



August 19, 2020

Following the midnight release of the Superintendent's reopening plan last week, we asked educators to review the proposal and share with us their questions and concerns. Because the plan was drafted and approved by the School Committee prior to beginning negotiations with the Haverhill Education Association, we were not able to address these questions in advance. A week later, we still await a response from the School Committee to the issues below:

HEA Questions about District Proposal

Health Concerns

- Is pregnancy considered a “high risk” category?
- What mental health accommodations are you making for teachers?
- Can we file for workman's comp if we are exposed to Covid at school?
- If we are exposed, do we have a right to know? What if we are not told?
- What job protections are there for teachers who have child/elderly care issues at home this year?
- Will all staff and students be tested prior to the start of school and who will pay for this testing and retesting if I am exposed to Covid at school?
- What is the timeline of testing before going into school i.e. 3 days before, 7 days, etc.?
- Are we mandated to test for Covid-19?
- If a member is caring daily for a high-risk family member who lives in another home, will there be an option for teachers to opt out of in person learning? It's not ideal, but we don't want to get our family members sick.
- If medically compromised and request remote teaching, is my job at risk?

Plan Concerns

- How many will go to school 4 days a week instead of 2. Are teachers responsible for the remote learning portion in this scenario as we would be in the hybrid model? HPS stated if 60% of families choose remote learning, then they will let those 60% remote. The remaining 40%?
- Will parents be allowed in the buildings?
- Some buildings have different AM drop off times, with a 30 minute “recess” during drop off until classroom instruction starts at 9:00. Please address.
- Who decides who is outside and when?



- When students are not working and/or showing up who chases them down?
- What are the times for each school?
- Why does the governor's plan for only 25 indoors contradict public school plans?
- In what order do grades or cohorts "phase-in"? Also, it seems like everyone will be fully hybrid by October 19. That seems too quick. I'm ok with a phased-in hybrid if it were done much slower. I would actually rather start all remote and start slowly fading in at the end of October/Beginning November
- What happens when a new student comes from another district? Do they quarantine? Do they need to provide a negative Covid test?
- Will SPED students continue to be integrated into other classrooms?
- Are there going to be a maximum number of students per cohort? Will the number of students be consistent across schools in classrooms of the same grade?
- Do we have the numbers on how many families from HPS are now going to choose to complete remote learning? How about HPS families that are choosing to opt out and homeschool instead?

Environmental concerns

- What's happening with people up on the second and third floors of the newer schools? Can they use fans? Can they have AC? Will it be too hot in some classrooms to wear masks? What temperature in the classroom will be considered to be too high to be in the building?
- Will the buildings be deep cleaned after cohort B occupies them?
- How can deep cleaning be completed on Wednesdays if the teachers and some students are in the building?
- When are the results going to be available to the public on the conditions of the schools ventilation systems? Will we see these reports and if they are safe, how often will they be maintained? Systems retested?
- The plan states that the bathrooms will be sanitized every hour. Are there enough custodians to allow for that? Does each building have an electrostatic germ blaster? If not, how will the ones we have be used?
- Can all staff members have access to N95 masks?



Classroom concerns

- How will the district manage the ELD classes which last year topped at 29 per?
- How will you assure that ESPs are not being pulled from the classroom to sub for other grade levels/teachers who are out sick or quarantined?
- If classrooms are being recorded how are we protecting the privacy rights of other students? (ie. students with special needs, medical issues, etc)?
- The document states that the desks will be 6 feet apart but if I remember correctly, at our school desks are 3 feet apart. If that is the case then the desks need to be rearranged.
- Will the students have time to transition into their new school setting (see photos/ videos/ explanations/ dialog about changes), since it will look completely different then last year?
- Will there be enough room for all my students (25-30+) to fit inside a classroom when the CDC says we have to be at least 6 ft apart in order to maintain safety?
- How are preschool students going to have play groups on Wednesdays as outlined in your proposal if they can touch each other or share objects?
- How will you address a classroom that may need to be evacuated?
- How many students can be in a bathroom at once? We have numerous groups in one grade level (11 in 6th grade alone), and there are bound to be many students in the bathrooms at once. Do we have a plan in preventing this from happening?
- Some school districts in MA are not allowing backpacks in school. I know at ABC and Nettle we are not using our lockers, but are students allowed to bring in things from home i.e. notebooks, school supplies, writing utensils, etc?
- What happens during a fire alarm, lock down, or active shooter drill?
- Outside tents have been mentioned a few times. That will work in September and most of October, but what happens in the winter months when we are depending on the space that the tents provide for classes, lunches, etc., and we can no longer use the tents? The document did mention that this would help during the warmer months, but no solution was given for the winter months.
- Will there be sign up for tents? Or which teachers/subjects/grades will be using tents?

Teaching concerns

- The average art supply budget is 1.50 per student per year, thus making it impossible to give students their own supplies to keep. How will this be resolved to comply with the DESE suggestions to give students all of their own supplies?

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- What are the evaluation standards this year?
- Can all staff, curriculum, and IEP meetings be held remotely?
- How does asking staff to sign-in everyday ensure contact tracing? (If a staff member is absent the school building would already know that information.)
- What materials will we have access to for teaching?
- When dividing into cohorts at the HHS, will the scholars be pushed into electives/classes they don't want for the sake of "cohort transitions"? (Behavior issues)
- Will everyone have similar caseloads at HHS?
What is expected of a freshman teacher for evening orientation?
- Are teachers allowed to use paper materials i.e. worksheets, textbooks, classroom libraries or does everything have to be online? (And if everything is online then why are we going to this hybrid model? This shows that the issue is child care and not education)
- Are teachers teaching both cohorts, because that would seem like it defeats the purpose of having 2 cohorts, if the teachers are being exposed to both groups.
- When we do teach remotely, we have to do it from our classroom? Why can't we teach remotely from our house?
- Are teachers supposed to teach remotely and in-person at the same time?? That seems completely unreasonable. Where will staff eat lunch?
- Will we be teaching on camera?
- Do teachers still have prep?
- What new duties will be added?
- What will the morning meeting look like?
- How many extra staff members have you hired to assist with SEL?
- Can at risk teachers volunteer to teach remotely? How will you determine who teaches remotely if there are more requests than is needed?
- How can we physically protect our school counselors who do intake interviews?
- Will we have to record our lessons? Will sick days have to be used if teachers are exposed to Covid and are required to quarantine? Will staff be expected to work remotely during this time if not symptomatic?
- What is the expectation for teachers regarding teaching in person students and students who are at home? Are lessons being shared live to the cohort at home learning remotely? With masks will students even be able to hear or understand what is being taught?
- Would a student who is sub-separate and chooses remote be taught by his/her SpED teachers or a "remote" teacher?



- For students that are deaf and hard of hearing/ wear cochlear implants and need to see our faces to understand us, how will they be accommodated as they will no longer be able to communicate or understand effectively?
- ESPs and Specialists need clear assignments so they can limit their contacts.

Breakfast, Lunch, Recess, Bathroom, Hallway, and Bus concerns

- What if we don't comply with the bathroom app?
- How will dismissals (bus and parent pick up) be handled?
- What are specific “hallway” monitoring duties, mask break, etc?
- What is the plan for busses?
- What happens in bad weather? Where will students eat? Where, when, and how will students have mask breaks?
- Is breakfast going to be eaten in the classrooms? If so, what will be done after breakfast to sanitize the desks and air? Who will monitor students if they eat in their classroom? That will require many staff.
- If water fountains are shut down for safety, how are we going to deal with all the students who are hot and want a drink and don't have a water bottle which happens all the time?
- “Breakfast after the bell” was just approved. How are we expected to feed students after the designated time for Breakfast while others are in classes working?
- What is the plan for recess (indoor and outdoor)? Have the lunch monitors agreed to come back? What support will they have?
- Who will be responsible for cleaning bathrooms after each student use? How often for deep cleaning? Many students are on toileting programs. For a few, toileting is a trigger event for many behaviors which results in a filthy bathroom.

Discipline concerns

- How many times does a student have to be non-compliant (mask wearing) before they are reassigned to remote learning?
- Will the districts have a zero-tolerance policy for students that remove masks?
- When a student takes off their mask and violates the 6-foot proximity is that considered assault? Can we press charges against them for putting our lives at risk?
- How do we report SD violations or if too many kids are in one class?

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- What is the protocol of students who refuse to wear their mask or social distance? Are there students that are allowed to not wear a mask for medical reasons and if so where will they be placed?
- What supports will be in place for students that take off their masks or refuse to wear masks?
- If need for restraint/physical intervention arises, limit to the amount of adults intervening? Sometimes switches need to be made during the intervention due to student targeting staff or staff fatigue/injury.

Technology concerns

- How are we going to ensure that all of the devices given out in March are in working condition?
- What is the plan to identify new students who need devices and distribute?
- Protocol for students who have internet issues? Technology assistance needs?

Covid testing/illness/quarantine concerns

- What is the protocol when someone in our classroom tests positive? Or if they are sent home to be tested? If we need to quarantine for 2 weeks, are we required to use our sick time?
- When a student gets sick and tests positive, how will we know they stayed home during the mandatory quarantine period? Will they need to be tested twice?
- If we got Covid-19 at work in our school and die, can our family members sue the city for poor working conditions?
- If we got Covid-19 at work in our school can we sue the school for poor working conditions?
- According to the proposed plan “Staff will complete daily wellness self-assessments” when will this take place exactly during our contracted hours?
- Do new students in our district have to quarantine prior to starting in person learning if they are coming from a high-risk area?
- If schools shut down because of Covid teachers should not be required to still report to their buildings they should also be able to work remotely.

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- What if a teacher is out sick or on leave for some reason? We have a difficult enough time getting subs in our schools. Who is going to sub for us during these difficult times, knowing they too could be infected?
- What happens when too many teachers that feel unsafe and they decide not to return/ retire early/ or FMLA/ medical waiver?
- In the SC meeting, Dr. Maddox was discussing if/when students become infected. He mentioned that if students from different cohorts were infected then we weren't keeping them separated because they would be mingling from one cohort to another. How can we prevent a student from one cohort not hanging out with a student from another cohort outside of school? We all know they are walking to school together, at one another's houses, we have siblings and cousins in the same grade, etc. We may be keeping each cohort apart at school but they are not in these groups 24 hours a day. If one student gets infected, then most likely many students will be exposed.
- Will we be able to take temperatures before the students enter? Can we trust the parents to share health conditions with us? Kids are often sent to school after vomiting at home or having a fever. And there are students who do not have clean clothes etc but we are now expecting them to have clean masks?
- What will happen if we can't get substitute teachers? Who will teach the students?
- If we need to quarantine for 2 weeks then I'm assuming our whole cohort will need to. Who is going to teach our cohort b?
- Will the classroom teachers be in charge of both the in person and remote curriculum? Also, who will be teaching those students whose parents are opting out in person learning all together? Will they be in a different cohort? How will those students, whose parents have opted out of the in-person model, be serviced if they are on an IEP, 504 and/or an EL student?
- If the parent survey shows that 60% or more parents want remote learning, then how will it be decided who teaches remotely and who teaches in person?
- What supports will be there for teachers? Attendance, contacting home, technology help, small group work, 1:1 supports, etc.
- In the Spring we worked on tracking students we did not see, now we will be with opposite cohorts...is it expected we do this before and after school?
- We need protocols for staff working with high need students who need to be touched, restrained, or who can't wear PPE. What happens if a classroom needs to be evacuated?

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- How will you address specialists (art, music, gym, library, tech) in contact with multiple students a day, traveling classroom to classroom? They will be exposed to hundreds of students and staff.
- What new trainings will you offer staff?
- Will there be equity for staff to student ratio? For example, specialists see the entire student population within a week period, whereas other teachers see less.
- Who will be monitoring the Covid isolation/quarantine room? If they hire a CNA (like Marotta mentioned at SC meeting), will they be trained in de escalation strategies if students get upset/behavioral?
- Hand Sanitizer --- Have children with PICA, are non-toxic Hand Sanitizers just as effective? Will District provide for it?
- What happens if a parent can't/unavailable to/doesn't want to pick up child from isolation room if student is symptomatic?
- Will there be a limit to the amount of students waiting in an isolation room? If over limit, any contingency plan?