

School Reopening Handbook for Beverly J. Martin 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

BJM Scholars as Changemakers We think. We question. We transform

Dear Beverly J Martin Families and Caregivers,

We are thrilled to be back in person! Without kids here, the halls are kind of hollow. As we move into the physical space there are lots of new ways to be and new things to learn. We will be working with the kids and with you to make it clear and positive. We are building new ways of learning together and developing community and looking forward to our partnering. When you have questions, reach out. When you have ideas, reach out.

Please continue to watch emails and look for announcements. Ask the kids to share with you some of the fun language we will be using for mask reminders and space reminders. This handbook explains the basics, but you can always ask us for more details.

For those continuing virtually, please continue to stay in close relationship with the learning, the teachers, and the schedule. Partnering for our actual learning environments (your homes) changes all of the ways we think about school. Grow that with us.

Let's go Scholars!!

Sincerely,

Susan Eschbach

Principal of Beverly J Martin
Ithaca City School District

School Contacts

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607 274-2210

BJM Office, Larry Cutler & Mary Paisley: 274-2209
lcutler@icsd.k12.ny.us mpaisley@icsd.k12.ny.us



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, teachers will talk with their classes about health and safety practices. **Key topics include:**

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

Families will also get added information in the form of a brochure or email with detailed descriptions. On the first day of arrival, we will work closely with each child to understand the practices and use positive language to teach the skills and expectations.

For example, when kids arrive they will see 78in posters with Big Mike and his arms spread wide. This is a visual guide to spacing. We will use language like, A Big Mike Hug, and Be Like Mike to help kids move to a spacing that is desirable. Throughout the first day, all kinds of language and protocols will be taught in a fun way.

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. Virtual classes and teachers will continue. Please check with your child's teacher about any schedule changes as a result of some district shifts.

School Hours:



The school day is still 8:00am-2:00pm.

Arrivals at 7:40 are encouraged to help children be more ready for the actual start of the day. AND, arrivals will take a little longer due to distancing to get in the building. Adults will be present to assist in mask wearing, space between kids, and handwashing. We regret that COVID world means that families will **not** be able to enter the building. See below.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:

Busses will drop off on Court street and Albany Street. Each child will be greeted and will learn the most direct route to their class. Hallway spacing is delineated and children will be accompanied by adults as they practice this. Similarly, families will be directed to one of two front doors to enter so that your child may use the most direct route to their class. This information will come to you before we start. This keeps the hallways sparse and allows great spacing for travel.

At dismissal, children will be called to busses and after school programs, and then for pick up. Again, they will use the routes most effective for distancing as they make their way out. Each family will be given a specific pick up area for your child. We will put siblings together for pick up.

It is important to remember:

- Families must screen children before arrival
- Families must drop students off outside of the building
- Drop-offs must be as brief as possible
- Wash your hands before drop-off, prior to pick-up

VISITORS- We will reduce most visitation to essential visitors only. Ring the bell to be welcomed in. Sign in will be with the front desk and cataloged by staff. A computer kiosk will also be available for you to review for screening questions. Please be aware that all of this increases time needed, so plan accordingly. Please do not request entry without a mask on. Thank you.

Health and Safety Information:



Ithaca City School District COVID-19 Coordinators

Lily Talcott, Deputy Superintendent of Schools: lily.talcott@icsd.k12.ny.us

Kari Burke, Coordinator of Health Services and Wellness: 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. IF there are large numbers of students requiring this step, they will be later for starting class. Please take this screening process seriously when considering your early morning family routines! 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. Children who are waiting to be picked up will be in room 109, across from the nurses office. When you arrive to pick up your child, let the front office know you are waiting and we will bring your child to you.

Masks



Students are **required** to bring and wear a mask at all times, to the extent practical, 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 regularly 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. 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.

If a student forgets their mask or does not have a mask, disposable masks are in plentiful supply and will be provided as often as needed. Extra masks will be available in the office and the classroom.



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 and adult monitoring will be in place to maintain 6 feet of social distancing outside of the bathrooms, and to ensure handwashing and/or sanitizer usage. Children will be reminded of handwashing practices
- 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.

Hallway Movement

Individual Classrooms will have their own routes for travel to the outdoors or the bathrooms. There will be very little other travel. Individual students will also learn those routes. Each route will also have a name that helps kids remember where they are going. The hallways have decals and other visual signage that helps support spacing. Teachers will be teaching this.

BE LIKE MIKE! This is the BIG MIKE HUG!



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. Students will wear masks unless they are engaged in activities which allow them to maintain physical distance.

Each classroom is developing an outdoor learning space that is particular to that class so that routines for going there, setting up, doing activities, and returning run smoothly and positively. We are expecting added materials, furniture, etc that will assist in this development. Ask your child how this unfolds! Please send your child in with clothes for a range of outdoor weather. Your teachers will keep you up to date.



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.

Beverly J Martin's school nutrition program falls under a status that allows all children a free meal. Seconds are priced as breakfast-\$1.75, and Lunch at \$ 2.85. If paying for these, 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 foodservice staff.

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: Proper sanitation protocols (handwashing 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.. The ICSD has eliminated "self-service" items (e.g., salad bars). Pre-packaged items will be utilized whenever appropriate. Students will eat in their classrooms.

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, while 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.



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 designated areas for individual activity will be established to allow for physically-distanced mask breaks. Equipment that can be used individually will still be permitted (e.g. jump ropes, hula hoops, kickballs). Students will be required to wash their hands prior to and after recess. The master recess schedule allows for separate cohorts to play in broad areas without mixing cohorts of other grades. Please make sure your child has outdoor weather clothing as we need to go outside as much as possible.



Daily Schedules and Routines

Each teacher will share your student's daily schedule with you. While we have also gathered many supplies, each teacher will let you know what else might be needed for class. Added suggestions, however, include:

- Mask lanyard - this would allow for students to keep masks from falling off and getting lost.
- Water bottle - water fountains will be closed, but the water bottle filling stations will be accessible.
- Shoe box or similarly sized plastic container - to store personal items.

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.

LIBRARY BOOKS!

We believe in the value of hands-on books as part of developing scholars, critical thinkers and a wild sense of adventure! This also develops 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:

- The librarian or other staff member will bring a cart of curated books to classrooms for students to check out.
- Classroom books may also be borrowed for student use.
- Returned books will be held for 24 hours to reduce the transmission of germs.

Teachers often create “centers,” learning activities with a set of materials where students interact with the materials to deepen the ways they grow and create knowledge. . Where possible, students will be given individual materials to accomplish these goals.



Inclusive education

We continue to strive to create the most inclusive learning possible for all students and for our children with disabilities, we continue to work on virtual or in-person plans that meet the needs of your children. Please contact the following when you have question about your child's learning.

Administration:

Bart Auble, Master Educator of Inclusion bauble@icsd.k12.ny.us

Jenn Gondek, Director of Special Education (jennifer.gondek@icsd.k12.ny.us)

For those of you with learners who are in our virtual cohorts, your child will be using a Virtual Learning Plan, that your child's special education support person should have spoken with you about. IF that has not happened yet, please contact Bart immediately. The intent is that the plan reflects the

changed learning environment.



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

Students that have 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. If you cannot reach the main office at BJM to make a plan, please be prepared to ring the bell, wait for directions through the monitor if we can accommodate you, wear a mask, and wait in the lobby area with appropriate protocols. Thank you.



Building Readiness

Cleaning

All spaces have been cleaned and disinfected, and equipped with Flexwipes for adult use. At BJM specifically, all of the units had standard maintenance which resulted in improved air quality and ventilation throughout the building. All roof exhaust fans are repaired and operating. Eleven rooms had belts replaced for more effective operation and damper control. You can be directed to the Indoor Air Quality Evaluation document at the [district website](#).