



PARENT GUIDE

Half Hollow Hills

Reopening- Fall, 2020

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Reopening Parent Guide, Fall 2020

The Covid-19 pandemic that began in March of 2020 has caused school districts around the country to quickly adapt and improvise in an effort to maintain the continuity of instruction for children.

This parent guide is designed to provide clear and concise guidance on the topics that are most relevant to the daily experiences of you and your child.

As a district, we recognize and understand the difficulties this pandemic has created in all aspects of life. This is a moment in history that will be remembered by our students and will prove to be a formative experience in their lives. As parents, teachers and administrators, how we approach this challenge will have a direct impact on how our students, your children, will approach this and future challenges. It is our belief that, with the right mindset, our students will persevere and succeed.

Please note: This document is a supplement to the official Half Hollow Hills Reopening Plan that you have received via email and is posted on the district website. The purpose of this document is to provide you with a concise summary of the information most relevant to parents and students. For clarification or more detailed information, please refer directly to the HHH Reopening Plan.

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Instruction

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. School must be safe for students and staff.

Half Hollow Hills is committed to following all federal, state and local health and safety guidelines to ensure a safe and healthy environment for education.

Specifically, as per New York State guidance, we will take direction from the Suffolk County Department of Health as it relates to the safe operation of our schools.

2. Remote instruction is not an equivalent substitute for in person instruction.

In person instruction provides for the best academic experiences for students and more effectively leads to the achievement of desired outcomes. The district is committed to providing as much in person instruction as is safely possible.

3. High quality in person instruction is our top instructional priority.

Teachers in Half Hollow Hills have spent decades developing high quality, effective instructional practices for their students. As long as in person instruction is deemed safe, this will be our focus.

4. The reopening plan needs to address various operational scenarios and family choices.

It is anticipated that the district or region will encounter several different operational scenarios and we must be able to transition quickly and efficiently. Additionally, the district will need to make practical accommodations for families that choose to not have their children attend or participate in school.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES (CONTINUED)

- 5. There have been no accommodations made by NYSED, The College Board, ACT or other significant academic institutions that limit or reduce the curricular goals for students.**

We must implement plans that maintain curricular pacing and standards so that our students can progress and succeed. This will be reviewed as necessary upon receipt of updated guidance.

- 6. A fully remote instruction plan must provide for curricular progress while being mindful of total student screen time.**

Significant screen time is inevitable in a fully remote instruction model, however we can work to ensure that each minute is purposeful and effective and efficient.

- 7. Instructional plans and models will be continually reviewed and updated to ensure ongoing improvement.**

As we experienced last year, our plans will need to evolve in a purposeful manner to ensure the best outcomes for students.

- 8. Students, parents and teachers need structure, clarity and consistency to successfully navigate through this challenging time.**

It is vitally important that all stakeholders understand what to expect, and what is expected of them.

Safety Practices and Procedures

The district will adhere to all federal, state and local guidelines for the safe operation of our schools. For more specific information or to read the guidance documents, please refer to the district website designated specifically for Covid-19 information and / or the HHH Reopening Plan.

1. All individuals, including students, entering a school building will be screened for concerning symptoms. Parents will be asked to screen their children prior to entering a bus or a building.
2. Social distancing, defined as 6' of separation, should be maintained whenever possible.
3. Masks are expected to be worn at all times, other than while eating or drinking. Students may take a "mask break" while seated and at least 6' from other people.
4. When social distancing cannot be maintained, a mask is required to be worn, covering both the nose and mouth. Masks are required while on a bus and while moving throughout a school building.
5. Passing times may be extended to accommodate the staggered movement of students through hallways.
6. Hallways may be designated as one-way or two-way with travel only on designated sides.

7. For at least the start of the school year, students will not have access to a locker. Students should plan to bring only a notebook and their district provided laptop computer.
8. Students will be encouraged to practice appropriate hand hygiene and wash as frequently as possible and practical.
9. Hand sanitizing stations will be positioned throughout the building and students are encouraged to bring sanitizer if they choose to.
10. Social gathering that violates social distancing guidelines, including during lunch, will not be permitted. Large gathering spaces, such as cafeterias, libraries and common areas will be outfitted with individually spaced desks, or clearly designated seating.
11. Safety practices will be reviewed frequently in the first weeks of school and revisited throughout the duration of these guidelines.

Educational Practices- Explanation

Synchronous Instruction- An instructional practice that allows for two-way communication between students and teachers. This would typically be accomplished via video or audio conferencing during a lesson. A synchronous lesson does not require that the entire lesson be live conferenced.

Asynchronous Instruction- An instructional practice that provides for the delivery of new content, but does not allow for the two way communication. This would typically be accomplished by a recorded video, screencast or similar instructional component. Asynchronous and synchronous instruction may be utilized together in one lesson to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.

Instructional Component- A portion of a lesson that involves the delivery of new curricular content, the practice of new learning and skills, or the intentional review of prior lessons via synchronous or asynchronous means.

Screencast- An instructional tool that allows for the audio and visual annotation of pre-existing materials in a recorded format. This would typically be a video in which students are seeing notes, examples, or slides while hearing or seeing a teachers comments throughout. This is an effective asynchronous tool for instruction that allows students to experience a lesson without being able to participate live.

Lesson- A complete educational experience that might include (but not be limited to) the review of prior work, delivery of new instruction, opportunities for both student and teacher questions, demonstration of student understanding, independent student work and an assessment of progress. Note- A lesson would rarely consist of only direct instruction.

Core Classes- For the purposes of this plan, core classes are identified as Middle School, Regents or Honors level classes in Math, Science, Social Studies, ELA and World Languages. All AP classes are considered core classes as well.

Educational Models

In preparation for the upcoming school year, we have developed three educational models. The implementation of these models will be determined by New York State in conjunction with the Suffolk County Department of Health.

Model 1- Full In-Person

When the Long Island Region is cleared to open schools for in person instruction with no or reduced social distancing requirements, all students would physically report to school each day. In this model, students would follow a regular bell schedule as they would in a regular school year.

Although this model would bring 100% of our students in each day, it is reasonable to expect modifications to certain activities such as large group gatherings, including sporting events, assemblies and field trips. It is also reasonable to expect that certain safety precautions, such as wearing a mask, will remain in effect.

As this model is being implemented, we anticipate receiving additional guidance from the Department of Health and New York State. This guidance will enable us to determine the exact protocols and procedures that will be put in place to ensure the safe return to normal operations.

Model 2- Full Remote

In the event of a full closure, students will not be permitted into school buildings for any in-person activities. Under those circumstances, all academic activity will take place online.

In this model students in middle and high school would log in to Canvas each day and for each period according to the bell schedule below:

8:00 am - 9:00 am	AM Extra-curricular
9:00 am - 9:30 am	Period 1
9:35 am - 10:05 am	Period 2
10:10 am - 10:40 am	Period 3
10:45 am - 11:15 am	Period 4
11:20 am - 11:50 am	Period 5
11:55 am - 12:25 pm	Period 6
12:30 pm - 1:00 pm	Period 7
1:05 pm - 1:35 pm	Period 8
1:40 pm - 2:10 pm	Period 9
2:15 pm - 2:45 pm	PM Extra-curricular

Within the bell schedule identified above, the following would apply:

- Core classes would meet four times per week for synchronous instruction, with the option to meet a fifth day for synchronous or asynchronous instruction when deemed necessary for curricular progress (see email attachment 2). As in a normal school year, students would be expected to complete additional independent work (comparable to homework) outside of class time.

- All other courses will meet synchronously 5 days per week, or according to a regular A/B schedule. It is expected that the majority of the required curricular work will be completed within these class periods each day, thereby limiting the amount of additional work and screen time.
- Students in AP courses should expect to be engaged in synchronous learning five days per week, at teacher discretion, with additional work commensurate with that of a typical year.
- Teachers have been asked to be mindful of cumulative screen time in their instructional practices. As there are no bells or physical transitions between periods, teachers are encouraged to end a lesson at a natural ending point and not hold students for the duration of the period unless it is useful. Teachers may elect to use the last several minutes of a class to address individual questions, but may release students whom may not find those questions helpful.

Model 3 - Hybrid Model

Overview

If schools in the Long Island Region are permitted to open for in-person activities, but with social distancing and other safety protocols in place, we have developed a plan that would bring approximately half of our students in to school each day. By reducing the number of students physically in the building, we can accommodate all required social distancing and safety protocols.

In this model, as described in our guiding principles, our focus is to maximize the quality and effectiveness of in-person instruction. This will require careful planning and preparation by teachers to select instructional methods that can make the best use of time spent together, and also provide enough instruction to allow for curricular progress with students at home.

Grouping Cohorts

Throughout the district, students will be grouped by household into two cohorts- Blue and Green. All household members will be grouped into the same cohort, regardless of the building they attend.

Each cohort will attend school on alternating days, as per the schedule in email attachment 2. The Blue cohort will attend on *Wednesday and Friday*, and the Green cohort will attend on *Tuesday and Thursday*, with each cohort alternating attendance on Mondays. The attached schedule has been carefully constructed to accommodate an A/B schedule, as well as ensuring an equal number of attendance days over the first several months of school. We have included this document as a separate attachment so parents and students can save it to their devices for frequent and easy access.

Model 3 - Hybrid Model (continued)

In-Person Attendance Days

On designated in-person attendance days, students will follow a regular bell schedule.

While in a hybrid model, all before and after school activities, including extra help, will be suspended or transition to online activities. After-school busing will not be provided.

Remote / Home Attendance Days

On designated remote days, students will be required to log in to their classes as per the regular bell schedule. As an example, students will be required to log in to Canvas for their first class at the beginning of period 1 (7:19 am for high school, 8:05 am for middle school).

Once logged in, students will follow the posted directions from their teacher. In the hybrid model, remote instruction will consist of one of the following:

- Recorded screencast that is aligned to in-person instruction
- Recorded, asynchronous instruction from a prior class or lesson
- Synchronous instruction from the classroom

In a hybrid model, it is unlikely that remote instruction will be a full period in length, as teachers must also focus their attention on the students in class. As described in the “Educational Practices” section, it is also unlikely that a teacher would use direct instruction for a full period while in class. Students at home should expect an instructional component, as described above, and then collaborative or independent student work to demonstrate their understanding.

In addition to the instructional components listed above, teachers will either make themselves available at a clearly designated time during the day to address student questions, or respond to questions throughout the day, within 24 hours.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

In addition to the expectations outlined in the Half Hollow Hills Code of Conduct, students will be expected to:

- Follow all health and safety protocols, including wearing a mask and maintaining social distance.
- Log in to Canvas at the designated times each day for each class. Attendance is required and will be recorded in both in-person and remote instructional models.
- When requested, utilize your camera during remote instruction to participate in class activities. If there are extenuating circumstances, please have a conversation with your teachers.
- Submit work on time, either in-person or remotely.
- Bring your district-provided laptop, charged, each day.
- Understand that expectations may change throughout this process, depending on the circumstances.
- Reach out- there are people here, in-person or remote, that can help.

PEER COLLABORATION

Collaboration- specifically, students working together in small groups to accomplish a task- is a critical component of contemporary education. In many ways, remote instruction has made it more difficult for teachers to manage collaborative work within a synchronous lesson. It has also become much easier for students to initiate and manage their own collaboration with the ubiquity of Zoom, Skype, FaceTime and other conferencing tools.

As we prepare for September, teachers will be encouraged to establish collaborative groups that span both the Blue and Green cohorts, and use those groups creatively to enhance instruction and provide students with opportunities to connect with their peers.

Additionally, as a district, we will be establishing the following designations for assignments and/or assessments. Teachers may choose to use or not use them at their discretion, but it is important for all students and parents to understand the following terminology:

Assignment Designations (optional)

- **Collaborative (C)**- Students are encouraged to work with a group of their choosing or their designated collaborative group, as determined by the teacher. It is expected that students working together will submit work that may have strong similarities and / or common language.
- **Independent (I)**- Students are expected to complete this work on their own, with original thoughts, ideas and language. Outside sources, including peers, may be utilized for assistance, but the final product should be individual work.
- **Secure (S)**- Students are expected to demonstrate their understanding independently, without outside assistance or support. Parents may be asked to verify that assignments or assessments in this category were completed in good faith, with the understanding that they will likely be used to measure student comprehension and / or direct future instruction.

Note: The creation and utilization of collaborative groups and assignment designations is not a District expectation. Teachers are not required to use these tools, but may do so if they fit within their curricular plans. It is important that students and parents understand the differences in the types of assigned work, and that teacher expectations for those assignments are clear.

EXTRA HELP

In both the Hybrid and Full Remote Models, extra help will be provided remotely. Teachers will be asked to post a time each day when they would typically be logged in and responding to emails or Canvas messages. Students may email or message teachers at any time, but it is reasonable to expect that a response would be sent within 24 hours, and typically during the designated time each day. Although it may happen frequently, it is not reasonable to assume that responses from teachers will be immediate.

GRADING STRUCTURE

All grades, regardless of the educational model, will be recorded in a numeric format, as in a typical year. Quarterly and final averages will be numeric and weighted as described in the student handbook. There will be no pass/fail options. Individual grading policies will be determined at the teacher, course or department level and outlined in a course syllabus.

Extra-Curricular Activities and Athletics

CLUBS, ACTIVITIES AND ACADEMIC TEAMS

As a district, we are committed to providing students with the best experiences possible, regardless of the educational model. In both the Full Remote and Hybrid Models, all clubs, activities and academic teams will conduct their meetings and events remotely.

In challenging times, connections become more important than ever to promote social and emotional health. All students are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity and join a club or activity.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The interscholastic athletics fall season has been postponed until September 21, 2020. As we receive additional information and guidance, we will share that information with the community and ensure that our coaches and student-athletes are ready to play when it is safe to do so. The district is currently reviewing alternate allowable activities so that our student-athletes can benefit from and experience the teamwork, camaraderie and leadership opportunities typically associated with athletics.

Transportation

BUSING

Busing will continue to be provided to students. Bus capacity has been reduced to allow for appropriate social distancing and masks are required at all times. Students will have designated seats based on when they board the bus to eliminate unnecessary close contact with other students. It is expected that students will have had their temperatures taken and the daily screening has been completed prior to boarding the bus.

STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Social distancing guidelines must be adhered to as students enter and exit the school building. You will receive detailed drop-off and pick-up information later in August which will describe the procedures.

Food Service

LUNCH

Lunch will be served each day. A limited menu of cold items will be available in a bagged, grab-and-go format. Students will verbally provide their ID number to reduce any unnecessary contact with high-use surfaces.

PROCEDURES

- Students must wear a mask at all times, until they are at their seat to eat.
- To the greatest degree possible, tables with multiple seats will be replaced with individual desks. Desks will be spaced appropriately to maintain social distance. If tables are utilized, seating arrangements will be clearly marked.
- Students will be called up by row or section to purchase lunch to avoid bunching and / or gathering as they line up.

Final Notes and Next Steps...

PREPARATION FOR SCHOOL

- Encourage proper mask and hand hygiene so it becomes habit before school begins.
- Have your child try out various masks to see which they prefer. It might be helpful to test them outside without air conditioning to see how they perform in the heat.
- Don't buy too many school supplies. Laptops should reduce the need for supplies and lockers will be inaccessible for at least the first few weeks.

- We are awaiting guidance that will help us determine if in-person orientations are possible for incoming 6th and 9th grade students. We will notify you as soon as possible. If they are not allowable, we will alter schedules and utilize the first few days of school to orient new students.
- Keep an eye on your inbox for communication from the district. Important information is forthcoming, including details on the laptop distribution plan.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE FIRST WEEK

- If we open in a Hybrid Model, the first week of school will focus solely on in-person instruction. There will be no remote instruction until September 14.
- Guidance counselors will be reaching out to students in-person and remotely to address any social, emotional or academic needs.
- Student in all grade levels will be made aware of the practices and procedures required for the health and safety of students and staff. This will be addressed multiple times, in multiple formats, and reinforced regularly.
- Technology staff will be on-site to assist with any device issues.
- Reassurance from teachers and administrators.