

Darien

Public Schools

District Reopening Schools Task Force *Summary Report and Recommendations*

July 13, 2020



CONTENTS

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Overview | 2 |
| Conceptual Framework | 4 |
| Lessons Learned | 5 |
| Survey Data | 6 |
| Teaching & Learning | 7 |
| Special Education | 9 |
| Operations | 11 |
| Health & Wellness | 13 |
| Communications | 15 |
| Moving Forward | 16 |
| Membership | 17 |
| Resources | 19 |

OVERVIEW

The Darien Reopening Schools Task Force (DRS) formed in response to the COVID-19 global health crisis. The Darien Public Schools closed its physical doors on March 12, 2020, resulting in community-wide engagement in remote learning. As we look toward the 2020-2021 school year, we must thoughtfully plan and prepare for various reopening scenarios including:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Physical Return: | All students physically return to school in August following health and safety guidelines. |
| Remote Learning Return: | Students are not physically present but learn through synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences using a virtual platform. |
| Hybrid Return: | Students engage in some combination of physical and an eLearning scenario (e.g. partial day, rotating schedule, staggered reopening etc.) |

The DRS consists of 50 members including teachers, administrators, special education related service providers and representation from the Darien Board of Education. Over the course of four meetings, DRS members identified lessons learned from the closing, discussed barriers and solutions related to reopening schools, and reviewed survey data from families and staff (Figure 1). Members of DRS worked as a whole and in five smaller groups focused on *Teaching & Learning, Operations, Health & Wellness, Communications, and Special Education*. The areas of focus were determined following a review of research and resources related to school operations during the pandemic. Each of the subcommittees offered recommendations aligned to this research as well as state and federal guidance, reflections on experiences, and stakeholder survey data.



Figure 1 - Process overview of DRS Task Force

This summary report includes the guiding principles, insights gained from surveys, subcommittee focus areas, subcommittee recommendations, and next steps to develop the Darien plan for reopening schools. This report will be made public and serve as a guide for the administration to safely reopen schools in August.

Guiding Principles

- 1 - Prioritize the safety of students, staff and families.
- 2 - Align recommendations with guiding documents from state departments and related research.
- 3 - Develop a thoughtful communication plan that offers clarity and consistency.
- 4 - Make decisions in the best interest of all students.
- 5 - Create equitable conditions for all students to access learning.
- 6 - Make timely decisions aligned with guiding documents.
- 7 - Embrace opportunities for innovation.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework below was created to offer a visual representation of the structure, organization, and progression of the DRS work. The “D” at the center of the image represents Darien Public Schools as the core focus of task force collaboration. The five subcommittees are represented with arrows suggesting individual groups must work together to develop recommendations that offer systemic coherence. The outer circles of classrooms, schools, and home and communities represent our various stakeholder groups.

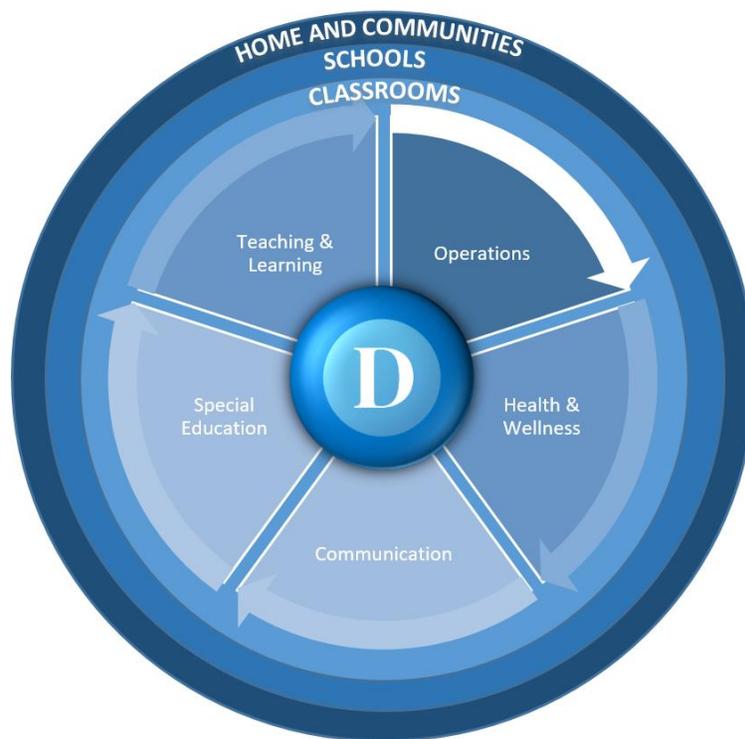


Figure 2 - DRS Conceptual Framework

LESSONS LEARNED

Each subcommittee engaged in a protocol to highlight lessons learned during our period of eLearning. While subcommittees engaged in this activity as smaller groups, clear themes emerged highlighting key takeaways. Common themes across groups included:

1. Relationships are paramount regardless of learning platform. Students and adults need to feel connected.
2. Clear expectations are needed from the start. Live instruction, priority standards, participation in specials, student engagement expectations, and the role of families must be clear and consistent.
3. Professional development with instructional technology needs to shift from “how to use” to “how to instruct”. The initial learning was focused on understanding how it works and more learning is needed for high-quality teaching and learning.
4. The need for social and emotional learning for students does not go away when school is not in session. We need a better plan for students and staff health and wellness as we move forward.
5. Maintaining relationships with families and school resources (psychologists, counselors) cannot be lost.
6. Students benefit from regular progress monitoring and feedback. Better systems are needed to accomplish this.
7. Regular schedules and routines are important. However, it might have been worth thinking a bit more out-of-the-box with schedule. School at home doesn’t look the same, therefore, schedules might need to reflect that more.
8. Communication should be clear and consistent.
9. Access to materials for all students must be equitable (technology, books, supplies).
10. Staff deserve feedback regardless of waivers of formal evaluation systems.

SURVEY DATA

Parents and staff received surveys to provide feedback and guide DRS recommendations. In just over a week, the committee received responses from nearly 2,000 participants. The survey gathered both quantitative and qualitative data summarized broadly below.

1. Clearly communicate expectations for students, teachers, and parents so District expectations are clear across stakeholder groups.
2. Provide concise communication with information available in one central location (website and/or handbook).
3. Students need explicit instruction related to social and emotional learning. Schools should plan to address the social and emotional needs of students and staff upon school reopening.
4. The majority of parents and teachers indicated a preference for more live instruction, teachers with students in real time.
5. Nearly 90% of parent participants indicated they could provide student transportation to and from school if that made a physical return possible.
6. Schedules need to be examined to make sure they are meeting the needs of learners of all abilities. Schedules should allow for ample teacher collaboration time in an eLearning setting.
7. All students should have access to technology and materials to be successful with eLearning.
8. Professional learning should be relevant to meet the needs of staff under different working conditions.
9. Consider innovative or out-of-the-box approaches to teaching and learning to meet student needs in a non-traditional classroom setting.

SUBCOMMITTEE OVERVIEWS

Teaching & Learning

The *Teaching & Learning Subcommittee* examined experiences both in and outside the classroom with an understanding that a return to school requires flexibility and innovative planning to meet the needs of all stakeholders. Recommendations consider multiple variables including the likelihood that some students and teachers will not return in the fall. In addition to the four DRS meetings, the *Teaching & Learning Subcommittee* met twice more to collaboratively offer recommendations connecting to the focus areas indicated below.

Teaching & Learning Subcommittee Areas of Focus

1. Develop plans for instruction and assessment across a variety of scenarios (traditional start to school, distance learning, hybrid model).
2. Solidify delivery approach of intervention services across a variety of platforms.
3. Provide input regarding scope & sequence and pacing guides.
4. Develop a plan for professional learning/development that supports district and teachers' needs for the upcoming school year.
5. Identify resources to support high-quality instruction through technology.
6. Work with *Health and Wellness Subcommittee* to embed social-emotional learning opportunities across curricula.

Teaching & Learning Recommendations:

Instruction

- A. Establish curriculum guides with flexibility for in-school and remote learning scenarios.
- B. Embed virtual learning experiences in school to prepare students for a potential return to remote learning and integrate students who are learning from home.
- C. Create plans for what are typically shared equipment and instructional supplies (e.g. art, math manipulatives, science labs, library books).
- D. Create opportunities for students to work collaboratively within social distancing guidelines.
- E. Integrate digital small group instruction using videos during class time to support differentiation and allow time for teachers to assess students.
- F. Create student schedules adhering to cohorts wherever possible. Consider using blended learning to maintain cohorts and avoid increased tracking/leveling of students.
- G. Consider reduced class sizes at the primary level to manage the developmental challenges with navigating learning physically and emotionally.
- H. Build time into the schedule that supports healthy behaviors and practices for physical cleanliness, safety, and social and emotional learning needs.
- I. Create specific recommendations for vocal and instrumental music including alternative activities for group singing and wind playing. Establish larger physical space where possible in order for students to have access to high-quality music learning experiences.

- J. Minimize conditions for bringing large groups of adults together (e.g. faculty meetings, team meetings, department meetings, new teacher orientation, professional development) and schedule virtually.

Social and Emotional Well-Being and Support

- A. Embed SEL as an interdisciplinary effort by explicitly teaching skills (self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, empathy, and responsible decision-making) across all content areas.
- B. Revisit grading practices related to remote learning.
- C. Provide staff and families with explicit instructions for opening school and transitioning to remote learning if needed.
- D. Create an explicit SEL timeline/pacing that can also be integrated into the curriculum context.
- E. Provide students and families with video guidance that will prepare students for their return to school.
- F. Maintain consistent expectations for families of students opting for remote learning.

Assessment & Intervention

- A. Create pacing guides and assessment calendars to accommodate various learning scenarios.
- B. Consider creating an assessment team to support classroom teachers with Running Records and Aimsweb prioritizing incoming first grade students who are most at risk for summer slide.
- C. Administer diagnostic assessments within the first six weeks of school thoughtfully and with consideration of SEL needs.
- D. Utilize a variety of informal assessments to begin the year including interest inventories, individual conferences, and observations.
- E. Provide teachers with longitudinal student data to create individual student profiles.
- F. Identify time for vertical meetings to support successful transitions including Tier 1 SRBI review.
- G. Develop a plan to manage and support students with frequent absences.

Professional Learning

- A. Identify time, prior to the start of school, for teachers to provide input regarding the physical layout and management of their classrooms.
- B. Work with media specialists and Director of Instructional Technology to identify common software and needed training.
- C. Provide teachers with explicit professional learning about health and safety guidelines including social distancing, wearing of masks, and physically navigating buildings safely.
- D. Focus opening professional development practically. Stay focused on health, safety, and SEL needs.
- E. Allocate additional paid time (at least one half day) for fifth grade teachers who are beginning a new math curriculum this year if time cannot otherwise be allocated.
- F. Minimally, make the first full week of school ½ days for students. This will provide professional learning time in the afternoon for all staff.
- G. Build time into the schedule that supports additional collaborative time for teacher teams.
- H. Assign a weekly half day for professional development and teacher collaboration.
- I. Develop a system for teacher feedback even if formal systems are not in place from the CSDE (Connecticut State Department of Education).
- J. Professional learning from outside providers must be delivered remotely and recorded when possible.
- K. Establish protocols for department and curriculum leaders when visiting buildings.
- L. Avoid all field trips for the remainder of 2020.

Special Education

The special education subcommittee focused primarily on management and operations to support a safe return to school for students receiving special services. Supporting the needs of students receiving special services, however, was not limited to this group as students who receive special education services are general education students first. The list below highlights focus areas of the subcommittee with a shared understanding that recommendations from all subcommittees also apply to students receiving special services.

Special Education Subcommittee Areas of Focus

1. Work with CSDE and Bureau of Special Education departments to remain aligned with best practices in providing and evaluating special education services with fidelity.
2. Identify a District practice regarding the identification or screening of social and emotional concerns related to the school closure or the reentry to school.
3. Work collaboratively with families and community members to outline unique concerns related to student reentry.
4. Develop structures and recommendations for assessing reentry baselines of students' IEP goals and objectives.
5. Work collaboratively with local, state, and federal agencies to develop recommendations for the completion of IEP processes (PPT meetings, outstanding evaluations, delayed referrals, and compliance timelines) without impacting instruction.
6. Collaborate with building administration and general education staff to design credit/instructional recovery opportunities for all students.

Special Education Recommendations:

Classroom Space

- A. Allocate and reconfigure spaces to accommodate small group instruction adhering to social distancing guidelines.
- B. Accommodate equipment needs to deliver all special and related services.
- C. Maintain appropriate spaces to support students with special health needs.

Bathroom Usage

- A. Provide training for paraprofessionals and staff who assist with toileting with consult of the Director of Nursing.
- B. Develop district protocols in accordance with health guidelines.
- C. Allocate bathrooms for student(s) who require assistance at all levels.

PPTs

- A. Create a PPT schedule that accommodates both the spring and fall meeting schedules.
- B. Maintain virtual PPTs for the health and safety of students and staff.

- C. Facilitate PPTs remotely.
- D. Limit staff to 2-3 in one conference space at a time; join remotely from office/classroom.
- E. Purchase additional conference room cameras for use at each building.

Cohorts

- A. Carefully develop student and staff schedules to adhere to cohorting practices in each school and minimize transitions.
- B. Ensure cohorting practices allow for students to receive services in alignment with their IEPs.

Lunch/Snacks & Feeding Students

- A. Adhere to ASHA (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association) protocols for feeding safety in consultation with the Director of Nursing and Director of Facilities.
- B. Practice appropriate handling of food in preparation and delivery with consideration of those with allergies and other special health needs.

Face Coverings & PPE

- A. Utilize ESY opportunities for students to practice wearing masks.
- B. Order masks with clear windows for lip reading in support of students with hearing impairment or speech related disabilities.
- C. Explore opportunities for clear face shields for support of students in DLC, ALC, EXCEL
- D. Provide PPE for staff for feeding and swallowing in addition to 'close contact' services providers (oral motor, OT/PT, SLP)

Transportation (Arrival and Dismissal)

- A. Identify safe locations for students who require accessibility features to access the building.
- B. Staggering entrance and exit of students, possible assigned times for drop off and pick up.
- C. Temperature-taking if required by State guidance, in consultation with Health Services

Evaluations

- A. Dedicate classroom or office space to service providers to conduct in-person evaluations.
- B. Develop a plan to manage evaluations resulting from our extended school closure this spring.

Restraint and Seclusion Protocols

- A. Provide appropriate PPE to include gloves, gowns, face shields.
- B. Provide professional development for staff on protocols and safe practices.

Operations

A well-developed operations plan serves as the foundation for the success for a safe reopening of schools. Recommendations of the Operations Subcommittee reflect collaborations across subcommittees, careful review of guiding documents, and thoughtful consideration of feasibility.

Operations Subcommittee Areas of Focus

1. Project expenditures using a variety of scenarios reflecting a traditional or non-traditional start to school.
2. Work with Transportation, Food Services and vendors to remain current with expectations related to contracted services.
3. Assess and plan for district needs related to systems technology, student access to technology, and teacher access to technology.
4. Collaborate with unions to negotiate the impact of any changes to working conditions.
5. Work with legal counsel when appropriate to address questions related to liability.
6. Determine how space may be utilized across the district to accommodate social distancing and class size.
7. Update policies regarding athletics and extracurricular activities when feasible.
8. Develop protocols related to safety and cleanliness of buildings amidst health crisis.
9. Establish procedural resources that clearly articulate what to expect when school resumes (transportation, hand washing, mask wearing, etc.).

Operations Recommendations:

Finance

- A. Model projected expenditures for items including but not limited to PPE's, sanitizing the buildings, additional staffing implications and food delivery.
- B. Select a new food service management company. Companies have developed plans for multiple food delivery options including traditional cafeteria locations, auxiliary locations, classroom delivery.
 - a. Recommendation will be to use disposable food service items (utensils, dishes, etc)
 - b. Individually plated meals

Social Distancing

- C. Maximize social distancing at a minimum of 3 feet according to appropriate guidelines. Desks should be separated either physically or with partitions. Markings will be put on the floor to allow for spacing between the teacher and students. Explore the option of using additional spaces (i.e., gym, cafeteria) for classrooms or service providers.

Tracking and Hygiene

- D. Develop protocols for tracking and tracing illness as well as protocols for closing (schools or cohorts) if someone tests positive for COVID-19.

- E. Inspect and upgrade, if necessary, all HVAC systems and air conditioning window units in order to provide appropriate ventilation and air filtering in all DPS buildings.
- F. Limit use of shared spaces and no sharing of materials unless unavoidable.
- G. Clean and disinfect shared spaces between uses.
- H. Teach and reinforce hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing stations are being looked at for disbursement to schools.

Masking

- I. Provide staff with two reusable face masks at the start of the year.
- J. Make face masks available on each bus in the event that a student forgets theirs.
- K. Distribute face masks (both adult and child size) to schools for those students/staff who don't remember their masks.
- L. Remind all students and school personnel that they must wear a face mask while on school property if less than 6 feet from another individual.
- M. Ask parents to provide masks for their children; staff will be asked to provide their own mask daily, however the schools will provide a mask for any student or staff if needed.

Sanitation Procedures

- N. Post signage in highly visible locations (school entrances, restrooms, gyms, cafeterias, hallways).
- O. Provide the following services to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 Virus with the Darien Public Schools custodial staff:
 - Use of disinfectant on touch surfaces
 - Restrooms cleaned regularly
 - Soap dispensers and towel holders filled regularly
 - Water fountains to be shut off
 - Student desks should be clear at the end of the day to promote cleaning
 - Hand sanitizer to be placed in each classroom
 - Signage throughout schools reminding everyone to physically distance and wash hands.
- P. Discontinue the use of drinking fountains
- Q. Develop a plan for movement within schools that maximizes social distancing (i.e., signs for one-way halls)

Visitation

- R. Explore high volume common spaces in buildings (i.e., offices) to minimize social contact (i.e., plexiglass dividers, limit or prohibit visitors).
- S. Limit visitors and volunteers in the buildings; continue with virtual meetings when possible.

Needs of Staff

- T. Provide professional development for all staff prior to the start of school relating to self-care, hand-washing, social distancing and other areas related to new procedures this school year.
- U. Determine proper mechanism for collecting input on staff unable to work in person this year.

Transportation

- V. Operate buses as normal with enhanced cleaning protocols including disinfecting all touch surfaces after each run.
- W. Send parents an opt-in/opt-out form in an effort to reduce volume of riders.
- X. Require all students and drivers to wear face coverings while on the bus.
- Y. Students will board the bus and fill the seats from back to front.

Health and Wellness

The *Health and Wellness Subcommittee* focused on the needs of our students, staff, and families as we transition back to school. This group looked at supporting all stakeholders both in and outside of the school settings. Recommendations regarding health & wellness are based on the focus areas indicated below.

Health & Wellness Subcommittee Areas of Focus

1. Audit internal resources and external partnerships to determine how they provide support related to the social and emotional health of staff and students.
2. Assess the need for additional resources to support the social and emotional health of staff and students.
3. Provide recommendations to embed social and emotional learning opportunities for students within curriculum and interventions systems.
4. Provide resources for staff self-care.
5. Develop a voluntary system for check-ins regarding staff wellness.
6. Provide resources for parents related to best practices in talking with children.

Health and Wellness Recommendations:

Internal Resources & External Partnerships

- A. Ensure staff and families are aware of external partnerships and community resources.
- B. Continue partnership with Mobile Crisis 211 and Child guidance: <https://childguidancect.org/>
- C. Continue relationship with Darien Human Services
- D. Explore community-based health/wellness (fitness) supports
- E. Support professional development for staff:
 - a. Implementation of SEL curriculum
 - b. Recognizing the signs of trauma in children and adolescents
 - c. Modeling hygiene and cleanliness protocols
 - d. Handling students “accusing” others of having Covid (ex: my child said you were coughing, student notices another coughing, etc.)
 - e. Reviewing calendar to add additional professional development time

Embedding SEL

- A. Consider the use of a universal screener or implementation of an informal screening tool for monitoring student social and emotional health/wellbeing: [Best Practices in Universal Screening](#). Establish a “check in” person (Classroom teacher, school counselor, school psychologists, school social worker, advisory/FLEX teacher) for each student AND frequent live check ins per week.
- B. Create a pacing guide/scope & sequence for delivery of [K-5 SEL curriculum](#) to ensure implementation.
- C. Consider additions to K-5 SEL curriculum.
- D. Formalize 6-12 SEL activities into curriculum and create a pacing guide/scope & sequence for delivery of 6-12 SEL curriculum - (MS advisory and 6-12 school counselors have this).
- E. Consider adding additional/frequent advisory check-ins for first weeks of school.

- F. Implement SEL during Advisory FLEX at MMS on a weekly basis for all students.
- G. Implement SEL during Advisory/Guidance seminar at DHS for all students.
- H. Consider scheduling students for a guidance seminar “Check-in” for the beginning of the school year.
- I. Develop additional lessons for the start of the year related to school closure, current/ongoing events, and student experience for all school levels.
- J. Review current SRBI bx practices:
 - a. Implement consistent practices for SRBI-Bx across all school levels
 - b. Create SRBI-Bx manual for staff
 - c. Consider use of specific resource for guiding SRBI-Bx goals
- K. Develop a plan for teaching for students/families/staff on sensitivity on medical issues (ex: student/family/staff response to someone in school coughing, etc.)
- L. Adapt opportunities for Kindergarten/Pre-K students:
 - a. Begin in stages, shortened day
 - b. Pictures of staff without masks
 - c. Small groups come to “meet teacher”
- M. Offer orientation options/protocols
 - a. Virtual orientation for K, 6, 9
 - b. Establish a plan for students new to the District?
 - c. Provide pictures of staff without masks
 - d. Instruction on how to use PPE/hygiene and cleanliness protocols: [NYT article](#)

Staff Self Care & Wellness

- A. Continue consultation with CBC (Cognitive & Behavioral Consultants)
 - a. DBT (Dialectical Behavior Therapy) for mental health staff (meetings every other week with consultant)
 - b. Consider provision of DBT consultation for staff or series of DBT PD talks
- B. Require all staff to attend EAP (Employee Assistance Program) education class at the beginning of year.
- C. Encourage the use of EAP (Employee Assistance Program) for staff in need:
 - a. Confidential Member counseling, information or help available at 1-800-252-4555 or 1-800-225-2527
 - b. Mental Health and Grief resources in COVID at <https://www.theeap.com/wellness/mental-health-awareness-in-the-time-of-covid19>
 - c. Wellness Blog at <https://www.theeap.com/wellness-blog>
- D. Set clear expectations for staff attendance (guidelines for when should staff stay home)
- E. Create “Backup Plans” for when an employee needs to stay home/out sick.
- F. Explore community-based child care resources
- G. Consider building-based social opportunities for staff

Resources for Families

- A. Review access to translators - how can we make this available to families?
- B. Create PTO or District “parent series” via Zoom (mornings and evenings)
- C. Continue with administrator communication/inclusion of wellness resources for families
 - a. ES: weekly theme based on CASEL standards: Mindful Monday activity, Wednesday Wellness activity, tips for parents
 - b. MS: consider using weekly FLEX/Advisory SEL theme to send tips for parents
 - c. HS: consider parent tips related to SEL themes
 - d. Should this be from district to streamline?

- e. Parent resources
- D. Provide parent training on recognizing the signs of trauma in children
- E. Offer opportunities for parent DBT training
- F. Explore community-based child care resources

Communications

While clear and consistent communication is always a goal, the need is exacerbated during these unprecedented times. The *Communications Subcommittee* considered strategies to streamline practices and calibrate expectations for all stakeholder groups. Recommendations from the *Communications Subcommittee* are based on the focus areas below.

Communications Subcommittee Areas of Focus

1. Develop a system of communication to keep families, students, and staff informed of district plans and practices for school reopening.
2. Aggregate information from subcommittees to inform communication.
3. Provide oversight and support of surveys that may inform large group or subcommittee work.
4. Support other subcommittees where needed.

Communications Recommendations:

- A. Create simple, daily schedules for each school (block at DHS, five day at elementary) to quickly adapt to potential school closures.
- B. Create a communication handbook for each school. The handbook should contain expectations for communication platforms, timing of communications from the school to home, how to access student grades, and how to communicate with faculty and staff.
- C. Update student / faculty handbooks for expected behaviors in safe “in school” learning.
- D. Design Google Classrooms at the start of the school year.
- E. Migrate to a single platform for communication needs (i.e.; migrate email and calendars to Google). Use Zoom for synchronous communication.
- F. Establish consistent online learning platforms that students become familiar with from the start of school.
- G. Create a bank of parent training modules to support clear understanding of communication systems and expectations.
- H. Explore Google classroom integration with ASPEN to easily view student grades and assignments.
- I. Research tools for parents to view information from Google Classroom without providing “full” access to the class.
- J. Manage the school website as a knowledge management tool to archive announcements, updates from the district / each school.
- K. Continue to encourage all important district information to be sent via parents and staff via email/text message and archived on the district website.
- L. Establish and regularly reinforce health and safety information, including HIPAA reminders to manage potential misinformation, rumors and unkind behavior. Create a regularly scheduled health update (2 x weekly, 1 x monthly etc.) to families and staff.

- M. Update the district “chain of communication” workflow posted on the district website. The updates should include school nurses alongside all staff members.
https://www.darienps.org/pdfs/Chain_of_Communication_10152015.pdf
- N. Establish clear professional learning opportunities before the school year begins for training on communication tools and discussion of the expectations to start the year.
- O. Create a professional learning opportunity for special education and related service providers to connect with legal counsel and educational professionals on best practices for communication in the “covid-era”

MOVING FORWARD

Recommendations from the DRS Task Force reflect many hours of collaborative work and creative thinking. These recommendations coupled with guiding documents from the CSDE will support district and school administrators in the development of the Darien’s Reopening Schools Plan. Next steps in the process include:

1. Administrative review of the DRS Task Force recommendations and CSDE guidelines.
2. Follow up with clarifying questions from administrators to DRS Task Force members.
3. Completion of various stakeholder focus groups for additional feedback.
4. Draft DPS Reopening Plan.
5. Finalize plan and submit to CSDE on or before July 24th.

DRS TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

Alan Addley, Superintendent of Schools

Teaching & Learning

Candace Crabill, Kindergarten Hindley School
Joslyn Delancey, Grade 5 Tokeneke School, DEA President
Christian Dockum, 6-12 Director of Science
Julie Droller, Hindley School Principal
Jessica Easter, Royle School Special Education
Cory Gillette, Elementary Curriculum Director
Linda Johnson, Elementary Curriculum Director
Keith Keeler, 6-12 Director of Social Studies
Joan McGettigan*, Director of Instructional Technology
Shelley Somers, Middlesex Middle School Principal
Christopher Tranberg*, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Andrew Turriago, Middlesex Middle School - English

Special Education

Paula Bleakley, Holmes Principal
Theresa Fox, Middlesex Middle School SESS Department Chair
Shirley Klein*, Assistant Superintendent of SESS
Taylor Kurtz, Secondary School Psychologist
Liz Markham, Grade 1 Royle School
Scott McCarthy*, Secondary Program Director SESS
Kristin O'Reilly, Elementary Program Director SESS
Heather Reilley, DLC
Jessica Sprague, Ox Ridge School Special Education
Christina Ulreich, Ox Ridge Assistant Principal

Operations

Jeff Adams, Director of Systems Technology
Alicia Casucci, Director of Nursing
Marge Cion*, Director of Human Resources
Jen Fischer, Grade 3 Ox Ridge School
Dan Kensek, Middlesex Middle School Math Specialist
Mike Lynch, Director of Facilities
Chris Manfredonia, Director of Athletics
Mary Michelson, Tokeneke School Principal
Tara Ochman, Board of Education Chair
Paul Ribeiro, Darien High School Assistant Principal
Rich Rudl*, Director of Finance & Operations

Health & Wellness

Susan Atkinson, Tokeneke School Special Education
Greg Darin, Darien High School Technology Education
Meghan Emanuelson, Director of School Counseling
Jennifer Ki, Elementary School Psychologist
Jessica Markus, ELP
Garan Mullin*, Royle School Principal
Ann Novotnik, Second Grade Holmes School
Mary Scalise*, Middlesex Assistant Principal
Kate Williamson, Secondary School Psychologist

Communications

Dennis Cabrera, Fitch Academy Lead Teacher/Social Studies
Mallory Consonery, Art Tokeneke School
Kate Curcio, Darien High School SLP
Ellen Dunn*, Darien High School Principal
Luke Forshaw*, Ox Ridge Principal
Rebecca Laus, Hindley School Assistant Principal
Nadine Vasil, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools

RESOURCES

The following resources served as guiding documents for the DRS Task Force. These resources offered organizational direction and guidance specific to the task force subcommittees and focus areas. CSDE primary guiding document, *Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together*, was published during the final week of scheduled Task Force meetings. This document and subsequent guidance from state and federal agencies will continue to inform decisions for a safe reopening of the Darien Public Schools.

[Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together](#)

[A Blueprint for Back to School](#)

[The Connecticut Interscholastic Conference Resocialization of Interscholastic Athletics and Activities Program Guidelines](#)

[Covid-19 and Beyond: Guidelines for Connecticut's K-12 Arts Programs](#)

[Reopen Connecticut: Safer. Stronger. Together.](#)

[Return to School Roadmap](#)