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**Side by Side Charter School**

## **Fall 2020 School Re-opening Plan**

### **Introduction**

Over the summer, Side by Side Charter School formed a committee of diverse stakeholders in order to plan our re-opening for the 2020-2021 school year. As we worked on developing a plan for re-entry after 5 months of learning and working from home, the decisions we made and the processes and protocols we developed were prioritized based on the principles of safety first, the provision of equitable and inclusive, high quality instruction for all learners, the social emotional well-being of our community members, and a belief that frequent, two-way communication is the best way to promote and sustain a safe and thriving learning community during this challenging time. This plan is the culmination of this work. It has been designed to prepare us for a full re-opening for all staff and students in the fall, as well as for alternative models should some form of distance learning again become advisable. In the upcoming year, distance learning will look different from the distance learning implemented in March of 2020. We have learned a lot. In talking to our teachers, students, parents and community members, we have designed this plan to proactively try to resolve some of the challenges encountered by our school community. We have done this by engaging in conversations with other districts, participating in professional learning, and diving into the research around what works best for young people in distance learning environments. We have also tried to leverage what worked this past spring. Importantly, our primary goal is to help our students remain actively engaged in school and achieve high levels of academic proficiency by creating and sustaining a nurturing and supportive classroom and school community, even when they are at home. This plan is an effort to contour this community.



A transition to or from Model 1, Model 2 or Model 3 will be based on classification of community spread as communicated by authorities from local, state and national levels. It is also important to note that as a CT public charter school, Side by Side receives student bus transportation and food service provisions from Norwalk Public Schools (NPS). The operating budget of Side by Side Charter School is reliant on the continuation of these provisions at all times. Therefore, Side by Side Charter School must also adhere to any decisions or changes implemented by Norwalk Public Schools (NPS) with regards to student transportation and/or lunch/food service. For example, should NPS transition to a plan phase involving shorter school days, or a lower frequency of busing provisions, Side by Side Charter School must parallel those decisions. This plan will be modified to reflect any changes that might occur as we enter the 2020-2021 school year.

### **3 Model Plan**

<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Model 1: Minimal Spread All students in person with precautions</b>	<b>Model 2: Moderate Spread Hybrid model with precautions and density limits</b>	<b>Model 3: High Spread Full distance learning model</b>
<p><b>Fall Re-opening model:</b> LEAs should plan to have all students, in all districts, return to schoolhouses for full-time instruction at the beginning of 2020-2021, so long as public health data continues to support this model. This model will be supported with more intensive mitigation strategies and specific monitoring, containment and class cancellation plans.</p> <p>In addition to full-time instruction plans as indicated above, LEAs</p>	<p>Side by Side Charter School has developed a Model 1 plan for a full, fall re-opening that meets all guidance criteria around mitigation strategies, monitoring of individual and community outbreak, and containment. Details are outlined throughout this document in this column, with appendices as necessary.</p> <p>Fall re-opening plans prioritize identifying learning gaps and social emotional needs that have</p>	<p>Side by Side Charter School has developed a Model 2, hybrid plan that focuses on providing quality instruction both on site and via distance learning when authorities classify spread as moderate and decreased population density is desired. Details are outlined throughout this document in this column, with appendices as necessary.</p> <p>Action planning for the hybrid model includes concrete, well-defined steps and strategies to leverage</p>	<p>Side by Side Charter School has developed a distance learning plan that focuses on providing a high-quality distance learning program when authorities classify spread rate as high as and in person learning is deemed unsafe. Details are outlined throughout this document in this column, with appendices as necessary.</p> <p>Action planning for the distance learning model includes concrete, well-defined steps and strategies</p>



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<p>must be prepared to modify their plans to support a partial reopening or to allow for scaling back at a future date if the public health data changes.</p> <p>Identify gaps and develop action plans for reopening that specifically address inclusion, equity, and access for all learners with strategies and clearly defined action steps.</p>	<p>emerged as a result of the spring 2020 school shutdown. Data collected on learning, engagement and access will be utilized to inform decision-making regarding instruction, access and resource allocation. Additionally, planning for a full, fall return foregrounds professional development, family outreach, and student instruction that will enhance the quality of instruction should on-site instruction need to be scaled back due to increased Covid spread. Details of this action plan are outlined throughout this document in this column, with appendices as necessary.</p>	<p>strengths from both on-site and distance learning models, as well as to strategically intervene on obstacles to students' learning and well-being encountered in the spring of 2020. Details of this action plan are outlined throughout this document in this column, with appendices as necessary.</p>	<p>to leverage strengths from distance learning models, as well as to strategically intervene on obstacles to students' learning and well-being encountered in the spring of 2020. Details of this action plan are outlined throughout this document in this column, with appendices as necessary.</p>
<p><b>Temporarily choosing not to return to school:</b> Plan for parents and students who may temporarily choose not to participate in the return to school.</p>	<p>Side by Side's plan for families temporarily choosing not to return to a fully-re-opened school prioritizes students' ability to actively participate and experience belonging in their classroom communities. Students participating in distance learning during Model 1 will participate in classroom centered two-way live-streaming for both whole group and differentiated, small group instruction in order for them to experience full membership in the classroom community. Additionally, tutors to support students and families in completing independent work at home will provide daily support. As part of this plan, parents will be informed that the distance learning program may not result in matching instructional hours 1:1 with an in-person learning model AND that the family to supervise and support attendance and engagement.</p>	<p>Side By Side's plan for families temporarily choosing not to return to school during hybrid, Model 2 instruction will participate in 2 way, livestreamed instruction on days their A/B, 10-12 student cohort is on site, and participate in synchronous and asynchronous distance learning with this cohort when they are at home.</p>	<p>N/A</p>



<p><b>School liaisons, communication plans and data collection:</b></p> <p>Designate an employee to serve as a COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison. This designated person will be responsible for engaging with students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to answer questions or concerns about health and safety requirements regarding COVID-19 concerns (e.g., school nurse).</p> <p>Put systems in place to communicate the most up to date policies and protocols related to the considerations herein, for staff, students, and families.</p> <p>Make communications plans available in relevant languages of families in the community, as well as accessible to those with visual and/or hearing impairments.</p> <p>Ensure the development of plans for ongoing two-way communication with the school community (staff, families, and students) about any new policies and/or protocols <i>prior</i> to reopening, any time there is a significant policy change, and upon re-entry if a school closes temporarily during the year.</p> <p>Develop expectations around frequency of communication, and ensure detailed updates are provided any time critical information regarding policies, protocols, or health data changes.</p> <p>Put in place a plan for how the community will be notified of any changed policies, need to cancel classes, or other changes or restrictions.</p>	<p>Our school nurse and Executive Director have been designated as the Covid Health and Safety Compliance liaison. In this role, she will be responsible for engaging with school community members to answer health and safety questions related to COVID-19, and will work closely with administration as they disaggregate incoming health and safety data in real time.</p> <p>The Executive Director will provide a bi-weekly community update via email, and a monthly, virtual town hall for community members to ask questions and voice concerns. Updates will also be posted on the school website, and hard copy mailings will go home.</p> <p>Communication will be more frequent when warranted, i.e. urgent updates. Urgent information will be communicated in real time via text and email blasts and updates to the school website.</p> <p>All communication will be translated into community languages, and bi-lingual buddy families will again be utilized to help navigate direct, real time communication amongst single language speakers. Accessible accommodations will be provided for families needing alternative forms of communication due to visual and/or hearing impairments.</p> <p>Side by Side's return to school plan will be shared via email and on website with all stakeholders upon submission to CSDE.</p>	<p>Same communication systems as Model 1, additional components as follows:</p> <p>Assistant Director will hold monthly, virtual on-line open meeting with families to discuss questions and concerns around hybrid instructional model. Weekly, virtual, office hours will also be made available to families for private conversations around individual student learning.</p> <p>Bi-weekly, virtual staff meetings will be held to provide staff with updates and to provide staff with an opportunity to discuss challenges, celebrate successes, and to ask questions and voice concerns.</p>	<p>Same systems as Model 1, additional components as follows:</p> <p>Assistant Director will hold monthly, virtual on-line open meeting with families to discuss questions and concerns around the distance learning instructional model. Weekly, virtual, office hours will also be made available to families for private conversations around individual student learning. .</p> <p>Bi-weekly, virtual staff meetings will be held to provide staff with updates and to provide staff with an opportunity to discuss challenges, celebrate successes, and to ask questions and voice concerns.</p>
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<p>Make plans easily accessible, including but not limited to being visible on the main landing page of the LEA and school websites.</p> <p>Prioritize gathering information from families prior to reopening. Collect information from families to properly plan for resuming classes in the fall (This should align with the forthcoming CSDE District Reopen Survey).</p>	<p>Staff and families will be surveyed, in alignment with the CSDE re-opening survey) prior to a return to school, both in late July and mid-August to ensure timely and accurate data collection. This information will be used to plan for staffing, classroom density, and streaming needs for families who temporarily chose to not return to school.</p> <p>Families will be surveyed <i>at least</i> each trimester to collect updated information and gauge satisfaction and perceptions around health, safety and facilities mitigations as well as instructional models and social and emotional interventions and support.</p>		
<p><b>Facilities:</b> Maximize social distancing between student workstations, achieving 6 feet when feasible, when determining the classroom layout.</p> <p>Where necessary, assess other space that may be repurposed for instruction in the school, in municipal or other community space, or if the school will require additional modular space.</p> <p>Maximize space between the teacher and students due to the risk of increased droplets from teachers during instruction.</p> <p>Ensure all signs and messages related to stopping the spread are accessible for students with disabilities and in languages appropriate for the school population.</p>	<p>In pre-K through grade one, alternative spaces will be used to divide each class into two, 9-12 student cohorts and maximize social distancing using repurposed space for these younger students who may struggle with sustaining body regulation. These students will be positioned 6 feet apart in their classrooms.</p> <p>Non-essential classroom furniture has been removed. Space between teachers and students during instructional time will be at least 6 feet apart. Student tables will be approximately 4 feet apart, with sneeze guards between students as well as sneeze guards at teacher's desk.</p> <p>Signs in both English and Spanish, and at varying heights and eye levels will be prevalent throughout the school. In addition to student trainings, students with disabilities will receive extra instruction as necessary in order for them to help them understand the safety protocols in school.</p>	<p>All components of facilities related protocols and practices the same as Model 1.</p>	<p>N/A, with exceptions being for administrative staff and essential workers who will maintain mask, social distancing and hygiene protocols when on site.</p>



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<p>Identify the training needs of staff related to health and safety protocols; perform such training prior to the first day of classes.</p> <p>Consider having training days and days to practice new protocols with staff only prior to having students enter the building.</p> <p>Plan an in-person or online training that includes: social distancing; cleaning protocols; and hygiene practices. Require attendance by all students and staff, and make available to families who are interested. Consider repeating this training during the first months that school reopens, and as needed.</p> <p>Ensure training is provided to substitutes or others who may enter the school outside of the first day or typical calendar start</p>	<p>Re-opening facilities and health sub-committees have identified staff re-opening trainings related to health and safety protocols including but not limited to drop-off and pick-up, daily staff and student health screenings, traffic flow in hallways, handwashing, mask usage, bathroom use, and lunch and recess protocols.</p> <p>School staff will return to school 8 days before students return to participate in safety training, protocol practice, and mandated reporter refreshers. Parent training will be offered both in person and -on-line. Training refreshers and revisions to protocols will be provided and implemented as needed.</p> <p>After School programming will take place for model 1 and will only be accessible for students in class. No outside enrichment/club providers will be used. Students will be grouped by grade level as much as possible. No field trips or leaving campus as part of after school programming will be permitted. Side by Side does not employ substitutes, however student interns and any outside staff used to support before and after school programs will be fully trained, using the same training protocols as full time employees.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1</p>	<p>Same as Model 1</p>
<p><b>Daily Operations:</b> Implement the key strategy of establishing stable cohorts within the school population, when feasible. Placing students in cohorts is <i>strongly encouraged</i> for grades K-8, and <i>encouraged</i></p>	<p>Side by Side Charter school's model is one class per grade. Therefore, during the Model 1 instructional phase students will remain in their 22 to 24 student cohorts throughout the school day, including lunch and recess periods. The one exception will be our pre-K</p>	<p>During the Model 2 instructional phase, grade level cohorts will be split into two cohorts (A/B) to decrease classroom density. Each cohort will attend school on site two days a week, and participate in distance learning 3 days a week. Teachers will be on-</p>	<p>Middle school after school programs run through the Carver Foundation will continue remotely. This program includes enrichment and academic support for students in grades 6-8.</p> <p>For younger students, the school social worker will</p>



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<p><i>where feasible</i> for grades 9–12.</p> <p>Develop consistent policies to address when clubs, before- and after-school programs, or other voluntary groups may be allowed to use school space. <b>Include ways to safely allow access for before- and after-school and childcare programs.</b></p>	<p>through grade 1 students, within which each of these classrooms will be split into two cohorts per grade, and school space will be re-purposed to accommodate lesser student density in these classes where managing distancing and masks will be more challenging for both students and teachers.</p>	<p>site 4 days a week, and provide distance learning instruction on the 5<sup>th</sup> day from home to allow for a deep clean of the facility.</p>	<p>work with community agencies to identify virtual enrichment opportunities during the Model 3 instructional phase.</p>
<p><b>Child Nutrition:</b> Schools and institutions that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program, and Special Milk Program (SMP) as applicable, must continue to determine eligibility for and make available free and reduced-price meals and snacks and free milk to all eligible students.</p> <p>Schools and institutions must comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) regulations and policies for school meals and milk including the meal pattern requirements.</p> <p>Schools and institutions that participate in the NSLP are required to claim meals/milk provided to eligible students using accurate counting and claiming methods.</p>	<p>The National School Lunch Program is provided through Norwalk Public Schools at Side by Side. Administration is working closely with NPS to coordinate continued, full lunch service during the Model 1 re-opening phase.</p> <p>All policies will be followed per regulations.</p> <p>In addition to notices and reminders for families to apply for and renew eligibility for participation in the NSLP, our social worker will engage in active outreach to ensure families have assistance with forms and understand guidelines and timelines for eligibility.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1 for on-site students. Plans are currently in the making by NPS for off-site, free lunch availability for all students.</p> <p>Modification to guidelines due to COVID-19 precautions will be monitored. School administration will engage in ongoing communication with NPS, and school social worker will actively work to keep families updated on food availability during distance learning.</p>	<p>Plans are currently in the making by NPS for off-site, free lunch availability for all students.</p> <p>Modification to guidelines due to COVID-19 precautions will be monitored. School administration will engage in ongoing communication with NPS, and school social worker will actively work to keep families updated on food availability during distance learning.</p>
<p><b>Transportation:</b> <i>Low Transmission Risk</i> Plan to operate at full capacity or close to while maximizing health and safety protocols, as well as considerations outlined in the plan. Require passengers to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth during transit, prior to</p>	<p>Side by Side utilizes Norwalk Public Schools buses for transportation to and from school. When school is operating under model 1, buses will be operating at full capacity. Paraeducators, engaging approved handwashing practices and wearing face mask and shield, will ride the bus to ensure and assist with mask and distancing</p>		





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<p>boarding the bus, and must be kept in place until they are completely off the bus. Passengers should load into the bus from the back row to the front (where the first passengers onto the bus sit in the back row) and then unload the bus in a controlled manner upon arrival at the school from front to back by seat.</p> <p><i>Moderate Transmission Risk</i> Plan to operate at significantly reduced capacity while maximizing health and safety protocols, as well as considerations outlined in the plan. Bus passengers should be spaced with family members sitting together and non-family members should be spaced 6 feet apart utilizing alternating diagonal seating. Require passengers to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth during transit, prior to boarding the bus, and must be kept in place until they are completely off the bus. Passengers should load into the bus from the back row to the front (where the first passengers onto the bus sit in the back row) and then unload the bus in a controlled manner upon arrival at the school from front to back by seat.</p>	<p>protocols, and students will be loaded on to the bus back to front and unloaded front to back.</p>	<p>Buses will operate at approximately 50% capacity, with family members sitting together and students spaced 6 feet apart. Paraeducators will continue to assist students with distancing protocols and proper mask wearing prior to students boarding the bus. Students will be loaded on to the bus back to front and unloaded front to back.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Health Practices and Protocols</b> Ensure that students are educated and engaged in the new expectations related to all public health policies and protocols. As part of this requirement, assess the best approach to communicating the information for the age group, and plan to set aside time at the beginning of the school year, as well as frequent reminders, to review the new policies and protocols.</p>	<p>All students will receive age appropriate training related to new public health policies and protocols (i.e. Brainpop, The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, etc.). In person training for students will begin the first day of school, including explicit instruction around social distancing, coughing etiquette, frequent hand washing and hand sanitizer use, use of face coverings, protocols for face mask breaks and eating, and surface disinfecting</p>	<p>Same practices and protocols will be in places as during the Model 1 instructional phase.</p>	<p>Refresher training and instruction around protocols will occur if students have already been on site prior to scaling back student attendance on site. If not, training and modeling of practices outlined in the Model 1 phase will occur via distance learning. preparation for a return to school, with full scale training also occurring when students transition to Model 1 or 2.</p>





<p>Familiarize all participants of the standard public health practices used to prevent the spread of diseases. These practices include, but are not limited to: social distancing; frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer; use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth; respiratory and cough etiquette; and enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces.</p> <p>Provide adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethyl alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol (for staff and older students who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible), and no-touch/ foot-pedal trash cans.</p>	<p>protocols including tables, desks, devices, materials, etc. In addition, tools will be provided to parents prior to the start of school in order for them to begin preparing students regarding what to expect in relation to the new, enhancing safety protocols this fall.</p> <p>All staff will receive training from the school nurse on the health practices as outlined by the CDC and the Board of Health. Training will be offered to families. Included will be explicit details around the protocol for reporting questions and concerns to the school liaison. The facilities coordinator will organize and supervise mock drop-off, pick-ups, temperature checks, flow of traffic in hallways, bathroom use, and lunch/recess protocols during the 8 day trainings designated to prepare for student return on day 1 of the 177 school day requirement.</p> <p>An abundance of supplies, including PPE, have been order to maintain clean surfaces, follow disinfecting and handwashing protocols, and minimizing the touching of shared surfaces to reduce viral spread. Additionally, a minimum supply on hand threshold has been identified, and new supplies will be ordered to ensure against shortages.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1.</p>	<p>In person training will be provided at a time that is in compliance with CSDE and public health guidance. Online training will occur around protocols outlined in Model 1 by school nurse and facilities coordinator.</p> <p>Supplies will be maintained in anticipation of school re-opening with little notice.</p>
<p><b>Health protocols cont.</b> <i>Reporting illnesses and addressing vulnerable populations</i> Instruct students and staff to inform the school if they are sick with COVID-19 related symptoms, particularly if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population.</p>	<p>Any student/staff must stay home when feeling sick, especially if they have COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, extreme levels of fatigue, body/muscle aches, loss of taste, loss of smell, loss of appetite</p> <p>Parent or staff member will notify the SBS nurse if they are sick with COVID-19</p>	<p>Same as model 1</p>	<p>Same health protocols as model 1, with the exception that in person training will be provided at a time that is in compliance with CSDE and public health guidance around the safety of school personnel being on site. Online training will occur around protocols outlined in Model 1 by school nurse and facilities coordinator in advance of a transition to instructional Models 1 or 2.</p>



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<p>Develop consistent protocols for information reporting, and a point person to appropriately receive and safeguard this information, such as the school nurse, district nursing supervisor, or principal.</p> <p>Establish and communicate school-wide sick protocols, including signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and temperature thresholds requiring students or staff to stay home.</p>	<p>related symptoms, particularly if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population.</p> <p>Parents and guardians are encouraged to monitor their children health status closely to identify any fever or possible symptoms prior to sending students to school.</p> <p>Trained staff supervised by school nurse will be performing daily temperature checks (a touchless thermometer will be utilized) upon arrival. Temperature checks will be conducted at designated building entry points.</p> <p>A student, who is found to have a fever (a temperature above 100.4° F) or who is exhibiting symptoms associated with COVID-19, will be immediately separated from others in a supervised isolated area. The parent will be notified and will be required to immediately pick up their child.</p> <p>The student will be supervised at all times maintaining a 6 feet distance until the parent/guardian or emergency contact arrives for pick up.</p> <p>While the symptomatic student and staff member are in the designated room/space, the staff member who takes care of the symptomatic student, will be wearing full PPE (mask, gloves, eye protection, gown). The student is required to wear a surgical/procedural mask and should be reminded to practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Upon pick-up, the parent/guardian or</p>		<p>Family self-reporting of COVID-19 positive tests will be actively monitored during distance learning in order to plan for differentiated learning plans designed to meet the academic and social needs of students</p>
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<p>Return to school protocol</p>	<p>emergency contact will be notified of exclusion criteria and encouraged to notify and seek medical assistance and be tested for COVID-19.</p> <p>Any siblings of the symptomatic child should also be picked up at the same time and excluded from the school.</p> <p>Contaminated items belonging to the symptomatic child are sent home immediately in a tied plastic bag.</p> <p>Once the student has been picked up, environmental cleaning and sanitizing of all rooms (using an Outbreak-Level disinfectant), equipment and materials that the child has been in contact with should be completed immediately.</p> <p>Staff and children who have been in contact with a suspected COVID-19 case will be monitored for symptoms.</p> <p>A symptomatic student who has been sent home and has not been tested, will not be able to return until free of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medicines and a doctor's note clearing the return with alternate diagnosis (strep, influenza, etc. as determined by a provider).</p> <p>A symptomatic student who has been sent home and has not been tested, or provided with an alternate diagnosis, must remain home for at least 10 days from the first day symptoms appeared AND 72 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medicine and with improvement of respiratory symptoms.</p>		
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<p>Attendance monitoring</p> <p>Educate staff and families about when to stay home. Schools should properly communicate the content of this or any updated guidance. – Instruct staff and students (or their parents and guardians) to perform a self-assessment prior to leaving for school to identify fever and other possible COVID-19 symptoms. Communicate this expectation and provide parents with reminders about the symptoms consistent with COVID-19 that require keeping their students at home.</p>	<p>A symptomatic student who has been sent home can return to school if tested negative AND with a note from the provider stating they believe the patient to have an alternate diagnosis and it's appropriate for the patient to return to school. EXCEPTION: A known close contact (within 6 feet of a confirmed case for more than 15 minutes) must complete a 14-day quarantine, even if test results are negative for COVID-19.</p> <p>A symptomatic student who has been sent home and tested Positive, must remain home in isolation for at least 10 days from the date symptoms began AND 72 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medications and improvement of respiratory symptoms</p> <p>School Nurse will monitor student and staff attendance on daily basis to track any potential trends that might suggest COVID 19</p> <p>SBS will look to create a system of communication for staff and families for self-reporting of symptoms</p> <p>Translated, easy to read protocol brochures will be made available to all parents. In addition, protocol and guidance videos will also be made available for real time reference on the school's web site. Parents will be invited to virtual town halls to voice questions and concerns prior to the re-opening of school. The school nurse will serve as the point person for health protocol questions, and will be accessible via phone and email to parents during regular school hours.</p>		
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<p><b>Social distancing:</b> Assist staff and students to maintain maximum social distancing between individuals to reduce the transmission of the virus per the public health guidelines at that time.</p>	<p>The maximum social distancing will be maintained at all times, with a goal of 6 feet whenever possible.</p> <p>Non-essential classroom furniture has been removed, and space between teachers and students during instructional time will be at least 6 feet apart. Student tables will be approximately 4 feet apart, with sneeze guards between students as well as sneeze guards at teacher's desk.</p> <p>Students in pre-k through 1<sup>st</sup> grade will be broken into smaller cohorts and space will be repurposed to increase distance between out youngest students who may struggle more with the new guidelines. Physical reminders, such as hula-hoops and yoga mats, will be utilized to help students regulate their physical space.</p> <p>Students will eat lunch in their classrooms, and recess will be staggered so cohorts remain together during recreational time. Activities will be structured to facilitate social distancing practices and allow for mask breaks when possible.</p> <p>Student lockers will not be used at this time, and students' dismissal from classes at transition times will be staggered to reduce student density in hallways.</p>	<p>Mitigating precautions outlined in Model 1 will continue to be followed, however student density will be reduced by 50%, with cohorts being split in half and attending school using an AA/BB model.</p>	<p>Social distancing protocols will be followed by essential workers.</p>
<p><b>Use of face coverings, masks and face shields:</b> Adopt policies requiring use of face coverings <i>for all students and staff when they are inside the school building, with certain exceptions listed below.</i></p> <p>For anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to</p>	<p>All students, staff and necessary visitors to the school will wear face masks, unless they meet the exceptions outlined via CDC guidance. These individuals will maintain a minimum of 6 feet social distancing whenever possible.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1</p>	<p>N/A except for essential staff. All protocols will be followed by staff members needing to work on site.</p>



<p>remove the mask without assistance, face coverings and masks should not be required, per CDC guidance.</p> <p>For anyone who has a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face covering, masks should not be required.</p> <p>Be prepared to provide a mask to any student or staff member who does not have one.</p>	<p>Masks and other PPE (gowns, eye covering, etc.) will be made available to all individuals who need them. Students and staff not wearing masks will be provided with a mask prior to entering the building using approved mask wearing protocols.</p>		
<p><b>Health monitoring plan</b> <i>Planning and distribution of information:</i> Include in the LEA reopening plan written protocols for monitoring of symptoms that could be related to COVID-19, with the goal of decreasing the risk of spreading or contracting the virus and maintaining oversight related to the pandemic while complying with relevant privacy and health laws.</p>	<p>See health monitoring protocols outlined in the health protocols section above. In addition, the Executive Director and school nurse will maintain regular contact with the local health department and CSDE in regard to changes or updates to current, COVID-19 risk reduction protocols .</p>	<p>Same as Model 1</p>	<p>School nurse and school social worker will maintain contact with families during distance learning in order to be able to respond to educational needs of families impacted by COVID-19 infection and to collect up to date data on COVID infection in our community in preparation for a transition to Model I or 2 on-site instruction.</p>
<p><b>Containment plan:</b> <i>The Connecticut Department of Public Health will be providing a tiered system to assist leaders and define the decision-making approach should partial or full class-cancellation become necessary. Anticipate this will be available at the time decisions will need to be made related to containment and possible school class cancellations.</i></p> <p>Include in the LEA reopening plan written protocols for containment and immediate response if an individual has signs or symptoms of COVID-19, there is a known exposure, or a member of the school community has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. The purpose of containment plans are to decrease the risks of spreading COVID-19, and shall include the following:</p>	<p>All containment planning will be in compliance with forthcoming guidance on tiered system from the CT Department of Public Health.</p> <p>SBS will adopt a written containment plan of specific steps for staff to follow should an individual show signs or symptoms of COVID 19. The purpose of all steps included will be to minimize and prevent spreading</p> <p>Containment plan will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the designation of a response team</li> <li>• clear identification of symptoms that would</li> </ul>	<p>Same as Model 1</p> <p>Same as Model 1</p>	<p>Continued efforts to collect up to date data around community spread in order to inform decisions directed toward preventing increased community spread.</p>



<p>Immediate coordination with the local health department, including being ready to comply with requests for information from the local health department to assist with contact tracing.</p> <p>Identification of a response team within the school and LEA with specific responsibilities.</p> <p>Consideration of what signs and symptoms exhibited by students or staff would require their immediate dismissal from school; for what period of time; and conditions for their re-admittance to school.</p> <p>Identify an “isolation room” (besides the health office) to accommodate students who exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19 until a parent or guardian arrives.</p> <p>Create a consistent policy for dismissal of students or staff who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 and must be dismissed from school.</p>	<p>result in immediate dismissal from school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• steps for escorting student,</li> <li>• seclusion,</li> <li>• identification of isolation space,</li> <li>• procedures for immediate communication and coordination with local health department</li> <li>• contact tracing protocol</li> <li>• implementation of CDC recommended cleaning</li> <li>• dismissal policy for staff and students</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Cancellation of classes, remote learning, and reopening plans:</b> <i>The Connecticut Department of Public Health will be developing specific community and school-based indicators to assist leaders and define the appropriate decision-making approach.</i></p> <p>Develop a plan for school class cancellations and reopening to be implemented in the event that the superintendent, their designee, or state government suspends or cancels in-school classes for some or all participants.</p> <p>Notify and consult with the CSDE immediately if the LEA is contemplating class cancellations.</p>	<p>Any school cancellations or returns to school will be decided in consultation with CSDE and Norwalk Public Schools, with whom we share our National School Lunch Program and transportation.</p> <p>Families will be notified immediately via email and text blast, as well as through a COVID-19 web page on our school web site which will be updated in real time.</p> <p>Faculty and staff will be trained on closure/re-opening protocols, expectations and responsibilities prior to the official start of the 2020-2021 school year. 8 days have been designated for staff training around hybrid and remote learning best practices, curricular and</p>	<p>Same as Model 1, however synchronous and a synchronous learning will occur on days students are not on-site using technology tools and platforms they were trained and or received refresher instruction for in Model 1, or via virtual training videos should school not open as planned.</p>	<p>Utilizing digital platforms outlined in Model 1, students and families will be prepared to fully access distance learning in Model 3. On-line videos will be available to model how to log-in and utilize platforms should students and parents struggle, and point persons are assigned to assist with technology throughout the school day.</p>





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<p>Include a communication plan and clear policies for faculty and staff regarding individual roles and responsibilities in the event of a shutdown occurring during the school year.</p> <p>Prioritize ongoing educational opportunities when drafting the plan for shutdown. Materials for continuity of learning must be made available to allow for school sessions to continue remotely.</p>	<p>pedagogical practices for each of the 3 instructional models, and explicit training in a variety of technology platforms and the development and implementation of high quality synchronous and asynchronous instruction and assessment practices.</p> <p>The educational program at Side By Side will maintain coherence by retaining fidelity to our core curricula's scope and sequence, with strategic variation in instructional design and implementation across the 3 models.</p> <p>During the Model 1 instructional phase, the first two weeks of school an emphasis on community building and formative assessment of student well-being.</p> <p>Teachers may begin short, low-stress literacy screenings in grades 1-3 in order to collect timely data on student performance to guide plans for hybrid and distance learning instruction.</p> <p>All students demonstrating technology needs will be given a chromebook and a personal hotspot.</p> <p>Students will also be formally trained in digital learning platforms adopted in the spring or purchased over the summer. This includes digital versions of their science and math curriculum including digital workbooks, labs and instructional videos, as well as Google Classroom for grades 3-8. All students will receive refreshers for Nearpod and Seesaw platforms which have been in use for two years but are new to younger and new students. Our technology</p>		
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<p>Grading practices</p>	<p>specialist and classroom teachers are creating “how to” YouTube videos of all digital platforms as well as how to log-in to borrowed Chromebooks for parents and students to access off of our websites in real time, and students will be taught how to access them during Model 1 should we transition to Model 2 or 3 instruction.</p> <p>At the end of week 2, teachers will begin transitioning to regular instruction, and begin unit 1 in all content areas. Equip math and OnPar science assessments have been purchased to embed content area assessment in curriculum efficiently allow teachers to fill learning gaps. These assessments are accessible for students in all 3 learning models.</p> <p>In week 3, NWEA MAP fall benchmark assessment in Reading and Math grades 1-8 and science grades 5-8.</p> <p>Grading will return to pre-COVID practices in all 3 models, with assessment practices being directed toward offering students multiple ways to demonstrate proficiency toward grade level standards. Parents will be provided with an overview of grading for the 2020-2021 school year and be given the opportunity to engage with school staff around questions and concerns.</p>		
<p><b>Cancellation of classes, remote learning, and reopening plans (cont.)</b> <i>Future Planning for remote, blended learning</i> Be prepared to provide remote blended learning opportunities immediately upon cancellation of in-school classes.</p>	<p>In the 8 days prior to the official start of our full return to school, teachers will work collaboratively to continue planning for all 3 instructional models. Professional development has been scheduled through CREC to provide enhanced training in the use of Google</p>	<p>Projects and activities that are part of our integrated science/social studies units in grades K-8, as well as our middle school STEAM units are being adapted to both hybrid and full distance learning models.</p>	<p>Digital platforms have been purchased for Side by Side’s Eureka math and IQWST middle school science curricula, and enhanced digital access to the Expeditionary Learning literacy curriculum used in grades K-8 is currently being developed. Teachers will be</p>



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	<p>Classroom. Additionally, two days of workshop model professional development have been planned to guide teachers in designing engaging, rigorous and accessible synchronous and asynchronous lessons. Digital platforms have also been purchased for Side by Side's Eureka math and IQWST middle school science curricula, and enhanced digital access to the Expeditionary Learning literacy curriculum used in grades K-8 is currently being developed. Teachers will be provided professional development in these platforms during the 8 days prior to students' return to school.</p>		<p>provided professional development in these platforms during the 8 days prior to students' return to school.</p>
<p>Consider implementing a plan to gather feedback from families, students, teachers, and leaders on experience with remote learning.</p>	<p>Surveys will be administered In July, August and again each trimester to collect up to date information on community members experiences with remote learning. Additionally, teachers and administration will have office hours, town halls and individual conferences with students to fine tune instructional models and levels of support to meet the needs of individual students.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1, with greater frequency as needed.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1, with greater frequency as needed.</p>
<p>Incorporate any feedback into a revised remote learning plan and incorporate into hybrid learning model.</p>	<p>Based on teacher, parent and student feedback, academic coaches will be assigned to students who experience extended absences. This coaching will be incorporated into a formal, individualized plan designed for each student based on their needs to close learning gaps for students missing extended periods of school.</p>	<p>In addition to activities outlined in Model 1, teachers will build bi-weekly, individual meetings with students to maintain relationships and sustain engagement. Teacher office hours will be provided for parents to talk with teachers and seek support for students struggling in instructional models 2 and 3.</p>	<p>Same as Models 1 and 2</p>
<p>Develop a plan for extended absences and communicate it with parents or guardians in the event of a second extended closure.</p>	<p>This plan will include asynchronous opportunities should students be well enough to work at their own pace, targeted, synchronous</p>		



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	<p>instruction around make-up work and skills deficits, and social-emotional support to ease their return to school. The Assistant Director will design and monitor these plans with the classroom teacher and appropriate service providers.</p> <p>In addition, a detailed protocol is being developed determining student daily attendance in all three instructional models, taking into account families who temporarily opt for distance learning in Models 1 and 2.</p>	Same as model 1.	Same as model 1.
<p><b>Academics: <i>Special Education</i></b></p> <p>Prepare with the understanding that there has been no waiver of requirements under the IDEA for provision of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). During COVID-19 school closures, schools were required to provide FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students, as well as those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students. Schools may not have been able to provide all services in the same manner that they are typically provided. Federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the individualized needs of students receiving special education services.</p> <p>Treat students eligible for special education and other special populations as general education students first. Guidance and policies related to school reopening</p>	<p>During the Model 1 instructional phase, all students will receive all services for allotted hours from appropriate staff as outlined in their individualized education plans. Service location within the school buildings may vary in order to maintain cohort safety.</p> <p>All accommodations being provided under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act will be provided, with adaptations in accordance with safety protocols and practices outlined in the health and safety sections of this plan.</p> <p>PPT's will be held virtually when possible via Zoom. Any outstanding evaluations from the spring shutdown, or upcoming evaluations will be conducted as soon as possible upon re-opening. Child find, SRBI and referral practices should resume using pre-COVID-19 protocols.</p>	Same as Model 1, except services will be delivered using a blended learning model using technology students and families are familiar with. All services will be synchronous. Additional technology tools will be made available to students in keeping with the principles of Universal Design for Learning.	Same as models 1 and 2, except all services will be provided synchronously via distance learning. Evaluations will be delayed until students return to on-site schooling.



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<p>plans apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for individual education programs under the IDEA and accommodation plans for eligible students under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If students with disabilities are unable to access the reopening plan as designed, facilitate individualized and alternative means of re-entry based upon student need, present levels of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input. Consider blended learning schedules if needed.</p> <p>Do not make programming decisions based on a student's disability category. However, the nature and/or severity of a student's disability may require unique considerations. Protocols should consider the student's developmental level and skills.</p> <p>Address mask and face covering use for the population of special education students, including cases where masks may need to be removed to provide appropriate services, and the approach to implementing any other possible mitigating strategy, including but not limited to maximum social distancing.</p>	<p>All students will be provided FAPE in the least restrictive environment while also in alignment with the health and safety protocols for all students.</p> <p>Students needing specialized supports, instruction and accommodations to access re-opening will be provided individualized re-entry needs via PPT collaboration, including school administration, parents/guardians, and service providers.</p> <p>Some students may be provided with additional instruction and support around maintaining social distancing and hygiene protocols, including more direct adult supervision and more frequent mask breaks as examples of enhanced mitigation strategies.</p>		
<p><b>Academics (cont.)</b> <i>English Language Learners</i></p> <p>Understand that like all other students, Els are entitled to FAPE. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IV, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (1974) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) provide guidance on the services to which Els are entitled. Els must have access to the general education curriculum as well</p>	<p>In the first 3 weeks of school, the pre-Las will be administered to all new kindergarten students in order to identify new ELL's. All identified English Language Learner's will receive supplemental language instruction, provided by a certified TESOL teacher utilizing a mix of push-in and pull-out language instruction.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1, except supplemental language instruction will occur both virtually and in-person.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1, except services will be virtual and synchronous, and co-planning will be virtual.</p>



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<p>as to a supplemental language instruction education program. During school closures due to COVID-19, Els continue to be entitled to receive their supplemental EL instructional program in addition to their general education program of mainstream, grade-level and content-area instruction. Such language instructional education programs may consist of a range of services, including bilingual education, English as a Second Language (ESL), Sheltered Instruction and others. When returning to school buildings, language instruction education programs must continue</p>			
<p>Comply with the requirement that eligible students in bilingual mandated districts are offered bilingual education programs. During COVID-19, school districts that are mandated to provide bilingual education remain required to offer a bilingual program to eligible students who have opted into the program. While program implementation may be altered during COVID-19 as compared to traditional in-building schooling, students in bilingual programs are still entitled to receive native language support as part of their school's designated bilingual program model. As with other language instruction education programs, when returning to traditional schooling, bilingual programs must continue.</p>	<p>Students eligible for and opting into bi-lingual language instruction will receive a bilingual instructional program designed to meet students' individual needs and current language proficiency levels.</p>	<p>In addition to in person language instruction, the TESOL teacher will collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure students are receiving appropriate support for accessing grade level content area standards, as well as to provide teachers with planning support based in students' English proficiency levels.</p>	<p>Same as Model 2</p>
<p>Communicate with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in English in a language they understand as required by Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education</p>	<p>All Title III communication will occur in a timely manner, including eligibility status, exit status, and parent notification letters.</p>		<p>Same as Model 2</p>



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<p>Act. As during traditional schooling, communications during school closures due to COVID-19 may be provided through translation and/or interpretation.</p> <p>Provide Els who are also identified as students with disabilities supports for their EL needs, as well as supports for their disabilities. During COVID-19, these dually identified students must continue to receive these supports. As in times with traditional schooling, dually identified students should have their language needs represented in their annual meetings about their IEP.</p>	<p>For El's who have been identified as individuals with disabilities, the Special Education teacher, the TESOL teacher and the classroom teacher will plan weekly to ensure accommodations, instructional supports, and differentiation practices meet the complex needs of the student.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1, but some planning and instruction may occur via distance learning. All supplementary instruction occurring virtually will be synchronous.</p>	<p>Same as Model 2. TESOL teacher will maintain active, bi-weekly correspondence and/or communication with parents to ensure students are receiving adequate support and families are able to access school and classroom communication.</p>
<p><b>Family and student engagement:</b> <i>Family support and communication</i> Comply with all state and federal family engagement requirements (e.g., School Governance Councils and Title I requirements) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prepare to provide families with clear and ongoing communication about what to expect, during and prior to reopening. This includes, but is not limited to, guidance on the school protocols related to health and safety guidelines.</p> <p>Continue to engage with families and students as the reopening moves forward to ensure they are informed and have the ability to provide feedback.</p> <p>Make reopen plans available on the LEA website, accessible, and clearly identify the school liaison.</p>	<p>A Covid-19 web page is being created, with sections designed to provide timely reporting on COVID-19 related issues, easy access to health and safety protocols, real-time video access to “how to’s” around social distancing, hygiene and mask protocols, learning technology support, and links to supporting agencies.</p> <p>The Executive Director will provide a bi-weekly community update via email, and a monthly, virtual town hall for community members to ask questions and voice concerns. Updates will also be posted on the school website, and hard copy mailings will go home.</p> <p>Communication will be more frequent when warranted, i.e. urgent updates. Urgent information will be communicated in real time via text and email blasts and updates to the school website.</p> <p>All communication will be translated into community languages, and bi-lingual</p>	<p>Same as Model 1</p>	<p>Same as Model 1</p>





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	<p>buddy families will again be utilized to help navigate direct, real time communication amongst single language speakers. Accessible accommodations will be provided for families needing alternative forms of communication due to visual and/or hearing impairments.</p> <p>Side by Side's return to school plan will be shared via email and on website with all stakeholders upon submission to CSDE.</p> <p>Staff and families will be surveyed, in alignment with the CSDE re-opening survey) prior to a return to school, both in late July and mid-August to ensure timely and accurate data collection. This information will be used to plan for staffing, classroom density, and streaming needs for families who temporarily chose to not return to school.</p> <p>Families will be surveyed <i>at least</i> each trimester to collect updated information and gauge satisfaction and perceptions around health, safety and facilities mitigations as well as instructional models and social and emotional interventions and support.</p>		
<p><b>Family and student engagement (cont):</b> <i>Social emotional learning and mental health</i> Develop a detailed plan to reengage all students, staff and families. Particularly identify strategies to identify and engage populations and specific students that have been disengaged.</p>	<p>Data was collected in the spring of 2020 and disengaged students have been identified. Teachers strategized with parents to re-engage students, and 90% of these students have been provided one-one one and small group instruction over the summer. Additionally, based on teacher, parent and student feedback, academic coaches will be assigned to students who have demonstrated difficulty staying engaged in school. This coaching will be incorporated into a formal,</p>	<p>Same as Model 1, except coaching will be virtual and in some cases, may include daily tutoring and engagement incentives.</p>	<p>Same as Model 2.</p>



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<p>Prepare staff to identify issues related to abuse and neglect in the context of the pandemic and comply with all mandated reporting requirements.</p>	<p>individualized plan designed for each student based on the need to close learning gaps and re-engage students demonstrating inconsistent engagement with school. The Assistant Director will design and monitor these plans with the classroom teacher and appropriate service providers.</p> <p>Staff will receive updated mandated reporter training that addresses the complexities of identifying abuse and neglect in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>		
<p><b>After school programming:</b> Programs receiving funding from the CSDE through the State After School, Extended School Hours (ESH) and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) programs, consult with the CSDE for individual grant-specific guidance.</p> <p>Follow the requirements outlined in this document, as applicable, including but not limited to requiring the use of face coverings that cover the nose and mouth, and maximizing social distancing.</p>	<p>Side by Side is currently communicating working to adapt their before and after school program in the elementary school to meet the criteria of COVID-19 health and safety protocols. We are grappling with our use of outside staff and the difficulty of keeping students in cohorts at this time. At the middle school, we continue to collaborate with our outside provider, the Carver foundation and Norwalk Public Schools to find the best way to offer after school programming in a safe and consistent manner.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1.</p>	<p>Middle school programming will be virtual, elementary programming will be suspended, however social worker will work with families to help them engage with virtual enrichment opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Career and Technical Education:</b> Develop a plan for cleaning and disinfecting shared equipment in the shop or lab, before and after each use.</p>	<p>All labs and lab equipment will have distinct disinfecting protocols, and all staff and students will be trained in how to engage with these practices.</p> <p>Material sharing will be minimized</p>	<p>Same as Model 1</p>	<p>N/A</p>



<p><b>Staffing and personnel:</b> <i>Certification and personnel planning</i></p> <p>Prepare with school human resources and board counsel to comply with legal and regulatory requirements related to personnel, including but not limited to the EEOC <a href="#">guidance</a> related to the ADA and the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Assess how to engage a full roster of staff, including potential substitute plan, and whether stipends or changes in substitute pay is required to support the needs of the school.</p>	<p>The Executive Director and Board of Directors is in consultation with the school’s legal advising firm to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements related to personnel, including but not limited to the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission’s guidance related to the ADA, workplace rights and the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Side by Side is currently evaluating staffing strategies for the 2020-2021 school year. At minimum, an additional teaching assistant has been hired to support families temporarily choosing to not to re-enter school at this time.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1.</p>
<p><b>Staffing and personnel (cont.): Professional development</b> <i>Professional development</i></p> <p>Prioritize mandatory training for staff, before the beginning of the school year, that covers signs and symptoms of COVID-19, Standard Public Health protocols, Hygiene Practices, PPE, Reporting Illnesses, and supporting SEL.</p> <p>Plan ongoing trainings as changes occur in recommendations and public health data.</p>	<p>In addition to the mandatory trainings for all staff around health, safety and hygiene protocols as outlined in the health protocols section of this document, staff will receive trauma sensitive SEL training, professional development strategies for helping students and staff manage stress during the pandemic, and job embedded support and training from the school’s Behavior Specialist for students demonstrating acute social emotional needs. Explicit attention to and engagement with students around SEL will occur daily in extended morning meetings, end of day check-outs, advisories, as well as embedded in a focus on reflection and mindfulness strategies in specialist courses (i.e. reflection through music and art, breathing and yoga instruction, tai-chi, etc.)</p>	<p>Same as Model 1, but with a hybrid on-site/distance learning instructional approach.</p>	<p>Same as Model 1, but with a distance learning instructional approach.</p>