



West Buffalo Charter School
2020-2021

Reopening Plan

Addendum

After careful consideration of available data, increasing COVID-19 positivity rates in Erie County and with our staff and students' health, safety, and well-being at the forefront of our decision, **West Buffalo Charter School will close for in-person instruction and shift to our fully remote instruction model beginning Tuesday, November 17th until further notice.**

We will re-evaluate our decision, analyze the data, review positivity rates, and consult with local and state officials on or around December 11th, 2020 (in 4 weeks). At that time we will either make the decision to return to in-person instruction on December 14th or extend the closure.

Return to In-Person Hybrid model effective - January 19, 2021

Rationale

After reviewing multiple guidance documents including those from the New York State Education Department, New York State Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control (CDC), West Buffalo Charter School has developed what we find to be a comprehensive reopening plan. It is our hope that this plan demonstrates our dedication to address our students' and staff's basic safety needs in addition to the social, emotional, and environmental factors that can impact staff's capacity to teach and students' capacity to learn. Finding the balance between evaluating education options and maintaining health and safety priorities was extremely difficult. We were faced with decisions that could negatively impact our students and families. The West Buffalo Charter School Task Force worked collaboratively to thoughtfully consider all back-to-school options. We believe the task force has determined the best choice that allows us to implement the maximum amount of classroom instruction for students, while keeping our students and staff safe.

West Buffalo Charter School values our status as a school of choice for families and we strongly support the community by planning to continue your child(ren)'s education with as much consistency and teaching of foundational skills in a face-to-face model as possible. Our plan takes into account the amount of available physical space, level of staffing, social-emotional and academic needs, as well as suggested health and safety measures. We have established a reopening plan that we feel is conducive to providing your child(ren) with a learning environment that will best meet their current needs.

The West Buffalo Charter School reopening plan includes both a **Hybrid Learning Model** (combination of face-to-face & virtual learning) and an **All Remote Learning Model** (virtual learning only). Details for the **Hybrid Learning Model** can be found below for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 and the Special Learning Environment Classrooms (1st-4th & 5th-8th). Families with a child who is immunocompromised, lives with a family member who is immunocompromised, or families that do not feel comfortable with an on campus, face-to-face model, may choose the **All Remote Learning Model** option for the 2020-2021 school year.

This option will be available to **all** students in Kindergarten through Grade 8. The **All Remote Learning Model** will include lessons that will be live-streamed daily allowing students that choose this model to participate in the same instruction as their peers that are participating in the **Hybrid Learning Model** (face-to-face & virtual learning). A daily schedule including core content times (i.e. ELA, Math, Science/Social Studies, and Curriculum Extension) for which students **must** participate in will be provided for those that choose the **All Remote Learning Model**. Parents/Guardians will be asked to select either the **Hybrid Learning Model** or the **All**

Remote Learning Model prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year. The option selected will be in effect for the entire school year as no changes will be allowed throughout the year unless there is a medical situation and an alternative plan is created in consultation with the school health personnel.

*Please note: West Buffalo Charter School will be required to move to an **All Remote Learning Model** (virtual only) for **all** students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 should data and science indicate it is necessary. In addition, West Buffalo Charter School has also planned for a “**phase-in**” approach should the school be permitted to bring more students back on campus each day, increase the number of students allowed per classroom, increase the number of face-to-face instructional days, etc. Changes to our plan will be communicated as soon as possible if necessary.*

COMMUNICATION/FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

NYS Communication Requirements

Pursuant to the guidance, a school, district, or other party responsible for developing the school's reopening plan must sign an assurance that its plan includes provisions to meet the following communication requirements:

- Responsible Parties must engage with school stakeholders and community members (e.g., administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians of students, local health departments, local health care providers, and affiliated organizations, such as unions, alumni, and/or community-based groups) when developing reopening plans. Plans for reopening should identify the groups of people involved and engaged throughout the planning process. **West Buffalo Charter School has developed a Reopening Task Force made up of a cross-section of key stakeholders. The 18 person team consists of: Instructional Staff, Parent/Family Representatives, School Related Personnel, the School Social Worker, the School Nurse, Board of Trustee Members, Community Members and Administration.**

- Responsible Parties must develop a communications plan for students, parents or legal guardians of students, staff, and visitors that includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and a consistent means to provide individuals with information. **West Buffalo Charter School Administration will effectively communicate with the school community (staff, families, and visitors) through the use of email, social media posts, automated phone calls, and written communication.**

- Responsible Parties must ensure all students are taught or trained how to follow new COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene. **Prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year, West Buffalo Charter School will train faculty and staff in all COVID-19 protocols. Staff will then be required to turnkey train students throughout the first week of school. Protocols will be revisited/retaught throughout the school year as warranted.**

- Responsible Parties must encourage all students, faculty, staff, and visitors through verbal and written communication (e.g., signage) to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically acceptable face coverings, when a social distance cannot be maintained.” **West Buffalo Charter School will post signage throughout the building as well as provide verbal cues regarding use of PPE specifically appropriate face coverings and their proper**

use. Floors (in common areas, hallways, and classrooms) will be marked at 6-foot intervals to allow for appropriate social distancing.

Additionally, communications must be provided in the language(s) spoken at home among families and throughout the school community. Written plans must be accessible to those with visual and/or hearing impairments. **West Buffalo Charter School will work with our Parent Liaison and/or various interpreting services to allow for translation of all communication. Written plans will be posted on our website for those with visual and/or hearing impairments.**

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Reopening Plan Mandatory Requirements

Districts/schools must review and consider the number of students and staff allowed to return in person. These factors should be considered when determining resumption of in person instruction:

1. Ability to maintain appropriate social distance
 2. PPE and cloth face mask availability
 3. Availability of safe transportation
 4. Local hospital capacity
- Districts/schools must engage with school stakeholders and community members (e.g., administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians of students, local health departments, local health care providers, and affiliated organizations, such as unions, alumni, and/or community-based groups) when developing health and safety reopening plans. **Key stakeholders and community members will serve as members of the West Buffalo Charter School Reopening Task Force.**
 - District/school plan should identify the groups of people involved and engaged throughout the planning process. **The following members of the West Buffalo Charter School community will be involved in the planning process: Instructional Staff, Parent/Family Representatives, School Related Personnel, the School Social Worker, the School Nurse, Board of Trustee Members, Community Members, and Administration.**
 - District/school plan must include a communications plan for students, parents/guardians, staff, and visitors that includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and a consistent means to provide individuals with information. **A detailed plan including the purpose of the written communication, date communication is to be shared, and the method of delivery (written, posted, telephone, etc.) will be maintained by the members of West Buffalo Charter School**

Administration. Instructions, training, and signage will be addressed prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year.

- District/school plan has a written protocol developed in collaboration with the district or school's director of school health services to instruct staff to observe for signs of illness in students and staff and requires symptomatic persons to be sent to the school nurse or other designated personnel. **The West Buffalo Charter School Nurse will work with the school's medical director to develop a checklist of observable symptoms to look for in both students and colleagues. A list of symptoms and steps to take when an individual appears ill will be kept as part of the 2020-2021 Teacher/Staff Handbook. The school nurse will review this document with all faculty and staff prior to the start of the school year.**
- District/school plan has a written protocol for daily temperature screenings of all students and staff, along with a daily screening questionnaire for faculty and staff and periodic use of the questionnaire for students. **Prior to reporting for the day, all West Buffalo Charter School faculty and staff will be required to self-report the results of their daily temperature screening and questionnaire. Results will be collected via a mobile app. Any staff member with a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, or that answers yes to any questions on the questionnaire will not be permitted to work that day. Families will be asked to follow the same protocol by reporting their child(ren)'s results from their daily temperature screening and questionnaire via a mobile app. Prior to entering the school building (whether via bus or drop-off) any students who did not have a temperature screening at home will be screened by a staff member before entering the building. If an individual's temperature is 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more, they will not be able to proceed to the classroom. The individual will be escorted to the Health Office and will be required to be picked up by a parent/guardian/other.**
- District/school plan requires that ill students and staff be assessed by the school nurse (registered professional nurse, RN) or medical director and that if a school nurse or medical director is not available, ill students and staff will be sent home for follow up with a healthcare provider. **West Buffalo Charter School employs a full-time school nurse who will assess any ill student or staff member. The school nurse will work with the student's family or staff member to ensure proper follow-up care is sought by a healthcare provider.**
- District/school plan has written protocol requiring students or staff with a temperature, signs of illness, and/or a positive response to the questionnaire to be sent directly to a dedicated isolation area where students are supervised, prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home. **The West Buffalo Charter School Health Office will be configured to allow for a private isolation area. This area will be used to host ill students or staff, those that did not pass the health**

screening, and/or those that answered yes to any question on the questionnaire until a responsible party is available to pick the student/staff member up.

- District/school plan has written protocol to address visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors to the school which includes health screening. **West Buffalo Charter School will require all visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors to have their temperature screened and answer the questionnaire immediately upon arrival. All visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors will be required to wear a face covering prior to entering the building and throughout their time in the building.**
- District/school plan has a written protocol to instruct parents/guardians to observe for signs of illness in their child that require staying home from school. **West Buffalo Charter School will share a list detailing the signs of possible illness with all families prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year. This list will also be included in the Parent-Student Handbook.**
- District/school plan has written protocol and appropriate signage to instruct staff and students in correct hand and respiratory hygiene. **Signage (with visual cues) will be posted throughout the school building (including each restroom) instructing students on correct hand and respiratory hygiene. Faculty and staff will also review the protocol with students throughout the first week of school. Protocols will be revisited/retaught as warranted.**
- District/school plan has written protocol to ensure all persons in school buildings keep social distance of at least 6 feet whenever possible. **West Buffalo Charter School will mark floors in common areas, hallways, and classrooms at 6-foot intervals to allow for appropriate social-distancing. Student desks in Kindergarten through Grade 8 will be placed 6 feet apart to allow for social distancing.**
- District/school plan has written protocol detailing how the district/school will provide accommodations to all students and staff who are at high risk or live with a person at high risk. **West Buffalo Charter School students who are immunocompromised, live with someone who is immunocompromised, or whose family does not feel comfortable returning to face-to-face instruction, an all Remote Learning model will be offered. For staff members who are immunocompromised, live with someone who is immunocompromised, or does not feel comfortable returning to face-to-face instruction, WBCS administration will attempt to provide alternative professional duties for his/her entire scheduled work day.**
- District/school plan has a written protocol requiring all employees, adult visitors, and students to wear a cloth face covering whenever social distancing cannot be maintained. **All West Buffalo Charter School employees, visitors, and students will be required to wear masks at**

all times except during meals. (i.e. upon arrival, in the hallways, during drills. “Mask breaks” will be permitted only during meals and when outdoors when social distancing of 6 feet is maintained. Updated 5/19/21- no change to mask policy

- District/school plan has written protocol regarding students taking mask breaks. **West Buffalo Charter School will ensure that faculty and staff schedule “mask breaks” throughout the school day. Breaks should take place during meals and when outdoors and social distancing is maintained.**
- District/school has a plan for obtaining and maintaining adequate supplies of cloth face coverings for school staff, students who forget their masks, and PPE for use by school health professionals. **West Buffalo Charter School will purchase cloth face coverings, PPE, and cleaning supplies in bulk quantities. Faculty, staff, and students may choose to supply their own face coverings. If not feasible, West Buffalo Charter School will provide a face covering to any employee, student, or visitor prior to entering the school building.**
- District/school plan has written protocol for actions to be taken if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school. **West Buffalo Charter School will contact the Erie County Health Department and will close off areas used by sick persons and not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfection has occurred. The school will wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces that were possibly infected. Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, it will be reopened for use. Students or staff who had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19 may return to school after 10 days of self-quarantining.**
- District/school plan has written protocol that complies with CDC guidance for the return to school of students and staff following illness or diagnosis of confirmed case of COVID-19 or following quarantine due to contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Return to school will be coordinated with the local health department. **If a person at West Buffalo Charter School is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider they will be excused from school and be required to self-quarantine at home for 10 days after exposure.**
- District/school plan has written protocol to clean and disinfect schools following CDC guidance. **West Buffalo Charter School will clean and disinfect high touch surfaces frequently throughout the day. Training of the cleaning staff will take place prior to the start of the school year and a log will be kept and reviewed by the facilities manager.**
- District/school plan has written protocol to conduct required school safety drills with modifications ensuring social distancing between persons. **West Buffalo Charter School will**

conduct all required drills on a staggered schedule where classrooms evacuate separately rather than all at once, and appropriate distance is kept between students to the evacuation site.

- District/school has a written plan for district/school run before and aftercare programs. **West Buffalo Charter School will not run any before or after school programs, activities, or sports unless recommendations become relaxed and allow for such activities to take place.**
- District/school must designate a COVID-19 safety coordinator (administrator) whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or "new normal" levels. **West Buffalo Charter School has delegated the School Leader, Andrea Todoro, as the COVID-19 safety coordinator.**

Health Checks

West Buffalo Charter School parents/guardians and staff members will be provided resources to educate them regarding the careful observation of symptoms of COVID-19 and health screenings that must be conducted each morning before coming to school. Parents/guardians and school staff will be instructed that any student or staff member with a fever of 100°F or greater and/or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection should not be present in school. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) keep an up to date list of symptoms of Coronavirus on its website. This list is not all inclusive as some individuals may display other symptoms or none at all. As of 7/13/2020, the following are listed as the most common symptoms of COVID-19:

- Fever or chills (100°F or greater);
- Cough;
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing;
- Fatigue;
- Muscle or body aches;
- Headache;
- New loss of taste or smell;
- Sore throat;
- Congestion or runny nose;
- Nausea or vomiting; and/or
- Diarrhea.

West Buffalo Charter School staff will be educated on how to best observe students or other staff members for signs of any type of illness such as:

- Flushed cheeks;
- Rapid or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity);
- Fatigue, and/or irritability; and
- Frequent use of the bathroom.

Students and staff exhibiting these signs with no other explanation for them will be escorted to the Health Office for an assessment by the school nurse. If a school nurse is not available, the school will contact the parent/guardian to come pick up their ill child or send the staff member home. Health screenings including daily temperature checks and completion of a screening questionnaire are required for staff, contractors, vendors, and visitors. Students are required to have a daily temperature check and completion of a screening questionnaire. Anyone who has a temperature of 100°F or greater or has a positive response on the screening questionnaire must be isolated from others in the designated isolation area and sent home immediately. Students will be supervised in an isolation area while awaiting transport home. The school nurse will refer such persons to a healthcare provider and provide resources on COVID-19 testing. Students and staff are required to notify the school when they develop symptoms or if their answers to the questionnaire change during or outside school hours.

A screening questionnaire determines whether the individual has:

- knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19;
- tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
- has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F in the past 14 days: and/or
- has traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.

Per NYSDOH, West Buffalo Charter School is prohibited from keeping records of student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data (e.g., the specific temperature data of an individual), but is permitted to maintain records that confirm individuals were screened and the result of such screening (e.g., pass/fail, cleared/not cleared). These results will be recorded in an application being purchased by West Buffalo Charter School. Procedures which require the parent/guardian to report the results of such screening rely on the parent/guardian to complete the report. If the parent/guardian symptom screen evaluation is done at home West Buffalo Charter School will:

- Ensure all students are treated equally; and
- Ensure students whose parent/guardian did not complete the screening are not singled out.

Students who may require screening to be completed at school will be treated in a confidential manner and will have the screening completed as quickly as possible before entering the building.

West Buffalo Charter School will have a designated staff person to review the incoming reports of screening by staff and parent/guardians and attesting that they are completed. This person will also be the contact for staff and/or students to inform if they later experience COVID-19 symptoms.

Health Screenings

Temperature

Prior to entering the school building (whether via bus or drop-off) any students who did not have a temperature screening at home will be screened by a staff member before entering the building. If an individual's temperature is 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more, they will not be able to proceed to the classroom. The individual will be escorted to the Health Office and will be required to be picked up by a parent/guardian/other. Therefore, West Buffalo Charter School will check temperatures of all students prior to entering the school building. While conducting temperature screenings West Buffalo Charter School will have:

- Staff members to supervise students who are waiting their turn. While waiting, students will be socially distanced;
- Trained staff members to perform temperature screenings;
- Sufficient supplies for taking temperatures such as temporal thermometers;
- PPE or barriers for staff members conducting the screening.

Conducting Screenings

- Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be used when within 6 feet of a child.
- Upon arrival, the individual will wash his/her hands and put on a facemask, eye protection (goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face), and a single pair of disposable gloves. A gown will be worn if extensive contact with a child is occurring;
- Take the child's temperature and clear him/her with a documented pass/fail.
- If the student passes they will be sent to class. If they fail they will be escorted to the nurse's office for further examination.
- Temporal or infrared thermometers will be used.
- Thermometers will be cleaned with an alcohol wipe (or isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab) between each screening. The school will reuse the same wipe if it remains wet;

- After each test, staff will use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol or wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Healthy Hygiene Practices

Healthy hygiene practices will be taught and re-taught (as warranted) in school settings for both students and staff. West Buffalo Charter School will post signs throughout the school and will regularly share messages with the school community. Signage will be used to remind individuals to:

- Stay home if they feel sick.
- Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others or in accordance with any stricter policy implemented by the school.
- Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
- Adhere to social distancing instructions.
- Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19.
- Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
- Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

Teaching healthy hygiene practices will be taught in person, by videos, announcements, and posters or signs. West Buffalo Charter School will post signage in highly visible areas such as:

- Entrances
- Restrooms
- Cafeteria
- Classrooms
- Administrative offices
- Gymnasium
- Janitorial staff areas

Hand Hygiene

West Buffalo Charter School will schedule time in the school day to allow for hand hygiene.

Hand hygiene includes:

- Traditional hand washing (with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds), which is the preferred method;
- Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater) when soap and water are not available, and hands are not visibly dirty.
- Provide hand sanitizer throughout common areas (e.g. entrances, cafeteria), near high touch surfaces, and use touch free dispensers when able;
- Signage will be placed near hand sanitizer indicating visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; and

- Students or staff who are unable to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers for health reasons will be permitted to wash their hands with soap and water.

West Buffalo Charter School will provide the following:

- Adequate facilities and supplies for hand washing including soap and water;
- Paper towels or touch free paper towel dispensers where feasible (hand dryers are not recommended as they can aerosolize germs);
- No-touch/no lid/foot pedal trash cans will be used;
- Alcohol based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol or disinfectant hand wipes;
- Time in the schedule to allow for frequent hand washing; and
- Promotion of proper hand washing before meals, after recess or physical education, before and after removing PPE, and other times, as appropriate.

At a minimum, students and staff will wash or sanitize hands, as follows:

- Upon entering the building and each classroom;
- After using shared objects or surfaces (e.g. electronic devices, musical instruments, writing utensils, tools, toys, desks or table tops);
- Before and after snacks and lunch;
- After using the bathroom;
- After helping a student with toileting;
- After sneezing, wiping or blowing nose, or coughing into hands;
- Upon coming in from outdoors; and
- Anytime hands are visibly soiled.

Respiratory Hygiene

Signage, processes and procedures for respiratory hygiene are included in West Buffalo Charter School's reopening plan. A supply of tissues and no touch/no lid/floor pedal trash cans will be available in each room. If no tissue is available, using the inside of the elbow (or shirtsleeve) to cover the mouth or nose is preferable to using the hands. Staff and students will perform hand hygiene after sneezing, coughing and handling dirty tissues or other soiled material.

Social Distancing

West Buffalo Charter School will develop, implement, and enforce social distancing in all school facilities and on school grounds, including transportation (if applicable).

West Buffalo Charter School will ensure that student groupings are as static as possible by having the same group/cohort of students stay together. Additionally, West Buffalo Charter School will:

- Stagger arrival and/or dismissal times to allow increased social distancing on buses as well as in classrooms;
- Follow all safety requirements when considering the use of other entrances and ensure that all entrances are monitored and are locked after use;
- Make arrival schedule changes for students who walk or are dropped off at school by a parent or caregiver;
- Establish designated areas for student drop-off and pick-up, limiting contact and entry of parents/ guardians into the building, to the greatest extent possible;
- Reduce in-school movement where possible by keeping students within a defined area or classroom and modifying class schedules or class transitions using these recommendations
- If possible, have the same cohort of students with the same teacher each day;
- Special area teachers (e.g., music, art, physical education) will go to individual classrooms versus rotating all students through a shared space that is not able to be cleaned with each new use. Whenever possible, physical education and music classes will be held outside and students will be spread out;
- Stagger the use of restrooms, allowing use at other times when necessary. Bathrooms may be monitored by staff to ensure social distancing, that it is clean, and students are washing hands after use;
- Turn desks (including teachers) to face in the same direction rather than facing each other to reduce transmission caused by virus-containing droplets (e.g., from talking, coughing, sneezing);
- Keep individual student belongings separated. Limit use of shared supplies to one group of students, clean between use by cohorts of students;
- Use the classrooms for eating breakfast and lunch;
- Restrict the use of classrooms and other places where students, faculty, and staff gather (e.g., lockers, cubbies, entryways, hallways), so that individuals can be socially distanced.
- Limit gathering in small spaces (e.g., elevators, faculty offices) to no more than one individual at a time, unless all individuals in such space are wearing acceptable face coverings;
- Playgrounds will continue to be used when proper safeguards are in place. Limit other activities where multiple groups interact. Wash hands before and after touching play structures and keep 6 feet of space from other children as much as possible.
- Ensure that a distance of twelve feet in all directions is maintained between individuals while participating in activities requires projecting the voice (e.g., singing), playing a wind instrument, or aerobic activity.
- Cancel student assemblies, athletic events/practices, performances, school-wide parent meetings, and;

- Limit visitors to the school building.

Medically Vulnerable/High-Risk Groups

Students who have family members who are in high risk groups will need to attend school remotely. West Buffalo Charter School will make accommodations and be able to accommodate the needs of these students in the school community. Persons in these groups will be encouraged to consult with their healthcare provider regarding prevention:

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

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

- Planning and coordination of:
 - school health services personnel
 - special education personnel
 - pupil personnel services and
 - administration.
- Being aware that such families are already under significant stress and COVID-19 has made their situations more critical.

Alternate plans will be created in consultation with school health personnel on how to meet the needs of the child while keeping social distancing may include:

- Additional PPE for staff caring for such students;
- Assigning only one staff member to care for the student; and/or
- Decreased students in a classroom, alternating schedules, and provision of related services to an individual instead of group setting.

Finally, if the parents/guardians choose not to send their child back to school, West Buffalo Charter School will provide instruction remotely. Please see the section on Special Education for more details.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The CDC recommends that school-based health personnel use **Healthcare Facilities: Managing Operations During COVID19 Pandemic** Updated June 29, 2020 guidance when providing care to ill persons as part of infection control protocols:

- Licensed healthcare professionals will utilize standard precautions at all times;
- Transmission- based precautions will be used when assessing persons suspected of having COVID-19;
- West Buffalo Charter School will ensure they have adequate supplies of PPE for use by school health professionals to assess and care for ill students and staff members;
- Such PPE includes, but is not limited to:
 - face masks (disposable surgical masks)
 - respirators (N95) masks that are fit tested
 - eye protection or face shields
 - gloves
 - disposable gowns.

For optimal protection, when worn, the face shield must be used with a face mask and:

- Extend below the chin anteriorly;
- To the ears laterally;
- There should be no exposed gap between the forehead and the shield's headpiece;
- Only be worn one person per shield;
- Be cleaned between use; and
- The wearer should wash their hands after removing the shield and before putting it on.

Aerosol Generating Procedures

West Buffalo Charter School will use PPE when administering AGPs.

PPE consists of:

- Gloves;
- N95 or surgical facemask;
- In lieu of N95 - a surgical mask with face shield;
- Eye protection; and
- A gown (if necessary).

PPE will be used when:

- Suctioning;
- Administering nebulizer treatments; or

- Using peak flow meters with students who have respiratory conditions.

Treatments such as nebulized medication treatments and oral or tracheostomy suctioning will be conducted in a room separate from others with nursing personnel wearing appropriate PPE. For nebulizer treatments, if developmentally appropriate, the nurse will leave the room and return when the nebulizer treatment is finished. Cleaning of the room will occur between use and cleaning of the equipment will be done following manufacturer's instructions after each use. Respiratory medications utilizing metered dose inhalers (MDI) with a spacer or valved holding chamber will be used over nebulizer treatments whenever possible. Nebulizer treatments at school will be reserved for children who cannot use an MDI (with or without spacer or valved holding chamber).

Cloth Face Coverings

All individuals including staff, students, and visitors in the school facilities and on school grounds will be prepared to put on a face covering to enter the building. All students and staff members will wear cloth face coverings at all times except when eating. Updated 5/19/21- no change in policy.

West Buffalo Charter School will provide acceptable face coverings to employees (and students if they forget their own) and have an adequate supply in case of need for replacement per Executive Order 202.16. West Buffalo Charter School will allow an employee to wear their own acceptable face covering, but will not require they supply their own face coverings. Employees with healthcare provider documentation stating they are not medically able to tolerate face covering will not be required to do so.

Face coverings will not be placed on:

- Children younger than 2 years old;
- Students where such covering would impair their health or mental health, or where such covering would present a challenge, distraction, or obstruction to education services and instruction;
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious; or
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

West Buffalo Charter School will instruct students, parents/guardians and staff, contractors and vendors on:

- The proper way to wear face coverings;
- Washing hands before putting on and after removing their face covering;
- Proper way to discard disposable face coverings;

- The importance of routine cleaning of reusable face coverings; and
- Reminding others that face coverings are for individual use only and should not be shared.

Students and staff will use alternate PPE (i.e., face coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth) for instruction or interventions that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouths (e.g., speech therapy). These alternate coverings may also be used for certain students (e.g., hearing impaired) who benefit from being able to see more of the face of the staff member.

Management of Ill Persons

Students and staff with symptoms of illness will be escorted to the health office. The school nurse (Registered Professional Nurse, RN) will be available to assess individuals as chronic conditions such as asthma and allergies or chronic gastrointestinal conditions may present the same symptoms as COVID-19 but are neither contagious nor pose a public health threat.

If the school nurse is not available, West Buffalo Charter School will isolate and dismiss any student or staff member who has a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19 that are not explained by a chronic health condition for follow up with a health care provider. Administrators will work collaboratively with the school nurse to determine if additional staff is needed to assist with non-nursing tasks such as:

- Student supervision;
- Telephone calls, text, or emails to parent/guardians; and
- Assistance with completing any required paperwork other than nursing documentation.

If Students or Staff become Ill with Symptoms of COVID-19 at School

West Buffalo Charter School will follow Education Law § 906, which provides [w]henver...a student in the public schools shows symptoms of any communicable or infectious disease reportable under the public health law that imposes a significant risk of infection of others in the school, he or she shall be excluded from the school and sent home immediately, in a safe and proper conveyance. The school nurse or designee will immediately notify the Erie County Department of Health of any disease reportable under the public health law⁷. The school nurse or other health professional(s) acting upon direction or referral of the nurse, will make such evaluations of teachers and any other school employees, the school building and premises as, in our discretion, we may deem necessary to protect the health of the students and staff.

School staff will immediately report any illness of students or staff to the school nurse or other designated school staff. Such reports will be made in compliance with FERPA, and Education Law 2-d. Staff members should contact the school nurse or designee prior to sending an ill student to the health office. If the nurse chooses to go to classrooms to make assessments of

students, this also will be done in a manner that protects the student's confidentiality. If there are several students waiting to see the school nurse, arrangements will be made to have students wait at least 6 feet apart.

West Buffalo Charter School will have two rooms for school health personnel - one room for healthy students who have injuries or need their medications or nursing treatment, and another room for assessing and caring for ill students and staff. Both rooms will have a supervising adult present and will have easy access to a bathroom and sink with hand hygiene supplies. The school nurse and other school health professional(s) assessing or providing care to ill students and staff will follow transmission-based precautions which includes the use of appropriate PPE (see section on PPE).

Students suspected of having COVID-19 awaiting transport home by the parent/guardian will be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult present utilizing appropriate PPE. Multiple students suspected of COVID-19 may be in this isolation room if they can be separated by at least 6 feet. If a separate room is not available, we will keep at least a 6-foot distance between ill students and other persons.

- Symptomatic students or staff members must follow CDC's Stay Home When You Are Sick guidance unless otherwise directed by a healthcare provider or the local department of health. If the student or staff member has emergency warning signs such as trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to arouse, bluish lips or face, we will call 911 and notify the operator that the person may have COVID-19;
- School staff will be aware of the symptoms of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) associated with COVID-19 which is a serious condition associated with COVID-19 in children and youth. West Buffalo Charter School will notify the parent/guardian if their child shows any of the following symptoms and recommend the child be referred for immediate follow up with a healthcare provider:
 - fever
 - abdominal pain
 - vomiting
 - diarrhea
 - neck pain
 - rash
 - bloodshot eyes
 - feeling extra tired

- West Buffalo Charter School will call for emergency transport (911) following school policies, for any student showing any of these emergency warning signs of MIS-C or other concerning signs:
 - trouble breathing
 - pain or pressure in the chest that does not go away
 - new confusion
 - inability to wake or stay awake
 - bluish lips or face
 - severe abdominal pain
- If a student or staff member reports having tested positive for COVID-19, the school administrators will notify the Erie County Health Department to determine what steps are needed for the school community. All protocols set forth by the CDC and DOH for closure, cleaning, and sanitizing of the area occupied by the individual will be followed.

Return to School after Illness

West Buffalo Charter School will follow CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school:

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they will be excused from school and required to stay at home in self-quarantine for 10 days. Individuals may return to school after the 10 day quarantine period if:

- It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without the use of fever reducing medicine); and
- It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

A student diagnosed with COVID-19 may return to physical activity with a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to physical activity (PE class, sports).

Contact Tracing

West Buffalo Charter School will cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing. West Buffalo Charter School will assist public health departments in knowing who may have had contact at school with a confirmed case by:

- keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members;
- ensuring student schedules are up to date;
- keeping a log of any visitors which includes date, time and where in the school they visited; and
- Assist local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual at school in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Questions will be directed to the local health department.

Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. West Buffalo Charter School staff will not try to determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the local department of health.

School Closures

West Buffalo Charter School will collaborate with the Erie County Health Department to determine the parameters, conditions or metrics (e.g., increased absenteeism or increased illness in the school community) that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.

Cleaning and Disinfection

West Buffalo Charter School cleaning will include classrooms, restrooms, cafeterias, common spaces, and playgrounds.

- Normal routine cleaning with soap and water will decrease how much of the virus is on surfaces and objects, which reduces the risk of exposure;
- Disinfection using US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved disinfectants against COVID-19. Where disinfectants are used, products will be registered with EPA and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people is important;
- When EPA-approved disinfectants are not available, alternative disinfectants will be used (e.g., 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water or 70% alcohol solutions). The school will not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together. This can cause fumes that may be extremely dangerous to breathe in. the school will keep all disinfectants out of the reach of children;
- West Buffalo Charter School will identify cleaning and disinfection frequency for each facility and area type; and
- West Buffalo Charter School will maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection of each area.

Cleaning plans will include considerations regarding the safety of custodial staff and other people who are carrying out the cleaning or disinfection. In order to disinfect areas frequently, additional staff will be trained.

High touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected frequently throughout the day. Examples of high touch surfaces include:

- Tables;
- Doorknobs;
- Light switches;
- Countertops;
- Handles;
- Desks;
- Phones;
- Keyboards and tablets;
- Toilets and restrooms; and
- Faucets and sinks.

Students will not be present when disinfectants are in use and should not participate in cleaning and/or disinfection activities.

- West Buffalo Charter School will establish a schedule for cleaning and/or changing heating/air conditioning system filters. Classes will be encouraged to get fresh air outside at least once a day.
- West Buffalo Charter School will follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection of electronic devices such as laptops, iPads or Chromebooks, keyboards and computer mice, etc., between use. If the manufacturer's guidance is unavailable, the school will consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or spray having at least 70% alcohol per CDC Guidance. The school will dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid the pooling of liquids;
- Shared wind musical instruments will be cleaned between use per the manufacturer's directions;
- Playgrounds will be cleaned per CDC guidance:
 - outdoor areas, like the playground will require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection
 - disinfectant will not be sprayed on the playground- it is not an efficient use of supplies and is not proven to reduce risk of COVID-19 to the public
 - high touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars and railings will be cleaned routinely
 - cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces (play structures, benches, tables) or groundcovers (mulch, sand) is not recommended
- Sidewalks and roads will not be disinfected.

- Shared athletic/gym equipment (e.g., balls, protective gear) will be cleaned between use per manufacturer’s directions.

School Health Office Cleaning

School health office cleaning will occur after each use of:

- Cots;
- Bathroom; and
- Health office equipment (e.g. blood pressure cuffs, otoscopes, stethoscopes, etc.) will be cleaned following manufacturer’s directions.

Disposable items will be used as much as possible including:

- Disposable pillow protectors; or
- Disposable thermometers, or disposable thermometer sheaths or probes, and disposable otoscope specula.

Safety Drills

Education Law § 807 requires that West Buffalo Charter School conducts 8 evacuation and 4 lockdown drills each school year. Regardless of the modification used when conducting a drill, students will be instructed that if it was an actual emergency that required evacuation or lockdown, the most imminent concern is to get to safety; maintaining social distancing in an actual emergency that requires evacuation or lockdown may not be possible and will not be the first priority.

Modifications to evacuation drill protocols will include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting drills on a “staggered” schedule, where classrooms evacuate separately rather than all at once, and appropriate distance is kept between students to the evacuation site. Staggering by classrooms, minimizes contact of students in hallways, stairwells, and at the evacuation site. If conducting drills using a modified procedure, the drill will be conducted with all students in the school building on that school day.
- If West Buffalo Charter School re-opens with a “hybrid” in-person model, such as one where students attend school alternate school weeks to reduce the occupancy of the school building, West Buffalo Charter School will be certain that all students are receiving instruction in emergency procedures, and participating in drills while they are in attendance in-person.

Modifications to Lockdown Drills may include, but are not limited to:

- Conduct lockdown drill in classroom setting while maintaining social distancing and using masks;
- Conducting lockdown drills on a “staggered” schedule with smaller numbers of students present to maintain social distancing, however we will be certain that all students are

receiving instruction in emergency procedures and participating in drills while they are in attendance in-person; and

- Conduct lockdown drills in classrooms without “hiding”/ “sheltering” but providing an overview of how to shelter or hide in the classroom.

FACILITIES

Reopening Mandatory Requirements

General Health and Safety Assurances

West Buffalo Charter School will follow all CDC, DoH, and SED guidance related to health and safety. This will include meeting social distancing requirements and cleaning frequently touched spaces regularly to prevent spread of infection.

Doorways

Many stairs and corridor doors have closers with automatic hold openings. These doors are normally held in the open position and are automatically released by the fire alarm system. The function, position, and operation of those doors will remain unchanged. Fortunately, they need not be touched during normal use.

Emergency Drills

West Buffalo Charter School shall conduct standard operations and procedures to the best of their abilities without deviating from current requirements. Fire (evacuation) Drills and Lockdown Drills are required by Education Law and regulation and the Fire Code and they will be conducted without exceptions. Fire Code Section 404 requires that the school maintains Fire Safety, Evacuation, and Lockdown Plans and these plans include how lockdown and evacuation drills are conducted. Methods to promote and provide for social distancing during the evacuation drills are ultimately West Buffalo Charter School’s decision and responsibility. Those changes will be included in the Fire Safety plans.

Plumbing Facilities and Fixtures

Toilet and Sink Fixtures

West Buffalo Charter School will consider reducing the number of toilet fixtures in a building in order to facilitate frequent cleaning. However, the minimum number of toilet fixtures that must be available for use in a building is established in the building code. The usual minimum requirement may be reduced by certain circumstances that may be relevant: (1) the building’s aggregate number of toilet fixtures already exceeds the minimum amount required by the Building Code or (2) the building occupancy is reduced using partial remote learning or reductions.

Reminder: frequent handwashing is a key component to avoiding the spread of COVID-19, so sinks and soap will be available to building occupants at all times.

Drinking Water Facilities:

West Buffalo Charter School may wish to reduce the number of drinking fountains available, in order to facilitate frequent cleaning. However, drinking fountains are a code required plumbing fixture. One fountain is required for each one hundred occupants.

In the event drinking fountains need to be taken out of service, the following will be considered to provide potable drinking water to all occupants of the building:

- Supplying students with bottled drinking water or water in disposable cups at specified locations is an acceptable alternative source.
- West Buffalo Charter School may provide students with personal water bottles to fill at home prior to the start of the school day if they do not have one already.

Ventilation

Ventilation Mandatory Requirements

- Maintain adequate, code required ventilation (natural or mechanical) as designed.

New Technology

Any new technologies will be proven safe by independent and impartial studies by a nationally recognized governing body, and the equipment will be listed/labeled for the intended use by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory.

CHILD NUTRITION

West Buffalo Charter School will work with Buffalo Public School Food Service to provide all students with access to school meals each school day. This includes:

- students in attendance at school; and
- students learning remotely.
- District/School Plan must address all applicable health and safety guidelines. **West Buffalo Charter School will work with Buffalo Public Schools to fully accommodate families per CDC, DoH, and SED health and safety guidelines.**
- District/School Plan must include measures to protect students with food allergies if providing meals in spaces outside the cafeteria. **West Buffalo Charter School will work with the school nurse to provide a separate location to eat for students with food allergies.**
- District/School Plan must include protocols and procedures for how students will perform hand hygiene before and after eating, how appropriate hand hygiene will be promoted, and how sharing of food and beverages will be discouraged. **West Buffalo Charter School will train the staff and students on proper hand washing**

techniques. Hand washing signage will be posted throughout the building. In addition, scheduled hand washing times are built into the daily schedule before/after meals.

- District/School Plan must include protocols and procedures that require cleaning and disinfection prior to the next group of students arriving for meals, if served in the same common area. **West Buffalo Charter School students will be eating both breakfast and lunch in their assigned classrooms. The school will also provide training for cleaners as well as a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting areas after eating.**
- District/School Plan must ensure compliance with Child Nutrition Program requirements. **West Buffalo Charter School will follow all requirements under the Child Nutrition Program.**
- District/School Plan must include protocols that describe communication with families through multiple means in the languages spoken by families. **West Buffalo Charter School will provide information for all families in multiple languages when able.**

Safety and Sanitation

(Buffalo Public Schools Food Service)

- Update standard operating procedures for sanitation of school kitchens, cafeterias, food warehouses, and central production kitchens;
- Identify any additional equipment or supplies such as thermometers, alcohol wipes or other equipment that may be needed to keep food, students, and staff safe;
- Install barriers at the point of pickup;
- Have adequate supplies of face masks, soap, hand sanitizer, and tissues in food service areas;
- Routinely clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces including tables, chairs, and carts used in transportation;
- Use timers for cleaning reminders;
- Wear single-use gloves when handling or delivering all foods;
- Wear a disposable apron when handling or delivering foods;
- Allow only program staff, custodial staff, and approved volunteers to enter program areas.

Food Service Staff

(Buffalo Public Schools Food Service)

- Evaluate staffing and make any needed adjustments;
- Ensure staff are trained on district policies and protocols on health and safety;
- Review, and retrain staff as needed on standard operating procedures for food service;

Contact Vendors and Suppliers

(Buffalo Public Schools Food Service)

- The unexpected closures may have impacted food supply chains or availability of certain services and it will be important to account for any of these changes prior to the start of operations;
- Work with food service vendors to determine the safest way to handle deliveries;
- Have supplies on hand for in person and grab and go meal delivery.

Meal Service

- Revise district, charter, and site food safety plans to include standard operating procedures for meal service in classroom, additional meal service procedures in the cafeteria, social distancing and PPE during meal prep and delivery, and receiving and storage;
- Ensure meals meet meal pattern requirements;
- Production records must be completed for each meal;
- Develop meal counting procedures for meals served outside of the cafeteria. Procedures will depend on eligibility determinations – CEP, Provision 2, or Free/Reduced/Paid status;
- Documented requests for children with special dietary needs (e.g., food allergies) must be accommodated;

Meals Consumed Onsite

- Assess where meals will be served (classroom, cafeteria, other);
- Remove or suspend the use of share tables, salad bars and other self-service refrigerators and buffets for food and condiments;
- Discourage food sharing between students;
- Coordinate with custodians to establish sanitation procedures;
- Clean and disinfect tables, chairs and other frequently touched hard surfaces between groups of students;
- Provide physical distancing guides in food service areas such as:
 - tape on floors
 - signage
 - increase table spacing, remove tables, mark tables as closed, or provide a physical barrier between tables
- Plan for one class at a time to go through the cafeteria line and return to the classroom if meals will be eaten in the classroom;
- Use pre-portioned condiments that cashiers & servers place on each tray;
- Place meals on a counter or tray line for quick pick up;

- Coordinate with school personnel in order to meet the feeding safety needs of students with disabilities;
- When students eat in classrooms:
 - train teachers on food allergies, including symptoms of allergic reactions to food
 - train all non-food service staff on any meal service-related activities they will be responsible for
 - obtain or develop posters or other aids to assist non-food service staff to implement meal service.

Meals Consumed Offsite

- Assess service methods (grab and go, curb-side pick-up, delivery, etc.);
- Determine if there are students who are unable to access school meal distribution sites and identify ways to address these gaps;
- Bulk meals packaged in boxes or containers for multiple days of meals picked up/delivered at one time;
- In hybrid situations, where students are attending in person and remotely, create an area with cones or signs where families can easily pull in to receive foods away from where students will be entering;
- Place meals for curb-side pick-up on a table or place in the trunk of the vehicle.

TRANSPORTATION

West Buffalo Charter School relies on Buffalo Public Schools to provide transportation to/from the school. All policies relative to transportation will be addressed by Buffalo Public Schools.

School District Policies/Practices

Reopening Mandatory Requirements

School districts and other applicable schools are expected to fulfill existing mandates regarding the safe and effective transportation of students who are homeless (McKinney-Vento), in foster care, have disabilities and attend non-public schools and charter schools.

School Bus Mandatory Requirements

Assurances of the following will be required:

- Students who are able will be required to wear masks and social distance on the bus;
- All buses (conforming and non-conforming to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Standards, as well as type A, C or D) which are used every day by districts and contract carriers must be cleaned/ disinfected once a day. High contact spots must be wiped down after

the am and pm run depending upon the disinfection schedule. (For example, some buses might be cleaned between the am and pm runs while other buses may be cleaned/disinfected after the pm run);

- School buses shall not be equipped with hand sanitizer due to its combustible composition and potential liability to the carrier or district. School bus drivers, monitors and attendants must not carry personal bottles of hand sanitizer with them on school buses;
- Wheelchair school buses must configure wheelchair placement to ensure social distancing of 6 feet.

School Bus Staff Mandatory Requirements

- School bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics shall perform a self-health assessment for symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving to work. If personnel are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19 they should notify their employer and seek medical attention;
- School bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics must wear a face covering along with an optional face shield;
- Transportation staff (drivers, monitors, attendants, mechanics and cleaners) will be trained and provided periodic refreshers on the proper use of personal protective equipment and the signs and symptoms of COVID-19;
- Transportation departments/carriers will need to provide Personal Protective Equipment such as masks and gloves for drivers, monitors and attendants in buses as well as hand sanitizer for all staff in their transportation locations such as dispatch offices, employee lunch/break rooms and/or bus garages.
- Drivers, monitors and attendants who must have direct physical contact with a child must wear gloves.

Students on Transportation Mandatory Requirements

- All parents/guardians will be required to ensure their child/children are not experiencing any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and do not have a fever of 100 degrees or more prior to them boarding their method of transportation to school;
- Students must wear a mask on a school bus if they are physically able. Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering, including students where such covering would impair their physical health or mental health are not subject to the required use of a face covering;
- Students must social distance (6 feet separation) on the bus;
- Students who do not have a mask can NOT be denied transportation;
- Students who do not have masks must be provide one by the district;

- Students with a disability which would prevent them from wearing a mask will not be forced to do so or denied transportation.

Pupil Transportation Routing Mandatory Requirements

- If the school district is in session remotely or otherwise, pupil transportation must be provided to nonpublic, parochial, private, charter schools or students whose Individualized Education Plans have placed them out of district whose schools are meeting in in-person sessions when/ if the district is not;
- All students are entitled to transportation by the district to the extent required by law. Transportation departments do not have the ability or the right to deny transportation for children who are in foster care, homeless or attend private or charter schools.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Reopening Plan Mandatory Requirements

- Ensure that a district-wide and building-level comprehensive developmental school counseling program plan, developed under the direction of certified school counselor(s), is reviewed and updated to meet current needs. **West Buffalo Charter School is committed to providing a welcoming, supportive, inclusive, and equitable environment for the students, families, community, faculty and staff. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) will be provided to students, their families, and staff to support the well-being and general success of the West Buffalo Charter School community. Social and emotional well-being will be prioritized during the transition back to school for as long as necessary to appropriately support student needs.**
- Establish an advisory council, shared decision-making, school climate team, or other collaborative working group comprised of families, students, members of the board of education, school building and/or district/charter leaders, community-based service providers, teachers, certified school counselors, and other pupil personnel service providers including school social workers and/or school psychologists to inform the comprehensive developmental school counseling program plan. **West Buffalo Charter School will utilize the Social-Emotional Learning Team as the advisory council to assist in the development of the school counseling program plan. This team will consist of teachers, students, parents, administration, the social worker, and community partner BestSelf Behavioral Health to ensure that all stakeholders are represented. The team will meet regularly to discuss current needs/trends and develop plans to support the WBCS community.**
- Address how the school/district will provide resources and referrals to address mental health, behavioral, and emotional support services and programs. **West Buffalo**

Charter School will utilize the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and the Student Support Team (SST) to identify and monitor students (and families) who need additional resources and support. Additionally, students, their families, faculty and staff will receive periodic surveys that will inform WBCS as to additional resources or supports that are necessary. Specific interventions and supports will be highlighted in the WBCS MTSS Plan.

- **Address professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on how to talk with and support students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, as well as provide supports for developing coping and resilience skills for students, faculty, and staff. WBCS already utilizes the Second Step curriculum to support student Social-Emotional Competencies. Additional CDC-compliant Restorative Circles/Community Circles will be implemented by the teachers on a daily basis. Faculty and Staff will receive training on how to embed these principles into their daily schedule and how to best support students in their classes. Professional Development for faculty and staff will also be focused on resiliency, trauma-informed best practices, and self-care.**

Mental Health and Trauma-Responsive Practices

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma can have a negative impact on young people's social emotional well-being, and consequently, their capacity to learn.

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

- **West Buffalo Charter School understands and prioritizes the need to support the mental health and well-being of the WBCS community. Trauma-informed practices will be embedded throughout the day by faculty and staff. Teachers will facilitate Restorative Justice practices through the implementation of CDC-compliant classroom community circles. Teachers will use these circles to develop and strengthen community-building within the class and increase students' understanding of current events and anti-racism practices. Circles will also be used to determine restorative responses to disruptive behavior as a classroom community.**

Staff will receive training on a variety of Social-Emotional Competencies and trauma-informed care. The Student Support Team will consider the root cause of the behavior in order to develop a plan in the MTSS. This will allow the school to monitor interventions and provide support for the students that address individual needs.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

MTSS is an evidence-based approach to comprehensive program delivery that addresses academic and behavioral challenges including proactive activities for all students (universal interventions), targeted activities for students identified at-risk (secondary interventions) and intensive activities for students identified at high risk (tertiary interventions). MTSS is grounded in the belief that all students can learn, and all school professionals must be responsive to the academic and behavioral needs of all students. **West Buffalo Charter School's Student Support Team will implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for WBCS students. This comprehensive system of support addresses academic and behavioral/social emotional concerns or deficits. Faculty and staff will use evidence-based practices to provide an effective, responsive approach to address the academic and behavioral needs of all students by providing them with the level and type of support necessary to be successful in order to thrive. Components of the MTSS model followed by West Buffalo Charter School will include:**

- **Universal screening for all students 3 times per school year**
- **Increasing levels of targeted support for students who are struggling (Academic or Social-Emotional)**
- **Use of evidence-based strategies and interventions**
- **A school-wide approach to student support through a team grouping meeting including a team of individuals**
- **School-wide approach to Professional Development so staff can deliver research-based interventions and monitor progress effectively**
- **Communication with families so that they can be involved and understand interventions and supports provided**
- **Frequent monitoring of student's progress so data can be used to guide next steps**

Tier	Components/Interventions	Progress Monitoring Tool
Tier 1	Universal interventions for all students and proactive approaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Win-Win Classroom to build strong relationships and sense of safe community ● SEL classes built into schedule ● CDC-compliant Community Circles implemented by teacher ● Imbedded SEL topics and open discussions in EL curriculum 	Classroom observations
Tier 2	Targeted interventions for students identified	Check in and out via Flip Grid

	<p><i>at-risk:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pre-recorded or live lessons/virtual resources to completed on Friday student work days ● Virtual small group intervention with students based on area of concern ● Progress monitoring of interventions ● Restorative circles/conferences 	<p>or student Google Survey Scheduled documentation via FastBridge</p>
Tier 3	<p>Intense activities for students identified at <i>high risk:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting with Social Worker on a regular basis ● Referral to outside supports and services as necessary ● Progress monitoring of interventions ● Adult contact within the building to have additional connection with frequent check-ins 	<p>Check in and out virtually or in person daily with adult of contact Scheduled documentation via FastBridge</p>

Pupil Personnel Services (PPS)

Roles within MTSS Pupil personnel service (PPS) staff, which include school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, mental health counselors and school nurses are uniquely poised to be the primary source of expertise upon which the entire school community can draw. These professionals have overlapping skills, such as counseling, assessment, consulting, collaboration, parent/school liaison, professional development for faculty and staff, and crisis response. They share in facilitating social emotional and physical well-being, strengthening family, school, and community partnerships, increasing access to instruction and promoting a positive school climate. **Pupil Personnel Service (PPS) roles are established to ensure the well-being of all students at WBCS. This team will consist of individuals who have expertise in various areas within the school community. The specific skill set of each member of the team will help to facilitate social-emotional and physical well-being, strengthen family, school and community partnerships, ultimately increasing access to instruction and promoting a positive school climate. Members of this team will meet to determine the area of need/support for students during the MTSS grouping and review meetings.**

	SEL Programming	Mental Health Support	Behavioral Supports & Interventions	Restorative Practices	Academic Supports and Interventions
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Tier 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Individual Instruction in SEL competencies strategies and skills ▮ Practice and coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Crisis Intervention ▮ Individual counseling / support plan ▮ Family collaborations ▮ Referral to services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Wraparound services ▮ Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIPs) ▮ Faculty/staff mentor ▮ Academic and/or behavioral coach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Family conferences / Collaborations ▮ Formal Restorative Conference(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Intensive instruction (1-2 students) ▮ Differentiation of material ▮ Small Group
Tier 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Targeted explicit instruction in SEL competencies, strategies and skills ▮ Practice and coaching with feedback ▮ SEL focused community building circles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Individual/ small group counseling ▮ Small group based on competency ▮ Family engagement ▮ Proactive and preventative approaches ▮ Referral to services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Faculty/ staff mentor ▮ Daily check-in/ Check out ▮ Social and Academic Small Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Peer mediation and Restorative Problem Solving Circles ▮ Formal Restorative Conference ▮ Community Circle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Small group supplemental instruction ▮ Visual/auditor aids/cues and manipulatives
Tier 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Explicit Instruction in SEL competencies ▮ Integration of SEL within the content areas through EL curriculum and teacher implementation of teaching practices ▮ Surveys data (student, staff, families) to guide programming ▮ Family engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Mental Health education ▮ Mental Health screening ▮ Prevention/ Interventions and supports ▮ Trauma-informed/trauma-sensitive approach ▮ Peer education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ School Wide Behavioral Expectations ▮ Win-Win Classroom ▮ Training of peer educators ▮ Bullying prevention ▮ Culturally responsive practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Community Building Circles ▮ Negotiation skills Training ▮ Peer mediation ▮ CDC-compliant Restorative/ Community Circles ▮ Family Engagement ▮ Responsive discipline policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▮ Standards-aligned differentiated, data informed, cross-curricular, culturally responsive instruction ▮ Goal-setting for learning ▮ Students/peer assessments ▮ Family engagement ▮ Universal design for learning ▮ Health Education

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Transformative SEL

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines SEL as, “the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.” By developing core intra- and inter-personal competencies, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making, students and adults build capacity to thrive by building a variety of protective factors, including increased resilience, stronger empathy, heightened self-efficacy and agency, and more. SEL is not synonymous with mental health, but it does provide a foundational set of competencies that serve as tools to navigate challenges in healthy, productive ways.

Transformative SEL elaborates on the core competencies from an educational equity lens and envisions their operationalization to better prepare young people and adults for critical, active citizenship, and considers the roles and implications of culture, identity, agency, belonging, and engagement. Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) and Project-Based Learning (PBL) offer opportunities for young people to shape their own learning and can support transformative SEL. **At West Buffalo Charter School the Second Step curriculum will be used as the foundation for SEL learning. Second Step has received CASEL’s SElect designation- the highest designation awarded through the organization. Additional resources, programs, and tools will also be integrated to ensure the specific needs of the students are met as it pertains to the COVID-19 pandemic. A strong focus on emotional well-being and emotion management will be at the forefront of all SEL curriculum.**

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) will be targeted for both WBCS students and staff in order to build their SEL capacity. The following will be explored as a means to build a variety of protective factors:

- **Increased resiliency**
- **Stronger empathy**
- **Heightened self-efficacy**
- **Self-awareness**
- **Self-management**
- **Social awareness**
- **Relationship skills**
- **Responsible decision-making**

Restorative Practices

Restorative practices are processes and approaches designed to build community and meaningful relationships, develop shared values, help students better understand their behavior, how it impacts themselves and others, and ultimately to use that self- and social awareness to

repair damage caused to relationships as a result of inappropriate behavior. It focuses on strategies and skills such as understanding and managing one's emotions and behavior, negotiating conflict constructively, building empathy, making constructive decisions about personal behavior, and realistically evaluating the consequences of one's behavior.

WBCS currently follows the Win-Win Philosophy, which emphasizes positive relationships, creative conflict resolution, problem solving, and intrinsic motivation. The method was developed by education researcher Dr. Jane Bluestein.

Teachers will be trained to facilitate CDC-compliant community circles, primarily focusing on community-building practices. Once a strong sense of community has been established in the classroom, teachers will be provided additional training to lead restorative circles. As a classroom community, restorative circles will be used to address any harm caused, and determine a restorative response and agreement, with all parties involved in the process. Circle facilitators will assist in maintaining accountability, to ensure that the agreement is fulfilled. CDC-compliant community circles will take place on a daily basis and restorative circles will occur on an as-needed basis.

Teachers will also receive a foundational training on Trauma-Informed Teaching and Learning (TITL), which will include an introduction to a general understanding of trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Scores.

Through SEL, restorative practices, and the Win-Win philosophy, all TITL principles will be incorporated into the classroom. These principles include:

- **Physical, emotional, social, and academic safety**
- **Trustworthiness and transparency**
- **Support and connection**
- **Inclusiveness and share purpose**
- **Collaboration and mutuality**
- **Empowerment, voice, and choice**
- **Cultural, historical, and gender issues**
- **Resilience, growth, and change**

Planning and Capacity Building

Central to a school or district's effective reopening or re-envisioning strategy is clear prioritization of mental health, well-being, and SEL that is communicated clearly and consistently to staff, students, family, and community. **West Buffalo Charter School's Social Emotional Learning Team will continue to meet throughout the year to ensure that the social emotional needs of the WBCS community are being thoroughly addressed. WBCS's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) will utilize data from surveys, universal assessments and teacher input to drive interventions. Data from MTSS will guide**

programming and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff throughout the school year.

Adult SEL & Well-Being

Adults in our school communities must take care of themselves and our peers, both for their own well-being and so that they may be better able to help young people heal. Adults in the school community have experienced stress, anxiety, grief, and trauma. It is important to consider the impact this will have on their return to an in-person or virtual school environment.

School leadership is faced with overwhelming challenges. Consider district/school-level supports for school leaders, especially those new to their roles, to provide mentorship. **West Buffalo Charter School leadership team will continue to have a strong line of communication, essential to supporting each other during these challenging times. In addition, the WBCS leadership team will attend weekly meetings with other Charter School Leaders across the state.**

- Build school community structures that encourage human connection, and that acknowledge it is necessary for us to take care of our physical and emotional safety and comfort before we can effectively teach and learn. Offer ongoing embedded opportunities for adults to develop and strengthen their own social and emotional competencies. **Opportunities to establish, maintain, and grow connections between faculty and staff will be built into the weekly calendar. Self-care and resilience will be two key areas of focus.**
- Offer all staff opportunities to heal together, to build strong, mutually supportive relationships, and to process their own emotions, including bus drivers, cafeteria workers, office workers, nurses, pupil personnel services staff, and administrators. **Opportunities that allow for healing, sharing of support and processing of emotions will be built into the weekly schedule for faculty and staff.**
- Offer professional learning opportunities to all staff. Address critical topics related to personal, student, and community well-being, including trauma-responsive practices, social emotional learning, restorative practices, mental health education, culturally and linguistically responsive-sustaining practices, implicit bias and structural racism, and facilitating difficult conversations about race. **An extensive list of professional development opportunities related to topics such as Social Emotional Learning and Competencies will be provided to all faculty and staff at WBCS at the start of the school year.**

West Buffalo Charter School staff and their families are able to access counseling services at any time through WBCS's Child and Family Services Employee Assistance Program (C&FS EAP). This EAP benefit provides staff and/or their household members with up to

four counseling sessions for each concern they might be experiencing. The C&FS EAP Program, in partnership with The Center for Resolution and Justice, is also now offering virtual conflict coaching and resolution sessions. Additional resources include webinars, tips for mindfulness, and information regarding COVID-19 is available to all staff through this service. Staff will receive a survey every two weeks to assess their needs and overall well-being. Adult SEL opportunities will be available periodically on professional development days to address the needs of staff based on survey results.

Student SEL and Well-Being

Improving school climate promotes critical conditions for learning, including an engaged school community responsive to culture, race, ethnicity, language, and socio-economic status; safe and inclusive academic environments that recognize and value the languages and cultures of all students; caring connections, trust, respect, and activities and curricula that engage and challenge young people. All these conditions are improved by socially and emotionally competent adults and young people in the school community.

Schools may wish to:

- Consider a prolonged orientation or transition period to support the social and emotional well-being and resiliency of students before beginning to phase in academic content. Encourage connection, healing, and relationship-building. **WBCS recognizes that the social-emotional well-being of all students must be prioritized in order for high quality learning to take place. Teachers will utilize SEL training, administered prior to school opening, to ensure a safe, welcoming, healing, and positive classroom environment.**
- Use community-building circles to ensure all voices can be heard. Foster increased resiliency for students to help prepare them for the possibility of additional transitions between in-person and remote learning. **CDC-compliant classroom community circles will take place everyday and are embedded into each classroom's daily schedule.**
- Create safe, supportive, engaging learning environments that nurture students' social and emotional learning.
- Nurture adult-student relationships to ensure that every student has a trusted adult at their school, and that the adult checks in on the student regularly, regardless of the mode of instruction. **Relationship-mapping will be used as a universal screening tool to ensure that each student has a strong, positive relationship with an adult in the school. Classroom teachers will check-in with each student in their classroom every day through the facilitation of CDC-compliant classroom community circles.**
- Offer opportunities for movement and physical activity to the extent possible. Social emotional and physical well-being are interconnected.
- Survey students regularly. Ask about their needs. Do not wait for them to come to you. Be prepared to respond with assistance or referrals.

- Leverage transformative SEL to support the work of anti-racism and anti-bias.
- Support access to mental health and trauma supports for students.
- Provide professional learning to support all staff in developing a deeper understanding of their role in supporting student social emotional competencies and well-being.

Extensive plan for professional learning is currently in place at West Buffalo Charter School.

- Implement explicit SEL lessons and embed opportunities to develop and practice SEL competencies within academic lessons.
- Embed SEL and trauma-responsive practices in restorative discipline policies.
- Consider ways to mitigate the absence of school social activities, like sports or clubs, with socially distanced or online replacements.

Using Data for Continuous Improvement

Data collection for continuous improvement and reflection means data is used to understand what is happening, to identify challenges or roadblocks, and to figure out what is working. Schools must assess immediate needs but recognize the need to continue to reassess regularly as circumstances are likely to change frequently in this tumultuous time. Continuing to collect data to ensure accurate understandings of need is necessary to continue providing the most effective and efficient response. **West Buffalo Charter School will:**


- **Consider why we are collecting data and what we want to learn from it;**
- **Collect and use data to support deeper relationships and improved supports for students, staff, and families;**
- **Engage stakeholders in the collection and review of data; and**
- **Support staff in reflecting upon data to inform continuous improvement.**

SCHOOL SCHEDULES

Schools/districts should collaborate with stakeholders including, but not limited to, teachers, staff members, parents, and community groups when considering alternate schedules. Plans must include how schedules will be shared and made available to the school community.

Schools should share their scheduling plans with students, families, and staff as soon as possible before the start of the school year and anytime a change is required in order to allow families to plan childcare and work arrangements. If schools/districts begin to implement in-person and hybrid learning models, they must also be prepared to shift back to fully remote learning models should circumstances change and school buildings are required to close. Regardless of the instructional model implemented, equity and access must be the priority for all students including, but not limited to, students with disabilities, English language learners, and students experiencing homelessness.






- **West Buffalo Charter School will share their scheduling plans with students, families, and staff through Zoom Meetings, on the School’s website, and across all social media platforms.**
- **In the event of a change, West Buffalo Charter School will share their plan to address the change as soon as possible with students, families, and staff.**
- **West Buffalo Charter School has developed schedules should a change be required to shift from the Hybrid Model to the fully Remote Learning Model.**
- **Regardless of the instructional model that is implemented at West Buffalo Charter School, equity and accessibility will be a top priority for all students, including, but not limited to, Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, and students experiencing homelessness.**




WEST BUFFALO
CHARTER SCHOOL


Weekly Instruction Schedule
2020-2021 All Grade Levels

First Day of School: September 8th, 2020
Instructional Hours: 8:00am - 3:30pm

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>In School</p> 	<p>In School</p> 	<p>In School</p> 	<p>Remote Learning</p> 	<p>Online assignments from home</p> 



■ Students Report to School



■ Students Learn at Home Virtually

BUDGET AND FISCAL MATTERS

Charter Schools

District schools should continue to process charter school per pupil invoices as required by Education Law § 2856 and Commissioner’s Regulation §119.1. Although many of the

considerations above are applicable to all schools, charter schools should consult with the school's authorizer regarding specific budgetary requirements.

All existing state aid reporting requirements and deadlines must be maintained; the content of data submissions will largely remain consistent with past practice, except where modified by law, regulation, or executive order.

Additional costs for PPE, transportation, food service, and other mitigation needs will likely be necessary. Districts should not assume additional state or federal support will be available beyond what has already been budgeted for the 2020-21 school year and should plan those needs accordingly.

ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Attendance for Instructional Purposes

Schools are responsible for developing a mechanism to collect and report daily teacher/student engagement or attendance regardless of the instructional setting. **West Buffalo Charter School is committed to maintaining the highest standards for the health and well-being of our students, families, faculty and staff. The following outlines additions to the WBCS Attendance Policy that reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic:**

Attendance during virtual instruction will be closely monitored and recorded by school faculty and staff. Students must *participate* and have their *cameras on* for the duration of the virtual session in order to be counted as present.

West Buffalo Charter School will provide faculty, staff and families with guidance on when they should stay home and when they should return to school.

Faculty, staff and students should stay home IF:

- **There has been close contact with a person with COVID-19 to monitor symptoms.**
- **The individual tests positive for COVID-19 or is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.**

Per CDC guidelines, people with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- **Fever or chills**
- **Cough**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **Fatigue**
- **Muscle or body aches**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Sore throat**
- **Congestion or runny nose**
- **Nausea or vomiting**
- **Diarrhea**

- **Headache**

Excused Absences

Student absences will be considered excused for the following reasons:

- **If the student is quarantined due to possible exposure to COVID-19 or is exhibiting symptoms.**
- **If the student has traveled outside the country or to a “high-risk” location and must self-quarantine.**
- **If the student has tested positive for COVID-19.**

During the excused absences, students will be provided remote (virtual) instruction. It is expected that students still participate in virtual instruction if medically and physically able to do so during these absences. If the student is ill and unable to participate in the virtual instruction, the student must make up any work missed during that time period.

Attendance for Reporting Purposes

Reopening Mandatory Requirements

- Attendance of any school-age student of compulsory age, who resides in the district or is placed by a parent/guardian in another public school district, a charter school, or is placed by a district administrator or the CSE of the school district in educational programs outside the district must be reported in SIRS. To date, the reporting of daily attendance of Prekindergarten students is not required;
- Attendance must be reported by any reporting entity that is required to take attendance;
- Resident students of compulsory age who were not in attendance in a public school, including charter schools, nonpublic school, or approved home schooling program in the current school year must be reported until they exceed compulsory school age, they no longer reside in the district, or the district has documentation that the student has entered another educational program leading to a high school diploma;
- Students who drop out while still of compulsory school age must be kept on the school attendance register until they exceed compulsory school age or move out of the district.

Attendance for State Aid Purposes

School districts report certain enrollment, attendance, and school calendar information through the State Aid Management System (SAMS). While this data submission process differs from other procedures, the underlying data provided should be consistent with all other attendance reporting and requirements.

As discussed in the Budget and Fiscal Matters section of this guidance, the minimum annual instructional hour requirement and 180 days of session requirement are also both reported through SAMS. For both the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, school districts will be

required to continue to submit the same information through SAMS that has been required in previous years, namely aggregate instructional days and hours, as well as daily calendars. Under regulatory changes adopted as an emergency rule by the Board of Regents on July 13, 2020, school districts may be eligible to apply for a waiver from the minimum instructional hour requirement for both the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years to the extent that “the district is unable to meet such requirement as a result of an Executive Order(s) of the Governor pursuant to the State of emergency declared for the COVID-19 crisis, or pursuant to Education Law §3604(8), as amended by Chapter 107 of the Laws of 2020, or reopening procedures implemented as a result of the COVID-19 crisis”. Successful application of the waiver will shield school districts from a reduction in aid for failure to meet the minimum instructional hour requirement.

However, the 180 days of session requirement is in statute, and for the 2020-21 school year there are currently no statutory provisions that would allow a school district to provide fewer than 180 days of instruction over the course of the full school year. For charter schools, instructional time requirements are set forth in Education Law Section 2851(2)(n) and Commissioner’s Regulation Section 175.5. These requirements were effectively waived as stated above.

Chronic Absenteeism

Extensive research indicates that missing ten percent of school days tends to be the “tipping point” when student achievement declines. Chronic absence, or absenteeism, is defined as missing at least ten percent of enrolled school days, which in New York State is eighteen days per school year, or two days per month.

- Chronic absence includes all absences from instruction, both excused and unexcused. Instead of school policies and procedures focusing on truancy, it is essential for school attendance policies to focus on the academic consequences of lost instructional time and for the school procedures to address absences before students fall behind in school.
- Although flexibility is recommended when monitoring attendance in a remote instructional model, for students who have not engaged in remote learning and school staff outreach to parents/guardians has been unsuccessful, West Buffalo Charter School will attempt a variety of methods for reaching out such as:
 - Phone calls to families
 - Texting which offers a low stress alternative and a subsequent phone call can be arranged
 - Seeking out adults in the school who have established a connection with the student and/or family
 - Social media contact or using friends to reach out can also be effective strategies.

- Assign each student an “ally” – an adult who is responsible to check in on the student every day, whether instruction is in-person, remote, or online.

Educational Neglect

An allegation of educational neglect may be warranted when a custodial parent or guardian fails to ensure a child’s prompt and regular attendance in school or keeps the child out of school for impermissible reasons resulting in an adverse effect on the child’s educational progress, or imminent danger of such an adverse effect. Educational neglect should not be considered where the parent/guardian has kept their child home because they believe it is unsafe for their child to attend school in person during the pandemic, and the child is participating in remote learning opportunities.

TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

Regardless of whether in-person, remote, or hybrid models are utilized, **West Buffalo Charter School will seek to provide students and teachers, for use in their places of residence, with access, to the extent practicable:**

- **A computing device, such as a laptop, desktop, Chromebook, iPad, or full-size tablet, for their exclusive use; and**
- **Consistent, reliable access to high-speed internet at a sufficient level to fully participate in remote/online learning (e.g., a hotspot).**

In the limited cases where students may still lack internet access in their places of residence, despite best efforts, the school must ensure that all efforts are being made to provide some form of internet access availability, such as by boosting WIFI signals to parking lots.

Reopening Plan Mandatory Requirements

School and District Reopening Plans must include information on how the school will:

- Have knowledge of the level of access to devices and highspeed broadband all students and teachers have in their places of residence;
West Buffalo Charter School will provide 1:1 devices (Chromebooks) for each student in grades K - 8. Families will be surveyed relative to their access to high speed internet. West Buffalo Charter School will work with those families on an individual basis to provide mobile hotspots or other access options.
- Provide multiple ways for students to participate in learning and demonstrate mastery of Learning Standards in remote or blended models, especially if all students do not yet have sufficient access to devices and/or high-speed internet.

See Teaching and Learning and Technology and Connectivity sections of this document for specific.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Reopening Plan Mandatory Requirements

- All schools must ensure that they have a continuity of learning plan for the 2020-2021 school year. Such plans must prepare for in-person, remote, and hybrid models of instruction. **West Buffalo Charter School is planning for two different learning models: *Hybrid Learning Model and Remote Learning Model.***

For the Hybrid Learning Model, face-to-face, in person instruction will be provided three days a week (Monday through Wednesday for all students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 and both classes in our Special Learning Environments (First through Fourth Grade and Fifth through Eighth Grade). On Thursday and Friday, students will continue their learning virtually with small group instruction, online lessons, and posted assignments posted online to Google Classroom.

West Buffalo Charter School will be prepared to transition to full in-person instruction or full remote instruction in the event that there is a loosening or tightening of restrictions from the NYSED, DoH, CDC or the Governor.

In the Hybrid Learning Model, teachers will rotate between cohorts to provide direct, core instruction to avoid student travel between classrooms. Teachers will practice social distancing and other health regulations as they transition back and forth between classrooms and cohorts of students. The Hybrid Learning Model also includes using a digital platform that will allow students to participate in online instruction, collaborate on group projects and complete assignments remotely at home.

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 will be broken in smaller cohorts to reduce class size, to limit the potential exposure to the COVID-19 virus, and to minimize interactions and contact with students in other cohorts. Fixed cohorts allow the same students to remain together for the duration of the public health crisis.

Students that receive Special Education services and/or English as a New Language services may be grouped in the same cohorts to help with scheduling and ensuring that their mandated minutes are met. Various spaces throughout the building will

be utilized as classrooms. Students will remain in their assigned classroom for the entire school day to reduce mixing with other cohorts of students.

For the Remote Learning Model, students will receive the same instruction as their peers that are attending school in-person through the Hybrid Learning Model, but will receive it virtually at home. Teachers at West Buffalo Charter School will plan and implement curricular lessons that must be completed by students whether they are in person or engaging remotely.

- **Instruction must be aligned with the outcomes in the New York State Learning Standards. At West Buffalo Charter School all instruction Kindergarten through Grade 8 will be aligned with the Next Generation Learning Standards. All students will meet the minimum required hours of instruction provided each day in both learning models: Hybrid Learning Model and Remote Learning Model.**
- **All instruction should be developed so that whether delivered in-person, remotely, or through a hybrid model due to a local or state school closure, there are clear opportunities for instruction that are accessible to all students. At West Buffalo Charter School all students will have the ability to choose the learning model that best fits their needs. Whether instruction is delivered through a Hybrid Learning Model (both in-person and remote) or Remote Learning Model all students will receive the same instruction no matter the location of the instruction (ex: at home or at school). Students that choose the Remote Learning Model will be able to participate in the instruction and learning through live-streamed lessons. West Buffalo Charter School will provide clear opportunities for instruction that are accessible to all students and aligned to the Next Generation Learning Standards.**

Example: 2nd Grade Schedule for a Hybrid Learning Model (In-Person Schedule)

Second Grade Hybrid Learning Student Schedule (In-Person)	
8:00-8:15	Breakfast
8:15-10:15	ELA
10:15-10:30	Bathroom Break

10:30-11:00	RtI
11:00-12:30	Math
12:30-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:20	Science/Social Studies
1:20-1:30	Bathroom Break
1:30-2:00	CE (Art, Music, Steam, PE, SEL, L2L)
2:00-2:20	Writing and Skills
2:20-2:35	SEL/Community Circle
2:35-3:00	Recess

Example: 2nd Grade Schedule for a Hybrid Learning Model (Remote Schedule)

Second Grade Hybrid Learning Student Schedule (Remote)	
8:00-8:15	Breakfast/Login to Google Classroom for attendance
8:15-9:15	ELA- Livestream
9:15-10:15	ELA- Independent Work at Home
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30-11:00	IXL *Students in Tier 3 RtI will work with Mrs. Mazurowski in Google Classroom at this time
11:00-12:00	Math- Livestream
12:00-12:30	Math- Independent Work at Home
12:30-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:20	Science/S.S.- Livestream
1:20-1:30	Break
1:30-2:00	Independent Reading or CE (Livestream)
2:00-2:20	Writing & Skills- Livestream
2:20-2:35	SEL/Community Circle- Livestream
2:35-3:00	Break

Away from screen

These two schedules (above) provide the same learning opportunities for all students while recognizing that those who are streaming the instruction at home need breaks away from the computer. These built in breaks, away from the screen, coincide with times on the in-person schedule where learning may be independent, bathroom breaks, or lunch.

In addition to meeting students' academic learning needs, West Buffalo Charter School will also meet students' social-emotional needs through daily conversations, community circles, frequent SEL lessons, and other activities.

- Instruction aligned to the academic program must include regular and substantive interaction with an appropriately certified teacher regardless of the delivery method (e.g., in person, remote or hybrid). **West Buffalo Charter School's core content instruction will be provided by a certified teacher. All students will have access to and interaction with an appropriately certified teacher on a regular basis.**
- Schools must create a clear communication plan for how students and their families/caregivers can contact the school and teachers with questions about their instruction and/or technology. **West Buffalo Charter School will be utilizing multiple methods for communication with families and caregivers. The school will use a digital app to organize notifications, share up-to-date information, and to communicate regularly. The school will also utilize social media platforms to share information. All teachers will reach out via phone and/or email to check in on the students and answer any questions. Reference sheets, videos, and training modules will be provided to families and caregivers to assist them with remote instruction, how to use a Chromebook, what to expect with live-streamed instruction, and much more. West Buffalo Charter School will work with the school's Parent Liaison to translate information into other languages to meet our diverse families' language needs.**

Curriculum Extension

West Buffalo Charter School will offer several Curriculum Extension classes to K-8 students.

- Students will not share materials/instruments/equipment among students or staff.
- Music and Physical Education teachers will ensure that a distance of twelve feet in all directions is maintained between individuals while participating in activities requiring projecting the voice (e.g., singing), playing a wind instrument.
- Teachers will create visuals and markings on the floor to reinforce social distancing and manage the flow of students in the classroom.
- Teachers will have hand hygiene supplies close to shared materials and surfaces.
- Teachers will create a plan for how to give students assignments, feedback, and track their progress in the event the school transitions to a fully remote model.
- Teachers will develop digital and non-digital options for sharing student's creative works within the classroom community and with the broader school community.
- Teachers will use digital platforms and other methodologies that will enable students to collaborate on group projects even if at home.
- Teachers will utilize resources such as digital field trips and online arts collections.

- Teachers will use games and activities that require no physical contact and do not require students to be in close physical proximity to each other.
- Teachers ensure lessons are planned around the available space for instruction.

Academic Intervention Services

Students in grades 3-8, including students with disabilities and English Language learners, who are at risk of not achieving State Learning Standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and or Science are entitled to receive Academic Intervention Services in accordance with Commissioner’s Regulations section 100.2(ee). As the New York State Assessments in grades 3-8 were not administered in the 2019-20 school year. **West Buffalo Charter School will use a school developed procedure to be applied uniformly at each grade level for determining which students are entitled to such services.**

Grading

West Buffalo Charter School has quarterly report cards that can be accessed through the eSchool Parent Portal. Kindergarten through 5th Grade uses standards based report cards and Grades 6-8 are graded using weighted categories (homework, tests, participation, etc.). Whether students choose the hybrid or remote learning option, all students will be graded using the same expectations and procedures.

ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Per the reopening guidance issued by the NYS Department of Health, schools/districts must develop policies regarding extracurricular programs including which activities will be allowed, considering social distancing, PPE usage, and cleaning and disinfection, as well as risk of COVID-19 transmission (e.g., interscholastic sports, assemblies, and other gatherings). Policies should consider how to maintain cohorts, if applicable, or members of the same household.

Interscholastic Athletics

Per the NYDOH Guidance Interscholastic sports are not permitted at the time of publication of this plan and additional information on athletic activities is forthcoming.

Extracurricular Activities and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

All extracurricular activities and external community organizations that use school facilities must follow State and local health and safety protocols and must comply with applicable social distancing requirements and hygiene protocol. **West Buffalo Charter School will not have any scheduled extracurricular activities until further notice.**

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Reopening Plan Mandatory Requirements

- The school reopening plan, whether services are provided in-person, remote, and/or through a hybrid model, must address the provision of FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those providing special education and services. **WBCS will address the provision of FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those providing special education and services under the following conditions:**
 - **If WBCS closes school to slow or stop the spread of COVID-19 and does not provide any educational services to the general student population then WBCS would not be required to provide services to students with disabilities during that same time period.**
 - **If WBCS continues to provide educational opportunities to the general student population during a school closure WBCS will ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the same opportunities including the provision of FAPE.**
 - **WBCS will ensure that to the greatest extent possible each student with a disability (including those identified as English Language Learners) can be provided the special education and related services identified within the student's IEP developed under IDEA or a plan developed under Section 504. WBCS will utilize a documentation system via Google Docs that reflects IEP mandates and Section 504 mandates, how each mandate will be met in each reopening model (i.e. hybrid or remote), and a schedule for each provider to reflect the mandated minutes.**
 - **WBCS will offer a hybrid model with three in-person (face-to-face) instructional days for the SLE 1-4 (8:1:1) and SLE 5-8 (8:1:1) classrooms. WBCS will take into consideration contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale or scope of in-person education, and/ or closing the school when conditions are identified and warranted. WBCS will ensure that students with disabilities will continue to receive their IEP mandates utilizing an alternative model (i.e. hybrid, distance learning, teletherapy) until an administrative decision is made to close school to stop the spread of COVID-19.**
 - **WBCS will collaborate with parents, families, related service providers, CSE, and SED to ensure that to the greatest extent possible each student with a disability can be provided the special**

- education and related services identified in the student's IEP developed under IDEA or a plan developed under Section 504.
- **WBCS will collaborate with CSE to ensure that all students found eligible during the Statewide closure of schools will have an IEP developed that addresses the needs of the student once the school reopens (not what can be accommodated during a temporary situation).**
 - **WBCS will collaborate with families, CSE, and physicians to provide special education and related services to a child with a disability who is absent for an extended period of time because the child is infected with COVID-19 while the school remains open. WBCS will follow protocols for students with disabilities who are home for more than 10 consecutive days including:**
 - **IEP meeting to change the child's placement and the content of the IEP (if warranted).**
 - **If the IEP goals will remain the same and only the time in special education will change, then the IEP Team may add an amendment to the IEP stating specifically the amount of time to be spent in education.**
 - **IEP Team must determine whether the child is available for instruction and could benefit from homebound services such as online or virtual instruction, instructional telephone calls, and other curriculum-based instructional activities.**
 - **The school reopening plan must address meaningful parent engagement in the parent's preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of services to his/her child to meet the requirements of the IDEA. WBCS will address meaningful parent engagement in the parent's preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of services to his/her child to meet the requirements of the IDEA under the following conditions:**
 - **WBCS will work collaboratively with the ENL Department to ensure communication in the parent's preferred language.**
 - **WBCS will ensure clear, ongoing, and shared communication and collaboration in order to ensure equitable access to special education programs and services in order to meet the requirements of IDEA along with resources available for parents during the Statewide closure via Class Tag (or other designated App), WBCS Parent-Liaison, Language Line (CSE account), CSE Social Worker, CSE Bilingual Team, WBCS SPED website, and WBCS ENL website.**

- **WBCS will utilize a documentation system to ensure there is a clear understanding of the school's efforts to communicate regarding the provision of services in order to meet the requirements of IDEA. This includes information about preparing for the upcoming school year and the continuity of learning during Statewide school closures due to the COVID-19 outbreak.**
- **The school reopening plan must address collaboration between the committees on preschool special education (CPSE) and committees on special education (CSE) and program providers representing the variety of settings where students are served to ensure there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on individualized education programs (IEPs), plans for monitoring and communicating student progress, and commitment to sharing resources. WBCS reopening plan will address collaboration between CPSE and CSE and program providers representing the variety of settings where students are served to ensure there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on individualized education programs (IEPs), plans for monitoring and communicating student progress, and commitment to sharing resources under the following conditions:**
 - **WBCS will collaborate with parents, families, related service providers, CSE, and SED to ensure that to the greatest extent possible each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP developed under IDEA or a plan developed under Section 504.**
 - **Communication with parents regarding their child's IEP services will include phone calls, U.S. mail email, and the appropriate use of real time translation via conference call or video conference for parents of English Language Learners. WBCS understands that parents may elect to receive prior written notice, procedural safeguards notices, and due process complaint notices by email. WBCS will obtain consent from the parents to utilize alternate modes of communication including email, electronic or digital signatures, and conference calls/video conferencing.**
 - **WBCS will ensure clear, ongoing, shared communication and collaboration in order to ensure equitable access to special education programs and services in order to meet the requirements of IDEA along with resources available for parents during the Statewide closure via Class Tag (or other designated App), WBCS Parent-Liaison, Language Line (CSE account), CSE Social Worker,**

CSE Bilingual Team, WBCS SPED website, and WBCS ENL website.

- The school reopening plan must ensure access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique disability related needs of students. **WBCS will ensure access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique disability related needs of students under the following conditions:**
 - **WBCS will identify and describe any modifications to social distancing or PPE (i.e. masks that allow student to see lips of special education teacher, teacher, or other providers) that may be necessary for certain students including students with disabilities (i.e. hearing loss, hearing impairment, students receiving speech/language services, sensory processing disorder) ensuring that any modifications minimize COVID-19 exposure risk for students with disabilities, special education teachers, and related service providers.**
 - **WBCS will provide students with an IEP that includes the use of assistive technology the opportunity to continue to utilize assistive technology as part of continuity of learning in school and home.**
 - **WBCS will provide all necessary accommodations, modification, supplementary aids and services, and technology during all models of instruction. All families, teachers, and service providers will be informed, attend professional developments, and collaborate with the Special Education department to ensure access.**

- The school reopening plan must address how it will document the programs and services offered and provided to students with disabilities as well as communications with parents, in their preferred language or mode of communication. **WBCS will address how it will document the programs and services offered and provided to students with disabilities as well as communication with parents in their preferred language or mode of communication under the following conditions:**
 - **WBCS will utilize a documentation system via eSchool (staff) and Google Docs (SPED Department) to ensure outreach efforts to help ensure there is a clear understanding of WBCS's efforts to provide services consistent with the recommendation of the IEP, scheduling/attendance of annual reviews, reevaluations, amendments, and parental/family consent to hold meetings virtually, and any necessary preparation for the upcoming school year.**
 - **WBCS will continue to monitor the document to assist school personnel (CSE) in documenting decisions made, why timelines were exceeded, and**

documentation of parent participation and consent through temporary alternate methods, such as emails or notes.

- **WBCS understands that timelines for initial evaluations and reevaluations can be extended (evaluations that require face-to-face meeting or observations will be delayed until school reopening) and will utilize the above mentioned document to communicate with parents (in their preferred language or mode of communication), to explain exceeded timelines, decisions made, parent participation and consent, conduct a remote observation, and committee member participation.**
- **Communication with parents regarding their child's IEP services will utilize phone calls, U.S. mail, email, and the appropriate use of real time translation via conference call or video conference for parents of English Language Learners. WBCS understands that parents may elect to receive prior written notice, procedural safeguards notices, and due process complaint notices by email. WBCS will obtain consent from the parents to utilize alternate modes of communication including email, electronic or digital signatures, and conference calls/video conferencing.**

Considerations for Reopening Plans

- **The school reopening plan encourages CPSEs/CSEs to prepare contingency plans to address students' remote learning needs in the event of potential future intermittent or extended school closures. WBCS will collaborate with parents, families, related service providers, CSE, and SED to ensure that to the greatest extent possible each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP developed under IDEA or a plan developed under Section 504 in the event of potential future intermittent or extended school closure. WBCS will ensure that students with disabilities will continue to receive their IEP mandates utilizing an alternative model (i.e. hybrid, distance learning, teletherapy) until an administrative decision is made to close school to stop the spread of COVID-19.**

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Students with disabilities must have equal access to high-quality programs that are designed, based on their individual needs and abilities, to enable them to achieve the desired learning results established for all students. **WBCS will ensure that to the greatest extent possible each student with a disability (including those identified as English Language Learners) can be provided the special education and related services identified within the student's IEP developed under IDEA or a plan developed under Section 504. WBCS will prioritize certain special education students to return to in-person instruction first or more**

frequently based on educational or other needs given requirements for equity, capacity, social distancing, PPE, feasibility, and learning considerations. **WBCS will offer a hybrid model with three in-person (face-to-face) instructional days for the SLE 1-4 (8:1:1) and SLE 5-8 (8:1:1) classrooms. WBCS will take into consideration contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale or scope of in-person education, and/ or closing the school when conditions are identified and warranted. WBCS will ensure that students with disabilities will continue to receive their IEP mandates utilizing an alternative model (i.e. hybrid, distance learning, teletherapy) until an administrative decision is made to close school to stop the spread of COVID-19.**

LRE Documentation

As schools plan to reopen and make determinations about how students with disabilities will receive access to the LRE, they must consider how that process is documented, including who is involved in making those determinations. **WBCS will utilize a documentation system via eSchool (staff) and Google Docs (SPED Department) to ensure outreach efforts to help ensure there is a clear understanding of WBCS's efforts to provide services consistent with the recommendation of the IEP, scheduling/attendance of annual reviews, reevaluations, amendments, and parental/family consent to hold meetings virtually, and any necessary preparation for the upcoming school year. WBCS will continue to monitor the document to assist school personnel (CSE) in documenting decisions made, why timelines were exceeded, and documentation of parent participation and consent through temporary alternate methods, such as emails or notes.**

IEP Implementation

Until schools return to normal operating conditions, the same flexibility with respect to IEP implementation for delivery of services during school closures due to the COVID-19 outbreak continues to apply to the programs and services whether delivered in-person and/or remotely (e.g., flexibility with respect to the mode and/or manner; group or individual sessions; specific group size for related services, frequency, duration and location of related services, and special class size ratio etc.). **WBCS will offer a Hybrid Learning Model with three in-person (face-to-face) instructional days for the SLE 1-4 (8:1:1) and SLE 5-8 (8:1:1) classrooms. WBCS will take into consideration contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale or scope of in-person education, and/ or closing the school when conditions are identified and warranted. WBCS will ensure that students with disabilities will continue to receive their IEP mandates utilizing an alternative model (i.e. hybrid, distance learning, teletherapy) until an administrative decision is made to close school to stop the spread of COVID-19. WBCS will collaborate with parents, families, related service providers, CSE, and SED to ensure that to the greatest extent possible each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in**

the student's IEP developed under IDEA or a plan developed under Section 504. WBCS will collaborate with CSE to ensure that all students found eligible during the Statewide closure of schools will have an IEP developed that addresses the needs of the student once the school reopens (not what can be accommodated during a temporary situation).

Provision of Services

Consistent with previously issued OSE guidance, school districts must ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP. **WBCS will ensure that to the greatest extent possible each student with a disability (including those identified as English Language Learners) can be provided the special education and related services identified within the student's IEP developed under IDEA or a plan developed under Section 504.**

Progress Monitoring

Teachers and service providers must continue to collect data, whether in-person or remotely, and use these data to monitor each student's progress toward the annual goals and to evaluate the effectiveness of the student's special education services. **West Buffalo Charter School teachers and service providers will utilize a system to collect data, with a plan for both in-person and remote options to progress monitor IEP goals. All progress monitoring will be collected and maintained electronically. WBCS will continue utilizing progress monitoring (adjusted for virtual if needed) to examine the student's academic performance over time, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction during school closure due to COVID-19.**

Best Practices for Contingency Plans

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves CPSE/CSE should prepare for all contingencies and consider plans to address students' remote learning needs in the event of potential future intermittent or extended school closures. **WBCS will collaborate with parents, families, related service providers, CSE, and SED to ensure that to the greatest extent possible each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP developed under IDEA or a plan developed under Section 504. WBCS understands that NYSED will allow schools as much flexibility as Federal and State laws and regulations allow in determining how FAPE is to be provided during the COVID-19 outbreak.**

Compensatory Services

Because schools were required to provide FAPE consistent with the need to protect health and safety in the first instance, students may have experienced a loss of skills despite best intentions, efforts, and creative solutions when providing educational programs and services. In these

circumstances, CPSE/CSEs must make an individualized determination whether and to what extent compensatory services are to be provided once school reopens; how those services will be provided in conjunction with the school's reopening plan and continue if the school must close again over the next school year. **West Buffalo Charter School will continue to work with the Buffalo Public School's CSE. CSE will continue to monitor WBCS and compliance regarding Compensatory Services.**

IEP Implementation Documentation

- Schools must determine how they will process and maintain the additional documentation regarding changing student needs due to the period of remote instruction and a return to a traditional classroom environment after a lengthy period away from in-person instruction.
 - **WBCS will utilize a documentation system via eSchool (staff) and Google Docs (SPED Department) to ensure outreach efforts to help ensure there is a clear understanding of WBCS's efforts to provide services consistent with the recommendation of the IEP, scheduling/attendance of annual reviews, reevaluations, amendments, and parental/family consent to hold meetings virtually, and any necessary preparation for the upcoming school year.**
 - **WBCS will provide students with an IEP that includes the use of assistive technology the opportunity to continue to utilize assistive technology as part of continuity of learning in school and home.**
 - **WBCS will provide all necessary accommodations, modification, supplementary aids and services, and technology during all models of instruction. All teachers and service providers will be informed, attend professional developments, and collaborate with the Special Education department to ensure access.**
 - **WBCS will take into consideration contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale or scope of in-person education, and/ or closing the school when conditions are identified and warranted. WBCS will ensure that students with disabilities will continue to receive their IEP mandates utilizing an alternative model (i.e. hybrid, distance learning, teletherapy) until an administrative decision is made to close school to stop the spread of COVID-19.**

- Schools must determine how documentation will be maintained on the instruction and services that were provided to each student so that it may be communicated to the CPSE/CSE for consideration when making any individualized determinations of subsequent student needs, including transition services. **WBCS will utilize a Google Docs to document instruction and services provided to students.**

- Schools must consider how formative assessment and ongoing monitoring of student progress will be documented and maintained and how that documentation will be available to the CPSE/ CSE and parents, in their preferred language or mode of communication. **West Buffalo Charter School teachers and service providers will utilize a system to collect data, with a plan for both the Hybrid Learning Model and Remote Learning Model to progress monitor IEP goals. All progress monitoring will be collected and maintained electronically. WBCS will continue utilizing progress monitoring (adjusted for virtual if needed) to examine the student's academic performance over time, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction during school closure due to COVID-19.**
- Schools must maintain documentation of collaboration with parents to develop any contingency remote learning plans that may be implemented during a school closure. **WBCS will ensure clear, ongoing, and shared communication and collaboration in order to ensure equitable access to special education programs and services in order to meet the requirements of IDEA along with resources available for parents during the Statewide closure via Class Tag (or other designated App), WBCS Parent-Liaison, Language Line (CSE account), CSE Social Worker, CSE Bilingual Team, WBCS SPED website, and WBCS ENL website.**
- Schools must document the ongoing provision of compensatory services to individual students upon the reopening of schools. Documentation will then be available to parents, CPSE/CSE and other relevant parties, in their preferred language or mode of communication. **West Buffalo Charter School will continue to work with the Buffalo Public School's CSE. CSE will continue to monitor WBCS and compliance regarding Compensatory Services.**

Child Find

As schools reopen, it is important for school districts to remember their responsibilities under IDEA to identify, locate, and evaluate all students with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services while keeping in mind the impact that school closures may have had on all students. **WBCS will continue current Child Find policies and procedures established for the 2020-2021 in collaboration with CSE.**

Referral

Before referring a student for special education, school districts should take into consideration all factors that may have influenced the student's progress during school closures due to COVID-19. If the school district suspects a student of having a disability, it must refer the

student for an initial special education evaluation and obtain parent consent for the evaluation. However, a referral may not be warranted if the reason for underperformance is due to school closures and a change in the provision of education. **The Student Support Team will take into consideration all factors that impact the student's ability and performance.**

Initial Evaluation/Reevaluation

Reopening plans must ensure that special education evaluations (i.e., initial and reevaluations) are conducted whether in-person or remotely within required timelines. **WBCS understands that timelines for initial evaluations and reevaluations can be extended (evaluations that require face-to-face meeting or observations will be delayed until school reopening) and will utilize the above mentioned document to communicate with parents (in their preferred language or mode of communication), to explain exceeded timelines, decisions made, parent participation and consent, conduct a remote observation, and committee member participation.**

Eligibility Determination/Annual Review Meetings

School districts should develop clear procedures and expectations for CPSEs/CSEs to meet as required including to make eligibility determinations following initial evaluations and to review and, if appropriate, revise each student's IEP at least annually. When conducting CPSE/CSE meetings, the parent of a student with a disability and a school district may agree to use alternative means of meeting participation requirements, such as video conferences and teleconferences. **WBCS will utilize a documentation system via eSchool (staff) and Google Docs (SPED Department) to ensure outreach efforts to help ensure there is a clear understanding of WBCS's efforts to provide services consistent with the recommendation of the IEP, scheduling/attendance of annual reviews, reevaluations, amendments, and parental/family consent to hold meetings virtually, and any necessary preparation for the upcoming school year. WBCS understands that timelines for initial evaluations and reevaluations can be extended (evaluations that require face-to-face meeting or observations will be delayed until school reopening) and will utilize the above mentioned document to communicate with parents (in their preferred language or mode of communication), to explain exceeded timelines, decisions made, parent participation and consent, conduct a remote observation, and committee member participation.**

Communication/Coordination

Ensuring clear, ongoing, and shared communication and collaboration is critical to ensuring equitable access to special education programs and services and the continued offer of FAPE for students with disabilities. School districts and approved programs serving students with disabilities must collaborate with parents and families to ensure that students continue to be provided FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students and their

service providers. **Communication with parents regarding their child's IEP services will utilize phone calls, U.S. mail, email, and the appropriate use of real time translation via conference call or video conference for parents of English Language Learners. WBCS understands that parents may elect to receive prior written notice, procedural safeguards notices, and due process complaint notices by electronic mail communication. WBCS will obtain consent from the parents to utilize alternate modes of communication including email, electronic or digital signatures, and conference calls/video conferencing.**

Meaningful Outreach and Engagement with Parents of Students with Disabilities

In addition to the communication efforts schools make for all students, parents of students with disabilities have a legal right to be informed regarding the identification, evaluation, educational placement and the provision of FAPE to their child. Whether special education programs and services are provided in-person, remotely, or through a hybrid model, effective communication between school personnel and parents includes the following:

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

WBCS will ensure clear, ongoing, and shared communication and collaboration in order to ensure equitable access to special education programs and services in order to meet the requirements of IDEA along with resources available for parents during the Statewide closure via Class Tag (or other designated App), WBCS Parent-Liaison, Language Line (CSE account), CSE Social Worker, CSE Bilingual Team, WBCS SPED website, and WBCS ENL website. Communication with parents regarding their child's IEP services will utilize phone calls, U.S. mail, email, and the appropriate use of real time translation via conference call or video conference for parents of English Language Learners. WBCS understands that parents may elect to receive prior written notice, procedural safeguards notices, and due process complaint notices by electronic mail communication. WBCS will obtain consent from the parents to utilize alternate modes of communication including email, electronic or digital signatures, and conference calls/video conferencing. WBCS will work collaboratively with the ENL Department to ensure communication in the parent's preferred language.

Procedural Safeguards and Prior Written Notice Requirements

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

- The procedural safeguards notice, prior written notice, and CPSE/CSE meeting notice may be provided to the parent by email if the parent elected to receive documents by email.
- Prior written notice is not required if instruction or related services continue to be provided remotely or through a hybrid model because remote learning and telepractice is considered an alternate mode of instructional delivery and not considered a change in the student's educational placement. If, however, based on current circumstances, revisions or additions to a student's IEP need be made to continue to meet the student's needs while school is closed due to COVID-19, such changes must be made by the CPSE/CSE at a meeting or through a written agreement with the parent to amend the IEP without a meeting (with the expectation that parents must be provided a copy of the document amending the IEP and prior written notice of the proposed changes to the IEP).

Communication with parents regarding their child's IEP services will utilize phone calls, U.S. mail, email, and the appropriate use of real time translation via conference call or video conference for parents of English Language Learners. WBCS understands that parents may elect to receive prior written notice, procedural safeguards notices, and due process complaint notices by electronic mail communication. WBCS will obtain consent from the parents to utilize alternate modes of communication including email, electronic or digital signatures, and conference calls/video conferencing.

Partnership and Collaboration to Reflect All Settings Where Students are Served

Where students are served the diverse educational needs of students with disabilities are reflected through the continuum of services that are provided in a variety of settings. As school districts are ultimately responsible for the provision of FAPE, frequent opportunities to interact with representatives from all applicable school settings will best facilitate the collective review of effective service delivery and student progress monitoring. For those students who are receiving special education programs and services in a charter school, Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) program, independent or religious school, approved school-age program serving students with disabilities, or for approved preschool special education providers contracted by the county, each school district must conduct outreach efforts to remain informed regarding the planned activities for the nature and delivery of instruction and related services and to identify shared resources, materials, and technology that may be available to students, as appropriate. **WBCS will ensure clear, ongoing, and shared communication and collaboration in order to ensure equitable access to special education programs and services in order to meet the requirements of IDEA along with resources available for parents during the Statewide closure via Class Tag (or other designated App), WBCS Parent-Liaison, Language Line (CSE account), CSE Social Worker, CSE Bilingual Team, WBCS SPED website, and WBCS ENL website. Communication with parents regarding**

their child's IEP services will utilize phone calls, U.S. mail, email, and the appropriate use of real time translation via conference call or video conference for parents of English Language Learners. WBCS understands that parents may elect to receive prior written notice, procedural safeguards notices, and due process complaint notices by electronic mail communication. WBCS will obtain consent from the parents to utilize alternate modes of communication including email, electronic or digital signatures, and conference calls/video conferencing. WBCS will work collaboratively with the ENL Department to ensure communication in the parent's preferred language.

Accommodations and Modifications

Schools must continue to review instructional practices and develop plans for the necessary accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities to progress in the general education curriculum. **WBCS will identify and describe any modifications to social distancing or PPE (i.e. masks that allow student to see lips of special education teacher, teacher, or other providers) that may be necessary for certain students including students with disabilities (i.e. hearing loss, hearing impairment, students receiving speech/language services, sensory processing disorder) ensuring that any modifications minimize COVID-19 exposure risk for students with disabilities, special education teachers, and related service providers. WBCS will provide students with an IEP that includes the use of assistive technology the opportunity to continue to utilize assistive technology as part of continuity of learning in school and home. WBCS will provide all necessary accommodations and modifications during all models of instruction. All teachers and service providers will be informed, attend professional developments, and collaborate with the Special Education department to ensure access.**

Supplementary Aids and Services

Schools must ensure students with disabilities have access to supplementary aids and services to meet their unique instructional and social emotional needs. **WBCS will identify and describe any modifications to social distancing or PPE (i.e. masks that allow student to see lips of special education teacher, teacher, or other providers) that may be necessary for certain students including students with disabilities (i.e. hearing loss, hearing impairment, students receiving speech/language services, sensory processing disorder) ensuring that any modifications minimize COVID-19 exposure risk for students with disabilities, special education teachers, and related service providers. WBCS will provide students with an IEP that includes the use of assistive technology the opportunity to continue to utilize assistive technology as part of continuity of learning in school and home. WBCS will provide all necessary supplementary aids and services during all models of instruction. All teachers and service providers will be informed, attend professional developments, and collaborate with the Special Education department to ensure access.**

Technology

Schools should be aware of the students with disabilities requiring assistive technology that is used to increase, maintain, or improve their functional capabilities. Consideration needs to be given to ensure students have access to their working technology and any accompanying programs. Protocols detailing availability of an assistive technology service are necessary to directly assist a student in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. Schools should consider providing parents and families with a list of individuals, including their contact information, available to respond to questions and concerns regarding the assistive technology devices and/or service for their child(ren). **WBCS will provide students with an IEP that includes the use of assistive technology the opportunity to continue to utilize assistive technology as part of continuity of learning in school and home. WBCS will provide all necessary accommodations, modification, supplementary aids and services, and technology during all models of instruction. All families, teachers, and service providers will be informed, attend professional developments, and collaborate with the Special Education department to ensure access.**

Budget and Finance Provisions:

Attendance and Enrollment

West Buffalo Charter School will follow the provisions outlined in the Attendance for Instructional Purposes section of this report. Student absences due to school closure per Governor Executive Order due to the COVID-19 outbreak are considered legal absences per §175.6. Billing can occur the first week of the student's enrollment (physical presence or legal absence) after three consecutive days.

180-Day and 30-Day Requirement

- For the 2020-21 extended school year program, days where programs and services are provided remotely count toward the 30 days of service requirement. Flexibility has also been provided for the 2020-21 extended school year program to allow amended calendars beginning at a later start date and/or operating less than five days of instruction per week provided that amended calendars reflect at least six weeks of instruction and will be funded for 30 days of programs and services. Prior approval from NYSED is not required and the new start and end dates must be updated in the System to Track and Account for Children (STAC).

BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND WORLD LANGUAGES

WBCS has a large English Language Learner (ELL) population and always prioritizes best practices to ensure this vulnerable group of students is supported in an environment

that allows them to thrive and grow, both in the Hybrid Learning Model and Remote Learning Model.

Mandatory Requirements for Reopening

- Qualifying schools that reopen using in-person or hybrid instruction will be required to complete the ELL identification process within 30 school days of the start of the school year for all students who enrolled during COVID-19 school closures in 2019-20, as well as all students who enroll during summer of 2020 and during the first 20 school days of the 2020-21 school year. After this 20day flexibility period, identification of ELLs must resume for all students within the required 10 school days of initial enrollment as required by Commissioner's Regulations Part 154. **WBCS added the language questions from the HLQ to the enrollment paperwork for all new families which was then filled out remotely. The ENL Coordinator will review all the HLQs, and will complete the ELL identification process within 30 school days of the start of the school year for all students who enrolled during the first 20 school days of the 2020-21 school year. If any new students enroll after the 20 day flexibility period, all ELLs will be identified within 10 school days.**
- West Buffalo Charter School will provide the provision of required instructional Units of Study must be provided to all ELLs based on their most recently measured English language proficiency level during in-person or hybrid instruction. **Any Former ELL at the Commanding level of proficiency within two years of exiting ELL status will continue to receive Former ELL services in the form of Integrated ENL or other Former ELL services approved by the Commissioner under Part 154-2.3(h) during in-person or hybrid learning. WBCS will review the proficiency of students who are entering their third year as a Former ELL at the Commanding level of proficiency in 2020-21 (Students who achieved Commanding on the '18 administration of the NYSESLAT) and will provide these students with supplemental Former ELL services in the form of integrated instruction or pre-recorded lessons.**
- Maintain regular communication with the parents/guardians and other family members of ELLs to ensure that they are engaged in their children's education during the reopening process Provide all communications for parents/guardians of ELLs in their preferred language and mode of communication. **WBCS will maintain regular communication with the parents/guardians and other family members of ELLs to ensure that they are engaged in their children's**

education during the reopening process. WBCS will provide all communication for parents/guardians of ELLs in their preferred language and mode of communication through translated material, language lines, communication apps and parent liaisons.

Initial Identification of Potential ELLs

NYSED has approved temporary emergency regulatory changes to the ELL identification process to address the backlog of newly enrolled students who need to complete the ELL identification process mandated by Part 154- 2.3(a) at the commencement of the 2020-21 school year.

- Qualifying schools that reopen using in-person instruction or blended/hybrid instruction will be required to complete the ELL identification process within 30 school days of the start of the academic school year for all students who enrolled during COVID-19 school closures in 2019-20, as well as all students who enroll during summer of 2020 and during the first 20 school days of the 2020-21 academic school year. After this 20- day flexibility period, all schools that reopen using in-person or hybrid instruction will be expected to complete identification of ELLs within the required 10 school days of initial enrollment for all students pursuant to Commissioner's Regulations Part 154, including the ELL screening, identification, and placement processes. **Newly accepted West Buffalo Charter School families completed a remote version of the HLQ that was included in the enrollment paperwork. The ENL Coordinator will review the HLQs, and will complete the ELL identification process within 30 school days of the start of the school year for all students who enrolled during the first 20 school days of the 2020-21 school year. If any new students enroll after the 20 day flexibility period, all ELLs will be identified within 10 school days. The individual interviews will be conducted in-person at the school using the parent liaison or other outside interpreter. If the student's family has chosen the Remote Learning Model, they will be offered the option to remotely conduct the individual interview.**

If a student has an IEP, and also has a language other than English listed on their HLQ, WBCS will conduct a meeting with the Language Proficiency Team to determine if the student would be eligible for the NYSITELL. If the student's family has chosen the Remote Learning Model, the family will be offered the option to conduct this meeting with the Language Proficiency Team virtually.

If WBCS suspects a student has been mis-identified, it will follow the extended 65-school day timeline from the beginning of the 2020-21 school year to initiate a review of a determination made in the initial or reentry identification process for English Language Learners after receipt of a written request.

- Any new entrant enrolling in a school district, to the extent feasible, must be provisionally placed in a Bilingual Education program while awaiting NYSITELL results, as this is the program of default for districts which meet the enrollment threshold set forth under Section 154-2.3(d). **WBCS will provisionally place any student who has been recommended to take the NYSITELL based on the Informal Interview or is awaiting NYSITELL test results in an English as a New Language program. These students will receive 180 minutes weekly of integrated ENL and 180 minutes weekly of stand-alone instruction until NYSITELL results are received.**

Units of Study for English as a New Language (ENL) and Transitional Bilingual Education (BE) Programs

All ELLs must be provided the required instructional Units of Study in their ENL or BE program based on their most recently measured English language proficiency level as evidenced in their most recent NYSESLAT or their NYSITELL assessment during in-person or hybrid learning. Former ELLs at the Commanding level of proficiency within two years of exiting ELL status are to continue receiving Former ELL services in the form of Integrated ENL or other Former ELL services approved by the Commissioner under Part 154-2.3(h) during in-person or hybrid learning. **West Buffalo Charter School will provide all required instructional Units of Study to all ELLs based on their most recently measured English language proficiency level from the most recent NYSESLAT or NYSITELL assessment during hybrid or remote learning. Any Former ELL at the Commanding level of proficiency within two years of exiting ELL status will continue to receive Former ELL services in the form of Integrated ENL or other Former ELL services during hybrid or remote learning. WBCS will review the proficiency of students who are entering their third year as a Former ELL at the Commanding level of proficiency in 2020-21 (Students who achieved Commanding on the '18 administration of the NYSESLAT) and will provide these students with supplemental Former ELL services in the form of integrated instruction or pre-recorded lessons.**

Social Emotional Education for ELLs

It is extremely important to actively engage students on a regular basis to assess their needs for social emotional well-being. WBCS will offer various supports to ELLs that address social emotional needs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic or any previous trauma. Teachers will utilize MTSS with ENL teachers in any and all grouping meetings.

ENL teachers will also participate in the SST process, to identify any ELLs with social emotional needs that need to be addressed. More information on protocols and procedures related to social emotional well-being are listed in the section titled “Social Emotional Well-Being”.

Communications and Language Access

All communications for parents/guardians of ELLs must be in their preferred language and mode of communication. School districts should, to the greatest extent possible, provide interpretation and translation through a qualified interpreter/translator in the languages most commonly spoken in the district, and at a minimum in those languages spoken by a large number and percentage of ELLs. **WBCS will continue to create and disseminate parent/guardian resources in the language(s) most frequently spoken by a school’s ELL population on how to access technology used in online education. The school will post videos on the WBCS website to show how to join and navigate Google Classroom, how to turn in assignments, how to use Google Meet, and how to email teachers from Gmail and Google Classroom. These resources will be available in Nepali, Spanish, Burmese, Karen, Arabic, and Swahili. They will also be shared via Facebook, and ClassTag to individual families based on their language preferences.**

Professional Learning for Educators

In order to ensure that all NYS educators are aware of and able to address ELL needs, all teachers and administrators must receive professional learning related to serving ELLs as required by Commissioner’s Regulations Part 154. Districts must adhere to professional learning requirements set forth under Section 154-2.3(k), pursuant to which – unless the district is eligible for and NYSED has approved a waiver – 15% of all teachers’ professional learning hours, and 50% of all professional learning hours for Bilingual Education and ENL teachers, must be targeted to the specific needs of ELLs.

All teachers and administrators at WBCS will receive high quality professional learning on topics related to the linguistically diverse needs of ELLs. Topics may also include the use of technology and hybrid or remote learning strategies in topics related to ELLs. Teacher schedules include blocks of time built in for professional development, and will include strategies related to ELLs.

Progress Monitoring

With the cancelation of the 2020 NYSESLAT, schools must determine new methods to measure the English language proficiency levels of their ELLs to ensure that these students are receiving the appropriate level of instruction. **It is crucial to identify any gaps in an ELLs learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. WBCS is developing progress monitoring tools to pinpoint**

any gaps in language development towards English language proficiency and towards content area proficiency in English.

West Buffalo Charter School is using the “Checklist for Developing or Selecting an ELP Monitoring Assessment” guidance to act as the roadmap for creating the Progress Monitoring Assessments. The assessments will be grouped by proficiency level, and each proficiency level’s indicators will include the goals for each language modality students need to achieve to move up to the next proficiency level. This will not only provide a full picture of the ELL’s language abilities, but provide instructional recommendations for ENL teachers.

The progress monitoring assessments will assess the student’s social and academic language, oral and listening comprehension, literacy-based foundational skills, and reading levels. We will also ensure that it is aligned with Next Generation Learning Standards and based on research-based results. We will use a plethora of resources in the creation of this progress monitoring assessment, including Targets of Measure (TOM’s), and NYSESLAT Speaking and Writing rubrics for grades K-8. The administration of these assessments will be able to be both online or paper, depending on if the student is using the hybrid or remote model.

Teachers will assess ELLs monthly, and include the data report in the student’s virtual folder. Student work samples and self-assessments will also be included in this folder. This data can also be shared with other teachers to help guide instruction when the ENL teacher is not able to offer language supports. Translated progress reports will be sent home to parents/guardians showing a student’s language development towards English language proficiency.

STAFFING

Reopening Plan Mandatory Requirements

Pursuant to Education Law 3012-d, each school district and BOCES must fully implement its currently approved APPR plans in each school year. **West Buffalo Charter School will continue to follow the same rigorous and high level APPR process it has always followed whether hybrid or remote, pursuant to the above.**

CERTIFICATION, INCIDENTAL TEACHING, AND SUBSTITUTE TEACHING

Reopening Plan Mandatory Requirements

- Pursuant to Education Law 3001, individuals employed to teach in New York State public schools must hold a valid certificate. School districts, BOCES, and charter schools can review the SIRS 329 Staff Certifications report, which is available in Cognos for authorized users, to ensure that teachers hold the appropriate certificates for their teaching assignments. This report is refreshed weekly and lists all valid certificates for all staff identified in the school district, BOCES, or charter school Staff Snapshot. **West Buffalo Charter School will continue to follow the same rigorous and high level staffing standards it has always followed whether hybrid or remote, pursuant to the above.**