
Academy Charter High School



SAFE RETURN PLAN 2021-2022

Highlights and Points of Interest

Scheduling

- The bell schedule is adjusted so that there are five (5) class periods that are equal in time. This allows for social distancing in the classroom and affords us the opportunity to add a fourth lunch period so that we can social distance in the cafeteria.

Masks and Sanitizer

- All staff, students, and visitors will be required to wear masks when entering the building. **Staff, students, and visitors must keep a mask on at all times (unless it inhibits health.)**
- Hand sanitizer stations will be placed at the entry and exit points as well as in every classroom.

Policies

- Updated school policies include:
 - Facilities Cleaning Procedures
 - Procedures for Visitors
 - Transportation Safety
 - Pandemic Reopening and Recovery
 - Contact Tracing

Anticipated board approval on September 3rd, 2020

Conditions for Learning

The advice of local health officials will be followed and serve as guidance to determine the safest course of action for school reopening. This will change as the public health landscape evolves and local circumstances evolve. The health and safety of students and staff will remain the number one priority and guide all decisions.

The provisions outlined in this section are consistent with a school district's general obligation to ensure the health and safety of its students and staff pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:40-6 and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.1

This section covers the following topics:

- Health and Safety
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Climate and Culture
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
- Wraparound Supports
- Food Service and Distribution
- Quality Child Care

Critical Area of Operation #1: General Health and Safety Guidelines

- Academy Charter High School will follow the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) recommendations, CDC's [Guidance for Schools and Childcare Programs](#), State of New Jersey guidance and the NJ Department of Education recommendations as best fits our operating procedures to ensure the safety of the staff and students.
- The Lead Person and school nurse will serve as the point of contact with the Local Health Department and Local Health Officials and maintain communication with appropriate authorities to determine current mitigation levels in your community.
- ACHS will protect and support staff and students who are at [higher risk for severe illness](#), such as providing options for telework and virtual learning.
 - Reasonable accommodations should be provided for individuals that the [Centers for Disease Control identifies as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#), including older adults (aged 65 years and older) and individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions, which may include:
 - Chronic lung disease or asthma (moderate to severe)
 - Serious heart conditions
 - Immunocompromised
 - Severe obesity (body mass index, or BMI, of 40 or higher)
 - Diabetes
 - Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
 - Liver disease
 - Medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
 - Students with complex disabilities with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
 - Students who require accommodations under a Plan in accordance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan).
 - The Lead Person will communicate with staff and families of students who are at higher risk.
 - Staff are required to provide documentation from a doctor indicating that they have health conditions that require them to work remotely.
- ACHS will promote [behaviors that reduce spread](#) of COVID-19 and other germs:
 - Stay home when appropriate
 - A fever of 100 F or greater
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Fatigue

- Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
 - Face coverings
 - Required for staff at all times.
 - Required for students when in common areas or close proximity of others. May be removed once at desks, but strongly encouraged to wear face masks when in the school building and on the bus.
 - Signs and messages
- School staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under two years of age. **Students are required to wear face coverings at all times**, unless doing so would inhibit the student's health. It is also necessary to acknowledge that enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities.

Critical Area of Operation #2: Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms

- **Classrooms:** Student desks will be spaced at least 3 feet apart to ensure social distancing. No desks will be placed near the classroom door or front of the classroom.
 - **Students are required to wear face masks at all times, except when eating or when wearing a face covering would inhibit their health. Students must wear face masks when moving around the classroom or school building.**
- **Hand Sanitizer:** Stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be in every classroom and touchless stations will be placed at the building entry, exit, and other common traffic areas.
- **Ventilation:** A/C units will continue to be maintained on their regular schedule and remain operable. A/C will run and windows will be opened to ensure proper air flow and ventilation with students and staff are in the building. All classrooms and spaces in the building are properly equipped with A/C and heat.
- **Shared Objects:** Additional supplies will be ordered to limit the use of shared objects. Should objects such as Physical Education equipment be shared they will be thoroughly cleaned between uses.
- **Handwashing:** Students should wash hands for at least 20 seconds at regular intervals, including before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing.
 - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) if washing with soap and water is not possible.

Critical Area of Operation #3: Transportation

- Transportation and bus routes are established by the sending districts. The Lead Person will work closely with the districts, MOESC, and bus companies to support best practices for busing students.
- ACHS will adhere to and support the requirements as established by MOESC and bus companies. This includes, but is not limited to bus capacity and wearing masks while on the bus.
- ACHS will attempt to increase parents' awareness of the ability to waive transportation for the school year. The extent to which parents are aware of this possibility is not clear and it has been suggested that some parents may be uncomfortable with having their children board a school bus until the COVID-19 pandemic is more thoroughly contained. By advising parents of this option, a district may be able to collect accurate data that allows them to assess the demand for transportation and to plan accordingly. Further, a district might explore an option whereby parents receive a payment to waive transportation services in accordance with 18A:39-1c. Such an option should specify the time period, up to the full school year, and the corresponding payment, that would be provided.
- Contractors will be responsible to adopt best practices for cleaning and disinfecting school buses and other transport vehicles between routes.

Transportation updates expected in near future as routes are out to bid.

Critical Area of Operation #4: Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas

- **Student/Staff Flow:**

- Upon arrival, students will be able to eat breakfast in classrooms or the cafeteria. Breakfast will be served in the classrooms.
- Best attempts will be made to control the flow of students in the hallways so that they stay to the right.
- Only the main door at the front of the building will be used as an entrance.
- Side doors to the main building will be used as exits.

- **Additional Considerations:**

- Anyone entering the building shall be required to wear a face mask.
- A security guard will be placed in the lobby to monitor traffic flow into the building and on the first floor.
- Require visitors and parent/guardians use their own pen for signing in/out.
- Signage about hygiene advice, reminders, and courtesies will be posted throughout the school in highly visible locations.
- Custodial people shall be required to wipe down shared surfaces.
- Teachers will be provided with a spray bottle with disinfectant to wipe down areas they use when they go into or leave a classroom.
- Lockers shall only be used if a student requires special accommodations that include locker access/use.

Critical Area of Operation #5: Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms

- Academy Charter shall operate in accordance with school policy 5141.3: Health Examinations and Immunizations, which includes a section specific to “Pandemic Reopening and Recovery.”
 - Screening and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - Face masks shall be provided for staff and students with extra face masks and face shields available.
 - School staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual’s health or the individual is under two years of age.
 - If a visitor refuses to wear a face covering for non-medical reasons and if such covering cannot be provided to the individual at the point of entry, entry to the school/district facility may be denied.
 - Students are required to wear face masks when moving around the building or classroom. They are encouraged to wear a face mask at all times unless doing so would inhibit a student’s health.
 - Exceptions:
 - Doing so would inhibit the individual’s health.
 - The individual is in extreme heat outdoors.
 - The individual is in water.
 - A student’s documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), precludes the use of face covering.
 - The student is under the age of two (2) and could risk suffocation.
 - Accommodations for students who are unable to wear a face covering should be addressed according to that student’s need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
 - Staff and students shall be screened for entry into the building using SafeCheck USA equipment.
 - Only the main entrance way shall be used to screen and admit students. The Administrative Team, school nurse, and security staff will assist in the screening process.
 - Staff must visually check students for symptoms upon arrival (which may include temperature checks) and/or confirm with families that students are free of COVID-19 symptoms.
 - Health checks shall be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.
 - Results will be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed.
 - Screening will consider needs and accommodations of students with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students.
- Procedures for symptomatic staff and students:
 - An isolation zone shall be established in a landing area, near an exit, outside the nurse’s office.
 - Students and staff with COVID-19 related symptoms shall be safely and respectfully isolated from others. They will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
 - Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others.
 - [Communicable Disease Service guidance](#) for illness reporting shall be followed.

- Preparations for when someone tests positive for COVID-19
 - An isolation zone shall be established in a landing area, near an exit, outside the nurse's office.
 - Students and staff with COVID-19 related symptoms shall be safely and respectfully isolated from others. They will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
 - [Communicable Disease Service guidance](#) for illness reporting shall be followed.
 - Readmittance to school shall be consistent with [Department of Health guidance and information for schools](#) and Department of Health/Communicable Disease Service's [Quick Reference Guidance on Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Home Isolation for Persons Diagnosed with COVID-19](#)
 - Contact tracing shall be initiated including records of groups/cohorts, assigned staff, and daily attendance.

- Protocols to address a positive case:
 - Students and employees may be asked to leave or not come into school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19, based on CDC guidance, that is not otherwise explained.
 - Symptoms include:
 - A fever of 100 F or greater
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Fatigue
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - An extended absence from school of 14 days may be required for any staff or student who tests positive for COVID-19.
 - Careful consideration will be given to other students and staff who may have had contact with the person who tests positive for COVID-19.

- Parents are encouraged and expected to monitor their children for signs of COVID-19 before sending them to school. Should a student demonstrate a possible COVID-19 symptom parents will be advised to keep the student home in the best interest of everyone's health and safety. Attendance will be managed appropriately and accordingly.
 - A brief survey of COVID-19 questions and considerations will also be sent home as part of the parent's screening process. These questions will be available on the Parent Portal in Genesis. Privacy regulations will be followed.
 - Has your child or anyone in your household traveled out of state in the past 14 days?

- Has your child or anyone in your household demonstrated any of the COVID-19 symptoms?
- To the best of your knowledge has your child or anyone in your household been in close proximity with someone who tested positive for COVID-19?
- Do you have any reason to believe your child or anyone in your household has been exposed to or acquired COVID-19?
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- PD will be provided at the start of the school year to educate staff about policies, procedures and protocols for COVID-19. Training will reinforce use of face coverings among all staff (excluding health exceptions) and teach hygiene protocols.

Critical Area of Operation #6: Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is the process used to identify those who come into contact with people who have tested positive for many contagious diseases, including COVID-19. It is a long-standing practice in New Jersey and around the world and is an integral function of local health departments in keeping communities safe from the spread of disease.

- Academy Charter shall operate in accordance with school policy 5141.2: Illness, more specifically the “Contact Tracing” section.
 - All procedures will adhere to applicable federal and state law and regulations regarding privacy and the confidentiality of records
 - Contact Tracing typically involves:
 - Interviewing people with COVID-19 to identify everyone with whom they had close contact during the time they may have been infectious;
 - Notifying contacts of their potential exposure;
 - Referring contacts for testing;
 - Monitoring contacts for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and
 - Connecting contacts with services they might need during the self-quarantine period.
 - To prevent the further spread of COVID-19 contacts are encouraged to stay home and maintain social distance of at least six feet from others until 14 days after their last exposure to a person with COVID-19. Contacts should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice daily and watching for symptoms of COVID-19.
 - The school nurse shall consult with the local health department in the development, review, and revision of the contact tracing policy and procedures, as necessary.
 - The school nurse and Lead Person are designated as the staff liaisons responsible for providing notifications and carrying out the other components of the board’s contact tracing policy.
 - The school nurse in consultation with the Lead Person shall establish measures for a system of open communication that allows staff, students, and families to self-report symptoms and/or suspected exposure.
 - Staff shall immediately notify the Lead Person and school nurse when he/she observes symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for COVID-19. The school nurse shall immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality when the COVID-19 test is positive.
 - When an individual exhibits symptoms the school nurse will ensure that the student is taken to the designated isolation area. The nurse will examine the individual and may refer for testing and treatment. A student exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 may be required to submit to a COVID-19 test. The school nurse shall report all students testing positive for COVID-19 to the health department. The health department shall conduct the contact tracing.
 - All school and district administrators, school safety specialists, counselors, and any other staff deemed appropriate by the school/district shall be provided information regarding the role of contact tracing and in keeping school communities safe from the spread of contagious disease.
 - The school nurse or designee shall make information available and/or conduct virtual information sessions to educate the broader school community on the importance of

- contact tracing.
- Upon notification that a resident has tested positive for COVID-19, a local health department will call to determine close contacts to whom they may have spread the virus, where close contact is defined as being within six feet for a period of at least 10 minutes. Trained professionals from the community then get in touch with those close contacts to recommend next steps, such as self-quarantining, and to provide critical education and support in risk mitigation strategies. Increasing the number and capacity of contact tracers has been a top priority of the Governor as these practices can help slow the spread of COVID-19.

Critical Area of Operation #7: Facilities Cleaning Practices

Academy Charter High School shall continue to adhere to [existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures](#), and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise.

- Academy Charter shall operate in accordance with school policy 3510: Operation and Maintenance of Plan, more specifically the “Facilities Procedures to Reduce the Spread of Contagion” section.
 - Procedures and Schedule for Cleaning
 - During the day:
 - ACHS Custodial staff will routinely clean commonly touched surfaces/items with disinfectant throughout the school day when In-Person Learning is in session. This includes:
 - Door handles
 - Corridor touch points
 - Bathrooms and bathroom touch points
 - Checking sanitizer stations
 - In the Evening:
 - Educational Facilities Management will routinely clean and disinfect the building after school hours, including a deep cleaning on Wednesdays when all students are remote.
 - This includes:
 - Cleaning desks and chairs
 - Phones
 - Common touch points
 - Shared surfaces
 - Teachers and staff will be asked to clear desktops and limit the use of shared items such as staplers, in order to make the cleaning process more efficient.
 - All surfaces will be cleaned with EPA approved disinfectant using a spray gun and wiping difficult to reach areas.
 - Routinely cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, including objects/surfaces that were not ordinarily cleaned daily.
 - Classroom desks and chairs;
 - Door handles and push plates;
 - Light switches
 - Handrails;
 - Bathrooms;
 - Handles on equipment and sports equipment;
 - Buttons on vending machines and elevators;
 - Telephones;
 - Staff desks;
 - Shared computers and accessories;
 - Drinking fountains;
 - School furniture
 - Using all cleaning products in accordance with directions on the label. For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. Whenever possible products that are EPA approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19

- shall be used. The manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products shall be used.
- Sanitizing bathrooms daily, or between use as much as possible, using protocols outlined by the EPA.
 - Bathrooms will remain locked to limit the number of students who can enter at once.
 - Security personnel and the administrative team will unlock bathrooms and enforce capacity restrictions.
 - Touchless hand dryers are installed.
 - Signage about hand washing and hygiene shall be displayed.
 - Custodial and security staff will wipe down bathroom sinks, door knobs, etc, as regularly as possible.
 - Provide EPA-registered disposable wipes and/or disinfectant spray to teachers so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before use.
 - Regularly order and stock adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices.
 - Ensure that cleaning and disinfection supplies are used and stored correctly and safely.
 - Placing physical barriers in areas where social distancing cannot be maintained.
 - Staff and students will be encouraged to bring their own water to minimize use of water fountains. Cleaning and sanitizing will occur regularly.
 - Hand sanitizer stations (at least 60%) alcohol will be in every classroom and in the highest traffic areas including entry and exits.
 - Contracted transportation providers, in conjunction with the MOESC and sending districts, will be required to clean and sanitize seats, rails, and highly touched surfaces before each run. ACHS will collaborate with the service provider to support and develop procedures and ensure they are consistently followed. The contracted service providers shall collaborate with the district in establishing sanitation protocols and practices that are consistent with social distancing practices. The contracted service provider shall ensure that employees are properly trained in the implementation of established protocols.
 - Cleaning and disinfecting a school building after a person has been identified as COVID-19 positive:
 - The district may need to implement short-term closure procedures in a school regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. If this happens, the CDC recommended procedures shall be followed:
 - Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use before cleaning and disinfection.
 - Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting.
 - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation.
 - Cleaning staff will clean and disinfect all areas used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

Critical Area of Operation #8: Meals

- Cafeteria will generally not be used for meals.
- Should the cafeteria need to be used:
 - Students will be spaced at least six feet apart
 - Meal times will be staggered with proper cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting between groups
- Individuals who handle food are required to wash their hands with soap and water after removing their gloves or after directly handling food service items.
- Breakfast: Students will report directly to assigned classrooms and eat breakfast in their classrooms.
- Lunch: Lunch will be distributed to each classroom with an assigned time for students to eat their lunch in their classrooms.
- Individually packaged meals will be distributed to students discontinuing and eliminating any buffet, family style, or self-serve meals.
- Disposable and individually wrapped food service items (utensils) will be used.
- Individually plated meals or pre-packaged boxed meals will be served.
- Time will be allotted for proper hand washing before and after meals.

Critical Area of Operation #9: Recess/Physical Education

- Physical Education cohorts will be limited, as best as possible.
- When there are two cohorts in the gym at the same time, cones will separate the gym into two zones to ensure separation of students.
- PE teachers will assist with flow when students leave classrooms to participate in Physical Education.
- Outdoor classes will be encouraged, weather permitting.
- Activities that minimize shared equipment will be prioritized. Should equipment be shared, it will be cleaned and disinfected between each use.
- Students are encouraged to wear comfortable pants/shorts and safe footwear to school that allows for safe movement and is appropriate for the weather in order to participate in physical education without the use of a locker room.
- Students are required to wash their hands with soap and water immediately after physical education.
- Minimize the sharing of equipment and equipment that is used will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.

Critical Area of Operation #10: Field Trips, Extra-curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

- Field trips, assemblies, and other activities with large gatherings of students may be scheduled with careful planning and consideration.
- Should there be extra-curricular activities, they will adhere to all applicable social distancing requirements and hygiene protocol during any extra- curricular activities.
- Require any external community organizations that use school/district facilities to follow district guidance on health and safety protocols.
- Online resources and platforms will be strongly considered to continue extra-curricular opportunities in order to minimize additional person-to-person contact.

Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports

Ensuring staff and students' physical health and safety is only the first step to optimizing conditions for learning. Academy Charter High School is committed to incorporating academic, social, behavioral supports to unlock educator capacity to teach and student capacity to learn.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Culture and Climate

Climate and culture, more specifically, social and emotional learning (SEL) have a critical role and the importance of re-engaging students, supporting adults, rebuilding relationships, and creating a foundation for academic learning.

Educator Well-Being

- Additional Professional Development days will be scheduled for the start of the school year to allow time for teachers to best prepare for Hybrid Model and reconnect with each other.
- The Social Worker will continue to share resources and services for self-care and mental well being with the Lead Person to disseminate to the staff.
- Additional PD time at the start of the school year will be devoted to collaborating with colleagues, rebuilding connections, team building, and information of social supports.

Trauma-Informed Social and Emotional Learning

It is important to acknowledge the potential trauma that staff and students have faced during the COVID-19 school closures. The full impact of the pandemic and the collateral consequences from isolation, fear, and economic hardship have yet to be fully realized. In addition, students and staff returning for the 2021-22 school year will be faced with new and intimidating routines and circumstances. We must address these challenges head-on to ensure that social and emotional learning are infused into everyday school life.

Additional focus will be given to:

- Establishing routines and maintaining clear communication;
- Prioritizing relationships and well-being over assignment and behavioral compliance, and
- Supporting students and staff in feeling safe, connected, and hopeful.

Other Actions Include:

- The Lead Person, Director of Special Services and Social Worker will continue to make deliberate efforts to communicate the importance of SEL and how it relates to student success in your school or district to students and families.
- Necessary staff and resources will be available to address social-emotional or trauma related concerns as ACHS becomes aware of changing needs.
- In-Person Learning sessions will focus on reflection, conversation with staff and peers, and emphasis relationship building. Small group sessions will be held, as needed, during virtual learning days.

School Culture and Climate

The health and safety of the staff and students remains a priority at ACHS. We will develop a positive culture and climate through:

- Including SEL Curriculum in each Elective.
- Continuation of our Mentoring program so that students and staff have time to rebuild relationships.
 - Activities focused on SEL will be part of the Mentoring program
- Continuation of the current PBIS system that rewards student growth and positive behaviors. We will adapt and modify this program to best meet our needs as we transition back to In-Person Learning.

Wraparound Supports

The Lead Person, Director of Special Services, School Social Worker, and School-to-Career Coordinator will work together on a comprehensive approach to addressing the academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of students with interventions both inside and outside of the school environment.

Mental Health Supports

COVID-19 will have significant psychological and emotional impacts on students. These impacts may be caused by the loss of teachers, administrators, peers, and/or family members to the virus, difficult living situations due to financial stress, emotional and physical abuse, and unprecedented disruption to social interactions with peers. Necessary supports are in place and readily available for all students to manage these stressors as they strive to meet their academic goals.

- **Tier 1 – Prevention and Universal Supports for All Students and Families**
 - Provide access to resources to self-care, self-help, parent supports, and psychoeducational information.
 - Continue to utilize a trauma-sensitive and culturally responsive approach to student engagement and support. Additional training will be provided and conversations with support staff and administration are encouraged.
 - Should a teacher develop concerns about a student they have the ability to reach out to support staff or the administration team in a timely manner.
 - Continue or develop efforts to provide Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programming.
 - Regular and consistent check-ins with teachers and parents to assist in identifying at-risk students will occur.
 - Information shared with parents and educators regarding how to identify when a student may be struggling with a mental health issue.
- **Tier 2 – Establishing more intensive supports (in addition to Tier 1) that can be provided to students who are identified as at-risk for mental health and/or substance abuse**
 - School Social Worker and School-to-Career Coordinator will provide support for students who are identified as needing assistance.
 - Connect families with local community providers, county resources, and other organizations to enhance Tier 2 and 3 supports.
 - Proactively reach out to Perform Care and Monmouth Cares to establish connections to better support families who may be receiving or in need of Tier 2 or 3 supports outside of school.
- **Tier 3 – Individualized and intensive support for students who are identified as needing mental health and/or substance abuse interventions**
 - Continue to monitor the Social Worker' capacity to provide students with individualized counseling, monitoring of progress, and therapeutic support through existing programs and current staff.
 - Collaborate with Mercy Center, Ocean's Family First, Perform Care, Monmouth Cares, The Change Agent Counseling Services and other organizations to enhance supports.
 - Connect students and parents to individual counseling, family therapy, out-patient

programs, or addiction services as needed.

Primary Health and Dental Care

- Academy Charter High School will continue to coordinate referrals to government agencies such as the NJ Department of Children and Families and the Department of Human Services as concerns about a student's safety, well being and health are recognized by staff or communicated by the student.
- ACHS will maintain lists of resources for families seeking access to healthcare programs, such as NJ Family Care, NJSNAP, NJHelps, Federally Qualifying Health Clinics, and dental clinics. In preparation for the 2020-2021 school year, districts should reinforce and adjust screening processes to identify students who may have had unaddressed health or dental needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, districts should consider the following:
 - The school nurse will screen students when students are in the building for In-Person Learning and will be accessible virtually through Google Meet to address health issues of staff and students.

Family Engagement

ACHS recognizes that communication with families and family engagement is a key component of successfully reopening schools.

- The School Social Worker will connect students and families to wraparound services that will be critical in the upcoming academic year such as health care, mental health supports, child care, after-school enrichment programs, and other services to meet day-to-day needs.
- The School-to-Career Coordinator will be in contact with students and their families to discuss academic progress and concerns.
- Plans, procedures, and protocols for re-opening in the hybrid model will be shared with families. Letters will be mailed to parents, information will be posted on the school website, and videos will air on the ACHS YouTube station.
- Partnerships with Ocean's Family First and The Mercy Center are being forged to build relationships with community resources for our students.
- Virtual Town Hall Meetings will be held during our regularly scheduled Saturday School Sessions.

Academic Enrichment/Expanded After-School Learning

Expansive course offerings provided through Edgenuity will allow for additional educational opportunities for students. Some modules can be used to support or enhance a student's academic progress depending on the rate at which they show mastery. SAT Prep and STEAM opportunities are also available through platforms such as Khan Academy and Newsela.

Additionally, creative alternatives to the Senior Project Community Service component are being explored to allow students to give back to their school and local communities.

Mentoring

Academy Charter High School will continue to provide its well-established Mentoring program. Teachers and staff members will work closely with a group of students to serve as their support system for the academic year. Mentoring has been a part of the ACHS fabric and we will continue to implement the detailed program with extra emphasis being placed on SEL activities this year.

Food Service and Distribution

Academy Charter will continue with regular food service to ensure that all students are properly fed. Students will have access to breakfast and lunch. These meals will be pre-packaged to the best extent possible.

Should we be forced into all Virtual Learning, meals will be distributed as outlined in the Preparedness Plan. The schedule will be determined if we need to distribute meals remotely at 701 1st Avenue.

Quality Child Care

While not necessarily applicable to our student body as a school that serves 9th through 12th grade students, we will work closely with staff to best accommodate them as they manage child care and potential issues that may arise due to circumstances.

Leadership and Planning

Restart Committee

- Established in early July, members include:
 - Administrative Team
 - Lead Person
 - Chief Financial Officer
 - Supervisor of Curriculum
 - Director of Special Services
 - School Social Worker
 - Board of Trustees Member
 - Parent
 - Two Teachers
- The Restart Committee works together to establish best practices to consider for a safe reopening of school.
- Scope of Work Includes:
 - Determine best practices for scheduling, classroom layouts, screening, disinfection, staff and student safety.
 - Assist in generating a plan for reopening school

See Addendum A for more information about the 2020-21 Restart Committee

Pandemic Response Team

Responsible for helping Academy Charter High School to centralize, expedite, and implement COVID-19-related decision-making.

Members include:

- The Lead Person
 - Also a member of the School Safety Team
- Chief Financial Officer
- Supervisor of Curriculum
- Director of Special Services
 - Also represents Child Study Team
- Three teachers
 - To represent the different grade levels/departments
- School Social Worker (School Counselor)
- School Nurse
- Technology Coordinator
- Custodian
- Parent

Responsibilities Include:

- Overseeing each school's implementation of the district's reopening plan, particularly health and safety measures, and providing safety and crisis leadership.
- Adjusting or amending school health and safety protocols as needed.
- Providing staff with needed support and training.
- Reviewing school level data regarding health and safety measures and the presence of COVID19 and reporting that data to the district as required.

- Developing and implementing procedures to foster and maintain safe and supportive school climates as necessitated by the challenges posted by COVID-19.
- Providing necessary communications to the school community and to the district.
- Creating pathways for community, family, and student voices to continuously inform the Team's decision-making.

Athletics

- Academy Charter High School will properly follow any regulations and guidelines established by the New Jersey State Intercollegiate Athletic Association (NJSIAA) and NJ Department of Education.
- ACHS will consider recommendations and guidance provided by the NJSIAA and National Federation of State High School Associations.

Continuity of Learning

The New Jersey Student Learning Standards define what students need to know and be able to do and serve as the foundation of our high-quality educational system. By delivering standards-based curriculum and instruction using the results of standards-based assessments to customize and strengthen instruction, Academy Charter High School will best be able to support student growth.

Curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional learning and career and technical education (CTE) are all important constructs that can be adjusted to best serve all of our students.

Ensuring the Delivery of Special Education and Related Services to Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the federal Disabilities Education Act ([IDEA](#)) and New Jersey state special education regulations, all students with disabilities will receive appropriate special education related services, accommodations, and modifications to instruction as outlined in their IEPs. This includes speech-language services, occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), and counseling.

Special considerations are:

- Procedures to address the return to school of medically fragile students and students with physical or health impairments who may require accommodations and modifications as part of a 504 Plan.
- Frequent communication with the families of students with significant medical risk factors to determine if additional precautions or unique measures are necessary prior to a student's return to school.
- IEP teams will review student data/student progress to determine whether critical skills were lost during the period in which remote instruction was being provided to students and determine the need for additional services to address learning loss.
- IEP teams will consider the impact of missed services on student progress towards meeting IEP goals and objectives, and determine if additional or compensatory services are needed to address regression and recoupment of skills within a reasonable length of time.
- IEP teams will develop procedures to complete overdue and/or incomplete evaluations to determine eligibility for special education services.

- The school social worker will work to identify students whose postsecondary plans may have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and provide support, resources, and assistance, which may include facilitating connection to community organizations, scholarship programs, county, state, and federal opportunities to access support.
- Clear communication to parents/guardians of the procedures for student referrals and evaluations to determine the eligibility for special education and related services or a 504 Plan as required by federal and state law.

Technology and Connectivity

Academy Charter High School will strive to ensure that every student has access to a device and internet connectivity.

- As a 1:1 initiative school we can guarantee that all students and staff will have access to a device. It is anticipated that 130 students will need a device.
- We are working collaboratively with Lightpath, Optimum, and T-Mobile to ensure that all students are able to connect to the internet.
- Students and staff are expected to abide by ACHS's Acceptable Use Policy for technology. Controls and web filters are in place on each device to protect student safety.
- Every student is responsible for bringing their laptop to and from school in the event that we have to close school. This will allow for a quick and smooth transition to any remote learning needs.
- For students with special needs, accommodations according to their instructional program must be addressed as appropriate for each student.
 - Students with disabilities will work on Edgenuity assignments as part of their In-Person Learning experience early in the school year to ensure they best understand how to manage this platform.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments

Multiple PD opportunities are scheduled to build the capacity of staff to deliver highly effective instruction in hybrid environments as well as prepare them to address any learning gaps that might prevent students from meeting grade-level New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).

Thoughtful planning and innovative approaches to creating a high-quality and grade appropriate education are being developed for all students. Better understanding and utilization of online platforms will provide flexibility and maximize opportunities for deeper learning for all students.

Student Progress and Testing

It is important to structure the curriculum to account for the loss of learning that may have resulted from the extended school building closures. This loss includes not only the skills necessary to access grade-level material, but also content knowledge.

To accelerate students' progress during the upcoming school year, administrators and educators will:

- Assess student skill levels, using NJ StartStrong, NWEA MAP testing and formative assessments as a benchmark. This data will be utilized to understand what unfinished learning needs to be addressed and to provide students with appropriate grade-level materials, tasks, and assignments.
- Prioritize the most critical prerequisite skills and knowledge for each subject area at each grade level at the start of the year.
- Adapt and adjust the curricular scope and sequence/pacing for each subject area and grade level to best accommodate student needs.

Educators will work with the Supervisor of Curriculum to examine the standards and district's scope and sequence to understand what skills and content knowledge will be addressed, when it will be addressed during the school year, and how students will demonstrate their knowledge of the standards. A systemic approach that places an emphasis on differentiation will ensure students are given assignments that are consistent with target standards and provide specific evidence of each student's progress. This will be important work as in-person instruction will be blended with Edgenuity and Google Classroom, the online learning platforms being used this year. Edgenuity courses are appropriately aligned to New Jersey State Learning Standards.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Students currently enrolled in vocational programs are encouraged to continue with those opportunities. Academy Charter High School will work closely with the Monmouth County Vocational School District and Career Center so that students are able to participate in their designated programs. We will accommodate and adjust schedules, as needed, for students and are confident that MCVSD will follow all safety procedures and policies.

All students will gain exposure to career exploration and college readiness sources through elective courses, meetings with the School-to-Career Coordinator, and other learning opportunities.

- While hopeful that we will be able to continue internships through the Senior Project course, we may need to adjust this program according to the health situation.
 - The School-to-Career Coordinator is exploring online internship opportunities.
 - All in-person internship opportunities will be carefully vetted to make sure proper social distancing can occur at the location, should we be in a position to offer in-person options.

Additional Considerations:

- Sources such as Google's G Suite, EverFi, Newsela, Khan Academy, College Board, Nearpod, and Edgenuity allow for students to explore careers and choose lessons that are of interest to them.
- Career interests surveys and career clusters activity exploration opportunities will be embedded into the Senior Project curriculum and certain electives.
- Virtual tours are offered to explore colleges, universities, and career opportunities.
- Service Learning projects to enhance the school and/or local community will continue.
 - Emphasis will be placed on beautification and improvements to school facilities and grounds while working professionals in fields such as construction, interior design, and horticulture.
 - Consideration will be given to working with areas directly impacted by COVID-19 such as food pantries and personal care necessities.
 - Efforts will be made to coordinate fundraising events to collect donated supplies or goods that may be tough for those in need to come by during health emergencies.
 - Meetings will be held virtually through Google Meet until circumstances allow otherwise.
- The School-to-Career Coordinator will create awareness for students through research about careers and career exploration.
- Individual meetings and the 1:1 computer initiative allows for maximizing individual future planning and goal identification.
- Soft and employability skills are threaded through the learning process, especially in Senior Project through role playing activities, research, public speaking assignments, and practice interviews.
- The School-to-Career Coordinator is in regular contact with Brookdale Community College to support students interested in Dual Enrollment. Updates to BCC's enrollment criteria have been discussed and reviewed to make sure that all eligible students are recognized.
- The School-to-Career Coordinator will continue to navigate the evolving post-secondary application landscape and work with students individually to ensure that they find the most appropriate fit.

Career Advisement and Development

Already established partnerships will be maintained in order to create awareness about careers, develop quality CTE programs and allow for college and career exploration.

Additional Considerations for Career Advisement

- The School-to-Career Coordinator will provide career education materials and counseling news in class discussions, via email to students and families, on the school webpage, school announcements, and billboards in addition to electronic communication for students and parents to access.
- Career education meetings with parents to review student learning plans, college and career pathways, CTE programs and career exploration will be scheduled virtually or in-person.
- Online career and college preparation tools to promote career exploration and college readiness.
- Career/industry and college recruitment guest speakers are invited into Senior Project classes via Google Meet.

Future Considerations

COVID-19 has had significant impacts on education. Teachers and staff have continuously shifted and reinvented educational best practices while still serving the students of Academy Charter High School. We will remain flexible and continue to prepare for all challenges presented by COVID-19. The administrative team cannot thank the parents, students, and staff enough for their adaptability and understanding during this ever-changing educational environment. Patience, planning, and perseverance are required as it is likely changes to this Roadback Plan will be made as the health si