

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

NOTE TO COMMUNITY:

This document is intended to address the questions that we have received from the community from the Parent Forums. We appreciate your interest and you can send questions by clicking [HERE](#).

Health and Safety

The Westchester County Department of Health (WCDOH) has provided valuable information about how it will support the school districts. Click [here](#) to see the information.

You have multiple nurses at every school?

There is one Registered Nurse per building, with two additional LPNs in the district as well as three health aides. We are hiring 5 additional health aides for the 2020-21 school year.

How long do you estimate temperature screening will take every day?

Screenings should take 6-8 seconds per person. We plan on each kiosk screening 250-300 individuals in a 30 minute period.

How many mask breaks will the kids get per day?

Mask breaks will naturally occur for our younger students during, snack, lunch and recess. Teachers will also schedule additional breaks as needed.

Many kids don't have temperatures with COVID - what other symptoms will you exclude children for? Simple runny nose? Cough? What will be the protocol for kids to return to school?

Any questions answered affirmatively to the COVID health questionnaire will exclude a student from school for that day. A doctor's note will be required for return to school.

Are you requiring certain paperwork for children who are medically exempt from wearing a mask? Will all staff know who those children are so those children aren't forced to wear them by staff that may not know?

Any student who is unable to wear a mask due to medical or emotional condition, will require a note from their doctor or therapist.

What training do the RN's have in using swabs for testing? They were mailed - have our RNs been expressly trained in this?

Our nurses will be trained in performing the COVID swab test, three of our RNs have been doing COVID testing over the summer.

In high school a teacher has different groups, tell me how you are going to trace all of them if one of them tests positive?

Through the use of the student's schedule, we will identify the students and staff that were in contact with that positive student. We will share that information with the Westchester County Department of Health.

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

If a student feels sick at school, will they need to go home or to the nurse's office? If they need to go home, will a parent be required to pick them up?

Any student who is sent to the nurses office with COVID-19 symptomology will be sent to the isolation room, the parent or guardian will be called, the student will need to be picked up from school and should be taken to their health care provider.

Unfortunately parents medicate their kids and send them to school when they are sick. how will you know or handle these situations?

Students who are not presenting with any of the COVID-19 symptoms will not be recognized as ill. With the scope of the COVID-19 pandemic, we hope that parents will not medicate their children and send them to school.

Is there a school-based testing and contact-tracing program? How/when will parents be alerted?

The Public Schools of the Tarrytowns does not conduct their own testing and contact tracing. We maintain a relationship with the Westchester County Department of Health in order to assist in referring staff members to testing sites, as well as collaborating with the WCDOH on contact tracing.

Wouldn't that mean there is a school-based contact tracing plan?

No, contact tracers have specific training. We are providing the information to trained contact tracers at the DOH.

Will the school assist in finding out who the child interacted with and who needs to be informed?

Yes, this will be facilitated through either the schedule in the secondary schools or through rosters and schedules in the primary schools.

Contact tracing can take days. Will you rely on DOH to communicate to the contacts? Why wouldn't you just notify everyone who was in the classroom?

If the district is notified of a positive case, we will provide this information to the community. We will also be specifically notifying the parents of the classes involved.

Will there be a lag between identification of a case and notification of parents and teachers? If so, that lag won't be under our control; it's per the DOH?

Broad notification that there has been a positive case will come from the district immediately. The contact tracers from DOH will also perform the contact tracing of those who had close contact.

If there is a reported positive case, will whomever the person came in contact with be required to quarantine for a given amount of time?

Anyone who has come into close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 will need to be quarantined for 14 days. A close contact is defined by the CDC as 15 minutes or longer, and inside six feet of distance.

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Will parents be made aware if a student in a cohort of 10 is home because they are showing signs of COVID and need to be tested?

If a student is showing signs of COVID-19 they will be asked to stay home until cleared by their doctor or have a negative COVID-19 test result. We will consult with our district medical director in all cases; however, we do not anticipate informing families of a student in their child's classes who demonstrates some symptoms.

What are the metrics being measured to determine if and when in-person school can resume for all students in the district? We will continue to follow the guidance from the CDC, New York State Department of Health and and State Education Department. However, based on the current social distancing requirements it is impossible for our facilities to safely house the return of all students to in-person school everyday.

Are students going to be seated at desks that are six feet apart? If so, why not more mask breaks while they are seated at their desks?

Yes, students will be seated six feet apart. The CDC recommends keeping the mask on as much as possible; however, should a student need a mask break they will be allowed to take one.

Will students be allowed to interact if they are wearing a mask?

Students in masks will be allowed to interact, but will still be required to practice social distancing.

Will any students or teachers be exempt from wearing a mask?

It is possible. Any students who are medically exempt from wearing a mask will be provided polycarbonate barriers at their desk. Any teacher who is medically exempt will be provided with a face shield.

Will there be any plexiglass dividers between desks? Will teachers be provided face shields?

If a student is medically exempt from wearing a mask, then a plexiglass divider will be put in place. Teachers who would like a face shield will be provided with one.

What is the turnaround time for COVID-19 tests?

Turn-around time for the results varies by facility but in Westchester County results have been received in approximately 5-8 days.

Temperature checks will not identify asymptomatic cases. What is the percentage of asymptomatic cases you are expecting in our population of students?

The Centers for Disease Control reports that 16% of children with COVID-19 are asymptomatic.

How does Dr. Goldstein suggest evaluating the asymptomatics?

The Westchester County Department of Health has not issued guidance on screening or testing asymptomatic students or teachers.

How will emergency drills and actual emergencies be handled such as fire drills and lockdown procedures?

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

We will continue to practice all mandatory safety drills and we will maintain social distancing throughout drills. As an example, during a lockdown drill students will not all congregate in the corner of the room out of eyesight, but will be reminded of the requirements. In the event of a true emergency, decisions will be made that prioritize student safety over social distancing.

Instructional Program

How will students in the All-Remote Learning Model be able to meet their teachers? This will vary by school. Teachers will schedule time on Google Meet to meet each of their students individually.

Questions that are specific to a grade or school will be addressed by the respective principal. Please refer to the principal information sessions and subsequent FAQs for each school.

Kindergarteners and other young children tend to have more trouble paying attention to classes virtually. When will a general schedule be shared so parents understand the expectations for a full-day, at-home schedule.

Schedules will be shared by Friday, August 28th.

Is it possible to have a designated teacher for each of the two learning models?

Yes. At this time, we will have a dedicated teacher(s) for students who are participating in the All-Remote Learning Model in grades kindergarten through fifth. Our plans for grades six through twelve are being finalized and will be shared this week.

Can you describe what a day will look like for a student who is learning remotely?

Grades K-5:

Students in the All-Remote Learning Model will have a teacher who is dedicated to a class of students learning entirely at home. All students will receive live instruction every day. At times, the teacher will be addressing the entire class. Then, at some points during the school day, students may be placed into smaller groups to allow for more individualized support. For example, Group 1 may receive live teacher instruction and support while Group 2 is engaged in independent work or an asynchronous lesson. Then the groups will switch, allowing Group 2 time with the teacher for live instruction. This is consistent with our standard classroom practices and helps ensure that students have quality time with their teacher.

Students in the Hybrid Learning Model will be assigned to either Cohort A or Cohort B. Each Cohort will receive three days of remote instruction which will be taught by the same teacher he or she has in the physical classroom. When at home, the student will engage in a combination of live streamed lessons, independent practice and asynchronous lessons. When participating in the live streamed lessons, the Cohort at home will virtually join the class being taught to the other Cohort in the physical classroom. The Cohort at home will be able to engage in discussion and ask questions in

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

real-time.

Are the instructional plans differentiated by the age and level of the learner?

All students will be participating in either the All-Remote or Hybrid Learning Model. As in any school year, teachers will continue to design and deliver age appropriate lessons and take into account the varying abilities of their students.

Can families receive learning (tool) kits for the younger learners?

Mr. Dorn and Ms. Culianos will be scheduling building specific meetings to discuss toolkits.

If a family chooses the all-remote learning model beginning in September and then wants to change to a hybrid learning model in December, will the student stay with the same teacher?

This is still to be determined and will be determined, in part, based on how many students choose to switch. However, at this time, we would anticipate that a remote student joining the hybrid model in December would be assigned to one of the hybrid teachers.

What happens if a parent is reluctant to have their child on a screen and the student does not participate in the remote instruction days?

Students are expected to follow their school's daily schedule which, at times, includes participating in live instruction. If the student misses the remote instruction, they are missing that day's instruction.

Questions that are specific to a grade or school will be addressed by the respective principal. Please refer to the principal information sessions and subsequent FAQs for each school.

What is happening with students who are learning at home when the teacher is talking to those in the classroom and vice versa?

Students will be given direction to work independently on a brief assignment if the teacher is working with one student or a small group at any given time, which aligns with our standard practices in the regular classroom. It is actually very common to have young students engaged in an activity and working somewhat independently while the teacher works with a small group.

How will teachers respond to students on Zoom while they have students in the classroom? How long will it take them to do this?

It will depend on the lesson being taught and the students who are on Zoom, but we anticipate it will not be more than 5-10 minutes.

Will the primary teacher be handling both class and remote learning? Will teaching assistants also be available?

There are full time teaching assistants in our kindergarten classes and multiple shared teaching assistants in grades 1-5.

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

How much time will students have to meet 1:1 with their teachers?

Students will be given scheduled times to interact with their teachers throughout each week. It can come in the form of office hours, small group lessons and 1:1 depending upon student needs.

Will the district continue to provide professional development to teachers during the school year to improve remote learning?

Yes. Teachers have been engaged in a range of professional development to learn best practices for teaching in a remote/hybrid setting since March and will continue. Teachers have also been asked to respond to a survey and identify any additional questions or needs they may have. Further, the four superintendent conference days scheduled for the start of the school year will be designed to provide specific professional development that has been requested by the teachers.

How will teachers be asked to manage poor behavior by students that occurs in the remote learning setting?

Learning expectations will be reviewed at the start of the school year so that students are aware of what is expected of them. Teachers will continue to use classroom management strategies and reinforce the Code of Conduct with their students.

How will the Dual Language curriculum work in both formats?

The teachers will alternate between English and Spanish instruction- one day will be in English for all content areas and the next day will be in Spanish for all content areas.

What is the requirement for kids to be using a computer during remote days? Does this vary by grade?

Students will follow a daily schedule to access their instruction. And, yes, the time is likely to vary by grade level and subject.

Will students of all ages have recess? If so, will students be able to interact and how will social distancing be managed?

Yes, time will be scheduled for all students to have daily recess and they will be assigned a designated zone. There will be many physical and mindfulness activities available to those who choose to participate, such as hopscotch, jump rope, rock/paper/scissor activities, conflict resolution ideas, dance, balance activities, yoga, and circuit fitness activities.

On inclement days will the PE be in the classrooms?

On inclement weather days, PE will occur either in the gymnasium or classroom, depending on the age of the students. When inside, the focus will be on anaerobic activities such as yoga and mindfulness. Social distancing will be practiced and masks worn.

Technology

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What type of technology will be used to support remote learning?

The district is using a range of hardware and software platforms to provide age-appropriate and engaging instruction. These include:

- **Google Classroom**
- **District approved learning platforms such as**
- **Document cameras**
- **Smart boards**
- **Instructional videos**

Will students and teachers have the necessary, high-quality technology to effectively manage remote learning?

All students will receive a district-issued Chromebook and internet connectivity will be provided to those that need it. The buildings in the district have adequate bandwidth to facilitate our remote learning plans, and the sound and visual quality of the lessons will be high.

Multiple students and working parents accessing the internet in one household can cause internet crashing and freezing of computer screens. Will all live instruction be taped so that if a student has technical difficulties they don't miss the lesson?

Students will have access to the instructional materials through their Google Classroom. If a student has difficulty accessing the live learning sessions, their teachers will work with them to ensure they have access to the material they may have missed.

What about ADA Requirements for the hearing impaired? With masks on both teachers being viewed remotely as well as those live in the classroom. What about closed captioning? The district will adhere to all ADA requirements. Closed captioning is available.

How are students supposed to read the board and watch the teacher?

Students are adept at directing their attention to multiple learning resources in the regular classroom. Many of our standard practices in the regular classroom are applicable in the hybrid/remote learning model.

Transportation

How many students are permitted on the large and small buses?

Large buses have a 70-passenger capacity and up to 42 students will be permitted at one time. Small buses have a 20-passenger capacity and a maximum of 18 students will be permitted at one time.

Will students require a temperature check before boarding the bus? If so, by whom?

Yes, students will have their temperature screened before boarding the bus by monitors or drivers. Additional time has been factored into the runs as appropriate.

Will the health questionnaire also be required prior to boarding.

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

No, a questionnaire will not be required prior to boarding the bus.

How are you going to keep social distance in buses?

Seats will be clearly marked with tape to indicate that students should not sit in certain seats.

Child Nutrition

Can I pick my children up for lunch every day?

We would strongly discourage parents from picking up students each day for lunch.

What is the plan to social distance at lunch time?

Students will have lunch in classrooms, the cafeteria and designated outside spaces to ensure social distancing. Students eating lunch in the classroom will maintain a 6-foot distance.

Is it really safe for the children to eat indoors?

As long as students practice social distancing, they are safe.

General

Why is TUFSD choosing to start school and have in-person learning in September when other districts have made the decision to do all-remote learning for the time being?

There are many different approaches being taken by schools throughout the region. Each district is making decisions based on the unique characteristics of their district.

How did you select parents for focus groups discussion and how can we be involved in your decision making going forward?

As part of our parent survey, which was sent to all parents, there was an invitation to participate in focus group discussions. Parents who expressed interest were forwarded a link to participate. The district continues to welcome community input and encourages ongoing participation in our district-wide and school-specific information sessions and Board of Education meetings. Any additional calls for task force members or focus groups will be widely publicized.

Will students/staff be expected to arrive at their school early each day to allow for testing?

Principals will work with students and staff to stagger arrivals of walkers, parent drop offs, and bus riders to accommodate daily screening.

Is it possible to offer some classes and/or lunch outside, weather permitting?

Principals are evaluating their buildings and grounds, as well as schedules to identify opportunities to utilize outside space for classes and lunch. However, student safety and security remain paramount in these decisions.

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

How will students be able to interact and enjoy the social aspect of being in school?

All aspects of school will be different for the foreseeable future and will take some adjustment for students and staff. However, we believe there will still be a significant social emotional and academic benefit for our students and staff to return to in-person learning and interaction.

How are you going to monitor student use of bathrooms to ensure they are not overcrowded and that masks are being worn?

Revised bathroom procedures will be part of our staff and student training.

NOTE: Questions that are specific to a grade or school will be addressed by the respective principal. Please refer to the principal information sessions and subsequent FAQs for each school.

Will the district be working with each principal to address parents' concerns about the plan based on the age of the child?

Of course, The district has been working closely with principals to ensure that parent questions and concerns are shared and being addressed. Each principal is scheduling a parent information for the week of August 24th and questions can be posed at that time.

How will after school activities be handled?

Based on the circumstances and environment, we will determine if after school activities can run beginning the week of October 19th. We are still awaiting a determination from the Governor regarding interscholastic athletics which are currently postponed until September 21, 2020.

When will specific plans and schedules be provided by each school?

Principals are scheduling parent meetings for the week of August 24th and will share sample schedules at those meetings.

What is Cohort C and which types of specialized learning is included in this Cohort?

Cohort C is for students with an IEP who are in our most restrictive settings, (8:1:2, 12:1:2 and 15:1). These students will be coming to school four days a week. In addition, certain students enrolled in our English as a New Language program will be part of Cohort C.

The division of Cohort by last names (A-L and M-Z) does not take into account the actual number of students by school. What happens if one Cohort has considerably more students than the other?

It is accurate that the alphabetical breakdown can vary by class, grade or building. One of the goals of our hybrid model is to ensure siblings attend school on the same days. If adjustments are necessary to balance the cohorts, we will make them and communicate with families.

Will the district provide tutoring for students who fell behind last year?

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

It's part of our regular practice to do baseline assessments at the beginning of the school year. Students who demonstrate increased need will have opportunities for additional support in their demonstrated area of need.

How will students who have a 504 plan receive instructional modifications in a remote model?

All students with a Section 504 will receive their specific accommodations. Accommodations have not been modified during COVID-19. Please reach out to Mr. Dorn's office with any questions.

The district's plan seems to prioritize the Hybrid Learning Model. Why isn't there a preference for a five-day remote model with all students receiving live instruction?

Our goal is to provide the best possible education to all students regardless of whether they are participating in the Hybrid or All-Remote Learning Model. That said, we concur with medical professionals that there is added value, both academically and social emotionally, to in-person instruction. Unfortunately, the virtual environment has the greatest negative impact on our most vulnerable students. The district has incorporated numerous protocols and procedures to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff.

Does school funding depend on enrollment numbers? That is, do schools lose funding when families choose a home school or private school option?

Certain state aid categories are based on overall district enrollment, which is evaluated on an annual basis.

How much of the core curriculum will be taught remotely vs "in the classroom"?

Teachers will be delivering core curriculum in both the hybrid and remote learning models on a daily basis.

It continues to disturb me that the view of teaching here is teacher talking and students listening. How is this engagement? This does not advance the situation from last spring.

The video shared was highlighting the use of document cameras to display learning material in the classroom. Students will engage with their teachers in multiple ways including: questions and answers, use of interactive technology to post responses - flip grid.

Will students be able to access all lessons at any time?

Yes, students will be able to access learning materials, assignments and resources through their Google Classroom at any time just as in a regular year. Students are reminded, however, that they are expected to follow their schedule and attend class when in session. Attendance will be taken.

I'm concerned about the student's ability to interact with the teacher. What if there is a question that needs to be addressed at that moment?

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Students will be provided time to ask questions.

Will students see the teacher in person?

Students will be able to see their teacher while on the Google meet.

Will there still be Teacher Aides?

Yes, there are teacher aides in all our buildings to support our students.

Was there a consideration to have two teachers per class, one to teach live in class and one to teach remotely?

We have considered a variety of possible scenarios. We continue to review the number of students who selected the All-Remote Learning Plan so that we can make the best decisions about how to allocate resources.

Will scheduling be considered that allows a teacher to focus on the students learning virtually while those on the hybrid model are in specials or at lunch?

A variety of scheduling options are being considered. Teachers will be scheduling time to work with their remote students to answer questions and provide additional support as needed.

If a teacher is out due to illness, will the substitute be trained to be able to handle the demands of these models?

Substitutes will be given access to teacher's materials for whom they are covering.

Is there a plan in place if the assigned class teacher opts out of teaching in person

We are looking at staff health concerns/needs and will assign teachers as needed to remote instruction.

Can parents decide to have their child participate in the Hybrid Model for in-class learning, but not participate in specials such as music or PE?

No, when children are in school, they are expected to follow their class schedule. The district has health and safety protocols that are in place regarding the wearing of masks and social distancing.

How will the district manage extended teacher absences? How many teachers have already indicated that they will take leaves rather than return?

We are in the process of speaking to staff members who have expressed concerns due to their own health needs. Information regarding leaves and accommodations have been shared with all staff. We will continue to follow the regulations regarding requests for leaves.

When will the individual schools have their information sessions?

The week of August 24th.

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

If one has chosen the hybrid model for their child will they be able to switch between now and the beginning of the year? This is in consideration of many area districts switching to an all remote model. Yes, if a parent would like to change their option to remote, they will need to contact their child's school as soon as possible.

If a child has to miss their cohort day for any reason, will they be able to access remote learning at home?

Students can access all learning materials/resources through their Google Classroom. If a child misses instruction, similar to what would happen in school, in regular sessions, they will be given an opportunity to talk with their teacher and make up missed work.

Remote teaching varies considerably by grade and subject. Is the district providing grade- and subject-specific training for teachers?

Teachers have been engaged in a range of professional development to learn best practices for teaching in a remote/hybrid setting since March. What's more, a survey was sent out to ask teachers to identify additional needs. We are dedicating the four superintendent conference days scheduled for the start of the school year to providing specific professional development that has been requested by the teachers.

Community questions that are specific to a grade or school will be addressed by the relevant principal during the school-specific information sessions taking place during the week of August 24th.

Facilities

Has the district purchased air purifiers for each classrooms and each bathroom? I believe Windows in classrooms can't fully open by law - how will you address ventilation? FAQ mentioned the district plans to use A/C

Air purifiers have not been purchased at this time. Windows in most classrooms can partially open to facilitate air flow. Ventilation will be addressed by opening windows and using air conditioning units and the building exhaust systems.

Does the district have electrostatic sprayers?

Yes, the district has electrostatic sprayers and will use them daily in critical areas within each building.

Have you looked into affordable "far-UVC lighting"?

UVC lighting technology has not been approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and currently cannot be used in school buildings.

Will students be using their lockers?

No, students will not be assigned lockers at this time.

Survey

TUFSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

When responding to the district's survey to choose the Hybrid or All-Remote Learning Model, did families with multiple children respond multiple times? If so, doesn't that favor those families?

The district regards each student as an individual learner and, therefore, parents were asked to make a determination for each student. For example, a family with three students enrolled in the district responded for each student. In some cases, parents chose different models for children within the same family based on the specific needs and learning style of that learner.