

Eastford School District
Eastford Elementary School
Safe Return to Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan
Shaping Futures Together
Updated December 23, 2021

During the 2020-21 school year, except for a few days, we were fortunate to provide onsite instruction to our students. We also provided the option of remote instruction to those families who requested it. Some families opted to home school their children for the year. We followed all the CDC and DPH guidelines that were in place during the 2020-21 school year.

Thanks to the combined efforts of students, staff, families and community members, we continue to safely navigate the uncharted territory of the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, although progress has been made, the pandemic is not over. The State of CT Departments of Education and Public Health are participating in national-level webinars to keep informed of the current best practices. School administrators and nurses continue to participate in webinars presented by these organizations. New mandates and recommendations for schools in CT are constantly reviewed considering the most current local and national data.

All districts have been asked to update and post on our websites the *Safe Return to Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*. The Plan is based on the most current health and safety mandates and recommendations. We remain committed to our professional responsibility to provide a safe and secure learning environment based upon the information that will emerge throughout the summer. We will continue to communicate with you as we learn new information. As new information is gathered, the plan will be updated and shared.

THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

In 2021-22 we returned to and have retained our standard five days of on-site instruction for all students. In the sections below we have highlighted some key practices, procedures and improvements that we believe allow us to provide a very safe and productive learning experience for all our students during the 2021-22 school year.

Health and Safety

There continues to be ongoing questions about health and safety prevention and mitigation strategies that should be in place in schools.

- The Eastford School District continues to comply with all the Connecticut health and safety mandates regarding mask wearing and other mitigating strategies. At this point in time, that includes the wearing of masks inside school buildings and maintaining a cleaning and sanitizing protocol.
- Our nurse continues to play a key role in providing families and students with support regarding responses to COVID-19 and other medical situations that may arise. Contact tracing and quarantining is consistent with the guidelines provided by the Departments of Education and Public Health.
- We thoroughly cleaned our building this summer. We will continue to maintain a high level of cleanliness throughout the year.
- Our heating and ventilation system was inspected and continues to be modified to ensure that it is in optimum working condition.

Family Engagement and Support

The *Safe Return to Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* is posted on our website and was distributed to families.

- We review and update our plan in response to new and changing mandates and notify families of such changes.
- We continue to use newsletters and the school website to keep families informed of important school events.
- We continue to respond to concerns/questions from families regarding mitigating practices and confidential health concerns. We will do our best to respond to questions and concerns within 24-48 hours.
- We continue to provide student/family support programs throughout the year. All families will receive notice of these family involvement programs. If needed, special meetings will be held on a group or individual basis.

Social/Emotional/Learning Support

We have increased our efforts to provide a positive and supportive environment that addresses the social and emotional needs of staff, students and their families.

- We have increased our counselor's time to provide additional social and emotional support and programming to students and families.
- All students will continue to receive targeted instruction that helps them to develop the social and emotional skills needed to become successful learners and community citizens.
- Middle School students have opportunities to participate in Student Advisory Groups.
- All teachers facilitate class meetings that foster the sense of belongingness and responsibility to the classroom and school communities.
- Professional development opportunities will continue to be provided to all staff to assist them in responding to school-wide social-emotional needs.

Response to Student Learning Needs

The following initiatives support our goal of a more personalized approach to learning that increases access to learning and addresses the specific learning needs of all students:

- Summer enrichment programs
- After school support
- Student Advisory Groups
- Equitable access to technology/internet
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support: intervention and enrichment
- Scheduled Data Team Meetings to assess progress
- Baseline and ongoing formative assessments

Curriculum Development

Last year our staff worked together to develop the Portrait of the Eastford Learner. This Portrait is our combined vision of what we believe are the important traits of a successful lifetime learner. This learner will possess the Habits of Success to be a Global Citizen, Creative Problem Solver, Effective Collaborator and Effective Communicator. It is our goal to support the development of these traits in all our students. With this vision in mind, our administration and staff, with the support of highly qualified consultants, are targeting their efforts on the following curriculum areas:

- Integration of Technology Standards into classroom instruction
- Expanded Science programming
- Updated Mathematics program in grades K-6
- Social and emotional curriculum in grades K-8
- Expanded middle school music program
- Continued development of the English Language Arts Curriculum in grades K-8
- Refinement of the Physical Education/Health Curriculum
- Intervention services to support learning gaps due to COVID-related absences

Staff Professional Development

It is critical that we provide quality and continued professional development programs to our staff as we improve our instructional programs and strategies to meet the needs of all students. Throughout the year, our staff will participate in professional development programming that includes:

- Research based practices in Social Emotional Learning and restorative practices
- Innovative Technology Applications
- Personalized Learning
- Family engagement

Although we are aware that we will continue to face new and sometimes unexpected challenges during the 2021-22 school year, the staff of Eastford Elementary School remain committed to offering an incredible year of learning for all our students. We are dedicated to including our families in this very important process. Working together toward shared goals and priorities, we will achieve the greatest success for all students.