gatherings in break rooms, copy/mailrooms, storage areas, and other small spaces. All water drinking fountains will be shut down, only designated water bottle refill stations will remain open to students and staff.

Common bathrooms will be restricted to one occupant at a time. Signage will be placed on each door. Communication will also be sent out to everyone to explain this change in use for the limited number of common bathrooms located in BOCES facilities.

Physical barriers in the Cafeteria will be used to separate the production and serving line spaces, and to also allow for additional space that can be utilized by other programs/reopening social distancing needs throughout the organization

Isolation rooms will be created at both instructional campuses in conformance with guidance from all applicable government agencies. Protocols for the isolation rooms will be established. Students suspected of potential COVID-19 cases will be placed in the isolation room. All

students will be supervised by an individual wearing the appropriate PPE until a parent/guardian picks the student up. Both nurse's offices will be redefined to create sick and well child areas.

General Health and Safety Considerations

Sullivan BOCES will follow all guidance related to health and safety. This includes meeting social distancing requirements and cleaning regularly to prevent the spread of infection. These requirements are addressed in more detail in other parts of the plan. The Facilities portion of this plan assures that Sullivan BOCES will meet all requirements associated with building spaces.

Fire Code Compliance

All spaces to be occupied by public school students and staff meet the requirements of the 2020 New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (BC) and the State Energy Conservation Code. Should any alterations need to be made, Sullivan BOCES will submit the proposed changes to the OFP for review and approval.

Doorways

Stairs and corridor doors have closers with automatic hold opens. These doors are normally held in the open position and are automatically released by the fire alarm system. The function, position, and operation of those doors will remain unchanged.

Emergency Drills

Sullivan BOCES will conduct standard operations and procedures to the best of its abilities without deviating from current requirements. Fire (evacuation) Drills and Lockdown Drills are required by Education Law and regulation and the Fire Code and they will be conducted without exceptions. Protocols for emergency drills will be maintained to ensure student and staff safety. Masks and additional hand sanitizer and gloves will be added to the current "To Go" buckets already distributed in all classrooms and designated common rooms to ensure adequate PPE is readily available. Fire Code Section 404 requires that schools maintain Fire Safety, Evacuation, and Lockdown Plans and these plans include how lockdown and evacuation drills are conducted. All required drills will be planned scheduled and conducted to maximize social distancing. These changes must be included in the Fire Safety plans.

Inspections

Deadlines for the submission of the Building Condition Survey and Visual Inspections will be met.

CHILD NUTRITION

A successful nutrition program is a key component to a successful educational environment. Children cannot focus on learning when they are hungry. School meals boost learning, and studies show that students perform best academically when they are well nourished. No child

should ever go hungry, and these plans provide for the feeding of all students who require food assistance.

Sullivan BOCES will consider national, state, and local health and safety guidelines. The school food service director at Sullivan BOCES participated in discussions regarding plans to ensure that students participating in all learning models have access to healthy meals.

Sullivan BOCES is considering the resources and flexibilities necessary to transition food service operations to safely accommodate our student's nutritional needs following principles and practices outlined by SED as they become available and needed. This includes utilizing state or nation-wide waivers and updating school policies, standard operating procedures, and training to ensure compliance with Child Nutrition Program requirements.

Sullivan BOCES will provide all students enrolled in the SFA with access to school meals each school day. This will include students in attendance at school, and students learning remotely.

Safety and Sanitation

Sullivan BOCES will:

- Update standard operating procedures for sanitation of school kitchens, cafeterias, food warehouses, and central production kitchens;
- Identify any additional equipment or supplies such as thermometers, alcohol wipes, or other equipment that may be needed to keep food, students, and staff safe;
- Consider the special feeding needs of students with severe disabilities whose safety and sanitation needs at mealtimes may differ from those of their peers;
- Install barriers at the point of sale/point of pickup (see the Facilities Guidance section);
- Have adequate supplies of face masks, soap, hand sanitizer, and tissues in food service areas (see the Health and Safety section);
- Routinely clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces including tables, chairs, carts used in transportation, and point-of-service touchpads;
- Use timers for cleaning reminders;
- Wear single-use gloves when handling or delivering all foods;
- Wear an apron when handling or delivering foods;

All cafeteria locations will implement the following:

- Master class list with columns broken down for meal types and overall counts - NO PAPER TRANSFER
- Food Service Staff will prepare meal quantities as outlined on the master list for individual classes

- Food Service Staff will provide all needed/requested components for classroom staff to transport back to the classrooms
- No students nor staff, other than Food Service, will have access to any foods or milk products until presented for actual pick up by the Food Service staff
- Classroom staff will be reminded of regular accountability procedures - one meal, one child, as ordered, and must be given directly to the specific student by an adult
- Food Service staff will assure each meal contains at least the minimum number of components needed to be classified as a reimbursable meal, should there be no student choice information

Food Service Staff

Sullivan BOCES staff are trained on district policies and protocols on health and safety and will be retrained as needed on standard operating procedures for food service.

Contact Vendors and Suppliers

Sullivan BOCES will work with its contact vendors and suppliers to ensure supply chain and availability of services and will collaborate on determining the safest way to handle deliveries.

USDA Waivers approved for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

Sullivan BOCES will notify the NYSED Office of Child Nutrition of the SFA's plan to use any of the following waivers necessary for operations:

- Non-Congregate Feeding
- Meal Service Time Flexibility
- "Offer Versus Serve" Flexibility for Senior High Schools.

Additional Food Service Resources

- [The NYSED Child Nutrition Office website](#)
- [USDA Food and Nutrition Service](#)
- [Institute of Child Nutrition](#)
- [New York State Department of Health Food Safety Guidance](#)
- [CDC Guidance for Schools](#)

TRANSPORTATION

The school bus is an extension of the classroom; therefore, many of the recommendations that apply to school buildings (like social distancing and frequent cleaning) should be applied to the school bus, as well. Pupil transportation also presents certain unique challenges, especially about the transportation of homeless students, students in foster care, students in nonpublic and charter schools, and students with disabilities.

Primary transportation to and from Sullivan BOCES is coordinated by the component school districts. BOCES will work with its ten (10) school districts to coordinate staggered arrival and dismissal times and unload/load buses at alternate entrance/exit locations to reduce the number of students at any one entrance/exit. Communication with our participating school districts will be essential in establishing safe procedures for student arrival and dismissal. For students not arriving by bus, they will follow the present BOCES protocol for signing in and out. For late arrival or early pick up of students, parents/guardians will follow the same sign out protocols but will do so from outside of the buildings.

Sullivan BOCES operates several shuttles between its various campuses and program sites. Some of these shuttles are provided under a contract with a private transportation company or through a contract with a component school district. The remainder of the shuttles including van service are operated directly by Sullivan BOCES.

The School Bus

Able students will be required to wear masks and where possible social distance on the shuttle buses and vans. All shuttle buses and vans will be cleaned/ disinfected once a day. Wheelchair school buses will be configured so wheelchair placement adheres to social distancing guidelines of 6 feet. When temperatures are above 45 degrees, shuttle buses and vans will transport passengers with roof hatches or windows slightly opened to provide for adequate airflow.

School Bus Staff

School bus drivers, monitors, attendants, and mechanics shall perform a self-health assessment for symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving at work. If personnel are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19 they will notify their supervisor and seek medical attention. School bus drivers, monitors, and attendants must wear a face covering. Transportation staff (drivers, monitors, attendants, mechanics, and cleaners) will be trained and provided periodic refreshers on the proper use of personal protective equipment and the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves will be provided for drivers, monitors, and attendants on shuttle buses and vans. Drivers, monitors, and attendants who must have direct physical contact with a child will wear gloves.

Transportation staff will be encouraged to wash their hands with soap and water before and after the am and pm runs to keep healthy and prevent the spread of respiratory and diarrheal infections from one person to the next.

Students on Transportation

Students must wear a mask on shuttle buses and vans if they are physically able and, wherever possible, follow social distancing guidelines. Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering, including students where such covering would impair their physical health or mental health are not subject to the required use of a face covering. In such a situation the seating will have to be rearranged so the student without a mask is socially distanced from other students. Students who are transported in a mobility device should use seating positions that provide the required social distancing. Students who do not have a mask will NOT be denied transportation. Students who do not have masks will be provided one by the BOCES.

Protocols Once Students Disembark from Transportation

When students embark and disembark the bus, they should follow social distancing protocols. This will increase the time required to load and unload buses at schools in the morning and afternoon. Staggered arrival and departure times to ensure social distancing will be coordinated with the local school district. Loading and unloading locations for students who are transported by bus, car, or are pedestrians will be arranged to maximize social distancing. All students are entitled to transportation to the extent required by law. Transportation departments do not have the ability or the right to deny transportation for children who are in foster care, homeless, or attend private or charter schools.

Pupil Transportation Routing Considerations

Sullivan BOCES will work with its component school districts to coordinate transportation shuttles to offsite Career & Technical Education Programs to ensure that proper social distancing on the shuttle buses is accomplished. Some school districts provide transportation directly to some offsite locations while others bring all of their students to the BOCES main campus. Staff will review enrollment numbers and evaluate the shuttle numbers to reduce the number of students on any one shuttle bus.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Communities and schools are facing unprecedented challenges as they respond to the compounded difficulties of a global pandemic, an economic recession, and civic unrest in response to structural racism. But these challenges also offer unprecedented opportunities to re-envision and renew the capacity of our schools and communities to be welcoming, supportive, inclusive and equitable environments.

To meet these challenges, individuals must start with the inner work of healing their own hearts and minds, finding the capacity within themselves to support healing for students, families, peers, and communities. While district and school personnel cannot solve every problem, collectively they are a powerful force in improving the well-being of themselves and those around them.

As district and school personnel adapt to environments that result in substantially reduced time spent interacting in person, ensuring intentional and meaningful inclusion of social emotional learning (SEL) across all aspects of operating strategies is critical to supporting the well-being and success of students, staff, and families.

Along with physical health and well-being, schools and districts must prioritize social emotional well-being -- not at the expense of academics, but to create the mental, social, and emotional space for academic learning to occur. It is unrealistic to expect that students will return to instruction as they left it months ago. Students have experienced an extremely stressful, and for many, traumatic experience while isolated from school, friends, and community. Some students have had positive experiences during school closures, learning, growing, and discovering new identities as activists, caregivers, and leaders in their communities. Schools should support and nurture new skills and mindsets.

Students known to be vulnerable, as well as those not previously on district and school radars, may return to instruction anxious, fearful, withdrawn, grieving, and/or unprepared to self-manage new or exacerbated negative behaviors. Schools and districts must be prepared to meet students where they are, regardless of the circumstances in which they find themselves.

During the Regional Task Force Meetings, stakeholders discussed the variety of student, family, and school personnel needs that must be addressed during transitions back to school in the fall, whether that is in-person or remote. Overall, worry was expressed that many students, families, and staff will return with fear or anxiety, and school and district staff will need to balance physical safety with social and emotional needs.

Stakeholders expressed concern over local capacity to address increased social and emotional needs with existing staff and discussed opportunities to better position existing staff to build capacity around student and family engagement, trauma-responsive practices, social emotional learning, restorative practices, and fostering relationships, within both in-person and virtual environments. They further expressed concerns about screen time for students should remote learning be necessary, and the ability of students and families to access resources during periods of remote learning.

Stakeholders stressed the importance of clear communication with all stakeholders including students, families, staff, and community, and considered how community partnerships could be leveraged to increase capacity. They recommended that social and emotional well-being be prioritized during transitions back to school and for as long as necessary to appropriately support student needs; physical and emotional safety is necessary for the brain and body to be ready to learn.

Finally, stakeholders stressed the critical need to address adults' social and emotional needs before the return to school and on an ongoing basis. Adults must have systems of support including meaningful peer relationships, opportunities to connect, and resources to support self-care. Without these supports in place, adults will not have optimal capacity to support the needs of students and families.

The following considerations are intended to assist in creating a welcoming and caring school community that ensures its members are met with compassion and the support they need to achieve and thrive. Academic learning cannot be effective until the basic human needs for

physical and emotional safety are met. This is an embodied practice. Breathe, notice, feel, and be present. Except where otherwise noted, the considerations outlined below are relevant regardless of whether the instruction is in-person or remote.

SEL Team

A designated SEL Advisory Team was created during the spring of 2020 to review and refine SEL practices for Sullivan BOCES. The SEL Advisory Team is currently composed of administrators, teachers, related service providers, school counselors, social workers, and behaviorists. Feedback from community representatives, parents, and/or student council representatives has been integrated into this process. The SEL Advisory Team contributed to the design of this Reopening Plan, which used survey data from school personnel, parents, and students. Additionally, the BOCES-wide Counseling Team meets monthly to discuss various topics regarding specific individual and program needs and reports back to the Advisory Team. These monthly meetings also provided the School Counseling Team with peer support and professional learning opportunities to support the ongoing design and development of the SEL work.

The SEL Advisory Team will review and refine our current comprehensive developmental school counseling program plans for each BOCES program. This team will work closely with administrators, teachers, and related service providers (including school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and behaviorists) to define program support available to all students, while meeting individual student IEPs and 504s, respectively. The SEL Advisory Team will also review and inform areas needed for MTSS. The SEL Advisory Team will use the CASEL framework to evaluate and pace ongoing development of SEL at Sullivan BOCES.

Professional Development

Professional learning is a community effort involving ISS staff, teachers, related service providers, teachers, instructional coaches, administrators, community members, and consultants. In addition to topics identified during the action planning process, any specific needs that arise or are identified by the Professional Development Team will be addressed.

Given the trauma of quarantine and social distancing during a worldwide pandemic, social and emotional learning, including mental health and wellness for adults and students, has to be the cornerstone of professional development work. This will be an important focus through the summer and continuing during the year. Workshops have been offered and are being developed on a county-wide basis and locally at BOCES, utilizing community resources and internal BOCES staff. Some of the topics include Youth Mental Health First Aid, Mental Health 101 (with customized strands for parents and educators), MTSS, Emergency Intervention Strategies, Trauma-Informed Instruction, SEL Instructional Strategies, Stress Reduction, and Restorative Practices.

These workshops will focus on deepening the understanding of mental health, well-being, trauma-responsive and restorative practices, and SEL through professional learning and collaboration with staff, students, and families.

Community Partnerships

Sullivan BOCES will continue to collaborate with our partner agencies that provide mental health/substance abuse treatment, transition services, family support, as well as additional outreach to our school community. Staff assists with referrals for services for our students as appropriate and/or have contact with agency staff to monitor our student's progress/needs with parental consent.

- Sullivan County Department of Community Services (Mental Health & Alcohol Substance Abuse Treatment & Case Management Services)
- SYNERGY (Mental Health)
- Rockland Children's Psychiatric Center (Mental Health, outpatient mental health services)
- Action Towards Independence (Parents for Parents Support Group)
- Sullivan County Department of Family Services (Preventive Services)
- Sullivan County Department of Probation
- New Hope Community (Transition Services, School Supports)
- Center for Discovery
- Arc of Orange and Sullivan County
- Sullivan 180
- Sullivan Allied Leadership Team (SALT)
- Catholic Charities
- Garnet Health
- CASEL
- Cornell Cooperative Extension Of Sullivan County
- Sullivan Renaissance
- Independent Living
- Rehabilitation Support Services - Multi Systemic Therapy (Must be referred by Single Point of Access (SPOA) committee)

MTSS

MTSS is an evidence-based approach to comprehensive program delivery that addresses academic and behavioral challenges including proactive activities for all students (universal interventions), targeted activities for students identified at-risk (secondary interventions), and intensive activities for students identified as high risk (tertiary interventions). MTSS is grounded in the belief that all students can learn, and all school professionals must be responsive to the academic and behavioral needs of all students. MTSS focuses on evidence-based practices, relies on student progress data to inform instructional decisions, and ensures that each student, based on their unique needs, receives the level and type of support necessary to be successful.

It is an important means of addressing equity and most importantly, ensures that all young people are provided with the support they need to thrive.

A strong set of universal interventions designed to support social emotional well-being will be crucial to our collective success as students and adults return to instruction and the school environment with increased needs. The supports represented in the universal tier are foundational to secondary and tertiary supports. In general, universal interventions should be effective for most students, but targeted and intensive support will be needed to address student needs that could not be met with universal interventions. A strong foundational tier helps ensure that schools are not over-identifying students and adults for tier 2 and 3 supports, which allows them to more strategically allocate resources for the higher tiers.

The SEL Advisory Team will review Sullivan BOCES counseling/guidance program and revise it to incorporate a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). As part of an MTSS framework, SEL, mental health, and well-being supports will be offered at all levels for students in all programs. These practices will be effective, efficient, and evidence-based with strategies that all students can access.

Mental Health and Trauma Informed Practices

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma can have a negative impact on young people's social emotional well-being, and consequently, their capacity to learn. Students and adults are grappling with new and exacerbated traumas that can have far-reaching impacts on health and educational outcomes. In addition, anxiety and depression may present or worsen in response to these additional stressors and traumas.

Trauma-responsive practices help shift negative reactions to inappropriate student behavior to thoughtful responses that consider the root causes of behavior and help to support individual student needs to address those causes.

Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) Roles within MTSS

Sullivan BOCES works collaboratively with Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) at each component school district. Monthly meetings are established to continue the collaboration between SED representatives, BOCES representatives, and CSE Directors.

The SEL Advisory Team will use a Mental Health Assessment upon reopening to evaluate the impact of trauma and social emotional needs of students. This Mental Health Assessment will be used during the first few weeks of reopening to determine individual student needs. The Mental Health Assessment process will include a 'debrief' and de-stressing practices for re-entry for staff and students if deemed clinically appropriate.

Classroom teachers and related service providers will also conduct assessments in content areas and related service areas around IEP and content goals for students to identify regression points initially and over the course of the school year. Team meetings will continue to discuss and identify tier 1, 2, and 3 activities and services that need to be developed or adopted to address individual student needs.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Transformative SEL

SEL is not synonymous with mental health, but it does provide a foundational set of competencies that serve as tools to navigate challenges in healthy, productive ways.

SEL must be culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining to equitably meet the needs of our young people and adults. Transformative SEL elaborates on the core competencies from an educational equity lens and envisions their operationalization to better prepare young people and adults for critical, active citizenship, and considers the roles and implications of culture, identity, agency, belonging, and engagement. Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) and Project-Based Learning (PBL) offer opportunities for young people to shape their own learning and can support transformative SEL.

Social emotional well-being and learning will be our priority for professional development of our staff, as well as our approach and framework for student learning. Our SEL Advisory Team, Professional Development Team, and Curriculum Advisory Team will coordinate the engagement of members of the school community in implementation efforts.

Restorative Practices

Implementation of restorative practices invites an opportunity to reflect on school culture, discipline policies, practices, and disparities, and how policies and practices may contribute to the school to prison pipeline.

Restorative practices are processes and approaches designed to build community and meaningful relationships, develop shared values, help students better understand their behavior, how it impacts themselves and others, and ultimately to use that self and social awareness to repair damage caused to relationships as a result of inappropriate behavior.

Replacing traditional discipline with restorative alternatives offers opportunities for youth to learn from mistakes and may reduce disciplinary disparities and negative outcomes.

Planning and Capacity Building

Central to Sullivan BOCES' effective opening strategy is clear prioritization of mental health, wellbeing, and SEL. An SEL task force team was an integral part of Sullivan BOCES' reopening planning process. Assessing and preparing to meet the needs of students will be the first objective in the new school year.

The SEL Advisory Team will review and refine our current comprehensive developmental school counseling program plans for each BOCES program. This team will work closely with administrators, teachers, and related service providers (including school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and behaviorists) to define program support available to all students, while meeting individual student IEPs and 504s, respectively. The SEL Advisory Team will also review and inform areas needed for MTSS. The SEL Advisory Team will use the CASEL framework to evaluate and pace ongoing development of SEL at Sullivan BOCES.

SCHOOL SCHEDULES

Sullivan BOCES will return to school five (5) days per week with face-to-face instruction. Remote Instruction will only be available to students with documented medical concerns.

Face-to-Face

In the face-to-face learning environment without social distancing requirements, students and faculty will follow the traditional school schedule as outlined in the student management system.

In the face-to-face learning environment under the requirements of social distancing, students will remain in their homerooms, and teachers will rotate in regularly to provide individual and small group instruction in specific content. Whole group instruction will take place via Google Classroom or Google Meet.

Remote Learning

Remote Instruction will only be available to students with documented medical concerns. If your child cannot return to school in person, please submit a note from their doctor to our school nurse listing their medical concerns before the start of the school year. Remote instruction will also be provided for all students who are officially quarantined by Sullivan County Public health. In a remote environment, students will be expected to meet daily with their respective teachers. All remote students will be held accountable for academic expectations, course work, and assignments.

BUDGET AND FISCAL MATTERS

Economic Overview

Both the national economy and New York State's economy have been dramatically impacted by the COVID-19 crisis and the various mitigation efforts that have continued to evolve since the pandemic changed the world as most knew it, in March 2020. School districts and BOCES throughout the state, like other businesses and organizations, will continue to assess the long term financial impact of the COVID crisis.

As a service provider, Sullivan BOCES remains prepared to continue to provide both instructional and non-instructional programs and services that are of high quality and meet district needs. BOCES services are created when two or more school districts have similar needs that can be met by sharing staff members, classroom/office space, equipment, time, or expertise. School districts receive BOCES aid from the state to encourage them to share resources and to obtain economies of scale. BOCES cannot levy taxes. All monies come from services delivered to school districts or from grants. Component districts share in the administrative and capital costs of BOCES. As a result, in some areas of program operations, we anticipate that our services requests will increase as districts look to expand their participation in BOCES services. In other areas of the BOCES operation, we anticipate that school districts will reduce their subscriptions to some services due to limited revenues. Throughout the upcoming school year, the BOCES will

continue to communicate regularly with our participating districts to ensure we are aware of their current needs. The BOCES is committed to adjusting services as needed to ensure that programs and services are available to meet the diverse needs of general education students, students with disabilities, and at-risk students.

The upcoming school year will be challenging for all schools/BOCES throughout the state. All educational organizations will still need to allocate resources to purchase PPE equipment, additional cleaning/sanitizing supplies, and modifications to facilities to meet social distancing requirements, and increased substitute and other personnel needs.

School District Fiscal Preparedness

Sullivan BOCES is fortunate to be in a stable financial position with adequate reserves and we anticipate stable enrollments in our major instructional program areas. However, with this said we will continue to closely monitor enrollment and analyze our actual revenues as well as closely review all BOCES expenditures.

In addition, the BOCES will continue to be a partner to its component school districts and seek out additional opportunities for collaboration. Our efforts will remain focused on areas where we can reduce duplication of services, enhance efficiencies and reduce overall expenses. School districts throughout the state received additional federal funding to support their operations. While at the current time this funding will only be available until 2023 and could cause a funding gap if used for recurring expenses. BOCES throughout NYS were not provided with any additional funding at all. Fortunately, Sullivan BOCES does have solid financials including a number of reserve funds that can be utilized to fund future expenses if needed. Reserve funds available to the BOCES if needed include: Unemployment, Employment Benefit Accrued Liability (EBALR), NYS Teachers Retirement System (TRS), NYS Employees Retirement System (ERS) Liability Reserve, and the Career & Technical Equipment. The BOCES has a long standing practice of utilizing its reserves in a prudent manner and will continue these practices over the next few years. Unlike school districts, a BOCES does not have a fund balance, any remaining funds are returned to the participating districts.

Pandemic Adjustment and CARES Act Funds

While BOCES itself is not eligible for the CARES Act funding, it will continue to support its participating districts by sharing information about the CARES Act application requirements, reminding districts of upcoming deadlines and for those that purchase Central Business Office services, the CBO staff will assist the districts if needed with gathering data and completing reports required by the CARES act funds as well as assisting with any other funding related needs. In addition, as stated earlier the BOCES is cognizant of the long term fiscal challenges its component school districts and districts throughout the state will face. We will continue to be a proactive partner and work with district leadership to provide high quality cost effective instructional programs and management services.

Potential Further Aid Reductions

While the BOCES will continue to focus on opening school and maintain its ability to pivot its instructional programming schedule as the conditions of the Pandemic evolve. Plans to discuss the 2022-2023 school year are also being developed and our primary focus will be to respond to the immediate and future needs of our component school districts. It will be critical for the BOCES to maintain ongoing communication with its districts so there is an opportunity to listen to the districts share ideas about potential changes, additions, or deletions in BOCES programs and services. Throughout these challenging times for our schools and our community BOCES will be there to provide leadership and support.

ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Sullivan BOCES will use a variety of methods to reach out to students and their families will address absences before students fall behind in their learning, working in collaboration with related service providers and parents.

Attendance for Instructional Purposes

Sullivan BOCES will strive to ensure faculty has daily contact with students in some format to support both their academic needs and social-emotional wellbeing. Teacher/student contact will be tracked in the student management system and/or as outlined in the Continuity of Learning plan. Related services provisions will be tracked in respective student IEPs.

Attendance Considerations

Homeroom teachers will be the daily point of contact for attendance purposes. In instances where students are remote, any daily contact by a faculty member with students will be considered as attendance for that day.

Opening Mandatory Requirements

Attendance of students placed at Sullivan BOCES will be reported to SIRS. All students of compulsory age who were not in attendance will be reported until they exceed compulsory school age, they no longer reside in their home district or the district has communicated with appropriate documentation that they have entered another educational program leading to a high school diploma.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Sullivan BOCES will strive to provide the opportunity for all students to feel safe, engaged, and excited about their learning, whether in-person, remote or some combination of the two. At the heart of teaching and learning are the relationships that students have with their peers,

teachers, and school community members. Sullivan BOCES will make all efforts to set a positive routine and welcoming environment that supports students during this unpredictable time. Individual student needs and equity will be at the center of all learning experiences. Flexibility is essential, and Sullivan BOCES will be prepared to shift between in-person, remote learning, and a hybrid model in a way that is least disruptive to students.

Instructional experiences will be inclusive, culturally responsive, consider the needs of all students, and adhere to all established state regulations and guidelines

Equity is at the heart of all school instructional decisions. All instruction will be developed so that whether delivered in-person, remotely or through a hybrid model due to a local or state school closure, there are clear opportunities for instruction that are accessible to all students. Such opportunities will be aligned with state standards and include routine scheduled times for students to interact and seek feedback and support from faculty members.

Instruction will include regular and substantive interaction with an appropriately certified teacher regardless of the delivery method (e.g., in person, remote or hybrid).

Students and their families/caregivers can contact the school and teachers with questions about their instruction and/or technology including email, Google Suite, and telephone. This information will be accessible to all, available in the predominant languages of our families, and will be widely disseminated. Faculty and administrative emails are available on the Sullivan BOCES website.

Pre-K

Sullivan BOCES does not provide Pre-K services.

Grades K-6

Sullivan BOCES will ensure that students receive high quality rigorous, standards based instruction that will meet their academic needs and allow them to attain the learning standards in all curricular areas regardless of the scenario in which the instruction is being delivered.

Grades 7-12 Units of Study

All students will be provided instruction designed to enable them to achieve the State's learning standards. In a face-to-face, in-person teaching environment, the school schedule for students will be built in adherence to the 180 minute unit of study requirement.

Sullivan BOCES will ensure that all students have equitable access to high quality rigorous instructional opportunities, and experiences, provided by highly qualified, certified teaching professionals, competent in the content or discipline of the course. BOCES will provide instruction, learning experiences, and coursework that, considered as a whole, is comparable in rigor, scope, and magnitude to a traditionally delivered unit of study.

Instructional experiences are not defined solely as a student's time spent in front of a teacher or in front of a screen, but time engaged in standards-based learning under the guidance and

direction of a teacher. These experiences might include, but are not limited to: completing online modules or tasks; viewing instructional videos; responding to posts or instructor questions; engaging with other class participants in an online or phone discussion; conducting research; doing projects; or meeting with an instructor face-to-face, via an online platform or by phone. The learning will be supported by faculty, and students will have access to assistance from a qualified teacher when they need it.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)

Sullivan BOCES will ensure that all applicable NYS Learning Standards are met and content that is critical for meeting these standards as well as requirements for applicable industry certifications or other postsecondary credentialing is identified. Additionally, for those programs in fields such as health sciences, barbering, and appearance enhancement where specific curricula and/or clinical hours are mandated by other state agencies (Department of Health and Department of State respectively), consideration will be given to ensuring requirements of the programs are met. All planning will be done within the context of meeting NYS Department of Health guidelines for health and safety and social distancing policies. CTE laboratory spaces will be set up to accommodate all such policies.

CTE coursework will be taught by appropriately certified CTE teachers. Instructors who are required to hold an NYS professional license for a particular content area (i.e., health sciences, barbering, and appearance enhancement) will maintain such license without lapse. All CTE laboratory/clinical instruction and supervision will be delivered by the appropriately certified CTE teacher. Other staff may be utilized (under the guidance of the CTE teacher) to supervise student groups in a non-laboratory/clinical setting to better adhere to social distancing guidelines.

Off Campus CTE programs and work-based learning and clinical sites:

All faculty, staff, and students will be expected to follow the COVID protocols of the off campus location that they are assigned. All faculty staff and students located at Garnet Health, Sullivan County Adult Care Center, Sullivan County Care Center at Sunset Lake, Achieve Rehabilitation Center, and SUNY Sullivan are required to be vaccinated. For work-based learning sites, COVID protocols will be determined by the organization or company hosting CTE students.

Modifying learning for social distancing and/or remote learning

- Course content will be prioritized in the event instructional capabilities are modified and/or changed throughout the year.
- Students will have access to materials necessary to complete all learning activities.
- Google Classroom will be utilized in-person to build practice among students if districts may need to switch to remote learning.
- Instructors may create videos demonstrating skills or teaching content for use both in and outside of the classroom.

- Procedures for disinfection, and decontaminating of shared materials and equipment have been developed.

Keeping students engaged when remote

- Class meeting times will be regularly scheduled to address large group instruction and/or issues impacting the whole class.
- Small group and/or individual check-ins will be scheduled around full class meeting times.
- Current topics will be integrated into the field of study to aid in interest and engagement along with incorporating current industry safety and infection control practices within curricula.
- Positive and respectful classroom culture will be supported through the SEL practices outlined in the SEL section of this plan.

Work-based Learning

Sullivan BOCES will collaborate with all business and industry partners to identify and ensure safe and healthy work-based learning opportunities. Students should be provided opportunities to participate in work-based learning, either in-person or remotely to the extent possible.

Supervision

All registered work-based learning programs will be supervised by an appropriately certified work-based learning coordinator, in coherence with the guidelines in the work-based learning manual.

Work-Site Placements

Priority for work-site placement experiences will be given to those students who need work-based learning hours to meet graduation or CDOS exit credential requirements. The work-based learning coordinator should remain actively engaged with the needs of business and industry as they may change rapidly.

Flexibility in Program Requirements

Registered Internship Programs (CEIP, Co-op, GEWEP, and WECEP): Internship hours for registered programs may be completed in a remote format where practical. The work-based learning coordinator and other interested school staff will determine, in collaboration with business and industry partners, where remote (some on-site, some remote) experiences are practical, given a student's training plan.

- Non-Registered Work-Based Learning Experiences: Where practical, and when supervised by school staff, non-registered work-based learning experiences may be conducted in a remote or hybrid format.
- For those programs which require a minimum number of work-based learning hours, Sullivan BOCES will strive to provide comprehensive work-based learning experiences that meet the needs of the students (maybe through remote or hybrid means, if practical). However, Sullivan BOCES may exercise discretion if a student is not able to meet the minimum hours requirement set for the program and/or credential being sought.
- Health Sciences students are required to complete supervised clinical hours under regulations set forth by the Department of Health. All regulations from the Department of Health will be followed when planning and supervising clinical experiences.
- Supervised clinical experiences for students in appearance enhancement programs will meet all guidelines set forth by the Department of State.
- School-based enterprises will follow all NYS Department of Health guidelines for cleaning and social distancing and will consider alternative methods of transactions (e.g., direct deliveries, e-commerce, etc.).

Considerations for Students with Disabilities

- The work-based learning coordinator, transition coordinator, and all other service providers will work collaboratively to design work-based learning experiences that are in line with students' individualized education program (IEP) goals.
- Where practical, remote experiences may be used towards work-based learning hours.
- Placements in the school building will be considered if participating outside businesses are not able to meet students' IEP requirements (job coaching, PPE, etc.).

Business and Community Partnerships

A high quality CTE program is planned with input from business and community partners. Sullivan BOCES will:

- Continue to have business and community participation in advisory council meetings, utilizing videoconferencing if necessary.
- Establish and communicate clear safety protocols that will be expected before student and instructor participation at internship or clinical sites and ensure appropriate PPE for students and instructors.
- Incorporate industry partners into virtual student interactions, student career development, and instruction to the extent possible.

- Seek legal counsel regarding potential changes and the implementation of those changes into existing agreements and waivers, especially in light of COVID-19.

Student Career Development

CTE programs of study will continue to provide high quality career advisement and exploration opportunities to students through an in-person or remote instruction environment. Sullivan BOCES will:

- Consider using the CTE Career and Financial Management framework to enrich career development if hands-on learning and skill practice may not be feasible in person.
- Consider using virtual options to facilitate career exploration including, but not limited to, job shadowing; guest speakers; career fairs; interview skills; job training; professionalism and proper use of virtual platforms; and other activities that allow safety guidelines to be followed by all involved.
- Utilizing school counselors and other school staff to facilitate and support career development and advisement within the district or BOCES.

Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)

- Sullivan BOCES will consult with the respective state and national organizations for each CTSO to determine what their policies and procedures are for a COVID-19 impacted school year.
- Conferences, meetings, service projects, programs of work, and events may be conducted. NYS Department of Health guidelines regarding social distancing, equipment, and events will be followed when planning CTSO events.
- The tenets of Ed Law 2D will be adhered to when teleconferencing or using any software platforms.

Program Approval, Data Reporting, Perkins, and Civil Rights

Program Approval

Sullivan BOCES will continue to follow established schedules and deadlines for program applications for re-approval and/or initial approval of CTE programs, work-based learning programs, and health science operational approvals and will submit any changes to NYSED-approved CTE programs to the Office of CTE for approval.

CTE Data Reporting

Sullivan BOCES will continue to report CTE and work-based learning data to the SIRS for the programs that they deliver.

ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Sullivan BOCES will not provide Athletics at this time. Extracurricular Activities are under review and if offered, will follow all appropriate CDC and NYSDOH guidelines.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education programs and services provide equity and access for students with disabilities to be involved in and to participate and progress in the general education curriculum. This plan will ensure that all students with disabilities continue to have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. In consideration of the health, safety, and well-being of students, families, and staff, this plan considers in-person, hybrid, and remote models for instruction.

Sullivan BOCES has and will continue to incorporate guidance documents from NYSED's Office of Special Education (OSE) to address frequently asked questions raised by parents, educators, administrators, and other key stakeholders regarding the implementation of special education programs and services and the provision of FAPE during this public health crisis. The OSE guidance is based on current information released from the United States Department of Education (USDE) as well as information contained in New York State Executive Orders and New York State Department of Health guidance.

Whether services are provided in-person or remotely, Sullivan BOCES will ensure the provision of FAPE is consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those providing special education and services.

Teachers, service providers, and administration will engage parents in the parent's preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of services to his/her child to meet the requirements of the IDEA. These opportunities may include phone calls, parent communication notebooks (digital or paper), email communication, or Google Suite interactions. Depending on the model (in-person or remote), parents may be asked to attend meetings regarding their child's progress.

Although Sullivan BOCES does not have preschool programming, Sullivan BOCES, and component school districts will collaborate when appropriate between the respective component school districts committees on preschool special education (CPSE) and committees on special education (CSE) and program providers representing the variety of settings where students are served to ensure there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on individualized education programs (IEPs), plans for monitoring and communicating student progress, and commitment to sharing resources.

Sullivan BOCES will, to the best of its ability, ensure student access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique disability related needs of students. Adjustments to needs may need to be considered during remote circumstances depending on the needs of students.

Sullivan BOCES will document the programs and services offered and provided to students with disabilities through the student's IEP (provided to students by their component school district). Amendments or adjustments to programs and services will be conducted through the CSE process and communication assistance in parents' preferred language or mode of communication will be provided if requested in advance.

In the case of intermittent or extended school closures, students will be provided with technology (when requested) to access Google Suite for remote learning. Paper instructional packets and other materials may also be provided depending on individual student needs.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Students with disabilities will have equal access to high-quality programs that are designed, based on their individual needs and abilities, to enable them to achieve the desired learning results established for all students. Sullivan BOCES will ensure that students with disabilities have opportunities for instruction with students without disabilities to the greatest extent possible consistent with their IEP. When providing in-person instruction, Sullivan BOCES will ensure that health and safety requirements do not result in the unnecessary separation of students with disabilities from their non-disabled peers.

LRE Documentation

Determinations about how students with disabilities will receive access to the LRE, when applicable, will be conducted through teams meeting with the parent and student. This may include access to CTE programs for high school students or trial periods for program placement changes for all grades. Documentation will be made in the guidance office and/or on student IEPs.

Provision of Services

Consistent with previously issued OSE guidance, Sullivan BOCES will ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP. During the 2021-22 school year, due to the health and safety requirements that must be in place, schools may not be able to provide all services in the same mode and/or manner they are typically provided. Student Case Management teams, in collaboration with parents, will determine what methods of delivery of services will be utilized to deliver special education programs and services to meet the needs of students with disabilities for in-person and remote learning.

Progress Monitoring

Teachers and service providers will continue to collect data and use this data to monitor each student's progress toward the annual goals and to evaluate the effectiveness of the student's special education services. Determining student progress is necessary for understanding the

student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, and for determining whether, and to what extent, the school closures may have disrupted the student's learning.

Reports of progress to parents may be made via telephone or other electronic means if progress reporting procedures specified in the student's IEP cannot be met with reasonable efforts.

Best Practice for Contingency Plans

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, Sullivan BOCES in collaboration with component district CPSE/CSE will prepare for all contingencies and consider plans to address students' remote learning needs in the event of potential future intermittent or extended school closures.

IEP Implementation Documentation

Sullivan BOCES will record communication between parents and service providers if there is an instance of changing student needs, including transition services, due to the period of remote instruction and a return to a traditional classroom environment after a lengthy period away from in-person instruction. This documentation will be stored in electronic format as outlined in the Continuity of Learning Plan. All attempts to document this agreement/consent with parents in writing will be made (electronically or via paper consent). Copies of consent will be stored in the student file. Changes in student needs will be communicated to the CPSE/CSE for consideration when making any individualized determinations of subsequent student needs, including transition services.

Sullivan BOCES will conduct formative assessments and ongoing monitoring of student progress and document in the student case management file. Documentation of progress monitoring will be available to the component district CPSE/CSE and parents, in their preferred language or mode of communication.

Child Find

The IDEA requires schools to identify, locate, and evaluate all students with disabilities who need special education and related services while keeping in mind the impact that school closures may have had on all students. In collaboration with component school districts, the Sullivan BOCES attendance monitor will communicate with the district continually and may request additional support after all attempts to locate absent students are not successful.

Referral

Before referring a student for special education or a change in placement, Sullivan BOCES will take into consideration all factors that may have influenced the student's progress during school. If Sullivan BOCES suspects a student of having a disability or in need of additional services, the child study team must refer the student for an initial special education evaluation or request a CSE meeting (if program/placement change) and obtain parental consent for the evaluation. However, a referral may not be warranted if the reason for underperformance is due to school closures and a change in the provision of education. All parent referrals and requests

for referrals by school staff should be considered as usual per the procedures in Commissioner's Regulations section 200.4(a).

Initial Evaluation/Reevaluation

Special education evaluations (i.e., initial and reevaluations) will be conducted whether in-person or remotely within required timelines. The use of technology will be considered to meet timelines for evaluations and reevaluations that must be conducted remotely. Sullivan BOCES will work with component district CPSEs/CSEs to review records to determine which students are due for an initial evaluation or reevaluation and will work with each component district to create a plan to address any backlog of evaluations.

Eligibility Determination/Annual Review Meetings

Sullivan BOCES will follow component school district procedures and expectations for CPSEs/CSEs to meet as required including making eligibility determinations following initial evaluations and reviewing and, if appropriate, revise each student's IEP at least annually. When conducting CPSE/CSE meetings, the parent of a student with a disability and a school district may agree to use alternative means of meeting participation requirements, such as video conferences and teleconferences. Sullivan BOCES will make every effort to support component school districts to facilitate these processes.

Communication/Coordination

Sullivan BOCES will ensure clear, ongoing, and shared communication and collaboration with component school districts, parents, and students so that there is equitable access to special education programs and services and the continued offer of FAPE for students with disabilities. Sullivan BOCES and component school districts will collaborate with parents and families to ensure that students continue to be provided FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students and their service providers.

Meaningful Outreach and Engagement with Parents of Students with Disabilities

In addition to the communication efforts, Sullivan BOCES will support component school districts to inform students and their parents regarding the identification, evaluation, educational placement, and the provision of FAPE to their child. Whether special education programs and services are provided in-person, remotely, or through a hybrid model, effective communication between school personnel and parents will include the following:

- Working collaboratively and creatively to help ensure there is an understanding of the school's efforts to provide services consistent with the recommendations on the IEP and monitor student progress; and
- Communicating with parents in their preferred language or mode of communication and documenting outreach efforts.

Procedural Safeguards and Prior Written Notice Requirements

Component school districts will provide the procedural safeguards notice to parents. Component school districts must continue to provide parents with prior written notice in a reasonable time before a change in the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or provision of FAPE to the student. The procedural safeguards notice, prior written notice, and

CPSE/CSE meeting notice may be provided to the parent by email if the parent elected to receive documents by email.

If however, based on current circumstances, revisions or additions to a student's IEP need to be made to continue to meet the student's needs, such changes must be made by the CPSE/CSE at a meeting or through a written agreement with the parent to amend the IEP without a meeting (with the expectation that parents must be provided a copy of the document amending the IEP and prior written notice of the proposed changes to the IEP).

Partnership and Collaboration to Reflect All Settings Where Students are served

The diverse educational needs of students with disabilities are reflected through the continuum of services that are provided in a variety of settings. As school districts are ultimately responsible for the provision of FAPE, frequent opportunities to interact with representatives from all applicable school settings will best facilitate the collective review of effective service delivery and student progress monitoring. For Sullivan BOCES students, each component school district must conduct outreach efforts to remain informed regarding the planned activities for the nature and delivery of instruction and related services and to identify shared resources, materials, and technology that may be available to students, as appropriate.

For those special education programs and services delivered via a contract with a component school district or county, the provision of instruction and related services must continue to be documented by the student's BOCES program itinerant service provider so that these activities may be communicated to the school district responsible for developing students' IEPs. This documentation is necessary for consideration when making individualized determinations as to whether changes to the IEP recommendation or compensatory services are needed, under applicable standards and requirements. Successful and continued partnerships between program providers and school districts will reflect coordinated efforts necessary to best respond to student needs.

Accommodations and Modifications

The Sullivan BOCES respective BOCES program instructional teams will review instructional practices to plan for the necessary accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities to progress in the general education curriculum. Accommodations are alterations in the way tasks and/or assignments are presented. Modifications are changes in what students are expected to learn. Both accommodations and modifications ensure equity and access to the general education curriculum in consideration of a student's unique disability related needs.

Supplementary Aids and Services

Supplementary aides and services mean aides, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes, other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic settings to enable students with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate following the least restrictive environment. Sullivan BOCES will ensure students with disabilities have access to supplementary aids and services to meet their unique instructional and social emotional needs.

Technology

Sullivan BOCES will identify students with disabilities requiring assistive technology that is used to increase, maintain, or improve their functional capabilities. To the extent possible under all circumstances, Sullivan BOCES will ensure students have access to their working technology and any accompanying programs. Parents may contact their child's program Principal to request availability of an assistive technology service that is necessary to directly assist a student in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.

Budget and Finance Provisions for Approved Providers of Preschool and School-Age Programs Serving Students with Disabilities

Preschool and School-Age approved programs receiving funding under Article 81 and/or Article 89 of the Education Law pursuant to tuition rate setting methodology are subject to specific attendance and reimbursement rules. The Department remains committed to ensuring its guidance is responsive to these essential programs and to the students they serve.

Attendance and Enrollment

Sullivan BOCES will follow all current provisions regarding attendance tracking and reporting for Instructional Purposes, as well as any new directives that are issued by NYSED.

180-Day and 30-Day Requirement

- 8 NYCRR 200.7(b)(5) and 200.16(a)(6) provides that "instruction for not less than 180 days each year shall be provided for each student." Sullivan BOCES will monitor all changes in, attendance calculations and any other changes the department issues to ensure compliance and to provide our participating districts with accurate student data to meet their reporting requirements. During the Reopening Task Force meetings, stakeholders provided feedback that tuition rate flexibility is needed to better respond and prepare for school reopening. If school districts/BOCES are forced to close again in the 2021-2022 school year, additional guidance on calculating tuition rates will be needed. While the Department does not have unilateral authority to approve flexibility in reimbursement methodology, it has proposed changes to better respond to program needs. In terms of flexibility to allow approved programs to retain short-term surpluses to apply against short term deficits, and offer flexibility with the direct/non-direct parameter, the Department recommended an approach to discontinuing the issuance of annual reconciliation rates effective with the 2020-21 tuition rate year. The Department is also recommending that the prospective tuition rates for years 2021-22 through 2024-25 be established based on the prior year's prospective tuition rate plus approved annual trend factors plus approved targeted funding initiatives. Pursuant to the proposal, after the 5-year period 2020-21 through 2024-25, a reconciliation will be performed for the 5-year period of the allowable expenses as compared to the provided funding for the 5-year period. If allowable expenses are less than the provided funding by more than 1%, the Department will calculate an adjustment to recoup the surplus funding exceeding the 1% surplus. This proposal is not currently approved for

implementation and the Department will provide additional information when it is available.

- The OSE and the Rate Setting Unit continue to have scheduled meetings with stakeholders representing the approved programs serving students with disabilities to obtain feedback and seek input regarding ongoing operational concerns. Any future guidance will continue to reflect this essential communication.
- Sullivan BOCES will monitor all changes in tuition rate setting, attendance calculations, and any other changes the department issues to ensure compliance and to provide out participating districts with accurate student data for their reporting purposes.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND WORLD LANGUAGES

There are no students requiring ELL services at this time. If districts identify and contract with BOCES to provide ELL services to students in their programs, Sullivan BOCES will work collaboratively with the school district to ensure that provisions of required instructional Units of Study be provided to all ELLs based on their most recently measured English language proficiency level during in-person or hybrid instruction. In addition, Sullivan BOCES, in coordination with the component school district, will maintain regular communication with the parents/guardians and other family members of ELLs to ensure that they are engaged in their children's education during the reopening process in their preferred language and mode of communication.

STAFFING

Among school-based factors, teaching and school leadership are the two greatest influences on student learning. Sullivan BOCES will ensure that all teachers, school and district leaders, and pupil personnel service professionals hold a valid and appropriate certificate for their assignment; continue to utilize incidental teaching when determining how to staff their classrooms; employ substitute teachers to address staffing needs for the allowable number of days, given their qualifications and teaching assignment.

TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION SYSTEM (EDUCATION LAW §3012-D/ APPR)

Consistent with research and best practices, Sullivan BOCES believes that well-designed and implemented teacher and principal evaluations ("Annual Professional Performance Review"; "APPR") are an important tool to help support educator growth and development. The measures that are used as part of an annual evaluation should provide useful information to district administrators and the educators who are being evaluated that helps support educators and leverage their expertise. In turn, this helps ensure equitable access to effective educators for all students so that students are given the skills to succeed.

Sullivan BOCES will fully implement its currently approved APPR plan, pursuant to Education Law 3012-d. If local conditions require a variance in that plan, BOCES will work with NYSED on the process of acquiring needed modifications.

STUDENT TEACHING

Sullivan BOCES will not be considering student teachers for the 2021-2022 school year.

RESOURCES

- [Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing: The Spirit of New York's Schools: Reopening Guidance](#)
- [Sullivan BOCES Continuity of Learning Plan SY2021](#)
- [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction At Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During The COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)
- [Preparing K-12 School Administrators for a Safe Return to School in Fall 2020 \(CDC\)](#)
- [Considerations for Schools: Operating Schools During COVID-19 \(CDC\)](#)

Links to the relevant federal and NYS resources that are available to schools for the delivery of special education programs and services:

Federal

- US Department of Education (USDE) COVID-19 (“Coronavirus”) Information and Resources for Schools and School Personnel – Provides “Program Information: FAQs and Responses” from OSEP and the Office of Civil Rights as well as resources for learning at home and remote learning resources for educators, administrators, and related service providers.
- National Center for Systemic Improvement’s COVID-19 Resources for Supporting Students with Disabilities – Designated by the USDE as resource hub for COVID-19 policy guidance, remote learning, and tele-practice/teletherapy.
- Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA): COVID-19 Resources and Information Web-page – Designated by USDE as a resource hub for information for state’s early intervention Part C and early childhood special education IDEA Part B Section 619 programs.
- OSEP Ideas that Work Continuity of Learning During COVID-19 – Provides information, tools, and resources to help educators, parents, and families, and related service providers meet the educational, behavioral, and emotional needs of children and youth with disabilities through remote and virtual learning. A searchable database is available to filter these resources by age, audience, and topic.

Office of Special Education

- Provision of Services to Students with Disabilities During Statewide School Closures Due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak in New York State (March 27, 2020) – Provides guidance regarding the provision of services to students with disabilities, including English Language Learners with disabilities.
- Supplement #1 (April 27, 2020) – Provides follow-up questions and answers to the March 2020 guidance.
- Supplement #2 (June 20, 2020) – Provides considerations for CPSEs and CSEs when making recommendations for extended school year services; revisions to IEPs to ensure the continued provision of a free appropriate public education due to a student’s changing needs; and compensatory services.
- Supplement #3 (June 20, 2020) – Provides information regarding the Governor’s Executive Order
- 202.37 which indicates that special education services and instruction required under federal, State

- or local laws, rules, or regulations, may be provided in person for the summer term in school districts.

ADDENDUMS

Addendum A

AHSEP/ATP Instruction BOCES Campus

- The current re-opening plan and all safety guidelines will be adhered to while students are attending the campus for hybrid AHSEP/ATP instruction.
- We provide all students with the choice to attend hybrid instruction or remote instruction for the AHSEP/ATP program from home.
- In the event Sullivan BOCES closes, all instruction will take place remotely until the building is safe for students and staff to return.
- Instruction will continue as long as it is beneficial for the students and will cease if deemed necessary based on varying circumstances.

AHSEP/Incarcerated Youth Educational Jail Program

- Visitors are not permitted in the jail at this time; therefore, if there is a need for Educational services to be provided, the AHSEP instruction would be remote.