

HAMPDEN CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE EAST & WEST



SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN

2020

LETTER FROM SUPERINTENDENT

August 7, 2020

Dear Hampden Charter School of Science Families, Students, and Staff,

A review of data from the survey we shared at our July 2nd Webinar has made it clear that HCSS families would like the choice to keep their children home as the world continues to move through the pandemic. Therefore, after much discussion, we are writing today with the decision that families have the option of beginning the 2020-2021 school year either entirely remotely or with a hybrid school model on Monday, September 14.



Our goal has always been to get students back to school on a full-time basis, because we agree that the best educational opportunity for most children is to be in front of a teacher. However, our first priority is the safety and health of students and staff and, by extension, of our families. The Reopening Plan, outlined below, remains flexible and will be updated based on the level of COVID-19 spread throughout our community over the coming weeks. In the event of a surge in COVID-19 cases in the community that requires more stringent health and safety guidelines, we will be ready to switch to a full virtual model for all students.

The full details of our reopening plan is attached. A summary follows.

Choosing a Model

We are asking parents to make a choice between the Hybrid Model and the Fully Virtual Model. We ask our parents to commit to the model they choose for at least one marking period.

The Hybrid Model

This model employs both face-to-face and on-line instruction. Students, family and staff will be asked to adhere to social distancing guidelines (see below for additional information.)

HCSS will use our regular schedule as the foundation and students will be assigned to two days of face-to-face learning on Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday. Students will receive face to face instruction during face-to-face learning and participate in online

learning on days when they are not physically in school. Wednesday will be online learning for all students.

Classrooms will be divided into the same groups of students with desks at least 6 feet apart and facing forward.

Full Virtual Learning Model

HCSS will also offer a full virtual learning model for students and families who do not wish to participate in in-person instruction when the school year begins.

Classroom hours and office hours are specified on a daily, scheduled routine. The curriculum is provided through Canvas Learning Management System and is directly aligned with the teachers' face-to-face, daily classroom instruction.

Special Education and ELL Students

Our Special Education and English Language Learners department will continue to collaborate with families and provide an appropriate educational program for students in alignment with public health guidelines. To address the unique needs of students, our educators will continue to work with families to collaboratively identify services for each student that can be provided both directly and indirectly in remote and in-person learning environments.

School Start Time

We require all students to participate in classes starting at 8:00am regardless of the educational model that they chose.

Health and Safety Protocols

The first day of school will undoubtedly look different this year. Below are some health and safety protocols HCSS will be undertaking to ensure everyone remains safe:

- Pre-Screening - Families are responsible for monitoring and assessing their children for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to the start of each school day, and should report any symptoms or test results to the school immediately.
- Face Coverings - In accordance with federal and state guidelines, all school employees, students, and visitors must wear a face mask that covers the mouth and nose at all times while in the building.
- Arrival and Dismissal - Additional updates will be sent out on this in the coming weeks. In order to adhere to social distancing guidelines, expect signage and staggered drop-offs for those utilizing the Hybrid Model. Rainy day plans will also be distributed.

- Hallways - Hallways will clearly be marked to allow for 6 feet of social distancing and multi-directional flow. Signage will be posted to mark 6 feet apart, which direction to travel, to remind students to wash their hands, and to properly put on their face coverings.
- Breakfast and Lunch - Meals will not be served in the cafeteria. Students may pick up meals and bring them to their classroom to eat. Students will be socially distanced in the lunch line.
- Water - Water fountains will be out of service in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Students are encouraged to carry their own water bottles with their names on them.
- Transportation - Everyone on the bus will be required to wear a face mask. Students will be seated on more than one student per bench, alternating sides for each row, which allows students to maintain approximately 3 feet of physical distance. Children from the same household may sit together and in closer proximity. Windows will be kept open at all times during operation, unless it is not possible due to extreme weather conditions per DESE guidelines.
- Field Trips and Assemblies - Will not be permitted until further notice.

We appreciate your partnership, continued patience and understanding as we do our best to work through this unprecedented challenge and look forward to another great academic year.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns at ttopcuoglu@hampdencharter.org.

Respectfully,

Tarkan Topcuoglu

Superintendent, Hampden Charter School of Science

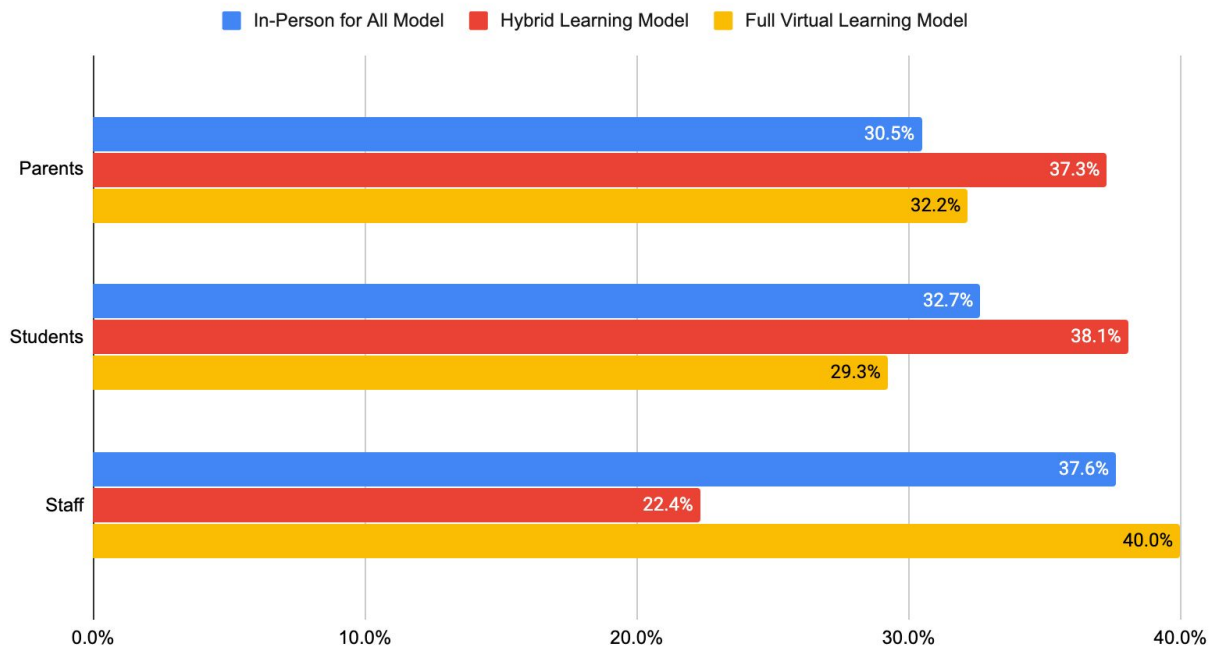
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In early July, Hampden Charter School of Science conducted a survey for parents, students, and staff as part of a comprehensive plan to determine the overall pulse for returning to school in September. After a review of the survey results, families made it clear that at the very least they wanted a choice that represented an opportunity to keep their child home while the pandemic continued to impact our community. As a result, we developed a reopening plan incorporating input from all stakeholders with student and staff safety as the priority.

Hampden Charter School of Science held a webinar on July 2nd about School Reopening Plans and delivered a survey online to all families, students, and staff. They were asked their level of comfort in coming back to school in September, as well as interest in virtual learning options. This survey was an integral part of our school reopening planning process as we proactively developed safety protocols for each instructional model. The survey was important in understanding stakeholders' attitudes and beliefs about COVID-19, which will allow us to better align with parents and students' needs and expectations.

Our goal has always been to get students back to school on a full-time basis, because we agree that the best educational opportunity for most children is to be in front of a teacher. However, we will never deliberately jeopardize the safety and health of students and staff and, by extension, of our families. This Reopening Plan remains flexible and will be strategically updated based on the level of coronavirus spread throughout our community over the coming weeks. It's difficult to guess how the spread will be in our community in the fall.

School Reopening Survey



Following is a summary of the Hampden Charter School of Science(HCSS) reopening plan.

HCSS will have the flexibility to participate in school through two main options. Our traditional schools will provide a Hybrid learning model where both face-to-face and synchronized online instruction is provided. Students who are not able to attend school participate in HCSS virtual school where the students will attend classes with students in school online. Either option will provide students with an opportunity to receive high quality education and learn the state standards. We require all students to participate in classes starting 8:00am regardless of the educational model that they chose. Parents will be surveyed in August to make a choice between these two models. We ask our parents at least for one marking period commitment with the model that they chose.

EDUCATION MODEL

HYBRID EDUCATION

Based on current COVID-19 circumstances, we are planning for all schools to start the school year with a hybrid learning model that adheres to local and state public health guidance and allows for social distancing to the greatest extent possible.

We decided two day rotation hybrid schedules that balance the health and safety of all school community members, provide the best academic experience for students, and serve the needs of families and stakeholders.

Our Hybrid Model will provide blended learning education where both face-to-face and virtual instruction is provided. Through a blended learning model, students will be able to continue learning, even on the days they are not physically attending school. Using Canvas, a learning management system, teachers will simultaneously provide face-to-face instruction, while also providing instruction to students who are learning online from home. When students come back to school on their assigned days, they will be on track with their classmates. Students can demonstrate acceptable attendance whether they are in class or engaged in online learning.

HCSS will use the regular schedule as the foundation and students will be assigned to two days of face-to-face learning on Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday. Students will receive face to face instruction during face-to-face learning and participate in online learning on days when they are not physically in school. Wednesday will be online learning for all students.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Group A	Group A	Online for All Students	Group B	Group B
Vulnerable Students			Vulnerable Students	

SAMPLE BELL SCHEDULE

	Start	End
Arrival+Breakfast	7:40	8:00
Block I	8:00	9:20
Block II	9:20	10:40
Block III + Lunch	10:40	12:20
Block IV	12:20	13:40
Dismissal	13:40	14:00

FULL VIRTUAL LEARNING MODEL

HCSS will offer a full virtual learning model for students and families who do not wish to participate in in-person instruction when the school year begins and for all students in the event of future classroom or school closures due to COVID-19. Our comprehensive full virtual learning model is an option for students who wish to stay connected to their school classmates and school community but complete their education completely online at home. Teachers provide online instruction that follows their daily face-to-face classroom instruction. Classroom hours and office hours are specified on a daily, scheduled routine. The curriculum is provided through Canvas Learning Management System and is directly aligned with the teachers' face-to-face, daily classroom instruction.

Students will receive live instruction during a portion of the instructional blocks and then be engaged through small group instruction, discussion, and asynchronous instruction. All students will be expected to complete and submit assignments as determined by their teachers. Code of Student Conduct and all technology expectations remain in effect. Each morning, students are expected to be present and engage in instruction each day within the designated schedule. All students will be expected to adhere to daily attendance guidelines by logging in and attending class during the designated times. Students will access their curriculum and assignments via the Canvas Learning Management System. Parent meetings and/or conferences will be scheduled to occur virtually.

HIGH NEEDS STUDENTS

Our SPED/ELL department will provide an appropriate educational program for students in alignment with public health guidelines. Collaboration with families will be always a necessary part of the education process and continues to be during this time. To address the unique needs of students, our team will continue the work with families to collaboratively identify services for each student that can be provided both directly

and indirectly in remote and in-person learning environments. Service plans may be adjusted as needed for the circumstances of the learning environment.

HCSS will continue to identify, locate, and evaluate students suspected of having a disability and needing special education or having a language barrier and need ELL services. At the same time, we will be mindful that students have been displaced from their typical learning environment when initiating the referral process. Some evaluation procedures can be completed in remote learning situations. Some evaluations require in-person contact with students or observations of students in school settings. HCSS will conduct evaluations remotely and in-person while adhering to CDC and DESE guidelines for the safety of students and staff.

We will continue to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). They will be working to incorporate new health and safety precautions that must also be enacted while providing FAPE to students with disabilities. Accommodations and modifications will be provided regardless of a student's learning environment. General and special education teachers will continue to collaborate in determining the appropriateness and success of a student's accommodations and/or modifications. The IEP team (general education teachers, special education, related services providers, and families) will work collaboratively to identify alternate solutions if it believes an accommodation and/or modification is not appropriate or successful in a particular setting.

Our teams will have in place consistent data collection and service log procedures for use across learning environments for economically disadvantaged or high need students. Collecting data and tracking the provision of services will assist educators and families in determining the effectiveness of instruction provided, student performance on goals/objectives, and assist the teams in making any necessary adjustments to instruction. Periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals will continue to be provided.

SAFETY, WELLNESS, AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS

The effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic on students and staff are expected to be direct and indirect.

HCSS will improve and expand the program and resources for social-emotional development, establishing partnerships as well as effective transfers to new classes, platforms and environments, whether in-person or online.

Instructional staff will be involved in the reopening of a series of professional developments on social emotional learning and support for mental health.

Our advisory program will provide instruction in social-emotional learning and relationship building. Also, counseling staff will provide mental health support and resources, including group or individual counseling and consultation for students and families, as needed.

INTERVENTION

All students will continue to require flexible and responsive support for their academic, behavioral, and wellness needs. HCSS has committed significant resources to support ongoing intervention services. Classroom teachers and support staff will receive professional development to plan and implement a support system for in-person and online education. Academic supports will provide focus and review of essential standards through whole-group and small-group instruction and individual student intervention. Schools will leverage resources and tools for systematic data collection, ongoing progress monitoring, and timely intervention. Support staff and resource teachers, including school counselors will work flexibly across the school to address student needs.

START DATE

The calendared start date for School Year 2020-2021 is Monday, September 14. HCSS Staff will participate in a series of professional development starting on August 21st.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

As students and staff return to face-to-face instruction in the fall, their traditional environment may look different due to enhanced safety and health protocols. This new normal will require an adjustment for all, but ultimately these changes will keep health and safety as the top priorities on every campus. We received input from parents, students, and staff and followed DESE guidelines to create a reopening plan with safety and health at the forefront.

Pre-Screening

- Checking for symptoms each morning is parents/caregivers' responsibility and will serve as the primary screening mechanism for COVID-19 symptoms.
- Students shall be self-screened at home with parents or guardians to ensure absence of symptoms. Teachers and staff will evaluate students throughout the day, including asking students how they are feeling and observing general wellness.
- We will provide information to families in their primary language to support them in conducting this symptom check and families should not send their children to school if they exhibit following COVID-19 symptoms. Stay home from work and consult your healthcare provider if you are experiencing any of the following:
 - Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
 - Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Headache when in combination with other symptoms
 - Muscle aches or body aches

- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

Hand washing/Sanitizing and Cleaning:

Each of us contributes to reducing the spread of the COVID-19 by diligently practicing specific hygiene measures. To this end, all students and staff should follow the below strategies to reduce the risk of transmission:

- Wash hands frequently--using soap and water-- for at least 20 seconds, particularly after coming into contact with high-touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, handrails, and commonly used equipment, before and after touching their masks, and when using the restroom.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if hand washing is not feasible. Hand sanitizer will be provided in all buildings.
- Cough/sneeze into sleeves, preferably into the elbow. When using a tissue, discard it properly and clean/sanitize hands immediately.
- Avoid touching the face, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth because these are the entry points for the virus.
- Hand washing/ Sanitizing will be required throughout the day.
- Additional hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom.

We will increase the number of hand sanitizer stations in key locations and do rigorous cleaning throughout the day in all high touch areas.

Face Coverings

- We protect each other by wearing masks.
- In accordance with Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, the Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Department of Elementary and

Secondary Education (DESE), all School employees, students, and visitors must wear a face mask that covers the mouth and nose at all times while in the building.

- When worn properly, wearing a mask helps reduce the spread of the coronavirus by reducing droplet transmission between people.
- Mask breaks will occur throughout the day when students can be six feet apart and ideally outside or at least with the windows open.

Social Distancing

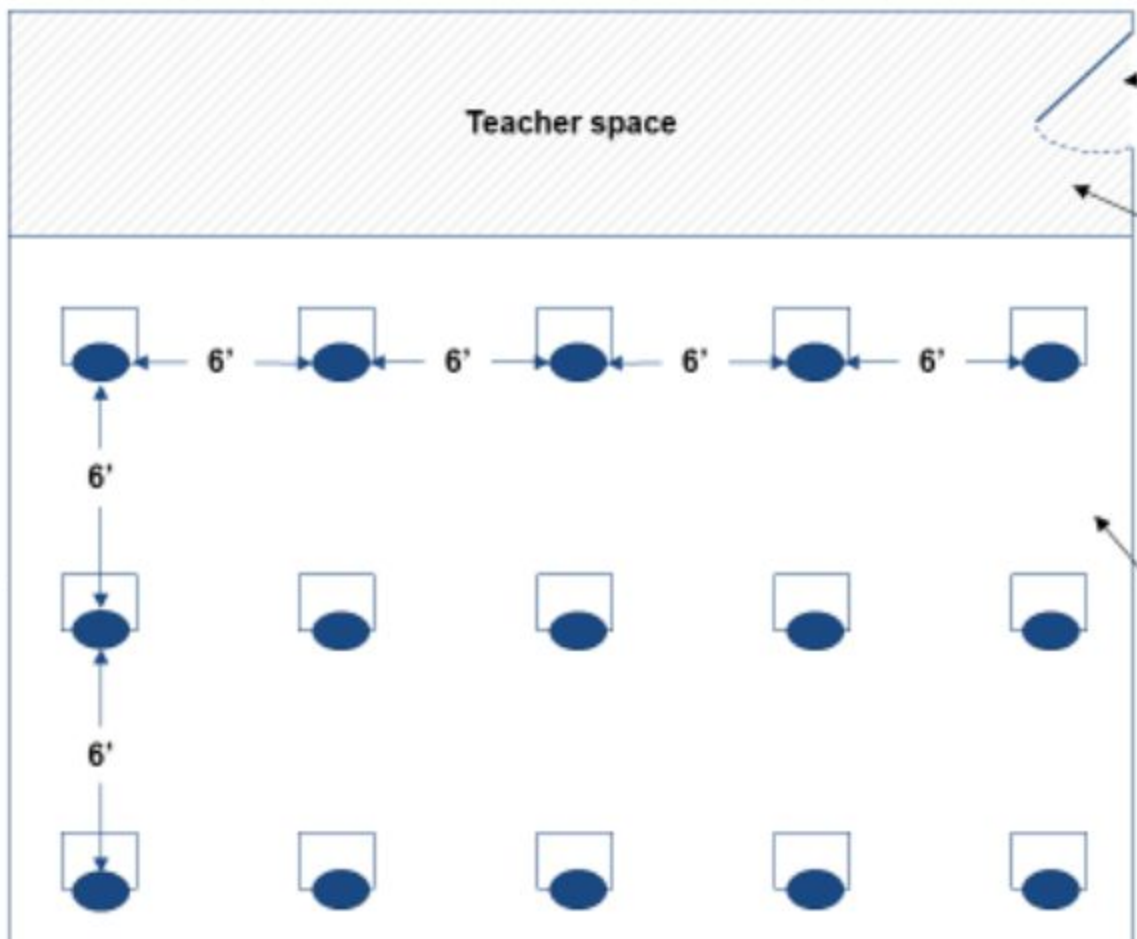
Arrival and Dismissal

- Schools will establish arrival and dismissal procedures to minimize crowding and transmission of COVID-19, including drop-off and pick-up points for walkers.
- Students will practice social distancing and walk in a single line 6 feet away from each other. They will be required to immediately report to classrooms upon entering school and will not be allowed to congregate in the hallways or other areas.
- Dismissal procedures will include transition directives and pathways that limit the mixing of cohorts of students. Signage will be provided to remind students and parents of the traffic flow pattern upon entrance and exit of school grounds.
- Additionally, school-based teams will establish a rainy-day plan. All arrival and dismissal plans will allow for social distancing where possible. Students will be supervised by staff throughout dismissal. Students will always be required to wear their face covering during dismissal.
- Dismissal procedures will include a staggered entrance and exit of the school. Car line will also be staggered for both arrival and dismissal.

Classroom structure

- Desks will be 6 feet apart from each other and facing the same direction.

- Study groups and student engagement activities that may not adhere to the 6 feet rule will not be conducted.
- Students will be scheduled into the same cohort group to the greatest extent possible.
- Every classroom will be designed to maximize space and distance between each student. Classroom furniture will be rearranged to provide additional space. Administrators will preview and approve classroom designs prior to the start of school, and throughout the school year as adjustments are required.
- Signage will be utilized to ensure procedures are listed in these areas. School-based staff will teach and implement these procedures for these areas.



Hallways:

- Hallways will be divided to allow 6 feet distancing and multi-directional flow.
- Markings will be placed every 6 feet to remind students of social distancing measures.
- Signage will be placed in key areas of schools and offices with reminders to wear face coverings, wash, and practice social distancing and to show which way they are allowed to travel.
- Staff will reinforce these directions, adherence to physical distancing, and masking.
- HCSS will test emergency evacuation protocols and carefully communicate any relevant changes to all stakeholders.
- HCSS will use a homeroom schedule to minimize hallway congestion. Staff will transition in between blocks.
- Students will not use lockers until social distancing rules are lifted.
- Students will walk only on the right-hand side of all hallways. We will utilize signage on walls to encourage proper movement to limit contact, as well as floor signage to encourage 6-foot distancing where possible.
- We will establish one direction hallways (where available) to assist with the flow of student movement.
- Staff members will monitor hallways and escort class changes when possible to ensure steady flow of students with no congregation in hallways.
- Physical barriers will be installed where practical, such as sneeze guards, and provide physical markings to ensure social distancing of at least 6 feet in areas outside of restrooms and cafeterias.

Breakfast/Lunch:

- Students will receive meals in a grab-and-go style breakfast in the morning and will

be asked to eat in their classrooms.

- Students will be distanced in the lunch line. Lunch will include pre-packaged items that can be picked up quickly to reduce time waiting in line. Lunch arrival and dismissal will be staggered.
- Students will eat their lunches in a designated area daily(Classrooms/Outside Area/Cafeteria).
- Students will be reminded that the expectation is to wear face covering up to the point of beginning their meal and immediately upon finishing the face cover will be put back on. Any free time/recess after eating commences will require face coverings to be placed back on.
- Students are encouraged to carry labeled water bottles. No water fountains will be in service. Food deliveries will not be permitted at school for students or staff during the school day.

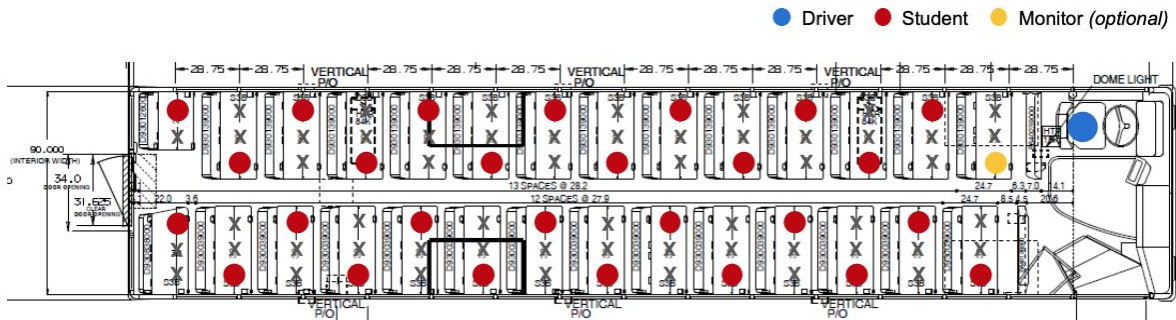
Transportation:

- All staff and students on the bus, regardless of age, are required to wear masks at all times.
- Students will be seated no more than one student per bench, alternating sides for each row, which allows students to maintain approximately 3 feet of physical distance.
- Children from the same household may sit together and in closer proximity (e.g., two students per bench).
- We will keep windows open at all times during operation, unless not possible due to extreme weather conditions per DESE guidelines.
- Students will be assigned to a single bus and a particular seat. The table below estimates the revised maximum capacity of school buses under the configuration above (not including bus monitors or scenarios with multiple children from the same household).

Bus Model: 83-passenger bus

Max. capacity with physical distancing requirements: 27 passengers (33% full capacity)

Seat map configuration:



Bus model	Maximum occupancy (excluding students who could sit together from same household)	Percentage of full bus capacity
83-passenger bus	27 passengers	33%
77-passenger bus	25 passengers	32%
71-passenger bus	23 passengers	32%
47-passenger bus	15 passengers	32%
29-passenger bus	9 passengers	31%
26-passenger bus	8 passengers	31%
22-passenger bus	7 passengers	32%
14-passenger bus	6 passengers	43%

COVID-19 cases

HCSS will follow CDC and state guidelines for handling suspected, or confirmed, COVID-19 cases and establish a quarantine room for symptomatic individuals. Students will be safely discharged per DESE guidelines.

Visitors

It is essential to create a healthy and safe environment by limiting potential COVID-19

exposure whenever possible. No external visitors are permitted to enter school district facilities until further notice.

Assemblies

For the safety of staff and students on campus, pep rallies, assemblies and other large gatherings will not be permitted until further notice.

Field Trips and Mass Gatherings

In order to stay committed to the health and safety of our students and staff, field trips and mass gatherings will not be permitted until further notice. Field trips will not be scheduled until further notice in order to promote social distancing and follow proper safety guidelines. Extracurricular activities will also be limited to virtual platforms when feasible.

Certification of Health and Safety Requirements

Hampden Charter School of Science East and West certifies that they meet the final health and safety requirements issued by DESE.