Key Communication Information found in NYS Guidance

Communication/Family and Community Engagement

Regular and frequent communication between schools, families, and the wider community has always been an essential element of effective family and community engagement. With all the uncertainty surrounding COVID’s spread and its impact on local communities, communication and family engage­ment will be more important than ever this year. When families, schools, and communities work to­gether and keep each other informed, students are more successful, and everyone benefits.

As plans for reopening schools are being developed, districts must work together with families to foster trust and instill confidence. Building these strong relationships takes regular, frequent, and transparent two-way communications. These communications should be clear and consistent, and families should be encouraged to engage in the process.

***Reopening Plan Mandatory 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.
* 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.
* Responsible Parties may consider developing webpages, text and email groups, and/or social media groups or posts.
* 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.
* 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.”

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.

Full New York State Education Department document link: <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/reopening-schools/nys-p12-school-reopening-guidance.pdf>