



# BLACK ROCK SCHOOL

# REOPENING OUR SCHOOL:

# COVID-19 GUIDELINES

FALL 2021

APPENDIX FOR STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

BASED ON THE GUIDELINES FROM:  
THE CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION;  
THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2021-2022 SCHOOL DISTRICT REOPENING PLAN

## A Message from the Principal

I hope this message finds you all happy, healthy, and prepared to commence the 2021-2022 academic year. Our focus at Black Rock School is to provide the very best educational opportunities possible. This is always true; however, in the age of COVID-19, it has become even more challenging to achieve this goal while maintaining a safe environment. I want to assure you that we have planned the reopening of our school with a full appreciation of the fear and anxiety that many of us are feeling.

This handbook is intended to provide our school community with rules, regulations, and policies that are designed using, and a direct result of, our district reopening plan. It is important for all stakeholders to acknowledge and understand that all COVID-19 related decisions were made based on local, state, and federal guidelines. It is even more important to acknowledge and recognize that political beliefs played no role in decision making and will play no role in how we enforce the rules, regulations, and policies found within this handbook. Lastly, this handbook pertains to COVID-19 related issues, it is not intended to replace our full Parent and Student Handbook.

I have had the pleasure of working at Black Rock School for several years. When difficult situations arise, our community has always risen to meet those challenges by working together. I expect no less in how we meet the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We will not let it derail our work to provide students with an outstanding educational experience.

I look forward to working with all the stakeholders in our community to provide an outstanding education for our children. Thank you for your continued commitment, flexibility, understanding, and support in your child's education.

**JONATHAN KOZLAK**  
PRINCIPAL



# Table of Contents

Reopening Our School.....	5
TPS COVID 19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison.....	5
Communications Plans.....	5
Reopening Policy and Procedures.....	5
Use of Facilities – Training .....	5
Use of Facilities – During Regular School Hours .....	6
Visitors and 504, IEP, Parent/Guardian Meetings .....	6
Student Movement in the Building.....	6
Classroom, Gymnasium and Cafeteria Layout .....	6
Use of Facilities – Outside of Regular School Hours .....	6
No-Touch Usage.....	6
Technology.....	6
Field Trips.....	6
Safety Drills and Procedures .....	6
Drinking and Water Fountains .....	7
Isolation Room .....	7
Signs and Messages.....	7
Bus Transportation.....	7
Cleaning Products .....	7
Arrival and Dismissal Procedures.....	8
Arrival Procedures.....	8
Dismissal Procedures .....	8
Bathroom Protocols.....	8
BRS Cafeteria Procedures .....	8
Health Practices and Protocols .....	9
Use of Face Coverings, Masks, Face Shields .....	9
How to Wear a Cloth Face Covering Correctly.....	9
How to Take Off Your Cloth Face Covering Carefully, When You’re Home .....	10
How to Clean a Cloth Face Covering (not for one-time use/disposable masks).....	10
How to Dry a Cloth Face Covering (not for one-time use/disposable masks) .....	10
State Mandated Assessments.....	11
COVID-19 Resources for Parents, Guardians and Students .....	11
Appendix A.....	12
Attendance for Remote Synchronous Learning for Quarantined Students.....	12



Appendix B ..... 13  
TPS Synchronous Learning Code of Conduct ..... 13



## Reopening Our School

The Thomaston Public Schools Safe Return to In-Person and Continuity of Services Plan 2021-2022 School Year identifies the critical “requirements” needed to submit a reopening plan in accordance with the Connecticut School Reopening Plan, Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together – Fall 2021

Links below:

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

[Connecticut School Reopening Plan, Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together – Fall 2021](#)

[Thomaston Public Schools Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2021-2022 School Year](#)

## TPS COVID 19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison

A School Nurse shall serve as the COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison. This Liaison is responsible for engaging with students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to answer questions or concerns about health and safety requirements regarding COVID-19 concerns.

The Liaison will provide ongoing two-way communication with the school community (staff, families, and students) about any new policies and/or protocols at the following times:

### **TPS District Liaison Information:**

**Diane Aniki, TCS School Nurse, 860-283-3036 Ext. 12303, [daniki@thomastonschools.org](mailto:daniki@thomastonschools.org)**

### **BRS School Liaison Information:**

**Doreen French, BRS School Nurse, 860-283-3040 Ex. 11111, [dfrench@thomastonschools.org](mailto:dfrench@thomastonschools.org)**

## Communications Plans

Following past practice, the District and School Administrators and certified staff will continue to notify community officials about changed policies, the need to cancel classes, or other changes or restrictions as warranted, through a variety of methods such as:

- ParentSquare messenger
- emails
- newsletters
- school website
- phone calls

## Reopening Policy and Procedures

### Use of Facilities – Training

The identified training needs of staff related to health and safety protocols shall be addressed prior to the first day of classes. As with all other training and professional development in the district, the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment shall coordinate and, at times, facilitate training.

All staff and students shall complete training in health and safety protocols. The COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison shall address such training in collaboration with the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. The initial health and safety protocol training for staff will be provided prior to the first day of school.

Health and safety protocols mandatory training for employees, substitutes, students, and staff shall include:

- Social distancing



- Cleaning protocols
- Hygiene practices.

## Use of Facilities – During Regular School Hours

### Visitors and 504, IEP, Parent/Guardian Meetings

Staff, students, and contractors shall be permitted in school buildings only after participating in Health and Safety Protocol training. Emergency responders shall be permitted in school buildings with no Health and Safety Protocol training. No visitors shall be permitted in the school building without an appointment. When dropping off materials, access will be limited to the vestibule at the main entrance.

**All meetings that are typically held in –person and include outside visitors such as 504, IEP, and all other parent/guardian meetings shall be held virtually.** We highly recommend parents/guardians set up a google Gmail account or Zoom account for virtual meetings, we can accommodate either. **When BRS schedules meetings with parents/guardians, the meeting will default to a Google meet unless the use of Zoom is requested.** Parents/guardians who cannot set up either Google meet or Zoom will be limited to conference calling for participation in meetings.

### Student Movement in the Building

Social distancing strategies implemented at BRS to strategically limit movement throughout the school day include the following:

- Organized entry, dismissal, breakfast, and lunch procedures; details provided in this handbook.
- Staggering lunch waves to minimize congestion outside the cafeteria
- Increasing staff presence during entry and dismissal times to minimize large congregating groups of students

### Classroom, Gymnasium and Cafeteria Layout

- ⇒ Social distancing between student work areas will be maximized, providing 3 feet of distance when practicable.
- ⇒ All student desks shall face the same direction.
- ⇒ The space between the teacher and students will be maximized when practicable in order to minimize the exchange of droplets during instruction.
- ⇒ All staff and students shall wear cloth face coverings when in the building

Our main goal is the health and wellbeing of our students and staff. In order to achieve this goal we have committed to reducing contact between students and staff and the success of this relies on student and staff cooperation. We ask that all students commit to achieving this goal.

## Use of Facilities – Outside of Regular School Hours

If a school building is to be used outside of regular school hours, that use shall follow the same rules of use as practiced during the regular school day.

### No-Touch Usage

Wherever possible, the installation and usage of no-touch items such as doors, trashcans, and bathroom fixtures shall occur. Remove lids from lidded trash cans.

### Technology

All device fees for the 2021-2022 school year have been suspended. Devices will be collected and redistributed for maintenance on a regular basis.

### Field Trips

Approved field trips will be allowed.

### Safety Drills and Procedures

Safety drills and procedures such as Fire Drills will follow regular procedures.



All participants must wear a mask as social distancing cannot be maintained during safety drills. Classrooms and spaces with direct access to the outside of the building should be used for evacuation. These exits will need to be maintained for the entire school year.

### Drinking and Water Fountains

Drinking water from the water fountain will be prohibited. Select bottle filler fountains will remain open to fill bottles and will be cleaned and sanitized once daily at the end of the school day. Students are urged to drink plenty of water before school, during lunch, and after school.

### Isolation Room

In the event that the school nurse identifies in an individual with symptoms that are consistent with Covid-19, that individual will be directed to the nurse's office ("isolation room") while the family is contacted to arrange pick-up. Such students will maintain a distance of at least 3 feet from other students while in isolation in the nurse's room.

### Signs and Messages

As required by the CSDE Plan, the school will post signs and messages related to stopping the spread of COVID-19 in all school facilities. These signs and messages shall be accessible for students with disabilities and in languages appropriate for the school population. Announcements will also be posted to district and school webpages and online communications will be distributed to staff, students, and families via email and social media.

### Bus Transportation

All students are to ride their assigned bus to and from school. Please note, the main office staff will not accept notes for change of bus assignments because the district's plan does not allow for traveling home on a different bus. Should your child require a permanent change of bus assignment, please contact the main office to obtain the appropriate form.

### Cleaning Products

Staff and students do not need to bring in their own cleaning products (for desks, etc.). Personal hand-sanitizer use is permitted.



## Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

### Arrival Procedures

Students will not be let into the building prior to 8:00am.

**Students being dropped off by car** – Parents will enter the property via the Route 6 driveway entrance, then follow markings and the traffic patterns around to the drop off zone. Students will be met by staff members and enter the building. Please note – we do not allow parents to park and then walk children to the entrance. All drop-offs occur directly from the vehicle.

**Students arriving by bus** – Will be directed by staff to use specific entrances at the front of the building upon arrival.

**Students arriving after 8:20 A.M. are considered tardy and will enter through the main entrance.**

### Dismissal Procedures

**Student dismissal to buses** – Teachers will guide students to busses. A foot traffic pattern to the busses is established to avoid interaction by students in different classes.

**Picking-up students** – Parents/Caretakers will form a socially distant line outside the building at the Route 6 entrance. Students for pick up will be sent to the yellow hallway and arrange in marked, socially distant locations. Staff will greet each parent/caretaker and the student will be brought to the door. No one picking up students will be allowed to enter the building.

### Bathroom Protocols

Bathroom usage will comply with DPH guidance for cleaning and disinfecting of schools during COVID-19.

Multi-stall bathrooms will be utilized to maximize social distancing.

### BRS Cafeteria Procedures

We remain committed to providing Thomaston’s children with healthy and nutritious meals during the COVID-19 Pandemic. There are several strict guidelines on food service at this time and Black Rock School will need to adapt our menus and school meal protocols.

- We will have four lunch waves. Each classroom will have a quadrant of the cafeteria for seating. Students will not have prolonged interaction with students from other classes.
- Students will be seated at tables all facing one direction. Student seats are spaced apart to meet distancing protocols.
- Floor decals will be presented on the floor in order to maintain social distancing while in line for food, and to keep traffic flowing in a “one way” direction.
- The handling of cash is trying to be eliminated. To put money on account please use a check or deposit money online through E-Funds for Schools at the following link: <https://www.thomastonschools.org/OnlinePayments>

Breakfast:

- The students who are purchasing or eating breakfast will report to the cafeteria immediately after arriving at the school.
- The student will walk into the servery to purchase breakfast; maintaining social distance and following floor markings.



- After purchasing breakfast, they will sit at a table, eat, and then head to their designated room assignment.
- If a student is not purchasing or eating breakfast in the cafeteria they will be asked to leave the cafeteria and return to the designated room assignment.

**Lunch:**

- Students will enter the cafeteria and sit at a table. Groups of students will be called up by a staff member to the servery to receive their lunch and then return to their table.
- Students are expected to maintain social distancing and follow floor markings.

There will be no changes in the pricing of school meals. If households need assistance with meal payments, the 2020-2021 free and reduced application is available at [thomastonschools.org](http://thomastonschools.org). The application can be submitted by email or USPS at any point during the school year.

## Health Practices and Protocols

### Use of Face Coverings, Masks, Face Shields

[Thomaston Board of Education changed Policy 5132 - Students - Dress and Grooming](#) requires the use of cloth face coverings by all students. An emergency supply of cloth face coverings will be provided for staff and students who soil, wet or damage their personal cloth face coverings. **A new mask can be requested from the school nurse.** Other protections like a face shield or clear plastic barrier still require the user to wear a cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth; these other protectors are optional and will not be provided by the District.



**Face Covering**

A cloth, paper, or disposable face covering that covers the nose and mouth; may or may not be medical grade



**Face Shield**

A clear plastic shield that covers the forehead, extends below the chin, and wraps around the sides of the face



**Clear Plastic Barrier**

A clear plastic or solid surface that can be cleaned and sanitized often

Teachers who provide instruction to English-language learners or students with hearing impairments will wear a clear face covering.

### How to Wear a Cloth Face Covering Correctly

- Wash your hands before putting on your face covering
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- Don't put the face covering around your neck or up on your forehead
- Don't touch the face covering, and, if you do, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer to disinfect



**Choosing to not properly wear a mask** will be considered a violation of the Thomaston Public School's dress code policy and disciplinary actions may include using one or more discipline management techniques, such as verbal/written warnings for first time offenses but may require revoking privileges, detention, and removal from class, and or remote learning only option for multiple offenses.

*The final decision whether the student has violated the dress code rests with the discretion of the administrators.*

\*We do not plan on, or intend to, debate the politics of face coverings. Student who refuse to properly wear face coverings will be assigned to remote/distance learning.

## How to Take Off Your Cloth Face Covering Carefully, When You're Home



Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops

Handle only by the ear loops or ties

- Fold outside corners together
- Place covering in the washing machine
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing

## How to Clean a Cloth Face Covering (not for one-time use/disposable masks)



Washing Machine

- You can include your face covering with your regular laundry.
- Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the face covering.



Washing by Hand

- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
  - 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) household bleach per gallon of room temperature water or
  - 4 teaspoons household bleach per quart of room temperature water
- Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection. Some bleach products, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing, may not be suitable for disinfection. Ensure the bleach product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
- Soak the face covering in the bleach solution for 5 minutes.
- Rinse thoroughly with cool or room temperature water.
- Make sure to completely dry the cloth face covering after washing.

## How to Dry a Cloth Face Covering (not for one-time use/disposable masks)



Dryer

- Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry.



Air dry

- Lay flat and allow to completely dry. If possible, place the cloth face covering in direct sunlight.



## State Mandated Assessments

The administration of all state mandated assessments will occur as planned. Information regarding these assessments will be communicated to parents/guardians and students as we approach the date of the assessment.

2021-22 State Summative Assessment Calendar			
Content Area(s)	Assessment	Grade(s)	Testing Window
English Language Proficiency: <i>Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing</i>	LAS Links	K–12	January 3–March 4, 2022
English Language Arts (ELA) & Mathematics	Connecticut Smarter Balanced	3–8	March 28–June 3, 2022
	Connecticut SAT School Day (Note: The 2022 administration will be digital.)	11	<b>Primary Test Dates:</b> March 23–25 and 29–30, 2022  <b>Makeup Dates:</b> April 26–28, 2022
	CTAA	3–8 and 11	March 28–June 3, 2022
Science	NGSS Assessment	5, 8, and 11	February 7–June 3, 2022 (Grade 11)  March 28–June 3, 2022 (Grades 5 and 8)
	CTAS (Can be administered all year.)	5, 8 and 11	<b>Upload Dates:</b> March 28–June 3, 2022
Physical Fitness	Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment	4, 6, 8, and High School	Anytime during the school year
Language, Literacy, Numeracy, Physical/Motor, Creative/Aesthetic, and Personal/Social	Kindergarten Entrance Inventory	Kindergarten	<b>Snapshot Date:</b> October 18, 2021 <b>Submission Due Date:</b> December 9, 2021

## COVID-19 Resources for Parents, Guardians and Students

The following links can provide parents, guardians, and students with resources for Covid-19 related questions.

- [How to make your own cloth face covering video link](#)
- [Thomaston Public Schools Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2021-2022 School Year](#)
- [CDC Back to School Planning: Checklists to Guide Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers](#)
- [Connecticut Department of Public Health](#)
- [Connecticut State Department of Education COVID-19 Resources for Families](#)
- [Torrington Area Health District](#)
- [Town of Thomaston](#)



## Appendix A

### Attendance for Remote Synchronous Learning for Quarantined Students

*Taken from Superintendent Coss's letter to parents regarding attendance flexibilities.*

Ending of Attendance Flexibilities – Change per the Thomaston Board of Education:

o Student Attendance – Change per Thomaston Board of Education: The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) attendance rules have not changed since Friday's letter (8/13/2021); however, my review and analysis of Connecticut law, CSDE and Department of Public Health policies/rules revealed a connection between quarantining and homebound instruction (different from homeschooling). Connecticut law requires districts to provide instruction to students who are designated as homebound due to prolonged illness or quarantine. The connection between quarantining, homebound instruction and the legal obligation to provide instruction to homebound students is described in a formal resolution which was presented to and approved by the Thomaston Board of Education last night. This formal resolution allows quarantined students to be marked present each day they appropriately participate in district-provided homebound instruction during their quarantine period; if they do not appropriately participate in district-provided homebound instruction during their quarantine period, they will be marked absent.

Quarantined students are required to log into google meet during the scheduled class time and instruction will be live. Per the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) attendance policy for remote learning:

- Quarantined students who do not log-into class virtually during regularly scheduled class time will be marked absent for that class
- Quarantined students who do not log-into class virtually for at least half of the school day will be marked absent for the whole day

[Superintendent Coss's Letter](#)



## Appendix B

### TPS Synchronous Learning Code of Conduct



## **Thomaston Public Schools Synchronous Learning Code of Conduct**



As a remote learner at this school, we maintain the same expectations of conduct as we do when you are physically in school. We are committed to active learning and creating a positive learning environment where every student is respected and the opinions of others are valued. All of the student conduct expectations outlined in the student handbooks and Board of Education policies are still fully in effect.

### **Student Expectations**

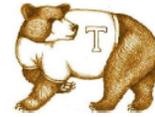
- Grades PK-3 (with support from parents and/or teachers)
  - Participate in learning activities and complete work within the designated time period
  - Commit to learning duration outlined in the schedule
  - Students and/or parents will communicate with teachers to answer questions
  - Remember to be respectful of classmates and adults at all times.
  - Continue practicing Whole Body Listening, just like when you're in your classroom!
- Grades 4-12
  - Take responsibility for their learning by participating, completing the assigned work, and responding to teacher posts or requests for feedback in a timely manner
  - Commit to learning duration outlined in the schedule
  - Ask your teacher for help if you are confused by a lesson or feel like you are falling behind
  - Being thoughtful and kind in your online communications with your peers and teachers. All online activity should be school appropriate
  - Use Google Chats for instructional purposes only

**Please keep reading for our Google Meet expectations.**





## Thomaston Public Schools Synchronous Learning Code of Conduct



### Google Meet Expectations

#### Attendance

- When a student logs in, the student is present. The teacher will decide the time frame student needs to be on the video. Students must be in every class brief and debrief.

#### What to do when you log in to Google Meet

- When you enter the Google Meet, mute yourself (if you are not already muted).
- Turn your camera on.

#### How to Participate in the Google Meet

- When you have a question, use the chat feature and wait for your teacher to call on you.
- When you have something to contribute to what is being said, but it is not your turn, use the chat feature in the right-hand corner of your meeting screen.
- Wait for the teacher to call on you to unmute yourself.

#### How to Be a Good Digital Citizen

- Remember, your computer IS your classroom for now - so ask yourself, would I write/share/say this while in my classroom in person with my teacher and classmates? If the answer is 'no,' most likely it is not appropriate for your online classroom, either.
- What you post online stays online forever, so make sure you're proud of what you share - it will always be there! Once a message is sent to the group, there is no taking it back.
  - **Tip:** Read everything out loud before you send it and remember no one can see your facial expression or hear the tone of your voice.
- Remember to use appropriate language. Excessive use of "chat" or "instant messaging" jargon is not acceptable.

#### Behavior

- Teachers have discretion to remove you from the Google Meet if your behavior becomes a distraction to the class. If it is egregious, then students will be referred to administration.
- Just as if you were in class, taking video or pictures of any class interactions, classmates, or the teacher is prohibited. Obviously then, the sharing or posting of any such videos or pictures is, too. It may actually be illegal to do so, it is a violation of educational privacy laws.



