

1. Is Mount Sinai considering bringing grades K-5 back for in-person instruction five days per week?

Mount Sinai is working on a plan to bring back grades K-5 four days per week. Wednesday's have been designated as a deep cleaning day and a day where teachers will be providing remote learning for those students who are not able to attend school. Please refer to the *Reopening of Schools Plan* that is posted on the District's website and view the PowerPoint that is available. Should you have specific questions related to grades K-5, please contact Mr. Catlin at the Elementary School or Ms. Hine at the Middle School.

2. What is the Elementary School doing to keep my child safe?

Students and staff will be required to wear masks daily. Social distancing will be practiced in classrooms and in hallways. Desk shields will be in place for grades K-5 and cleaned nightly. Students will be entering and exiting the building from various doorways. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands for twenty seconds as often as possible. Movement will be limited and students will spend most of their day in their classroom. Students will receive most of their instruction in their classroom including art, music and physical education. At this time it appears that lunch will also be occurring in the classroom. We strongly encourage you to take your child's temperature each morning before school. You will be receiving a letter from the Principal that will provide you with further information regarding safety and building procedures. These same procedures will be followed in Grade 5 in the Middle School.

3. My child has a documented health concern and attendance in-school could jeopardize their health. What should I do?

You should contact your child's building principal to discuss this issue as well as send the building nurse the medical documentation, if you have not done so already. Your child is entitled to remote instruction that will include personal contact with the teacher.

4. I am uncomfortable sending my child to school when the COVID 19 virus remains prevalent in our Country. What are my options?

According to the Commissioner of Education, remote learning is a "district decision." The Mount Sinai Board of Education has agreed to provide remote learning to those parents who are reluctant to send their children to school at this time. Due to the need for planning, social distancing, and personnel decisions, we need to know who is attending and who will be opting-out. We need an exact number of students who will need to be placed in a socially distanced setting. Parents should be aware that if they choose to opt- out their child from attending in September, the window for returning to school would open in January, the beginning of the second semester. Although remote

instruction will be provided, we still believe that nothing replaces in person instruction and interaction with a teacher.

5. Will the secondary grades be on a hybrid schedule?

Yes, grades 6-12 will be on a hybrid schedule. Hybrid schedule means a combination of in-person instruction and remote instruction. We will schedule alphabetically half of the student population to attend Monday and Tuesday and the second half will attend school on Thursday and Friday. Although we clean nightly, Wednesday is designated as the deep cleaning day and we will utilize an outside crew. Remote instruction will also occur on Wednesday's.

6. I was not happy with the remote learning of last spring. What has the District done to improve remote/online instruction?

Since last spring we have made great efforts to improve our online/remote instruction. District administration met frequently with building administrators and teachers to develop a unified plan that would address the needs of all three buildings. Google classroom will be the main platform used by the teachers in the District. Although a number of teachers were already using Google classroom, we offered training throughout the summer for our teachers in Google classroom and the various resources that it offers. Further teacher training is currently being planned. Already on the website our tutorials for parents. On August 13 and 14, the District will offer in person training for parents. Should you wish to attend please contact Ms. DiPrimo at the High School (870-2800). I would also encourage parents to visit our *Remote Learning Guide* that is posted on the District's website. Should parents encounter difficulties accessing a teacher's information, I encourage them to contact the teacher first, then the building principal. Technicians will also be available to help parents through any learning difficulties.

7. Will I be getting any notification from my child's principal?

Principals are attempting to conduct in person parent meetings by grade level. Also, each building is creating a video to explain what will appear to be different in school this year as far as physical building space and procedures are concerned.

8. I have twins who are attending the Elementary School. Is it possible to have them in one class together?

Yes, we are permitting siblings to be in the same classes and go through the same schedule together.

9. I have a child attending the Middle School and another in the High School. It would be easier for me if they attended school using the same hybrid schedule. Is it possible to have my two children scheduled on the same days, which would make child care easier for me to schedule?

Yes, we will make every attempt to schedule siblings on the same hybrid days.

10. Will the hours of the school day remain the same?

The District is making every effort to keep the arrival and dismissal of school as close to the regular times as possible.

11. What happens if anyone in the school tests positive for COVID? Does everyone in the school need to quarantine for 14 days?

If anyone tests positive for COVID-19, it will be immediately reported to the Department of Health. The DOH will assess the situation and make the appropriate recommendations regarding cleaning, disinfecting, and possible self-quarantine of others and/or possible closing of the facility or portion thereof. Know that the District will notify the school community and, if necessary, the Superintendent can make the determination to close a portion of or entire building in the name of safety.

12. If one person has COVID, does the entire school get shut down? Is there rapid testing available if that happens?

The Department of Health will make the determination (along with the Superintendent) regarding school closures. It is possible that a room, a wing, or the entire school could be closed for a period of time, depending on the tracing of the individual's contact with others and travel within the building. As far as rapid testing, schools will not be testing students or staff. That is the purview of the State, County or an individual's private physician.

13. How and when will student temperatures be taken?

The District encourages parents/guardians to take their child(ren)'s temperature before departing for school. Parents/guardians will also be asked to complete an attestation that their child does not have a temperature above 100.0 F.

14. Why are we installing Sneeze Guards?

The Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control as well as State guidelines highly recommend face coverings whenever students are unable to socially distance. We recognize this is challenging for some individuals, even when they are at their desk. Given the nature of teaching

and learning, teachers in elementary schools may need to move about the room assisting and supporting students. The nature of younger children in particular, means they may inadvertently move their desks, which will minimize social distancing; sneeze guards will help protect students in this event.

15. Will students stay in the same class all day to minimize possible exposure?

In elementary school (K-5), students will stay in one class all day with specials (art, music, etc.) pushing into their rooms. Teachers will take precautions as they move from room to room, and cleaning protocols have been put in place as well.

16. Will there be separate nursing areas for kids who are sick and kids who get hurt?

Yes, we will have a quarantine area for anyone suspected of being exposed to COVID or demonstrating symptoms (these individuals will be picked up by a family member as soon as practical). The nurse's office will remain in use for general injuries, medication dispersal, and/or general illnesses.

17. How will bathrooms, classrooms, and buses be properly disinfected?

Our facilities will be disinfected several times a day in accordance with CDC guidelines. This includes utilizing hospital grade disinfectants. The District will maintain cleaning schedules, daily logs, and redeploy the necessary staff to ensure the guidelines are met. Our bus company will follow State and CDC protocols.

18. What type of filters are in each of the buildings' vents?

All existing HVAC RTU's (rooftop units), which can be upgraded to MERV 13 filtration will be. Also, many of our classrooms have "uni-vents" which draw fresh air from the outside and provide heat in the winter.

19. Will there be several entry/exit points for children so that hundreds of children don't go through one entry at a time?

Each school will communicate their plans for student arrival and dismissal to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff, students, and parents/guardians. Be assured that schools will take into account the staggered arrival and dismissal times, the number of students for each time period and assure that proper CDC and DOH protocols are followed at all times.

20. Why can't secondary students attend school every day with half in the morning and half in the afternoon?

Guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting of school facilities between uses such as an AM/PM model cannot be met. Further, transportation costs, lack of additional buses and drivers and the extra staffing needed to run morning and afternoon schedules would also preclude us from running an AM/PM schedule.

21. Is this the plan for the whole year or can it change and go back to the old "normal" schedule?

Although conditions may change, it is unlikely that COVID will subside to the degree necessary to remove social distancing requirements allowing us to return to a "normal" schedule. However, it is possible that infection rates could rise enough that we are forced to move to a long-term remote model.

22. Will BOCES be available?

BOCES has shared with the District that they do plan on opening every day for on-site instruction. Mount Sinai High School is working with BOCES to create schedules for those students who are registered to attend.

23. Will NYS Regents be exempt again if we continue with a hybrid schedule at the middle school and high school?

At this time we do not know if the State will administer Regents exams. However, we will proceed in such a way as to attempt to assure student success.

24. How will the District accommodate families where both parent work?

The District recognizes that two working parents/guardians can be difficult. One of the driving forces in our decision to have elementary students attend school four days per week is to accommodate working families.

25. Will students have the opportunity to have outside recess or engage in activities outside?

Students will have opportunities, weather permitting, to go outside for lunch and lessons as designed by the school and/or teacher. Otherwise, we are working on other means of outside recreation that are safe based on the age of students and available facilities.

26. Will secondary students have access to their lockers?

At this time secondary students will not have access to their lockers.

27. Will schools offer extracurricular activities and athletics?

Each school building will be identifying which extracurricular activities that the school offers to see which, if any, will be able to be offered based on all of the safety guidelines establish by the NYSED, DOH, CDC, and the District. Please be aware that the District does not make the decision regarding athletics for both middle and high school. We are awaiting further guidance from Section XI.

28. Will Driver Education be offered?

At this time it is anticipated that driver's education will not be offered.

29. When will the parent meetings be held?

All parent meetings will occur by August 21. Make-up meetings will be held at the discretion of the principal.

30. Will early/aftercare be offered in the Elementary and Middle School?

Yes, before school and after school childcare will be offered at the Elementary School. After school childcare will be offered at the Middle School.

31. What is the decision date for parents to notify the school district if choosing the virtual option?

The District must be informed of the parents' decision by August 21, 2020.

32. In the event of a school quarantine or shutdown, what is the District's plan in placement of the two in-person instruction _____ days?

Should the Governor or Board of Health order a building or the District to close, remote learning will occur five days per _____ week.

33. The hybrid schedule at the high school scheduling students by alphabet does not take into consideration how many students within the cohort are scheduled in the same class. What is the plan to accommodate those cohorts so social distancing within the classroom can still be maintained?

The high school administration will attempt to "level" the class by moving students, or that larger class will be moved to a larger room.

34. If students/teacher is not 3-6 feet apart will teachers still be giving "mask breaks?"

Students and teachers must wear masks at all times. The teacher may remove their mask when teaching, if they are six feet apart from the students.

35. Will campus gates be open for students who walk and ride their bikes?

Yes. The gates will be open when school starts. The District has purchased bicycle racks for students.

36. Will there be any field trips this year?

At this time we have cancelled all field trips until further notice. All large group events have been cancelled as well.

37. Will use of school facilities, like the track and tennis courts be permitted?

A decision will be made in the fall regarding facilities usage.

38. How does a school district contact the local health department to report a COVID-19 case in their district?

School staff can call 311 to report a case in their district. Information will be taken about the case and general guidance may be provided. Specific guidance, however, cannot be provided until the case investigation is complete. SCDHS typically completes case investigations with 24 hours of receipt of a positive test result.

39. Would you recommend masks for all students even with 6 feet social distance?

Yes. Face coverings should be the norm, not the exception. Breaks from mask wearing should be allowed for meals and other coordinated activities, provided physical distancing is in place.

40. What are the recommended protocols if a student tests positive?

Student should immediately be placed on isolation at home for at least 10 days. School staff should assist the local health department in contact tracing efforts by providing a list of probable close contacts (defined as being within 6 feet of the infected student for at least 10 minutes). The identification of close contacts should begin 48 hours before the student became symptomatic, or 48 hours before the student was tested for the COVID-19 virus if asymptomatic. Identified close contacts should also remain at home for 14 days of quarantine from the date of last exposure to the infected student.

SCDHS is responsible for case investigation and contact tracing in Suffolk County. School districts should support case investigation and contact tracing efforts by confirming attendance, sharing rosters, etc. SCDHS typically completes case investigations within 24 hours of receipt of a positive test result. School districts should have plans in place related to community notification and operations while investigations are underway. SCDHS provides isolation or quarantine orders to all cases and contacts in Suffolk County. In addition, those under isolation or quarantine will be monitored daily. When the isolation or quarantine period has ended, a letter from SCDHS

confirming release will be provided to each case and contact. Students and/or staff can provide the letter to their school district to return. Contact tracing and quarantining of close contacts is initiated upon receipt of a positive test result. In addition, only contacts of the case are quarantined, not contacts of contacts.

41. What are the recommended protocols for suspected cases of COVID-19?

Students and staff with symptoms of illness should not attend school. It is recommended that individuals and/or families consult their medical provider to determine if COVID-19 testing is warranted. Notification and contact tracing is initiated upon receipt of a positive COVID-19 test result. No action is taken for suspected cases. Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the established CDC/NYS DOH guidelines for ending isolation. All residents who test positive are monitored daily by SCDHS contact tracing staff and will receive a letter from SCDHS confirming release from isolation.

42. To what extent must students/staff quarantine/isolate after:

A singular positive case?

Identified close contacts should be placed on quarantine for 14 days from date of last contact. This could affect students, teachers, or other school staff. SCDHS strongly recommends that close contacts get tested for COVID-19. Students and staff should consult their medical provider for guidance.

Multiple positives?

This would be more complicated, depending on if they are in the same cohort (a cluster), or positives in multiple cohorts (an outbreak). Those in a cluster would isolate at home, and a presumably small number of identified close contacts would quarantine at home. An outbreak across multiple cohorts would involve a larger number of people identified as close contacts, and thus more of the student population under quarantine. This would require coordination with NYS DOH in addition to the school district.

Should isolation occur within singular classroom? Grade level? Building? District?

Isolation would apply to the person who tests positive. Any close contacts identified for quarantine will likely be in the same classroom or lunchroom. Schools should try to limit the number of cohorts to the greatest extent possible. For most children that number is going to be a least two, the bus and the classroom.

43. If an elementary student tests positive and the students within the class/cohort are all in masks and 6 feet apart in class must the class be quarantined?

This would be decided on a case-by-case basis. Most likely, out of an abundance of caution, we would advise that all of the students in that class/cohort be considered close contacts and be placed on quarantine. If all were wearing face coverings and practicing social distancing, the likelihood that further positive cases are identified from that cohort is minimal.

44. If students are 6 feet apart in a classroom with no masks and one tests positive, is the class quarantined?

Yes, in this scenario, there will be a higher likelihood of identifying other positive cases related to the index case. Students wearing masks lower the rate of transmission/new cases when one is exposed to a case.

45. Which campus gates will be open for student walkers and bicycle riders?

The walking gates behind the elementary school and the high school baseball field will be open at 7:00 a.m., and closed for the day at 4:00 p.m. Gates will be locked after student arrival from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. The district purchased bicycle racks, which have already arrived and will be located at each school building.

46. This question has been asked numerous times, but it has come up at our principal meetings. Therefore, it is worth answering again. Why isn't the elementary school open five days per week? Is it necessary for students to stay home on Wednesdays?

The reopening plan states that it is a "Living Document" which means it will/can be upgraded or changed, as we move carefully into the school year. Teachers will be working on Wednesdays with the students who are on remote learning and not attending the other four days of the week. Teachers will also be filming and posting lessons. After they leave, the building will undergo a deep cleaning by an outside cleaning company. This is in addition to the cleaning our own custodians do daily. It is the goal of the District to get our students, all students, back fully and daily. As we move through September, and students and teachers adapt to be in school once again and have learned to follow all safety protocols, the District will review the possibility of bringing grades K-5 back five days per week. Of course, this is contingent upon the COVID percentage rate remaining low and the Governor and Department of Health. It is our belief that there is no better learning situation than live in-person instruction daily.

47. What exactly is the deep cleaning that will take place every Wednesday and Friday?

DEEP CLEANING on requested areas with proper PPE (gloves, glasses, and mask) using Halt cleaner Virucide, and TB-cide quat or whatever disinfectant the school supplies. We dilute the disinfectant in a pail, and add a

microfiber cloth. We apply the product using the cloth ensuring that the cloth is consistently wet. We then wipe all surfaces stated below allowing them to air

dry for dwell time. We make sure that when we see the product soiled in the pail, we replace it. When finished we dispose of the rags in a pail in the supply area.

WIPE ALL DESK TOPS

KEYBOARDS

PHONES

CARTS

OVEN HANDLES

SHELF HANDLES

TOOL BOXES

CHAIRS

CONTROL KNOBS

TABLES

COMPUTER SCREEN EDGES

PRINTERS

SCAN GUNS

DESK HANDLES AND DRAWERS

MOUSE

FANS

FILE CABINETS

STATIONERY PRODUCTS

CUPS

ELEVATOR CALL BUTTONS

AND ANY OTHER TOUCH POINTS

48. What will be the cleaning protocols of our bus company FIRST STUDENT?

The bus company will be utilizing EPA registered disinfectant, Zoono Z 71 that protects all surfaces for 30 days from cross-contamination. In addition, they will be disinfecting the high contact areas twice per day after the AM runs and again after the PM runs. They will not be disinfecting between individual tiers. This would be difficult between schools with multiple drop offs, tightly scheduled times, and disinfectant drying times.

- All drivers will wear masks when loading and unloading students. Matrons will be required to wear masks at all times.
- All bus employees are provided hand sanitizer and gloves for the matrons.
- All high contact areas like handrails, steering wheel, and seat backs will be disinfected twice daily.
- All employees will receive COVID-19 training on PPE and signs of the virus as per the NYS guidance.
- As per NYS guidance, no student will be denied transportation.
- All employees are required to self-assess prior to starting their workday.
- Roof hatches on all vehicles will be opened when the temperature is above 45 degrees.

49. Will we get all of our students back to school five days per week?

The Reopening Plan is a "Living Document" which means it can be adjusted and upgraded as we enter/ transition into the new school year. If the COVID percentage rate remains low, we don't experience COVID cases in our staff and student populations, and the Governor's Executive orders become less stringent, we are looking at the possibility of rotating Wednesday into the high school schedule. In other words, the first week cohort A would attend school on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. The next week cohort B would attend school on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. What will also make this possible is if the number of students on remote learning remains low. Currently, Wednesday is a day for teachers to work remotely with those students who chose not to attend school in person.

50. I was a student in the Mount Sinai Driver's Education spring 2020 class. I have questions about the completion of the course. Where can I go to get my questions answered?

Students in the Mount Sinai Driver's Ed spring 2020 class should refer to the website with updated information on the completion of the course based on new guidelines from the NYSED this morning. Remaining lecture dates are posted for next week as well as information regarding the NEW parent requirement to complete and sign off on the additional 15 hours of "in car" driving time. Once final exams are graded and parent log sheets are turned in to the middle school by September 11, 2020, Driver's Ed Completion Certificates will be issued the following week with a date and time to be determined. Any questions, email or call Ms. Hine at 631-870-2701/2632 for further information or clarification.

51. My child is in Mount Sinai High School. Will there be cleaning of the desks between periods?

Due to the limited time between classes, cleaning each desk in the room would be impossible. However, each classroom will be supplied with hand sanitizer, paper towels and cleaning fluid. Should the student choose to clean their desk they are welcome to use those materials or bring their own sanitizer to clean their desk. All door knobs and frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned between each class.

52. If my child is sent home from school with COVID symptoms what do I have to do in order to return them to school?

The District is requiring a doctor's note to return your child to their school building.

53. Do you feel that schools will stay open for in-person instruction with the COVID virus peaking in some states and in colleges around the country?

I am very concerned to hear about colleges closing and students returning home or quarantined before returning home. I am also concerned that people are becoming tired of social distancing and wearing masks. I believe people are becoming lax and not being as cautious.

Then you have to consider that this is vacation and travel time. Parents and their children are often returning from vacation the week before school opens. The Governor has his list of states where he considers travel dangerous. If families visit one of these listed states they should self-quarantine for two weeks. I must ask, will parents tell us that they traveled to one of these states? Will they inform the school that their child visited one of these states during the final days before school opens? They absolutely should. A child can be asymptomatic and carry the virus. One child or one teacher becoming COVID will have significant impact on a school building. Numerous cases will have great impact on the District and we can find ourselves closed by the Department of Health. I

sincerely hope that parents who travel to one of the states on the list where COVID is peaking will keep their child home for two weeks.

54. How many students do you think will be on my child's elementary school bus?

The bus company has informed me that they are doing their best to limit the number of students on a bus to remain below 40 per bus. That would mean there would be approximately two students per seat. This is the reason why the bus driver and all students on the bus must wear a mask at all times. Siblings may sit together on the bus.

However, we know more students will be walking and riding their bicycles to school, as parents have indicated. That is why the gates near Vidoni Drive and the gates behind the high school baseball field will be open. We also have approximately 50 students who chose remote instruction and will not be taking the bus. The elementary school just posted a survey to give us an approximate number of parents who will drive their child to school. This will also bring down the number of students on the bus. A number of our parents do not have the luxury of driving their child and are bus dependent.

So, really, as I write this the exact number of students per bus is unknown. We want them as low as possible. The bus company does not have extra buses to add to its fleet. We were informed by the bus company that it takes six months for a bus to be constructed. If buses were available to be added each bus would cost approximately eighty to ninety thousand dollars.

55. I chose to keep my child home and opted for remote learning. What can I expect during the first week or two of school?

Due to the Corona virus, the delivery of the cameras and needed wiring was delayed. Fortunately, the cameras have arrived and are being installed in 160 classrooms in the District. We hired an additional outside crew to come in and wire the cameras into our system. They continue to be wired. But teachers can also perform remote learning by using a laptop, iPad, or iPhone.

School begins on a Tuesday. The first day back involves welcoming students, making them feel comfortable and talking about curriculum. The second day back is a teacher remote day to get in touch with their remote learners and students are not physically in the building. Then on Thursday, teachers will be welcoming the B cohort of students for their first day of school. Friday may see the first day of instruction for the secondary students. On the elementary level, actual instruction may begin at the end of the week. After being out of school for six months, the emphasis will be on transitioning our students back to school and again creating routines.

Look for planned instruction to get under way in week two, after the students have been transitioned to a return.

If a parent has concerns about the remote instruction, they should contact their child's teacher. If questions and concerns persist, the parent should contact the building principal.

56. Can I still opt my child for in-person instruction if I already signed up for remote learning?

No. However, you can opt for in-person learning at the beginning of the second semester. At this time Principals have created class rosters based on the number of students attending school in-person. As we plan to include Wednesdays in the weekly school schedule our numbers have to remain firm.

57. When will my child's bus route be posted on the website?

All bus routes will be posted this Friday on the District's website.

58. If I request a device for my child to enable them to do remote, when will I receive that device?

Please be prepared to wait a few days after the technology department receives your request. The device must be reconfigured and loaded with software so it is appropriate for student use.

59. How do I place my request for a device?

The parent needs to contact the main office of their child's building and place their request.

60. Why aren't grades 7-12 attending school five days per week?

I am sure that the community is aware of the phase 2 of our School Reopening Plan.

Grades K-6 will be attending school five days per week beginning the week of October 19, 2020. Beginning on October 21, 2020, students in grades 7-12 will begin rotating Wednesdays into their schedule. October 19, 20 and 21 will be the A cohort days. Cohort B will attend school as usual on Thursday, October 22 and Friday, October 23. So, the week looks like (A/A/A/B/B). The next week will look like (A/A/B/B/B).

Achieving a five day per week schedule in grades K-6 was a more simple challenge. These students only require one classroom and do not move from class to class. Space was available in the elementary school to properly social distance our students and desk shields were affixed to each desk, in every classroom.

Creating a five day schedule for Grades 7-12 is a greater challenge. Space is not available in the

middle and high school.

Social distancing is the law. Having 24, 25, 26 students in a class would violate the Governor's Executive Order and the guidelines set forth by the Department of Health. No further plans will be considered until the social distancing order has been removed by the Governor.

61. What is the plan for school closure on days due to COVID?

The plan is that teachers will teach remotely according to their class schedule and provide five days of instruction. More teachers are moving to livestreaming due to the expectation that they must have their lessons posted or delivered according to their schedule. At the end of the quarter I will assess teachers' progress toward livestreaming. All students should attend the lesson remotely according to their bell schedule. Attendance will be taken and failure could be a result of not attending the classes.

62. Why do we not have teachers 7-12 who are solely for our remote only learners like other districts have?

Remote students should attend classes remotely according to their class schedule. They are part of the teachers' roster and belong to a teacher. In addition, remote students will be contacted by a remote only teacher several times per weeks to assist with any needs they may have.

63. How are you addressing the lack of instruction happening in grades 7-12?

First, we have made Wednesday an instructional day--this will be a remote instructional day where all students will be addressed. The expectation is that students will receive five days of instruction either livestreamed or the teachers recording and editing their lessons. Administrators will be supervising to ensure that teachers are delivering five days of instruction and are teaching remotely according to their schedule. If a parent feels that instruction is lacking in a particular class and has concerns they should contact that teacher. If the parent feels that their concerns have not been addressed they should contact the principal. If the parent continues to be concerned about the quality of instruction they should contact the superintendent. When teachers teach according to their bell schedule, the students should not receive any more work than they would if they were in-person.

64. When is the transition for 7-12 for full days happening?

Currently, with the executive orders and the guidelines from the Department of Health still in effect that clearly demands social distancing, it is not possible to return students in grades 7-12 five days per week. There is simply not enough classroom space and teachers. Also, in grades K-6 a teacher certification is greatly different than a specific certification of a secondary teacher. In science

alone, you must be certified subject specific. You would need additional living environment, chemistry, earth science, physics and AP teachers. Elementary teachers can teach K-6. It was easier to bring back grades K-6 because students stay in one classroom with their teacher. In grades 7-12 students move from class to class often visiting 7-8 classrooms and seeing 7-8 teachers per day. Because students in K-6 stay in their classroom for instruction, we mounted desk shields for each student. These shields remain on their desks and are cleaned nightly. In grades 7-12 a student would have to move from classroom to classroom carrying their shields and bring it home to sanitize it nightly. Then they would have to return to school with it the next day, which could be problematic. What we are doing since the COVID cases amongst students and staff have all been at the high school is rotating Wednesdays into the instructional schedule at the beginning of the second quarter. Unfortunately, at this time there are no more options due to the lack of space.

65. Why our school grounds are not open to the community?

The use of the school grounds is governed by the restrictions imposed by the Department of Health, Executive Orders from the Governor, and the District's Use Policy. The District is responsible for the safety and use of the grounds and is liable for any violations of social distancing, congregation and public health, including sanitizing the equipment on the playground.

The playground equipment is presently not used during the school day during recess since we are unable to provide for active cleaning after each use. The grounds are closed for outside use due to the inability to provide for the safety, health and compliance with Executive Orders since staff and security are not present after the school day ends or on weekends.

We are cognizant of the inconvenience of these restrictions and will continue to explore avenues that may allow for the use of the playground equipment and still meet the guidelines imposed by the Department of Health and Governor. As always, the health and safety of our students is of the utmost importance to us.

66. Many other districts have been able to offer their students free breakfast and lunch through a state grant, why not Mount Sinai?

Mount Sinai did not qualify for this grant. However, we do offer free and reduced breakfast/lunch for those families who qualify and meet the criteria.

67. Can the Board of Education get a designated email address as many other districts have?

The notification form that was used for this communication is received by each one of the Board members. The Board confers among the members and creates and agrees upon one common

response. That response is communicated to the author of the email through the District Clerk or Superintendent.

68. The community expressed the belief that children are spending countless hours online and a lot of the work they are receiving is busy work. Is that true?

I have communicated this belief to the district directors and principals. I have asked them to poll their teachers to see how much work is being assigned by each teacher on the secondary level. It is my belief that when teachers teach period by period according to their schedule, remote days should yield the same amount of work as an in-person class day. I have asked the principals and directors to make sure that only essential work is assigned not extra work. If you feel that your child is receiving a large amount of work from a teacher, please call that teacher and express your concern. If you don't receive a response please call the building principal.

69. The concern was expressed that some teachers are requiring students to have two devices at a time to record themselves when taking tests. Are parents expected to provide their child with two devices?

The District understands that when there is more than one child in the household, additional equipment may be needed. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's school if a need for devices exists.

Student backpack concerns have been expressed to the Board and District Office. I hear this complaint annually and ask the principals to speak to their staff about the necessity of keeping numerous books in students' backpacks. Over the last few years, we have purposely purchased textbooks that are available online for student use at home. I requested that the middle school principal and teachers look into this issue in an attempt to keep backpacks lighter. We are also exploring if pages can be printed out for the students versus carrying a book or if books can actually be kept at home.

70. Is it true that mask breaks are not being provided in our schools?

I am currently addressing this issue with the elementary and secondary principals. Teachers became vigilant about mask wearing at the high school when we suddenly had five case of COVID between staff and students. We realize that there are various beliefs in the effectiveness of masks; however the Department of Health insists upon mask wearing and we must comply. We will attempt to identify additional mask break opportunities. One such remedy may be alternating mask breaks between the rows of students within the classroom.

71. Is the District considering alternative exercises to walking around the track for our gym classes?

Yes, we are currently writing a guide for proposed physical activities in our gym classes as we move forward. These activities must be approved by the Athletic Director and Superintendent. In proposing these new activities, the safety of students is our first priority. We hope to begin different physical education classes next week.

72. Many teachers are posting lessons and assignments at different times of the day? Will this be organized to create a clear schedule and time when a student must be on a computer for remote lessons?

Parents can expect that lessons and assignments will be posted according to a classroom schedule. These lessons may appear in the form of live streaming, Google meets, and Zoom or teacher prerecorded lessons of them teaching live. By following this schedule the expectations for teachers and students are clear. Students will attend a teacher's class at that time remotely for instruction. Should the District have to close for COVID reasons, students should go on their computers and follow their schedule as if they were physically in school.

73. When a parent has a question regarding their child's 504 or feel that the 504 accommodations are not being provided, what should a parent do?

I recommend that elementary parents contact their child's teacher first. If parents still have concerns, please reach out to the building principal. On the secondary level, it is recommended that parents reach out to the school psychologist or guidance counselor. If concerns still exist, parents should contact the building principal. Parents should advocate for their child and make sure they are receiving the appropriate accommodations.

74. Without school activities and sports, the children in the District are missing out on the social benefit that school normally offers. Is there something that we can do?

The District realizes that school is missing a great deal without fall sports on all levels, clubs, concerts, etc. The principals have been proposing clubs and providing guidance for such activities to occur remotely as we bring them back. A number of these clubs have already been approved and should be beginning shortly. The high school is also working on bringing back a "safe" Halloween. School sports are scheduled to begin in January. Hopefully, with clubs and sports opening up, we will bring some form of socialization back for our students.

75. Is the District following CDC guidelines accurately?

We noticed in creating our reopening plan that the CDC and DOH have their own set of guidelines. The Department of Health is the agency that reviewed and approved our reopening plan. Therefore, we believe that we are following the appropriate guidelines, which includes the

approval of our hybrid plan. Our school nurses are well versed in the guidelines issued by the CDC and the DOH. They have been included in our District meetings regarding safety protocols and COVID activities.

76. Is it possible to produce a full year calendar for the community?

In this COVID situation it is difficult to plan and communicate activities in advance because they are dependent upon many variables. Many of the regularly scheduled events were stripped from the calendar because they don't comply with CDC guidelines. For example, sports are scheduled to begin in January but will they begin? The date may be changed or sports may be cancelled. I have asked the principals to schedule as many events as they can that look like they will happen in this COVID period. However, understand that if there is a spike in New York, these events will be cancelled. We are attempting to post the calendar two months in advance.

77. Why are waiting until mid-November to start Wednesdays?

When the high school suddenly had a spike in COVID revealing five cases among staff and students, we thought it was risky and it did not make sense to bring students into school more often as these incidents were rising. We saw it as another opportunity to better align our remote instruction and require students to follow their daily class schedules. We also felt it made more sense to begin this change at the beginning of the second quarter.

Again, I will repeat, that parents must contact the teacher if they have concerns about their child's remote instruction. If those concerns are not addressed, it is recommended that parents speak to the principal.

78. Will the kids be able to use the Big Toy device on the elementary school playground?

Mr. Catlin, Elementary School Principal, has developed a plan that promotes the safety of the children who will be permitted to use the equipment on the playground. Students will be rotated through Big Toy one class per grade level per day, which allows for five classes per day. Unfortunately, we cannot permit equipment use like in the past. We have to maintain distancing among our children. After all, students are spaced 12 feet apart in their physical education, chorus and band classes. It doesn't make sense to allow kids to be on top of one another while using the equipment. By allowing one class at a time to use the equipment it will be easier to supervise and maintain order.

79. How much money was saved by lack of sports last spring and this fall?

The Board of Education dedicated money from the fund balance to pay for construction materials and supplies to satisfy the Department of Health requirements and guidelines for COVID. There was no money saved by the lack of sports this fall. All sports seasons will be occurring in a few months, beginning January 4, 2021. The coaches are currently running intramurals. Should all sports seasons occur at the beginning of 2021, the coaches will earn their full salaries. Transportation costs will be incurred as well. The money saved from last spring went into the fund balance, which is where our two million COVID money came from.

80. If a parent needs a remote device, may they borrow one from the District?

IPads and laptops are available to sign out from the District. Contact your building principal for information. Also, students in grades 9-12 will be issued individual laptops beginning in September 2021.

81. Some parents were skeptical about students being given the opportunity to play on the elementary school playground.

Students have been permitted to play on the playground since September. Now classes are taking turns playing on Big Toy.

82. Who do I contact if I am not satisfied with my child's remote learning experience?

If parents are not satisfied with the remote learning that their child is experiencing, they should contact the teacher. If the situation is not remedied, the parents should reach out to the principal.









83. Is the District considering further changes to the Reopening Plan once Phase Two becomes fully implemented?

We have successfully returned students in grades K-6 back to school for five days of in-person instruction. Currently, grades 7-12 are on a hybrid schedule, as are many of our neighboring districts. Please look at the chart I provided that shows the instructional models that are currently being used by neighboring districts.

Beginning the week of November 16, Wednesdays will be rotated in the hybrid schedule for grades 7-12. However, the Board of Education and District administrators are exploring the possibility of returning grades seven and eight. The return of certain grades in the high school is also a scenario currently being discussed. Returning all grades, nine through twelve, for five days of in-person instruction is not being discussed at this time due to social distancing mandates.

In addition, the Board of Education, building administrators, and I have heard from many parents who indicated that they are not in favor of five days of in-person instruction due to COVID.

Brookhaven Cluster - Instruction Models as of November 2020								
			K-4	5	6	7-8	9-11	12
1	Center Moriches	n/c	In-Person 5	In-Person 5	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
2	Comsewogue	n/c	In-Person 5	In-Person 5	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
3	ESM	Nov.	Hybrid -> In-Person 5	Hybrid -> In-Person 5	Hybrid -> In-Person 5	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
4	Longwood	n/c	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
5	Middle Country	Oct-Nov	Hybrid -> In-Person 5	Hybrid -> In-Person 5	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid -> In-Person 5
6	Miller Place	n/c	In-Person 5	In-Person 5	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
7	Mt. Sinai	Oct.	In-Person 4 to 5	In-Person 4 to 5	In-Person 4 to 5	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
8	Pat-Med	n/c	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
9	Pt. Jefferson	n/c	In-Person 5	In-Person 5	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
10	Riverhead	Dec.	Hybrid -> In-Person 5	Hybrid -> In-Person 5	Hybrid -> In-Person 5	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
11	Rocky Point	Dec.	In-Person 5	In-Person 5	Hybrid -> In-Person 4			
12	South Country	n/c	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
13	SWR	n/c	In-Person 5					
14	Three Village	n/c	In-Person 5					
15	William Floyd	Nov.	Hybrid -> In-Person 4	Hybrid	Hybrid -> In-Person 4			
16	East Moriches	n/c	In-Person	In-Person	In-Person	In-Person	N/A	N/A

84. Does the Mount Sinai School District participate in the Federal Child Nutrition Program, which provides for free lunch for all students?

The Mount Sinai School District is not participating in this Federal Program. The estimated initial outlay for the District would be \$500,000. However, that is not the issue. The issue is that New York State cannot guarantee that we would be reimbursed for these funds. High needs districts will be reimbursed first. Mount Sinai is not a high needs district. There is also the chance that these funds will run out before all districts are reimbursed. The District cannot take this chance with its budget. New York State is already reducing our state aid by 20

percent. We have had to already set aside two million dollars for COVID costs.

If a community member is in need and struggles to pay for their child's breakfast/lunch, we have a program in place where they can apply and receive these meals for free.