



AVOCA

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Central School District



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Avoca CSD plans to open with hybrid model

August 11, 2020—The Avoca Central School District has been hard at work developing its reopening plan for the 2020-21 school year based on guidance from the state and feedback from the school community. On Aug. 7, Governor Cuomo announced that schools could reopen in-person, as long as infection rates remain low and districts implement rigorous health and safety precautions that include frequent hand-washing, social distancing and wearing face coverings.

The district will open in September implementing the hybrid model that was developed to accommodate in-person return to the building while maintaining the health and safety of all students and school personnel. A summary of the hybrid model is below and the full reopening plan, submitted to the State Education Dept. and Dept. of Health can be [found here](#).

Parent Q&A sessions scheduled

Parents can ask questions about the plan for September by attending one of the district's upcoming virtual meetings:

Wednesday, August 12 - After Dinner Conversation (7 p.m.)

<https://E2CCB-GST.zoom.us/j/97153818541?pwd=SHk0c2srNG9WV3owSkE5K1FlbWFqQT09> Webinar ID 971 5381 8541 Webinar Passcode 103222

Thursday, August 13 - Coffee Conversation (7:30 a.m.)

<https://E2CCB-GST.zoom.us/j/98698846934?pwd=ZHBnQWhSKzF1OVpxK0gxK0tGRVJjUT09> Webinar ID 986 9884 6934 Webinar Passcode 764438

Thursday, August 13 - Dinner Conversation (5 p.m.)

<https://E2CCB-GST.zoom.us/j/99670047160?pwd=d0oxdFN2bXpMSE1qRDJHaytUSmFkZz09> Webinar ID 996 7004 7160 Webinar Passcode 105616

“We hope that you can find some assurance knowing that we are prepared to safely care for and educate our students,” said Superintendent Stephen Saxton. “We encourage you to join us at one of our information sessions and also connect with us on our many communication channels.”

The district uses Blackboard to send out mass notifications (phone, text message and email) and will be mailing home instructions for families to create and customize their preferences for receiving time sensitive information. Other ways to connect include checking avocacsd.org for the latest news and downloading the district’s free app for mobile access.

Overview of the Reopening plan

The district’s reopening plan was developed with consideration from community engagement and stakeholder feedback. The district administered a ThoughtExchange with families in June to identify areas of improvement with virtual learning and connectivity. Meetings were convened with front office staff and administration, elementary, middle and high school staff, and the Avoca Teachers Association Executive Committee in July. A second family survey (link to results summary) was also administered to gauge parent preferences for learning models, safety concerns and transportation.

The Hybrid Learning Model

- In-person learning two days each week
- Students divided into two teams (maroon and gold) so half of the student population is on campus each day
- Students on the maroon team would attend school in-person on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Students on the gold team would attend school in-person on Wednesdays and Fridays
- All siblings would be on the same team, regardless of grade level
- Extended school day, to build in an “advisory period” at the end of the day to prepare for asynchronous virtual learning and meal collection for the remote day, moving the end of the school day to 3:15 p.m.
- Students required to wear face coverings on buses and while moving about the classroom when six feet of social distancing could not be maintained
- All students would be remote on Mondays, with first period GoogleMeets to take attendance, and then work independently on assignments
- Teachers will be available via email or remind if additional support is needed
- Monday would be a planning day for teachers
- Counselors would check-in with students, and virtual college visits/virtual career information sessions would be scheduled for Mondays. Some therapy sessions will occur on Mondays. Teachers would be available for office hours to help clarify assignments or answer any questions
- Committee on Special Education (CSE meetings) would be scheduled on Mondays

Grading and attendance

Regardless of model, student assignments would be graded and daily attendance would be taken. The district’s grading policy remains the same, regardless of instructional model.

In the hybrid model, students learning at home would still connect with their homeroom teacher daily. If they do not appear for homeroom, they would be marked absent for the day, prompting a phone call home. Any student not present for the homeroom period would be marked absent for the day, prompting a phone call home.

Facilities

- Spray disinfectant would be used on desks/chairs during student transition times
- At the end of each day, all classrooms will have a thorough cleaning and disinfecting
- Locker use is prohibited to limit gatherings, students will carry their belongings with them at all times
- Students will not change clothes during physical education classes this year
- Students will be allowed to carry a backpack in between classes
- No school supplies will be shared between students
- The district will continue to provide school supplies for students

Nutrition

Onsite

- Breakfast will be grab-and-go for middle and high school students on their way to first period, to be eaten at their desk
- Elementary students will go directly to their classroom upon arrival to eat breakfast in their room
- Lunch: To maintain social distancing during lunch, a number of locations will be designated and assigned to students.

Offsite

- Meals for our students and their families will be provided
- When students are in attendance, meals for remote days will be sent home with them
- Families who opt to homeschool also have access to meals during designated pickup times and locations

Transportation

- Siblings must sit together at all times
- Face coverings required at all times

Technology

- Enrolled students will be provided with a Chromebook for academics
- All teachers will use the Google Classroom platform in each instructional model
- The Avoca Public Library has added T-Mobile wifi "hotspots" devices for loan
- The local library also plans to offer students public space for learning

The full reopening plan is available on the district website at: <https://www.avocacsd.org/Domain/140>

Sincerely,



Stephen Saxton
Superintendent of Schools