

# School Reopening Handbook for Belle Sherman Families & Staff

Ithaca City School District  
October 2020

Ithaca City School District  
400 Lake St., NY 14850 |  
<https://www.ithacacityschools.org/>

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## Letter from Dr. Brown

Dear Ithaca Families and Caregivers,

I am excited to welcome you back to Ithaca City School District for the 2020-2021 school year. We have missed you and the energy that your students bring to our physical and virtual learning spaces.

It is my hope that this handbook will serve as an important and user-friendly tool for all families navigating this school year. In this handbook you will find much information about how our team of educators plan to address health, safety, and instructional delivery within each of our buildings.

I appreciate your patience and support as we move forward together in-person and virtually as one Ithaca City School District community. It is an honor to be on this journey with you.

Regards,

*Luvelle*

Superintendent of Schools  
Ithaca City School District

## Letter from Building Principal

*Dear Belle Sherman Families and Caregivers,*

*Our whole school community has worked very hard to get to the point where we will start in-person learning for many of our students as of October 5th. We remain committed to providing the best possible learning experience for all of our students, whether learning in person or virtually. In the coming months as we engage in new and challenging experiences together, please reach out to your child's teachers and I so that we can support your child. Thanks for your support of our school community and I look forward to many bright moments amidst the backdrop of a challenging year.*

*Sincerely,*

*Jeff Tomasik, Principal*

## School Contacts

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Patricia McBean (Attendance Clerk): [pmcbean@icsd.k12.ny.us](mailto:pmcbean@icsd.k12.ny.us) (607)-  
274-2382



## Students' Return to Instruction

The 2020-2021 school year began for all students PreK - 12 **VIRTUALLY** on **Monday, September 14, 2020**.

All buildings will use the first few days of virtual instruction to serve as orientation for staff and students to build relationships and understanding of online tools for teaching and learning.

Prior to welcoming students who chose to be back in person, our school will hold information sessions for students around health and safety practices. **Key topics included:**

- Masks
- Physical distancing
- Hand washing
- Walking through the halls
- Breakfast and lunch
- Bathrooms

Beginning **Monday, October 5, 2020**, students PreK-12 that chose the **IN PERSON** option will be welcomed back to campus and our classrooms.

Students that chose the **DISTANCE LEARNING** option will continue their studies online.



## School Hours:

The school day is from 8:00-2:00. Students may enter the building at 7:40 and proceed to their classrooms.



## Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:

We will be using many of the exterior doors to limit students crowding at any one entry. You will receive specific instructions for each grade level entry and exit points for the class cohorts.

It is important to remember:

- Families must drop students off outside of the building and are not allowed to walk their child into the building.
  - Drop-offs must be as brief as possible.
  - Wash your hands before drop-off, prior to pick-up
  - Visitors (including families and caregivers) to our buildings will be very limited
  - Pen and paper sign-in/sign-out sheets have been eliminated and will instead be digitally catalogued by staff

## Health and Safety Information:



### Ithaca City School District COVID-19 Coordinators

Lily Talcott, Deputy Superintendent of Schools: [lily.talcott@icsd.k12.ny.us](mailto:lily.talcott@icsd.k12.ny.us)

Kari Burke, Coordinator of Health Services and Wellness: [kari.burke@icsd.k12.ny.us](mailto:kari.burke@icsd.k12.ny.us)



### Daily Health Screening

Daily screening of students by caregivers is required every day for in person learners at least 20 minutes before school begins. If your student's screening results do not show up in the daily report prior to arriving at school, your student will have their temperature checked upon arrival to the building. Expectations and protocols for daily screening as well as information about the Screening App will be communicated to families prior to the start of in person instruction, with regular reminders provided throughout the year.

Currently, the screener will inquire whether your child has experienced any symptoms consistent with the [CDC's Symptoms of COVID-19](#) as well as their temperature, known exposures, and a positive test result:

- chills
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- fatigue
- headache
- muscle aches or pains
- new loss of taste or smell
- sore throat
- congestion or runny nose
- nausea or vomiting two or more times in the last 24 hours
- diarrhea in the last 24 hours

If your child is experiencing symptoms as noted above, please do not send them to school and call the school to alert them that they are staying home. We encourage you to reach out to your doctor prior to returning to school. If you have any health questions or concerns, please reach out to your school nurse.



### If Symptoms Develop While at School

Students or staff who develop symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 or those with a positive response to the questionnaire during the school day will be assessed by the school nurse, with the district medical director available for consultation, as needed.

[Following assessment by the school nurse](#), any students or staff with a temperature of 100.0°F (37.78°C) or higher, signs of illness, and/or a positive response to the screening questionnaire will be directed to a dedicated isolation area, where students will be supervised prior to being picked up or

otherwise sent home. Please call the main office when you arrive if you are coming to pick up your child and remain in your vehicle. An adult will escort your child to you.



## Masks

Students are **required** to bring and wear a mask at all times, if medically capable of doing so. If a student or staff forgets their mask or does not have a mask, a disposable mask will be provided. All students will be provided with [mask breaks](#). Staff will facilitate scheduled mask breaks throughout the day, ensuring that students maintain 6 feet of physical distance when removing their masks.



Students are encouraged to bring their own mask(s) from home. If possible, sending multiple masks with your child is recommended. The most effective masks are made with at least 2 layers of fabric which cover their nose and mouth without large gaps and include ear loops or ties for adjustments. Please note, the following types of masks are not recommended as they are less effective in blocking respiratory particles:

- Bandanas and gaiters
- Masks with a breathing valve or “button” vent

If a student forgets his/her mask or does not have a mask, disposable masks are in plentiful supply and will be provided as often as needed. Masks will be available in classrooms, at the main office, and in Nurse Barb’s office. All masks should be changed if they become wet or soiled, dropped on the floor, or otherwise contaminated. Students will be taught and reminded not to touch the front or inside of the mask and to use the side loops to put on and take off the masks. Disposable masks will be thrown in the garbage; re-usable masks will be placed in a plastic storage bag and brought home to be washed.



## Hand Washing

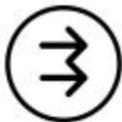
All who enter the building must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer. In addition to bathroom and outdoor sinks, many learning spaces are equipped with a sink and hand soap for routine hand washing. If a sink is not in a learning space, signage and frequent reminders will be given so that students are encouraged to wash their hands frequently. All hand dryers in district buildings have been replaced with disposable paper towel dispensers. Hand sanitizer stations are also located throughout the building and in classrooms for staff and students to use.



## Bathrooms

All students will wear their masks while using the bathroom, and wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer after bathroom use.

- Signage will be in place to maintain six feet of social distancing outside of the bathrooms, and to ensure handwashing and/or sanitizer usage
- Shared bathrooms will be reduced to single occupancy, and will have signage indicating if they are in use. They will be gender neutral. There will be marked spots for students to wait while physically distanced.
- Our custodial staff will monitor shared bathroom usage and disinfect often with a full sanitization every hour



## Hallway Movement

Hallway movement will be limited whenever possible. Students will be spaced with physical distancing while traveling the hallways. Decals on the floor will be spaced 6 feet apart to guide students to maintain physical distancing.

## Playgrounds, Green Spaces and Recreational Areas:



Outdoor spaces will be used as much as possible, weather permitting. Adults will be present to support small groups and their physical distancing during both learning and play as well as to encourage hand washing at our portable outdoor sink units.



## School Nutrition

All students have the opportunity to receive school meals in a safe and comfortable environment so that they are ready to succeed in academic and social activities. The district will continue the healthy school nutrition program our families rely on to both in school students and remote learners. Meals will be free to students who qualify for Free/reduced priced meals, and fee based for students not qualifying for Free/Reduced priced meals. Please note that all students are eligible for free meals through December 31, 2020. After December 31, 2020, the meal pricing (below) will resume to pre-distance learning fees.

### Meal pricing for the 2020-2021 School year

Elementary Breakfast \$1.75	Elementary Lunch \$2.85
Middle Breakfast \$2.00	Middle School Lunch \$3.10
High School Breakfast \$2.25	High School Lunch \$3.35

If you are a distance learner: The ICSD will utilize the online forms developed during spring of 2020 for caregivers to make their meal choices and dates requested known to the ICSD. Sites will be set up throughout the district, based on responses generated, so the greatest number of families will be able to comfortably travel to a nearby site. Attention will be given to remote areas, as well as areas that have a higher percentage of families reliant on public transportation. If you have any questions please feel free to call Child Nutrition at 607-274-2302.

If you are an in-person learner, students will be supervised to wash hands before and after eating all meals. Students will eat lunch with their classroom cohort in their classrooms or outside. Proper sanitation protocols (hand washing or sanitizing prior to consumption; appropriate containers for food waste; physical distancing; not sharing food/drink) will be followed. The use of the cafeteria itself will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Pre-packaged items will be utilized whenever appropriate.

**Paying for meals and snacks** Cashless Funding for School meals for Paid eligibility as well as a la carte drinks and snacks should be funded online in the secure hosted platform SchoolPay.com. Ithaca City School Nutrition Program is committed to providing meal service that is as contactless as possible. Funding on this platform assures no transfer contact between cashiers and students. Funds may be deposited with credit card or checking account encrypted information hosted by SchoolPay.com or checks can be handed to school food service staff.

**Remote Learning days meal ordering** Meals for all students are available for remote learners and onsite learners for free. The USDA free funding ends on December 31, 2020. At that time meals will be available for all students and will follow the paid/reduced and free eligibility status.

## Physical Education and Recess



### Physical Education (PE)

The District will make every effort to hold Physical Education (PE) classes outdoors. In the event that PE cannot be held outdoors, classes will take place in a gym, weightroom, or a classroom with 12 feet of physical distancing for aerobic activities, while also wearing a mask.

All students will be required and encouraged to participate in their assigned PE class, regardless of the class being administered in the live, synchronous, or asynchronous format. Grading criteria will be presented and reviewed by each student's teacher.



### **Elementary School Recess**

We believe that students need an outdoor break within their school day, free of academic tasks. To facilitate distancing, recess periods for elementary students will be staggered throughout the day.

Masks will be worn at recess, although we may set up individual physically distanced areas so kids can individually play 6 feet apart in order to remove their masks. . Equipment that can be used individually will still be permitted (e.g. jump ropes, hula hoops, kickballs). Students will be allowed to play on playground structures, and will be required to wash their hands prior to and after recess at an outdoor sink unit.



## **Daily Schedules and Routines**

### **Elementary School Details**

- Your teacher will be in contact with you about your daily schedule and routines.

#### **Shared Materials**

Shared materials will be reduced as much as possible; however, there are items that need to be used by multiple students over the course of the year. These items will be set aside and/or immediately sanitized after student use. Handwashing after shared materials will also be required.

We believe in the value of books as part of our reading programs and a critical component of developing a love of learning in children. Therefore, students will still have the opportunity to borrow books from the school or classroom libraries. We will follow the procedures that have been developed by public libraries and have been shown to be effective:

- Classroom books may also be borrowed for student use.
- Returned books will be held for 48 hours to reduce the transmission of germs/viruses.

Shared classroom materials will also be sanitized after student use. Work or projects that must be collected from students will be quarantined for 24 hours before and after teacher review.

Elementary teachers often create “centers,” learning activities with a set of materials where students interact with the materials to solidify their understanding of a concept. Where possible, students will be given individual materials to accomplish these goals.



## Technology

### Elementary Devices

Students in the elementary school will be issued 1:1 iPads (PreK-1) or Chromebooks (2-5) depending on the grade level. Devices will be kept at school, and quickly shipped home, in the event of transition to an all-remote learning model.

### Malfunctioning/Damaged Chromebooks

Any student who has an iPad or Chromebook that is malfunctioning and/or damaged should fill out a [student/family help ticket](#) for assistance in getting the device repaired or exchanged.



## Campus Visitors

The District campus will be closed to all visitors without prior appointment and completion of an online health assurance screener. Parents/guardians visiting campus for any reason other than arrival and dismissal must also follow these procedures.



## Building Readiness

### Cleaning

All spaces have been cleaned and disinfected, and equipped with Flexwipes for adult use. Custodial staff will disinfect high-traffic areas each hour, and all surfaces will be disinfected each evening.

### HVAC

The HVAC systems have now been calibrated to provide fresh air at volumes that exceed those recommended in response to COVID-19. All Air Handling Units (AHUs) at Belle Sherman are working properly, all parts of the HVAC system that needed to be replaced have been replaced, all exhaust fans are in working order. District-wide, all air filters will be replaced with MERV-13 models prior to October 5th.