




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kimberly Young Wilkins
Office of Instructional Support
89 Washington Avenue – Room 875 EBA
Albany, New York 12234

Phone: (518) 474-5918
Fax: (518) 486-2233

April 19, 2021

TO: School District Superintendents
School Principals
BOCES District Superintendents
Charter School Leaders
Religious and Independent School Leaders
Administrators of Nonpublic Schools with Approved Special Education Programs
Administrators of the State-Supported Schools
Superintendents of the New York State-Operated Schools
Administrators of Approved Private Preschool Special Class Programs and Special Class in an Integrated Setting Programs

FROM: Kimberly Young Wilkins, Deputy Commissioner 

RE: **Submission of Revised School Reopening Plans**

On April 9, 2021, the New York State Department of Health (“DOH”) updated its [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) (“Updated Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools”). The Updated Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools aligns with the most recent recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on how to prioritize safe in-person learning in schools while adhering to layered mitigation strategies.

As reopening plans may be revised for increased in-person learning, BOCES, school districts, charter schools, religious and independent schools, and nonpublic schools with approved special education programs (853 Schools), State-Operated Schools, State-Supported Schools (4201 Schools), and approved private preschool special class and special class in an integrated setting programs (hereinafter referred to as Approved Special Education Programs or “ASEPs”) must ensure that the mandatory elements outlined in DOH’s Updated Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools are included. Specifically, if BOCES, school districts, charter schools, religious and independent schools, or ASEPs modify or revise plans for in-person instruction, they must first provide the required opportunities for local community feedback from parents, community members, teachers, staff, and local health departments. Then, any modified plan that is developed must be posted online and, at minimum, cover:

- (1) Reopening of school facilities for in-person instruction,
- (2) Monitoring of health conditions,
- (3) Containment of potential transmission of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and
- (4) Closure of school facilities and in-person instruction, if necessitated by widespread virus transmission.

Once finalized, modified plans must be posted on the BOCES, school district, charter school, religious or independent school, or ASEP's public website in a location that is easily located for students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other community stakeholders; provided that if a religious or independent school or ASEP does not have a public website, those schools may identify an online platform (e.g. social media group or post, file sharing service, email listserv) that allows modified plans to be directly communicated to students, parents or legal guardians, school staff, and visitors. All efforts should be made to make the revised plans available in the dominant language(s) spoken by the school community.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) does not review or approve revisions to reopening plans. Local health departments are charged with ensuring the enforcement of the minimum standards described in the Updated Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools.

However, the Updated Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools requires that the Revised School Reopening Plans be "shared" with NYSED in addition to local health departments. NYSED has therefore issued a new survey through the SED Monitoring and Vendor Reporting System ("the Portal") to collect only the following information:

1. Indication (Yes or No) as to whether a plan is being revised and;
2. In cases where an entity indicates it has revised its plan, the URL (website location) for any Revised School Reopening Plans of BOCES, school districts, charter schools, and ASEPs. For school districts and for ASEPs operating multiple school building sites, superintendents/school leaders should submit a URL that leads to a comprehensive district/provider plan, or if school buildings have different plans, a URL that leads to a single page where all plans can be accessed.

Please note that all entities should complete the survey even if no plan modifications have been made. Detailed directions for accessing the survey in the Portal are available in Attachment A.

For religious and independent schools:

Submission via the Portal is strongly encouraged. Instructions are provided in Attachment A.

However, for schools that do not use the internet, a hard copy may be submitted. These schools may either fax the reopening plan to the State Office of Religious and Independent Schools (SORIS) at 518-474-9200 or mail to:

New York State Education Department
State Office of Religious and Independent Schools
89 Washington Ave., Room 1074 EBA
Albany, NY 12234
ATTN: Revised Reopening Plan

Religious and independent schools may not send revised reopening plans via email to NYSED.

Attachment A
How to Submit the “Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan” Survey in the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System

The Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan survey may be accessed in the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System by completing the following steps:

1. Go to the [NYSED Business Portal](#);
2. Click on the “Log In” button
3. Enter your username and password
4. Click on “SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System” under My Applications
5. Select “View Surveys for Surveys for School Closure”
6. Find the report titled “Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan”
7. Click on ‘view’ to begin/continue to input information

If you have any questions regarding the requirements for the Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan *survey* submission, please reach out to NYSED program staff via email at ReopeningPlans@nysed.gov.

To resolve any questions related to user accounts, password resets, the SEDDAS application, and assistance with the Business Portal itself, please contact the Help Desk at SEDDAS@nysed.gov.