



Argyle Central School

2020-21 Reopening Q&A Document

As the District continues to work on the details of our reopening plan, we wanted to be able to address initial questions from parents, students, and community members.

This Q&A document will continue to be expanded upon as we receive additional questions and as we are able to provide additional answers based on parent survey results, staff availability, space availability on our buses and in our buildings based on social distancing rules, and on feedback from our district reopening committee. If you have a question that is not addressed here, please send it to info@argylecsd.org.

The District Reopening Plan

Q1: Is the reopening plan posted on the Argyle CSD website and submitted to NYS the final reopening plan?

A1: No. The information presented is our plan to the state indicating that the district is prepared to meet all of the requirements from the State Departments of Health and Education. Certain details presented (e.g., final location of classrooms, cafeteria plan, course offerings, etc.) may change and additional information will be added. Each week we plan on posting updates to our plan which includes additional details generated from our District Reopening Committee, administrative team, parent/guardian and student survey results, feedback that we receive via our info@argylecsd.org email box, and updates from NYS.

Social Distancing

Q1: Will social distancing be required on the school bus?

A1: Yes, Students will be spaced apart on the buses with the majority of our regular size buses only transporting roughly 22 students at a time (with their masks on). Siblings/members of the same household will be seated together when appropriate.

Q2: How will social distancing be accounted for in the classroom /How many children will be in a classroom?

A2: To ensure the health and safety of students and staff, classrooms will be set up with fewer desks than normal to accommodate a six foot social distance between students, with many classrooms holding no more than 12-15 desks (requiring the district to create additional sections of the grade level or class).

Q3: How will students socially distance during the school day?

A3: Students will be spaced six feet apart during the day and throughout transitions, in classrooms, and during lunchtimes. Students will stay within their class or section cohort as much as possible and will not be participating in activities that would put them in close proximity to others.

Q4: What are the consequences for a student who purposely violates the rules for social distancing and mask wearing/face covering?

A4: The District is committed to making sure our students understand the expectations about wearing masks as outlined in our plan; we are also committed to working with each student to ensure he/she has access to masks and understand the appropriate way to wear and care for their mask. The District also is committed to the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff. As such, we anticipate expanding the Code of Conduct to address this issue as it applies to intentional or willful disregard of district expectations by students and adults alike within our school building and while on district provided transportation.

Face Coverings

Q1: Will students be required to wear masks all day?

A1: Our students will be required to wear appropriate masks throughout the day, including when on the bus, entering or leaving the building, transitioning in the halls, when moving about the classroom, and other situations as determined to be necessary. Students will not be required to wear masks while seated for instruction or while eating lunch.

Q2: Will staff have to wear masks all day?

A2: Face coverings will be required of all staff throughout the day, including when entering and leaving the building, transitioning in the halls, when unable to safely social distance while moving about the classroom, and other situations as determined to be necessary. Staff members may, but are not required, to wear masks while providing instruction and socially distanced from students.

Q3: Will students be required to wear masks on the school bus?

A3: Yes. Following the latest guidance from the State and CDC all students who are medically able will be required to wear masks while riding on a school bus.

Q4: If my child has asthma or a related respiratory issue, will they still be required to wear a mask?

A4: No. Students who have a medical condition and provide a medical doctor's note will not be required to wear a mask.

Q5: Will the school provide a mask for my child(ren)?

A5: Yes. If needed, the school will provide masks to students who may have forgotten or have lost their mask. We are asking all students to have two (2) masks, one to wear and one to keep in a backpack as back up.

Health Management of Students and Staff

Q1: Will my child(ren) have their temperature checked each day on the bus or as they enter the school building?

A1: Under our current model, parents will be asked to check their child's temperature and monitor health symptoms each day and **before** sending them to school. We are currently developing a way for parents to indicate the temperature check has been completed (e.g. app or paper sign off). Students who do not have temperature checked at home will have their temperature checked before entering the school building.

Q2: How will the health of staff be monitored each day that school is open?

A2: Staff will also be required to self-monitor daily and to complete a screening questionnaire before they enter the school building and/or school bus.

Q3: Will there be an isolation area for those identified with a temperature and are awaiting parental pickup?

A3: Yes, the school will have designated isolation rooms and dedicated staff to ensure the students who show any signs and symptoms will be properly separated and dismissed accordingly to their parents.

Q4: What happens if someone in a classmate's family tests positive for COVID-19?

A4: The Department of Health will provide direction to us in any situation related to a positive test and the steps that should be taken from quarantining to school closure.

Q5: What if a teacher tests positive for COVID-19?

A5: See answer above.

Q6: If my family travels out of state over the summer months, is there any restriction on our children returning to school?

A6: Yes. There is currently a travel advisory in place in NYS which carries with it rules for a 14- day quarantine upon return. Please see <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-traveladvisory> for more information.

Before children return to school, parents will need to attest that no such travel has taken place in the previous 14 days.

Reopening Options

Q1: What models are being considered for reopening while complying with the state guidance?

A1: The district is required to develop three separate plans - fully open for in-person instruction, fully remote instruction, and a hybrid model. Currently, and if allowed by NYS, the District is planning for in-person instruction for all students K-12.

Q2: When will a final decision be made on which model will be chosen and implemented?

A2: At this point, the District plans to reopen for in-person instruction for all students K-12.

However, the determination for which plan(s) we will implement will depend on the Governor's decision to reopen, which is currently scheduled to be made during this week (Week of August 1-7). Looking ahead, our model could change, and depends on whether the daily infection rate for our state-designated region, the Capital District Region, remains below 5 percent using a 7-day average. For more information, please see <https://forward.ny.gov/percentage-positive-results-region-dashboard>.

Q3: How will the District ensure that buildings are secure and that students and staff are kept safe under the reopening model?

A3: With the start of the 2020-21 school year the District is committed to ensuring that the following conditions will be in place:

1. Continued attention to safety and security of students, staff, and, vendors/visitors (when they are allowed in our buildings);
2. Health checks/screenings of students at various times using various methods throughout the day (please be sure to follow the usual guidelines as to when to keep your child home. See [CDC Guidance](#) for more information);
3. Advanced and more frequent cleaning and disinfection of buses and buildings;

4. Protocol for how we will address and isolate students or staff who become ill during the school day;
5. Students and staff wearing of masks/face coverings on buses and in our buildings with certain exceptions;
6. Social distancing requirements and guidelines on our buses, when entering the school building, in the school building, and in our classrooms;
7. Restrictions on how and where breakfasts and lunches will be made available/served;
8. Training for students, staff, and parents on health and safety protocols and effective components of remote learning; and
9. Continuous communications through consistent form and various means including website, email, social media, direct mailings, voice/text messages, and video messages.

Q4: If the district is allowed to reopen, will I have the option to stay with remote learning for my child (ren)?

A4: Yes. A Parental Choice: Opting Out of Argyle CSD In-Person Learning survey is posted on our website ([and available here](#)) that will allow you to choose this option. Because classroom seating is very limited under the new state guidance, we will ask parents to commit to this model for a period of 5-weeks (meaning parents will be permitted to opt their child(ren) back into in-person learning on a five-week incremental basis).

However, if a change in family situation occurs that was not anticipated (e.g., called back early from a furloughed position), the district will have procedures in place to support our students and families in returning to in-person instruction.

Q5: If I choose remote learning for one of my children, do I have to choose it for all of my children?

A5: No. As parents and guardians, you know what is best for each of your children. Parents will have the ability to choose which model of instruction works best for each child.

Q6: If I choose remote learning, will this count against my child for attendance purposes?

A6: No, but consistent attendance in the remote arrangement is required by NYS.

Q7: How will remote instruction be different in the fall than it was in the spring?

A7: We will be improving upon our delivery of remote instruction provided in the emergency school closure in March. Our teachers have been receiving professional development and training related to effective delivery of instruction through remote learning.

This school year, all teachers are required to have a functional, fully interactive Google Classroom and be proficient in providing remote instruction through Google Meet or a similar model. Paper-based packets, while necessary in some situations, will be limited and will only be used when Google Classroom, Google Meet, or other similar interactive instructional options are unavailable or unsuitable..

Q8: If I choose to send my child (ren) to school and then decide that I want to change to a remote option, will I have that choice?

A8: Yes. While we will have predetermined points during the school year for students to re-enter the schools, parents will be able to opt for remote instruction throughout the course of the school year.

Q9: What is the difference between choosing remote learning and choosing to homeschool my child(ren)?

A9: Remote learning provides an opportunity for students to remain connected and engaged with instruction provided by Argyle CSD teachers while working from their homes.

Homeschooling in NYS requires a parent to file a number of documents with the district and to provide instruction outside of, and separate from, the public school setting. District staff is involved in homeschooling only to provide guidance on a parent's homeschool Individualized Home Instruction Plan. For more information, please see

<http://www.nysed.gov/nonpublic-schools/home-instruction-questions-and-answers>

Social Emotional Health Under the Reopening Model

Q1: Who can I speak with if my child (ren) are struggling with social/emotional or mental health issues?

A1: There are several faculty members ready to assist with supporting the social, emotional, and mental health of our students, including our school counselors, psychologist, and social workers. School counseling personnel are also available to assist with academic related concerns, as our teachers and building leaders.

Instruction Under the Reopening Model

Q1: Will my child be able to receive a Chromebook from the district to work with at home?

A1: Yes. Argyle CSD is a 1:1 school, meaning that all students are provided a Chromebook (or Ipad for our younger students) for use both in-school and for remote instructional purposes.

Q2: What will the instructional day look like for my child?

A2: The Jr/Sr High School and Elementary school continue to plan exactly what the instructional day will look like for our students. We will begin by focusing on the core areas of instruction and expand as we are able to increase the amount of instructional time each day, at this point, we anticipate a daily instructional schedule similar what we've offered in the past with adjustments made for social distancing with in the

classroom (this includes smaller class sizes, teachers (instead of students) moving from classroom to classroom, etc.). More details will be shared as they become available.

Food Service under the Reopening Model

Q1: Will my child (ren) still be able to get lunch from the school cafeteria?

A1: The District's food service provider is planning on several scenarios for delivering the breakfast and lunch program in the school and for all students.

Q2: Will breakfast still be available to my child (ren)?

A2: Yes, at this point the plan is to provide a "grab-n-go" meal to the students who participate in the breakfast program. Students will eat breakfast in their classroom.

Q3: Our family circumstances have changed since last year and I am not sure if I qualify for a free or reduced lunch. How can I find out?

A3: We can help you. Please contact the Main Office at (518) 638-8243 ext. 504.

Q4: What safety precautions will be in place during lunch time?

A4: Our cafeterias which have been reset to allow for proper distancing between our students while eating.

Transportation under the Reopening Model

Q1: Will social distancing be in place on the school bus?

A1: Students will be spaced apart on the buses with the majority of our regular size buses only transporting 22 students at a time (with their masks on). Siblings/members of the same household will be seated together when appropriate.

Q2: Will students be required to wear masks on the school bus?

A2: Yes. To ensure the health and safety of students and staff, everyone (unless medically unable to do so) will be required to wear a mask while on the school buses.

Q3: Will drivers be required to wear a mask while driving the school bus?

A3: Yes. To ensure the health and safety of students and staff, everyone will be required to wear a mask while on the school buses unless determined to be medically unable to do so.

Q4: Will I be able to drive my student(s) to/from school instead of having them ride the bus?

A4: Yes, we are encouraging those parents who are able to transport their students to and from school for the 2020-21 school year to do so. If you are able to commit to transporting your student to and from school for the 2020-21 school year, and you haven't let the school know already, please email info@argylecsd.org or call the main office at (518) 638-8243.

To reduce congestion and traffic (both in our parking lots and in our hallways), the district is creating new drop off locations and procedures for both the Jr/Sr High and the Elementary school. More information will be shared in the coming weeks.

Q5: Will I be able to make bus changes during the day?

A5: Unfortunately, we are not able to accept bus changes. To make our transportation plan work with new social distancing guidelines, parents will need to designate one location that their children will be picked up and dropped off at - this location will need to be the same location for the morning and afternoon.

Q6: Will there be staggered start/finish times to the school day (to address bus runs and school traffic issues)?

A6: To provide as much predictability to our schedule as possible, we will utilize the current start and end times to our school day. However, for social distancing purposes, we will have to stagger our entry and exit times, which will reduce the amount of instructional time during the day.

As students, staff, and parents adapt to this new process, we expect that we will become more efficient and therefore will be able to increase instructional time.

Sports and Extracurricular Activities under the Reopening Model

Q1: Will students have the opportunity to participate in fall sports?

A1: The participation in fall sports will be determined as we move into the school year. Currently, the NYS Public High School Athletic Association has postponed all team practices until September 21, 2020.

Q2: Will there be any after school activities/events during the reopening/fall semester?

A2: There will not be any late buses or in-person after-school events when schools reopen. We will continue to reevaluate this decision based on health and safety factors, as well as guidance from NYS.

Some clubs/events may move to a virtual format where possible, but that will not occur immediately and with the reopening of school in September.

Staffing the Reopening Model

Q2: Will the District be hiring additional staff to meet new requirements associating with reopening?

A2: The district was able to staff newly created elementary classrooms (grades 2,4,5, and 6) with NYS certified elementary teachers currently in-district, but working in other capacities (e.g. Reading Teachers, Technology Teacher, PreK teacher). The Jr/Sr High School will also not require additional staffing as we were able to cover all newly required sections of core classes with our existing teaching staff (and by not offering some electives for the 2020-21 school year).

In addition, the district will hire one Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) for the 2020-21 school year and to work with our current Registered Nurse, Mrs. Lori Keith.

Communications about Reopening

Q1: What if I have a question that is not addressed here; who do I ask?

A1: Please email your question(s) to Info@Argylecsd.org or contact your building principal.

Q2: If the Governor determines that schools need to close again, how much time will parents have to adjust to this?

A2: As was the case with school closure details in the spring, we expect that this information would be included in an Executive Order from the Governor.

Q3: Does the District have a Communication Plan as required by the state?

A3: The District's reopening communication plan includes the use of our Reopening Schools Information webpage, our info@argylecsd.org email address, emails, mailings, automated phone messages, and social media updates.

Q4: Will there be additional questions added to this Q&A document?

A4: Yes, this document will be updated often and will be date stamped.