

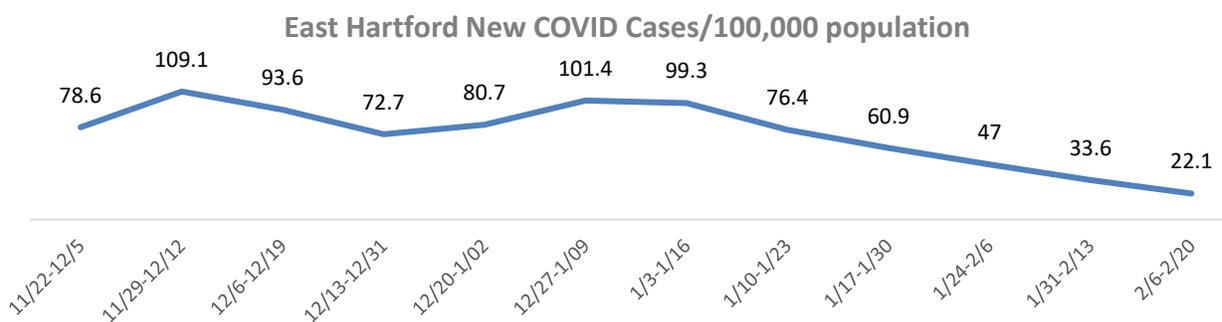
March 1, 2021

Dear East Hartford Community,

Greetings! I hope all is well for you and yours.

I am pleased to write to you today to share our intention to take another step in our ReOpening Process titled *ReOpen EHPS 4.0*. **This plan focuses on opening schools for In-Person Learners (IPL), five days/week on Monday, March 29, 2021.** Please note this announcement is contingent on several important factors listed below. In this communication, I will share the rationale behind this decision, as well as several important details for which I ask for your careful attention. I am thrilled we are able to continue to *safely, incrementally and adaptively* ReOpen our schools, and as always, I appreciate your partnership and support in this process.

Rationale/Data Supporting ReOpen 4.0: Over the past month, public transmission rates for COVID-19 have steadily regressed to a current rate of 22.1/100,000 population. The chart below tracks the rate of new cases of COVID-19/100,000 population and has served as a vital guide for efforts to select a safe instructional model for schools. Aligned to [New CDC Guidelines for Reopening Schools 2021](#), and in consultation with East Hartford Department of Public Health (EHDPH) officials, we have now reached a threshold which enables the safe re-entry of IPL students. Please note that a significant change to this data might necessitate a pause in bringing IPL students back to school, five days/week. **If this pause is necessary, the district will delay the return of our IPL students five days/week until following April Vacation on Monday, April 19, 2021.**



Maintenance of Current Model Selection: Families who have selected the Remote Learning Experience (RLE) Program are asked to maintain their current selection. As you are aware, model selections were originally selected in August and revisited in January. Pending future transmission trends and class sizes, a limited number of changes of students from RLE to IPL may be considered at this time. In addition, notwithstanding the expectation of daily student attendance, EHPS will continue to offer concurrent learning for students as necessary. Should families desire to make a change to their current selection, they should contact the school principal by Friday, March 12, 2021. All requests will be reviewed individually and are subject to aforementioned concerns.

Faculty Vaccination Program: As announced this week by Governor Lamont, all staff associated with school operations have been prioritized in the state vaccination program. Over the next month, EHPS will be working with EHDPH to provide a first dose vaccination to staff. This incremental strategy will significantly improve the ability of the district to protect the health of the EHPS community as well as maintain adequate staffing levels for schools. *ReOpen EHPS 4.0* is contingent on the inventory of the vaccine and the ability to complete this significant task. Please note that a delay in the vaccination program could set back the district’s plan to return our IPL students to school five days/week.

Social Distancing in Classrooms: As articulated in our first iterations of EHPS ReOpening plans, suspending our current Reduced Enrollment Model (A/B Day Schedule) and returning all IPL students to school five days/week will reduce the amount of space that currently exists between students in schools. Current data on elementary in person class sizes varies between 10 and 28 students. Of note, 43% of students have selected RLE as their preferred learning model. As such, while the numbers of students physically attending will increase, it should not be misconstrued that all students are back in school. In alignment with guidance from the CDC, *ReOpen EHPS 4.0* will socially distance students as feasible but transparently acknowledges that current spacing will no longer be possible. Recognizing this adaptation, requests to transition from IPL to RLE will be granted for families.

Face Covering/Mask Requirement: As a vital component of protecting public health, all students and staff will continue to be required to wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth throughout the school day. While EHPS encourages students and staff to wear ones that best meet their personal preference and comfort, the district will provide face coverings to any student or staff member who does not have one.

While we are thrilled to take this next adaptation, we urge continued caution and vigilance as we work to stamp out the virus in our community. Please wear your mask, avoid large groups, maintain social distance, and stay home when ill. While the implementation of the vaccination program and the return of our IPL students five days/week is certainly exciting, the battle against COVID-19 is far from over. Together, we can beat this virus!

We realize that this is a wealth of information that will stimulate ideas, questions, and concerns. In an effort to continue to communicate directly with you, we have scheduled the following virtual Town Hall meetings that will provide our parents and guardians an opportunity to provide feedback and respond.

EHPS Community Group	Date	Time	Zoom Link
Parents/Guardians - English	3/11/21	5:00 PM	https://zoom.us/j/92838494847 Phone: +1 929 436 2866 Meeting ID: 928 3849 4847
Parents/Guardians - Spanish	3/11/21	6:00 PM	https://zoom.us/j/99636700587 Phone: +1 929 436 2866 Meeting ID: 996 3670 0587

Thank you for your continued support of East Hartford Public Schools.

Sincerely,



Nathan D. Quesnel
Superintendent
 East Hartford Public Schools