

NORTH ALLEGHENY

**RETURN TO
SCHOOL**



2020 - 2021

**Return To School
Education Plan**



The North Allegheny School District is looking forward to safely welcoming students to school on September 8. During this unprecedented time of change, we know that the 2020-2021 school year will look different and we are implementing health and safety measures to protect our students, staff, and families.

While we have comprehensive plans to support the return of all students, the final back to school decision will be driven by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Pennsylvania Department of Education, and Allegheny County Health Department guidelines.

The North Allegheny School District will return to school this fall with two learning options for students: In-Person Instruction or remote learning provided by NA Cyber Academy.

Under the In-Person Instruction option, there are three possible phases for students: full-time in-person instruction, as a hybrid (in-person and remote instruction), or a full remote learning environment. These phases will be directed by our District, local, or commonwealth guidelines. Families who select the North Allegheny School District In-Person option will open in a **hybrid** phase for the first quarter of the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Several factors contributed to both our Health & Safety and Education Plans:

- The District formed a Return to School Committee. This committee is comprised of 90+ members from the following District groups: Central Office Administrators, School Board Members, Principals, Assistant Principals, North Allegheny Federation of Teachers Executive Leadership, teacher representatives from each school, counselors, Student Assistance Program, health services, public relations and communications, facilities, transportation, food service, and finance.
- Our Return to School plans were created with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Pennsylvania Department of Education, Allegheny County Health Department, District Physician, District Health Services, and the North Allegheny Board of School Directors.
- The feedback of parents/guardians from our Remote Learning and Return to School surveys was critical while developing these plans.
 - Feedback from our Remote Learning survey showed that parents/guardians wanted a more consistent District-wide online learning platform and more real-time instruction. Therefore, we standardized our learning management system to be Blackboard for K-12 and provided teachers with training during the last week of school focused on increasing interaction with students during synchronous learning (instruction that is provided in real-time to students).
 - Teachers and staff will receive additional training before school starts and throughout the year to meet the needs of the rapidly changing learning environment. We are working diligently to ensure a smooth and successful start to the new school year.
 - Our Return to School survey results show that 74 percent of parents/guardians would likely consider face-to-face instruction for their student(s) with health and safety guidelines in place. Knowing that some families would like options for their students, we've designed a plan that gives parents/guardians a choice.



- The commonwealth requires a Pandemic Crisis Response Team. This team is responsible for facilitating the local planning process, monitoring implementation of the Health & Safety Plan, and continued monitoring of local health data to assess implications for school operations and potential adjustments to the Health & Safety Plan throughout the school year.

The District's families and students will be asked to make a decision with regard to their instructional plan. North Allegheny School District's Return to School plan prioritizes the health and safety of students and staff while maximizing educational opportunities.

The District acknowledges that parents and guardians will have questions about the Health & Safety and Education Plans and the District will work to provide answers. Families, students, and staff will have the opportunity to submit questions and the District will be updating our [FAQ](#) page on an ongoing basis.

The health and safety of our students and staff is our top priority. We encourage all members of the NA community to follow the safeguards we've outlined to help keep our community safe.

The circumstances related to COVID-19 evolve rapidly, and we will update our plans frequently based on guidance from local, commonwealth, and national guidelines.





2020-2021 Enrollment Options

Students and parents/guardians will be asked to select an instructional plan that best fits their needs. The Return to School plan prioritizes the health and safety of students and staff while maximizing their educational opportunities. Parents/guardians will select an option for their child(ren) between **July 30 and August 9, 2020**, and if an option is not selected, the child(ren) will be automatically signed up for In-Person Instruction. We realize that circumstances may change after August 9. If they do, please contact the Office of K-12 Education at **412-369-5896**.

At the end of each quarter:

- Students who are enrolled in NA Cyber Academy will have the option to enroll in In-Person Instruction.
- Students who are enrolled in In-Person Instruction will have the option to enroll in the NA Cyber Academy.

End of Quarter Dates		
Quarter	Elementary	Secondary
1st	November 2, 2020	November 10, 2020
2nd	January 28, 2021	January 28, 2021
3rd	April 1, 2021	April 1, 2021



Option 1: In-Person Instruction (K-12)

With health and safety guidelines in place, students return to a traditional classroom setting when school resumes on September 8, 2020. Under the In-Person Instruction plan, there are three separate phases for instructional delivery based on District, local, or commonwealth guidelines:

- Full-time in-person instruction
- Hybrid (in-person and remote instruction) **(The school year will start in this phase)**
- Fully remote instruction

IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION SCENARIOS

FULL-TIME IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION K-12

Students attend school in a physical school building five days a week.

HYBRID INSTRUCTION K-12

A mix of in-person instruction at physical school buildings and remote instruction. Students spend two days each week in NA school buildings.

FULL REMOTE INSTRUCTION K-12

Students will receive remote instruction five days a week. Classes will be taught by assigned classroom teachers.

Option 2: NA Cyber Academy (K-12)

The NA Cyber Academy offers families the option of full-time online instruction from NA teachers as a replacement for returning to a physical school building. The NA Cyber Academy will be the thirteenth school in the North Allegheny School District. NA teachers will provide online instruction leveraging curriculum from Edgenuity - a leading provider of K-12 online curriculum, as well as NA curriculum resources to create a blended learning solution. Instruction will include both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Detailed information about both of these options is included in this document.



Instructional Delivery Descriptions

All North Allegheny students, including those who attend NA Cyber Academy, will benefit from services provided by the North Allegheny School District. Below are descriptions of instructional delivery for the 2020 -2021 school year. The following sections will provide detailed descriptions for both In-Person Instruction and NA Cyber Academy instruction as outlined in our Return to School plan. Under the In-Person Instruction plan, you will see three phases: full-time in-person instruction, hybrid instruction, and fully remote instruction, which are based on District, local, and commonwealth guidelines. If you select in-person instruction, please do so with the knowledge that the District may have to shift between the different phases over the course of the school year.



Full-Time In-Person Instruction K-12

The Full-Time In-Person Instruction delivery model is the closest option to the traditional school setting that staff, students, and families are used to experiencing. During full-time in-person instruction, students and staff will be face-to-face to allow for social interaction and real-time learning within the confines of the District's Health & Safety Plan. Teachers will follow safety protocols while organizing students to work collaboratively. Partner work, small groups, and one-on-one meetings with teachers will continue through the use of different collaboration tools and strategies including available technology. All traditional student and staff resources and supports will be available in the Full-Time In-Person Instruction setting while implementing the Health & Safety Plan protocols.

- All staff and students report to the school building daily for instruction.
- All staff and students will follow enhanced hygiene protocols.
- All students (grades K-12) will have access to Blackboard. In this platform, students can access a variety of videos, lessons, templates, assignments, virtual tutorials, and other tools to support their "at home" work. Blackboard will also be used for students who are absent and need to stay up-to-date with classroom instruction.



In-Person Instruction - Hybrid Instruction K-12

The District recognizes that at times we may need to decrease capacity in our schools, and the decision to move to hybrid instruction will be based on health and safety requirements set by District, local, or commonwealth officials. When this occurs, instruction will be provided to students both in-person and remotely during the week. When it becomes necessary to shift from in-person to hybrid instruction, the District will utilize SchoolMessenger to notify staff, students, and families of this change. During hybrid instruction, the following will take place:

- All staff report to school to facilitate learning for assigned student groups.
- All staff and students follow enhanced hygiene protocols.
- Students will be grouped into cohorts and assigned to report to school on designated days:
 - Students assigned to “Cohort 1” will attend Monday and Tuesday of each week
 - All students will work synchronously on Wednesdays to allow for cleaning. In addition to synchronous instruction, teachers will hold office hours on Wednesdays.
 - Students assigned to “Cohort 2” will attend Thursday and Friday of each week.
 - Cohorts 1 and 2 will be designated by the alphabet (A-L for Cohort 1 and M-Z for Cohort 2) so families with children in multiple schools are in school on the same days.
 - Families with multiple last names will default to the oldest student in the household’s last name.
 - Adjustments to student assigned groups may be made as necessary for classroom size, bus capacity, or other reasons to achieve the desired goal of fewer students in school buildings.
- All schools will facilitate District programming, including elementary special area classes, academic interventions, English Learners, Special Education, and Gifted programming.
- NASD recognizes that in order to ensure meaningful educational benefit, some students with complex learning needs may need to attend in person for instruction more than two days a week. IEP/ESL teams, to include parents will meet to discuss options and to make determinations based on individual student’s learning needs.
- Teachers will engage with students for in-person learning on assigned “at school” days and facilitate new learning experiences based on academic standards.
- When a cohort is “At home”, instruction will become remote synchronous days. This will allow students to continue with the daily instruction virtually. The district is adding voice amplification and camera live streaming so that students can follow along from home. This strategy will be implemented over the course of the first quarter based on receipt of the equipment purchased.
- All students (grades K-12) will work to complete assignments with access to their grade-level learning platform, Blackboard. In this platform, students can access a variety of videos, lessons, templates, assignments, virtual tutorials, and other tools to support their “at home” work.
- Teachers will maintain regular communication with families and students using Blackboard and other methods of communication. Blackboard Collaborate is the video tool that all teachers will use to hold live sessions with students/families.



Full Remote Instruction K-12

The Full Remote Instruction plan is enacted when the Full-Time In-Person Instruction and Hybrid options are no longer feasible based on District, local, or commonwealth officials recognizing that the level of community spread is too great and all constituents are at heightened risk. Full Remote Instruction is a different instructional delivery method than the NA Cyber Academy. Full Remote Instruction is a continuation of the In-Person Instruction option, which means it will be taught by each child's classroom teachers. Staff, students, and families will be notified by the District through a SchoolMessenger phone call and email. Full remote instruction will look significantly different than last spring. Utilizing feedback from the parent/guardian survey, families will notice a robust plan for full remote instruction if needed this school year.

Full remote schedules have been developed for elementary, middle, and high schools and mimic a student's regular school day, where possible. All weekly schedules include instruction and application of skills through synchronous instruction, asynchronous learning, check-in meetings with teachers, and independent practice that meet Pennsylvania's required hours of instruction by week. All teachers are expected to deliver synchronous instruction at least three times each week with a few exceptions.

Elementary

A sample of a 3rd grade elementary school student schedule for a week can be found [here](#).

Weekly plans will be posted on every teacher's Blackboard page in an agenda format. Each agenda will have links to where students and families can review the required work and sessions for the week.

Blackboard Collaborate is the video tool that all teachers will be expected to use to hold live sessions with students/families.

Students will be required to attend the synchronous sessions. If students do not attend these sessions, they will be counted as absent for the day unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher. Students will be expected to "attend" class virtually daily and to complete/turn in assigned work.

Secondary

Secondary Schools will follow the Full Remote Schedules found [here](#).

All teachers K-12 will use Blackboard to communicate weekly learning plans by posting an agenda with details for the week. Each agenda will have links to where students and families can review the required work and sessions for the week.

Blackboard Collaborate is the video tool that all teachers will be expected to use to hold live sessions with students/families.



Students will be required to attend the synchronous/live sessions. If students do not attend these sessions, they will be counted as absent for the day unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher. Students will be expected to “attend” class virtually daily and to complete/turn in assigned work.

English Language Learners

English as a Second Language staff will work with families to assist in making choices for their selection of options and to assist with any transition if the District moves between options of instruction in the building, hybrid, or remotely throughout the year.

Student Services

Students receiving full-time in-person instruction will have access to the NA Student Services Team. The Student Services team is a coordinated group of professionals providing specialized services such as psychological, school counseling, health/wellness, student assistance, and social work to students within the North Allegheny School District. The student services staff will implement health and safety protocols appropriately while students transition from instruction in the building, hybrid, or remotely. Enrollment for students who are homeless or in foster care will be verified by District staff before the start of the school year.

504 Plans

The NA School Counseling Department will ensure student support through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 while students are receiving in-person instruction. If the District transitions to hybrid or remote learning, the School Counseling Department will reach out to families to address individual student needs based on the changes to the instructional delivery.

Special Education

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has been maintained during the pandemic. Therefore, the North Allegheny School District is committed to working with the parents/guardians of Students with Disabilities to provide individualized instruction based on each learner. During in-person instruction, service providers will follow the District’s health and safety protocols in the Special Education environment while implementing each student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Upon returning to school, case managers will address student-specific needs arising from the transition back into school buildings while considering whether or not a student has experienced a regression of skills and/or lack of progress. If regression and/or a lack of progress is present, the IEP team will identify opportunities for recovery, including additional, new, or different services and accommodations. If the District is required to transition to hybrid or full remote learning, case managers will schedule a parent/teacher conference to discuss the contents of the IEP and create this individualized continuity of learning plan for students in a hybrid/remote environment. When working with students through alternative delivery models, the school or District should make a good faith effort within available capabilities to determine how a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) will be provided and should consider the following:



- Appropriate resources
- Equal access to learning and required materials
- Ability to provide the services and supports in the IEP
- Parents/guardians, students, and staff training
- Communication processes
- Related Services
- Instructional Assistants
- Assistive Technology

Gifted Programming

The NA GOAL program provides enrichment and a broad spectrum of educational opportunities while encouraging individual learners to develop personal responsibility, task commitment, self-discipline, independent learning skills, respectful conduct, and social/emotional balance. Online and project-based enrichment and educational opportunities will be made available to students through the GOAL program during all phases of in-person instruction, including hybrid, and full remote learning.

Guidance on In-Person Instruction

Based on [requirements from the Pennsylvania Department of Education \(PDE\)](#), the North Allegheny School District submitted a [Health & Safety Plan](#) that outlines guidelines for the reopening of our schools. Below is an overview that shows how the District will make decisions regarding instructional delivery options based on additional guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, North Allegheny Health Services Department, North Allegheny School Physician, Allegheny County Department of Health, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. *It's important to note that the North Allegheny School District Superintendent will have the authority to change in-person instruction based on the health and wellness of the students and staff in each building.*



Process to Reopen Pennsylvania Guidelines		
Allegheny County Green Phase	Allegheny County Yellow Phase	Allegheny County Red Phase
While this phase will facilitate a return to a “new normal,” it will be equally important to continue to monitor public health indicators and adjust orders and restrictions as necessary to ensure the spread of disease remains at a minimum.	As regions or counties move into the yellow phase, some restrictions on work and social interaction will ease. while others, such as closures of schools, gyms, and other indoor recreation centers, hair and nail salons, as well as limitations around large gatherings, remain in place.	The red phase has the sole purpose of minimizing the spread of COVID-19 through strict social distancing, non-life sustaining business, school closures, and building safety protocols.
Schools subject to CDC and commonwealth guidance.	Schools may provide in-person instruction with the Department of Education guidance.	Schools (for in-person instruction) are closed.
Corresponding North Allegheny School District Instruction Options		
Full-time in-person instruction. At this time, the current requirement of the commonwealth regarding physical distancing when not wearing masks during meal times will likely force the District to implement a Hybrid or Full Remote return to school model as outlined in this plan.	Hybrid Instruction: Approximately half of the school’s student population will be in attendance each school day with enhanced hygiene protocols.	All students and staff are assigned to work/learn from home (full Remote Learning).
<i>North Allegheny Cyber Academy is operational during all phases.</i>		



Superintendent Designation

The Superintendent may decide to move to hybrid instruction or full remote instruction for emergency reasons, such as (but not limited to):

- Community spread of the illness in classrooms, individual school buildings, and across the District
- Lack of Bus Drivers to cover necessary runs to get students to and from school for the day
- The number of Teachers absent leading to the inability to cover classrooms in a manner that ensures the safety and welfare of students
- Inability to provide food to students during the school day due to absences of METZ employees
- Lack of custodial staff to be able to clean buildings nightly
- Lack of coverage in Health Clinics due to Nurse/Support Nurse absence





NA Cyber Academy K-12

We understand that some families may have concerns about returning to the school building in the fall for a variety of reasons. The North Allegheny School District is committed to all students having access to a quality education this fall. We are excited to offer our new NA Cyber Academy - a stand-alone K-12 online school within the North Allegheny School District taught by NA teachers.

NA Cyber Academy students will remain enrolled in the District and have access to District athletics, extra-curricular activities, and after-school functions that are available throughout the school year following the guidance of District, local, and commonwealth officials. This program also allows seniors to graduate with a diploma from the North Allegheny School District.

- The NA Cyber Academy is available for any student with the commitment to continue full-time online instruction for at least an entire quarter.
- The coursework will be customized to align with NA's in-person instruction, allowing easier transitions back to the in-school environment.
- At the end of each quarter, parents/guardians can choose to enroll in In-Person Instruction. Additionally, those students receiving In-Person Instruction can enroll in NA Cyber Academy at the end of each quarter. If a student chooses to remain in NA Cyber Academy, no action is required by the family.
- The NA Cyber Academy will function as the 13th school within the District and provides the following:
 - NA teachers will provide instruction for NA Cyber Academy.
 - NA Cyber Academy will not be affected by a change in instructional delivery options based on additional guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, North Allegheny Health Services Department, North Allegheny School Physician, Allegheny County Department of Health, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.



NA Cyber Academy Curriculum

- NA teachers will provide online instruction leveraging curriculum from Edgenuity, a leading provider of K–12 online curriculum, as well as NA curriculum resources to create a blended learning solution. With courses available for core curriculum and solutions for intervention, test readiness, and summer school, Edgenuity will help us support our students no matter what needs they have. Instruction will include both synchronous and asynchronous learning. Families who select this option will have the ability to return to a physical school building at the end of each quarter. Families who do not select this option at the start of school can select this option at the end of each quarter.
- Edgenuity has been approved by the NCAA Clearinghouse as credits reflected on a high school transcript.
- NA’s add/drop process defined in the Program Studies will apply for NA Cyber Academy.
- For high school courses:
 - Final grades for any high school credit courses will be entered in the building transcript with the school listed as “NA Cyber Academy”. The grade WILL be calculated in the GPA.

NA Cyber Academy Instruction Schedules

- Lessons will be conducted both synchronously and asynchronously with an expectation that live instruction and contact with students will occur 4-5 days a week.
- Opportunities for interaction with peers may include group projections, discussions, discussion boards, and scheduled community time to connect as NA Cyber Academy learners.
- Class schedules for NA Cyber Academy can be found [here](#).
- A list of expanded NA Cyber Academy Courses can be found [here](#).

English Language Learners

Students who qualify for English Language instruction will be able to access the curriculum through Edgenuity’s partner, Middlebury Interactive Languages. This program offers schools a new way to boost learning outcomes for English language learners (ELLs). This standards-based blended learning curriculum focuses on the fundamentals of academic English and literacy development for students. This program will be provided for students in grades K-12, an NA ESL teacher will use both the NA ESL curriculum and Middlebury Interactives program to provide instruction for ELLs.

Student Services

Students participating in NA Cyber Academy will have access to the NA Student Services Team. The Student Services team is a coordinated group of professionals providing specialized services such as psychological, school counseling, health/wellness, student assistance, and social work to students within the North Allegheny School District.



504 Plans

The NA Cyber Academy School Guidance Department will ensure student support through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This act was established to provide accommodations for students who have been determined to have a disability which substantially limits a major life activity.

Special Education

Our NA Cyber Academy special education program includes support and services for students who have educational disabilities. Qualified NA staff will deliver specially designed instruction to meet the individual needs of students through an Individual Education Program (IEP). Students with disabilities will be provided with the strategies, tools, instruction, and services that will allow them to maximize their learning. After enrolling in the NA Cyber Academy, an IEP meeting will be scheduled to review the students' needs arising from the transition into the Cyber Academy while considering whether or not a student has experienced a regression of skills and/or lack of progress. If regression and/or a lack of progress is present, the IEP team will identify opportunities for recovery, including additional, new, or different services and accommodations.

Gifted Programming

The gifted education program in the NA Cyber Academy will provide enrichment and a broad spectrum of educational opportunities while encouraging individual learners to develop personal responsibility, task commitment, self-discipline, independent learning skills, respectful conduct, and social/emotional balance. Enrichment and educational opportunities will be made available to students through NA GOAL teachers.





Grading for Full-Time In-Person Instruction, Hybrid Instruction, Full Remote Instruction, & NA Cyber Academy

Although NASD used a pass/fail system during the fourth quarter last year, grading will resume as letter grades (A,B,C,D). (The procedure for high school weighted grades will remain and be used in all instructional delivery options.) Grading will be set up on a quarterly basis in our Student Information System (Tyler SIS Student 360) as follows:

Elementary:

1. *Formative assignments* are used to guide instruction and determine if students are understanding concepts taught. Teachers can use the formative assignments and assessments to determine if concepts need to be retaught or if students already know the material. Formative assignments can be redone to increase learning opportunities.
 - a. Will account for 40% of the grade and may include:
 - i. Classwork, Homework, Exit Tickets, Student Engagement, etc.
2. *Summative assessments* are used to determine mastery of learning at the end of a unit, quarter, or semester.
 - a. Will account for 60% of the grade and may include:
 - i. Writing Assignments, Projects, Assessments, Quizzes, etc.

*Extra credit will be limited across every grade level.

Secondary:

1. *Formative assignments/assessments* are used to guide instruction and determine if students are understanding concepts taught. Teachers can use the formative assignments and assessments to determine if concepts need to be retaught or if students already know the material. Formative assignments can be redone to increase learning opportunities.
 - a. Will account for 30% of the grade and may include:
 - i. Classwork, Homework, Exit Tickets, Student Engagement
2. *Summative assessments* are used to determine mastery of learning at the end of a unit, quarter, or semester.
 - a. Will account for 70% of the grade and may include:
 - i. Writing Assignments, Projects, Assessments, Quizzes

*Extra credit will be limited across every grade level.





The North Allegheny School District submitted a [Health & Safety Plan](#) to the NA School Board of Directors on July 22, 2020, for approval on July 29, 2020. Pending approval, the plan will be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. A full copy of the plan can be found [here](#).

Below are the key health and safety updates that students, parents/guardians, and staff should know before in-person instruction begins.

Getting Ready For School Safely

- Before students come to school, parents/guardians will be responsible for monitoring students' symptoms. If students have a fever of 100 degrees or higher, a cough, shortness of breath, or loss of taste or smell, they must stay home.
- Transportation routes will be shortened and bus stops consolidated where feasible to limit the amount of time students spend on buses. Students should maintain social distancing at bus stops. Buses will be loaded from the rear to the front to minimize students passing in the aisles. Student seating will be based on the order of pickup. All students will be required to wear masks/face coverings while on the bus. Where possible, the seat immediately behind the driver will be unoccupied, and the other front seat will be reserved for students who cannot wear masks due to a documented medical, mental health condition, or disability.





COVID-19

WHEN SHOULD I KEEP MY CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL?

Please keep your child home if they show any of the following symptoms

- **Active vomiting or diarrhea.**
- **Fever (100° or higher), chills, or general body aches.**
- **Has shown any COVID-19 symptoms**
including fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, repeated shaking with chills, achiness, sore throat, and a new loss of taste or smell.
- **Other symptoms of possible concern**
including rash, conjunctivitis (red eyes), swelling of the palms and soles of the feet or skin peeling in those areas, lymph node enlargement (swollen glands), and sharp abdominal pains.



COVID-19

WHEN CAN MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER ILLNESS?

- **24 hours since last episode of active vomiting or diarrhea.**
- **24 hours being fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication** (fevers of 100° or higher).
- **24 hours after starting antibiotics for bacterial causes.**
- **Doctor's note of clearance** for various student specific medical conditions.
- **For a known exposure to COVID-19, contact your school nurse.**
- **If your child has been home because they have been sick, they must see the school nurse for a temperature check before returning to school.**



Student's Health and Safety At School

Each school will create a comprehensive plan for how they will implement the District Health & Safety Plan. These plans will be reviewed and approved by the Pandemic Crisis Response Team to ensure proper implementation. These plans will be communicated to families in each building's Back to School Newsletter.

Face Coverings

- Students and staff will be required to wear masks/face coverings at all times, including on the school bus. In the event a face covering needs to be replaced at school, each school has face masks available to ensure compliance with this requirement.
- The [PA Secretary of Health's Order on Universal Face Coverings Order](#) requires individuals to wear a "face covering." "Face covering" means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. A "face covering" can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen, and, for the purposes of the order, can include a plastic face shield that covers the nose and mouth.
- Staff members must wear an appropriate face covering. Staff members with restrictions or concerns about face coverings should speak to HR about possible accommodations.
- If students or their families assert children cannot wear face coverings in schools for medical reasons, Section 504 and IDEA both require participation in a team meeting to decide whether an accommodation should be provided. Therefore, the district may require parents/guardians to provide pertinent medical information in order to decide whether a 504 plan should be developed or modified for a child (or an existing IEP modified) to address whether a child should be excused from wearing a face covering in school. If a student does not have a valid medical excuse to not wear a face covering, and demonstrates continued noncompliance with this requirement, the district would apply the code of conduct and any necessary disciplinary procedures.
- Staff with a need to know basis will be informed of student accommodations.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

- Each school will have a delayed release of students from and to the cars and buses. More than one entrance and exit from the schools will be utilized to decrease large groups of students entering/exiting the school building. Dismissal from classrooms will be utilized from each school building.
- Information regarding late arrivals, item drop off, and early dismissals will be communicated in the building's Back to School Newsletter.



Hygiene and Social Distancing

- Students and staff will be encouraged and reminded to follow good hygiene practices, including frequent hand washing and/or hand sanitizing.
- Students and staff will be encouraged to distance as much as possible in hallways and stairways.
 - At the elementary level, students will remain in homeroom cohorts for instruction with minimal movement to assist in the delivery of special services classes such as interventions, ESL, and special education.
 - At the middle schools, classes will be switched by teams, which will limit the number of students changing classrooms at any specific time.
 - As high school students transition from one class to the next, teachers will taper their dismissal from their classroom incrementally (example, 5-10 students who have to travel the farthest first, 5-10 students next, etc.). When students arrive at their destination, they will wait outside the classroom, socially distanced as directed by signage, until the classroom is safely emptied allowing for new students to arrive.
 - Modified locker visits/usage will be scheduled to adhere to social distancing guidelines.
 - Students will be provided with locations at each school to store their athletic and instrumental materials.
 - Staff will be asked to avoid congregating in communal spaces such as copy rooms and teachers lounges during breaks or planning time.

Classroom Arrangements

Desks will be turned to face in the same direction, to the maximum extent feasible. If desks or workstations cannot be moved, students will be spaced as far apart as possible and where feasible, will sit on only one side of a table.

Food Service

Cafeterias will be utilized for food service and consumption. Additional spaces such as auditoriums, gymnasiums, multi-purpose rooms, and possibly classrooms will be utilized where feasible to reduce student density during lunch periods. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands before and after lunch periods and to wear masks/face coverings when not eating or drinking. Students will follow appropriate hygiene and safety protocols after recess. Meal menus will be revised and limited to support more “grab and go” style meals and limit a-la-carte and individual serving selections.



Physical Education, Music, and Related Arts

Plans for these areas are not final at this time. The District is currently working with the department chairs on outlining courses that follow the Health & Safety Plan guidance for each grade level as it relates to these content areas. Plans for each department will be shared in each school building's Back to School Newsletter.

Library/Classroom Libraries

Library circulation will continue during this time utilizing enhanced safety measures. Once returned, books will be held for five days before reentering circulation.

Sports and Activities

The Return to Athletics/Activities plan can be found on the [North Allegheny Athletics website](#).

Special Education

The Department of Special Education is reviewing all elements of the Health & Safety Plan and taking into consideration how to apply it to all of our Special Education Programs. Consideration is being given to characteristics of each Disability Category that receives support in these programs and how health/safety measures may be implemented.

Recess

Weather permitting, outdoor recess will be held. Students will not have access to shared equipment, such as sports balls. Students will have access to permanent playsets if on campus. Contactless activities will be encouraged. Masks will not be required outdoors. On days when indoor recess is necessary, students will stay in their homeroom to engage in activities that are contactless. Masks will be required for indoor recess. Students will follow hygiene protocols following recess.

Large Assemblies and School Activities

- Gatherings, events, and extracurricular activities will be limited to maintain physical distancing.
- There will be no field trips in the first semester. This will be reassessed for the second semester.
- There will be no winter concerts. This will be reassessed for the second semester.
- Clubs and activities will follow the Return to Sports/Activities plan and/or consider meeting virtually when possible.



School Volunteers/Visitors

- Volunteers will be strictly limited and will require approval from the Assistant Superintendent.
- Volunteers/Visitors will be required to:
 - Wear masks/face coverings at all times. In the event someone arrives without a face covering, each school has face masks available to ensure compliance with this requirement. If a visitor is unable to wear a mask, the school will make other arrangements for the visit.
 - Visitors will be screened by the school nurse upon arrival.

Our Commitment to Keeping Schools Clean

- All buildings have been subjected to extensive summer cleaning.
- Equipment is being purchased to support the cleaning and disinfecting of each building every night utilizing electrostatic sprayers and appropriate disinfecting solutions. Custodial staff will conduct frequent cleaning of high traffic areas throughout the school day.
- Kindergarten classrooms will be disinfected after each session.
- HVAC systems will remain in “occupied” status 24/7 to support increased air circulation and filtration. Enhanced air filters (MERV-13) are being installed in air handlers for the start of school to further improve indoor air quality.
- Portable HEPA air filtration units are being purchased to use in areas such as nurse’s offices that may have limited outside air circulation. Units may also be used in large group spaces, such as cafeterias.
- Where feasible and safe, classroom and office windows will be opened in order to increase outside air supply into the buildings. Building HVAC systems will be adjusted to operate with increased outside air circulation.
- Additional disinfecting wipes will be available for staff to wipe down classroom surfaces or supplies.
- Additional custodial staff will be available during the school day to support additional cleaning.
- Some traditional water fountains are being replaced by touchless bottle filling stations across all buildings. Where traditional water fountains remain, they will either be disabled or subject to additional cleaning throughout the day. Students will be able to carry water bottles in all schools.
- School buses will be cleaned regularly and disinfected after the morning and afternoon runs. When feasible, windows will be open to increase air circulation.



Social and Emotional Wellness

North Allegheny is committed to the social and emotional wellness of our students and staff. Below are ways in which we will be addressing these needs this school year:

- **Trauma-Informed Care** - During the fall of 2020, all staff members will begin training in Trauma Informed-Care. Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) is an approach in the human service field that assumes that an individual is more likely than not to have a history of trauma. Trauma-Informed Care recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role trauma may play in an individual's life, including service staff.
- **Student Assistance Program** - The Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a systematic team process used to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. SAP is designed to assist in identifying issues including alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and mental health issues that pose a barrier to a student's success.
- **School-Based Mental Health** - Through a partnership with Glade Run, students in grades 9-12 can be provided with outpatient mental health services both in the school setting and through teletherapy. This partnership will work to effectively diminish barriers that historically have prohibited some families from accessing supportive mental health services.
- **School-Based Social and Emotional Wellness Committees** - Led by a School Counselor and supported by the District's Positive Behavior Support Specialists, each building will have a multidisciplinary committee that will work on addressing student and staff social and emotional wellness as we work to reopen and renew our school community.
- **Individual Student Supports** - Students at all levels may be afforded opportunities to address specific social and emotional concerns through individual school counseling sessions.
- **Consultative Support for School Staff** - Classroom teachers will have access to consultative support from Social Workers and Positive Behavior Support Specialists' to handle student concerns.
- **Employee Assistance Program** - An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a voluntary, work-based program that offers free and confidential assessments, short-term counseling, referrals, and follow-up services to employees who have personal and/or work-related problems.

Attendance

- We understand that COVID-19 presents many challenges that may affect attendance. The District will work with each student and family individually to address attendance and instructional needs.
- When absent due to quarantine or illness, students will have access to virtual instruction and Blackboard to ensure they can keep up with the required coursework.





Student and Staff Health

- Students, families and staff will be reminded of the likely symptoms of COVID-19 and families will be responsible for monitoring students prior to sending students to school. Staff members are responsible for self-monitoring for symptoms before arriving at school.
- If a student or staff member presents to the Health Office with any of the described symptoms, they will be isolated in an identified area located in or near the Health Office. The school nurse will apply required PPE and ensure a face mask is applied/available to an individual with respiratory symptoms and a fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit if it is able to be tolerated and developmentally appropriate.
- Health Services staff will be responsible for making decisions regarding quarantine or isolation requirements.
- The Health Services Department will collaborate with the Administration, along with considering recommendations and orders from the State and Local Departments of Health, Office of the Governor, CDC, and the PA Department of Education when considering changes in safety protocols.
- The Health Services Department Chairperson will be available to respond to student/staff needs as part of the Pandemic Response Team. To do this, the District is hiring a long term substitute to cover the chairperson's assigned time in the school health office.

Response to COVID Exposure

- If a student or staff member presents any of the described symptoms of COVID-19 to the Health Office, they will be isolated in an identified area located in or near the Health Office.
- Upon reporting exposure to someone who tests positive for COVID-19, the student/employee, if symptom-free, may continue attending in-person instruction provided that additional precautions are taken for a minimum of 14 days unless directed otherwise by a health care provider. Further information on self-assessment can be found through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, PA Department of Health, or Allegheny County Health Department.



- If identified as being in close contact with someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, stay home unless you are going to see a medical professional. Individuals will be required to quarantine for 14 days since the date of contact. Close contact means being within six feet of an individual for at least 15 minutes, with or without a mask. Once notified by the district of exposure, the individual will be required to consult with their health care provider and inform the school nurse. If a student or staff person is diagnosed with COVID-19, with or without a positive test and/or symptoms, the District will follow applicable health department protocol and guidance on contact tracing, quarantine, and/or isolation while respecting the confidentiality of those involved.
- Quarantine due to travel would be based on the county/state provisions at the time of the trip. If the county/state requires quarantine for the location you visit, then you would be required to do so upon arriving back in Pittsburgh. Instructional materials would be available online through Blackboard to ensure your student receives instruction.





Communication Protocol

North Allegheny School District recognizes that information and safety recommendations are rapidly changing. The District will continue to develop ongoing communications to provide staff and parents/guardians with timely information on the District's preparation for, incidence of, and response to COVID-19. We will work with the North Allegheny Health Services Department and the Allegheny County Health Department on specific communications on a case-by-case basis.

Ongoing COVID Communication

To provide full transparency to our community, the District will update the [COVID-19 page](#) on the North Allegheny School District website daily with new confirmed cases. The cases will be listed by building in a table format.

The District will notify parents/guardians via email when their student has been in a **classroom, bus, sports team, or activity** with a student or staff member who has tested positive for COVID-19 or attends a **school** in which someone has tested positive for COVID-19. There are two types of communication that will occur:

- **When a student or staff member is present in a classroom, bus, sports team or activity where an individual tests positive for COVID-19:**
 - Staff and parents/guardians will receive written communication via email sharing that they may have been in direct contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
 - The letter will contain action steps to be taken and any recommendations provided by the Allegheny County Health Department.
 - If there are multiple cases in one day, the District will send one email per day to staff, parents/guardians, etc. with cases grouped together.



- **When a student or staff member in a District school tests positive for COVID-19:**
 - Staff and parents/guardians will receive written communication via email notifying them that a person in the school has tested positive for COVID-19.
 - The letter will contain necessary action steps to be taken and any recommendations provided by the Allegheny County Health Department.
 - If there are multiple cases in one day, the District will send one email per day to staff, parents/guardians, etc. with cases grouped together.

