

ONC BOCES Opening Plan

Fall 2021-2022

Goal for Fall 2021 Opening:

The goal for the 2021-22 school year is to keep students and staff healthy and safe, while maximizing in-person learning. The protocols outlined in this document are derived from layered mitigation strategies recommended by the CDC, our local Health Departments and NYS Education Department.

COVID Coordinators:

The BOCES has designated Dr. Catherine Huber, District Superintendent, as the COVID-19 coordinator. Other contacts include the Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Jennifer Avery and Safety Risk Coordinator, Mr. Joshua Reiss.

LAYERED HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Social Distancing:

In developing this Fall 2021 opening plan, BOCES has considered the size of our buildings and the ability to maintain appropriate social distance. ONC BOCES currently serves approximately 600 students in our occupational centers, 40 adult students in a rented facility, 1,800 students in our component schools and employs about 275 staff members. We take the safety of our students and our staff very seriously.

In order to appropriately plan for space within our facility, BOCES administration has calculated the square footage of every space. We have assigned capacity to those spaces based upon the space needed for three to six foot social distancing in offices, classrooms and labs. During lunch periods and physical education classes, students will maintain a six-foot distance whenever possible. Classes will also utilize outdoor spaces as much as possible.

Face Masks:

Face masks must be worn by students, staff, and visitors while in the BOCES buildings and vehicles regardless of vaccination status or physical distance. Face masks should be worn at crowded outdoor events. Staff should comply with protocols set by component districts while in their facilities.

BOCES requests that staff and students bring cloth masks from home and that cloth masks are washed regularly. If a person does not have a mask, disposable masks have been purchased and are available at the entrances to BOCES facilities or upon request at the health office.

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Students will be permitted to take mask breaks at the discretion of faculty or administration. Staff can plan for their own mask breaks. With mask breaks, physical distancing of at least 6 feet is encouraged.

Hand Washing and Respiratory Etiquette:

Staff and students should wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Covering coughs and sneezes can help reduce the spread of the virus.

Self-Assessment:

Staff, students (with the assistance of their guardian) and visitors should monitor their health and assess if they are exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms. A person with **new** symptoms should **not** enter the building but should contact their healthcare provider to determine the cause and if a COVID-19 test is necessary. If anyone that is not vaccinated who has had close contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 within the last 10 days, should not enter the building and contact their county Department of Health for guidance.

Students are expected to follow the protocols outlined by their home district.

Cleaning and Ventilation:

BOCES will follow CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting school buildings.

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>)

These protocols will include:

- Daily cleaning of all spaces in each building
- Mid-Day cleaning to disinfect high touch surfaces
- Fogging of buildings twice per week, once to be on Friday
- Immediate cleaning and disinfection of spaces occupied by a person that has reported illness
- Staff should continue to disinfect shared surfaces after use

BOCES will continue to meet the requirements for maintaining adequate ventilation.

These protocols include:

- Ventilation systems will be evaluated and adjusted to run according to optimal manufacturer recommendations
- The maximum MERV filter rating that each HVAC unit allows will be installed
- Daily pre and post occupancy fresh air purge cycles will be performed
- Window ventilation should also be maximized as much as possible

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Visitors:

Nonessential visitors will be limited to only BOCES events at each center. Exceptions can be made with approval by the District or Deputy Superintendent. Appointments should be made for visitors by each program office.

A log of visitors must be maintained at each center. The lobby guard system will be used at NCOC and OAOC. A paper log will be used at ISSC and Center Street.

Visitors should monitor their health and assess if they are exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms before entering an ONC BOCES facility. Visitors must follow the three foot social distancing mandate and follow regulations for wearing face masks to limit the spread of illness while on site.

Symptomatic Students or Staff:

Staff and students showing new signs of illness should not report to school or work. It is expected that staff will seek medical assessment by their own health care provider and get tested for COVID-19. Staff are responsible for alerting the Human Resource Department and their supervisor of their need to stay home from work.

Students and staff with symptoms of illness that present during the school/work day must be sent to the health office. Ill students and staff will be assessed by the school nurse (registered professional nurse, RN) or medical director.

Students or staff with a temperature or other signs of illness, will be sent directly to a dedicated isolation area where students are supervised, prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home.

School health personnel will wear PPE when assessing ill persons or conducting certain respiratory treatments.

COVID-19 Confirmed Cases:

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, the employee should alert Human Resources and their supervisor immediately. BOCES must immediately notify state and local health departments and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers or visitors who had close contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal law and regulations.

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If an employee is receiving a COVID-19 test due to COVID symptoms, the employee should alert Human Resources and their supervisor immediately. Employees are expected to self-quarantine until the test results are received.

If someone in the employee's household tests positive for COVID-19, the employee should contact Human Resources and their supervisor immediately for further discussion about potential quarantine orders.

If a student is confirmed positive for COVID-19, the BOCES will immediately notify the state and local health departments about the case. Together with the department of health, there will be a decision made about building or classroom closure. Notifications will be made to those that have been in close contact with the infected student.

Employees will share any quarantine and release orders from the Department of Health with the Human Resource Department before they return to work.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

In-person learning:

ONC BOCES is committed to assisting the component schools we serve. BOCES will continue to collaborate with component schools to provide educational programs and support to students. BOCES will provide 5 day per week in-person student programming to the extent safe and practicable following NY State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and local health guidelines. BOCES will be ready to shift to remote instruction on an as needed basis, recognizing that remote instruction may only be needed for specific school districts/regions of our BOCES.

BOCES will provide a social contract to students, staff and parents. The contract sets standards of behavior to lessen the spread of the coronavirus while on campus. The goal is to safely manage our educational environment to offer students in-person instruction. Everyone's cooperation is required to succeed. The Social Contract can be found at the following link: [ONC BOCES Social Contract](#)

Student Attendance:

For the 2021-2022 school year, instruction will include a record of daily attendance for in-person instruction and will follow the normal recording procedures set by BOCES. All attendance will be recorded in the student management system.

Students on quarantine are required to log in for remote instruction unless they are too unwell to do so. In this instance, a parent or guardian is required to contact the district attendance officer to record the absence as excused.

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Mandatory Quarantine for Students

When an individual or small group of students are subject to mandatory, COVID-related quarantine, the student(s) will be provided with on-going instruction which may include:

- Office Hours support (via phone or video conference platforms)
- Primary Synchronous Instruction via video conference platforms or SMSs (such as Schoology or Google Classroom) (NYSED does not have a requirement for hybrid instructional options for 2021-22)
- Asynchronous Instruction via video conference platform or SMSs (such as Schoology or Google Classroom)
- Independent Work (ex. handouts, self-paced activities, worksheets, or packets)

Determination of the appropriate instructional model will be made by the Principal, Director and/or District Superintendent in collaboration with the classroom teacher and in recognition of the unique circumstances of the course and technology related issues impacting the family (ex. lack of internet access or lack of a device). Regardless of instructional modality during quarantine, instruction must include regular connection with a NYS certified teacher throughout the period of mandatory quarantine.

Technology and Connectivity:

The Digital Access Survey will be distributed to staff and families via standard mail distribution and access via agency websites beginning late August/early September.

- Students and staff with limited device capability but sufficient internet access will be issued Chromebooks, laptops, and other technology by the agency to participate in the online delivery format.
- Students with insufficient internet capabilities but can benefit from a mobile hotspot device for connectivity will be issued one for instructional purposes.
- Staff with insufficient internet access capabilities will be allowed to use the agency facilities whenever practicable for instructional purposes. Staff with insufficient internet capabilities that are unable to enter the facility but can benefit from a mobile hotspot device for connectivity will be issued one for instructional purposes
- Students with insufficient internet capabilities will receive individualized instructional materials to support their learning needs and goals in two week intervals.
- Building Administrators and related staff will follow up with families that have not participated in the survey over the ensuing month of September, with the goal of full participation by the end of the first month of the school year.

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- Students and families will be provided supporting information regarding opportunities for remote connection that is available via area service providers. (e.g. <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>)
- Students will be provided access to technology materials as dictated by their families' needs. In the event of a transition to a remote instructional model, the agency will make use of the van mail to collect and distribute course materials and completed assignments to component districts..
- Technical support will be provided through the MITS service with the use of ServiceNow technology support help desk for all students and families.

Staff will continue to receive training on instructional technology best practices and utilize the district learning management system in conjunction with other platforms for digital instruction where necessary.

Medically Fragile Students:

The BOCES will accommodate the needs of students in high risk groups. Final determination of accommodations will be made by the home school district.

Transportation:

BOCES does not offer a regional transportation program, nor does it transport students to and from home or component schools. On occasion, BOCES would transport students to an offsite location for work based learning, field trips, or competitions. BOCES will follow mass transit COVID-19 protocols, including masking. Whenever possible, ventilation will be increased by opening windows in the vehicle.

Communication:

BOCES web based professional development platform, Public School WORKS, allows courses to be assigned to all staff and document completion of the training. All staff have been assigned courses on proper handwashing, proper use of face coverings and the signs, symptoms and protections from COVID-19.

A zoom webinar will be offered to all staff and to the public prior to the opening of school to review the protocols and to answer any questions.

The students will receive updated training on the importance of face coverings, social distancing and handwashing directly from their instructors at the start of the school year. Students showing any signs of illness will be referred to the school nurse for evaluation.

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Signage about signs and symptoms of COVID-19, proper hand washing protocols, requirements of face coverings and reminders for self-assessment checks have been posted at entrances, bathrooms and in hallways and common areas.

BOCES will provide regular communications in the form of letters and e2Campus Omni-alerts to students, parents or legal guardians of students and staff that includes applicable instructions to individuals about BOCES' plan and protocols for opening. Please be sure your contact information is up to date at this link: <https://oncboces.omnilert.net/subscriber.php>

Resource links:

NYSED:

<http://www.nysed.gov/back-to-school>

CDC:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>