

Canaan Schools FAQ on Learning Options

This FAQ document was created using questions submitted from Canaan Schools families regarding the reopening of school. We hope this document helps to answer your questions.

Updated: August 9, 2020 (This is a fluid document that will continue to receive updates)

Will classrooms be able to adhere to the 6 feet rule?

High School

- Students and staff will be grouped together for homeroom, WIN and study hall time and assigned to a specific classroom during these times. Assigned seating will occur in all classrooms. Within these rooms, students will be spaced at least 6 feet apart and will be facing in one direction. Students will be provided with individual supplies and curriculum materials. Students will have scheduled access to their lockers and materials to avoid congregating and release from classrooms will be staggered.

Elementary

- Students and staff will be grouped as cohorts and assigned to a specific classroom, to include assigned seating. For the purpose of these guidelines, a cohort is defined as a group of students that will remain together throughout the school day for the purpose of decreasing opportunities for contact. Cohorts will not exceed the maximum number allowed by state guidance. Within these rooms, desks will be spaced at least 3-6 feet apart and will be facing in one direction. Students will be provided with individual supplies and curriculum materials. Teachers and staff will remain with a single cohort, if possible. If not possible, teachers will travel between cohorts to deliver instruction.

What will the attendance policies look like?

- Due to the requirements for students to stay home when exhibiting any of these symptoms, such as fever over 100.4, a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. Any absences related to these symptoms will be considered excused. During these situations, students will access learning remotely and will still be expected to complete missed work.

What happens if there are positive COVID cases within the school?

- If COVID-19 is confirmed or presumptive positive in a student or staff member, areas used by a sick person will be closed until after cleaning and disinfecting; waiting 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfecting to allow droplets to settle. School staff will participate in contact tracing as requested by the VT DOH. The school will communicate the risk, or lack of risk, from contact with products, people and places while maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of those seeking healthcare and those who may be part of a contact investigation.
- Anyone confirmed or presumptive positive with COVID-19 can return to school after three full days without a fever, AND symptoms have improved, AND at least 10 days have passed since any symptoms appeared.

- If a student or staff has been identified as a close contact to someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, they should self-quarantine for 14 days since the day they were last in close contact with the person with COVID-19. Staff or students that have not shown symptoms may contact their primary care provider about getting tested on or after day 7. If the results are negative, quarantine may be ended.

What if I chose one of the options and then want to change to another type of learning?

- The expectation is that you will choose the learning plan you feel most comfortable with for your family at this time and this will remain the learning plan for the year. The type of learning chosen may however be changed due to extenuating circumstances with input from Canaan Schools staff, the student, parent/guardian and primary care physician if applicable.

What is the plan to address missed learning during remote learning from March 2020- June 2020?

- When the students return to in person learning, staff will assess students academically and make recommendations for interventions necessary or provide differentiated instruction accordingly based on these assessments.

How can you get young children to understand and adhere to the guidelines?

- Mrs. Giroux’s health class, the classroom teachers and the school nurse will continually address the need for these guidelines with the rationale for the guidelines.
- What would be most helpful to us is support from you at home regarding these requirements. It is important to start these conversations now to prepare for the start of school. There are some great tips below as well as at this link.

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-childfacecovering.pdf>

It’s understandable that children may be afraid of cloth face coverings at first. Here are a few ideas to help make them seem less scary:

- Look in the mirror with the face coverings on and talk about it.
- Put a cloth face covering on a favorite stuffed animal.
- Decorate them so they’re more personalized and fun.
- Show your child pictures of other children wearing them.
- Draw one on their favorite book character.
- Practice wearing the face covering at home to help your child get used to it.
- Find a style face covering that fits well and they are comfortable with.

For children under 3, it’s best to answer their questions simply in language they understand. If they ask about why people are wearing cloth face coverings, explain that sometimes people wear them when they are sick, and when they are all better, they stop wearing them.

For children over 3, try focusing on germs. Explain that germs are special to your own body. Some germs are good and some are bad. The bad ones can make you sick. Since we can’t always tell which are good or bad, the cloth face coverings help make sure you keep those germs away from your own body.

One of the biggest challenges with having children wear cloth face coverings relates to them "feeling different" or stereotyping them as being sick. As more people wear these cloth face coverings, children will get used to them and not feel singled out or strange about wearing them.

What about students not adhering to the guidelines?

- All students are expected to follow the guidelines outlined in this document. These new expectations for creating a safe and healthy learning environment will be an adjustment for everyone. School staff will utilize a progressive approach to helping students follow expectations, including redirecting, reteaching, and team meetings including parents/caregivers as appropriate. At no time will students be shamed or ridiculed for not meeting expectations. If a student is unable or unwilling to comply, creating a health and safety risk to our school community, administration will make a decision regarding consequences which may include exclusion from school. This decision may be expedited during this period of COVID-19 depending on the seriousness of the situation. Teachers and staff will not tolerate negative language, behavior or statements that cause stigma or discrimination.

What about lack of air exchange wearing masks all day?

- Routine breaks from masks will be provided as well as outdoor classrooms encouraged. Masks can be removed for snacks and meals and when outdoors if 6 feet social distancing can be maintained.
- There is current evidence that masks do protect, but no evidence of any harm at this time.

Please provide more information on the home schooling and the remote options.

For homeschooling:

- Please visit <https://education.vermont.gov/vermont-schools/school-operations/home-study> to learn about enrolling your student in a home study program. Enrollment can be done anytime, but may take up to 14 business days for approval. Students who are homeschooled will have access to extracurricular activities, such as sports and clubs, following the same health and safety guidelines as other students.

For remote learning (Canaan Virtual Academy):

- We will be offering a full-year remote option for students in grades K-12, provided by VT licensed distance learning instructors, through VTVLC called the Canaan Virtual Academy. Families interested in a PreK learning experience will be addressed individually.
- The off-campus location must have adequate, reliable access to the Internet (at least 3.2 Mbps). A school device will be provided with a home use contract needing to be signed.
- Families must connect with support staff as needed for additional services (ie. guidance counselor, special educator).
- School meals will be provided if requested, but the school does not have the capacity to deliver them. Guardians will need to make arrangements for pickup.
- Students will have the same opportunities as their classmates to participate in morning meetings, school-sponsored clubs, sports, and activities with the understanding that some can only be done in-person.

What will breaks from masks look like?

- Facial coverings will not be worn during meal and snack times.
- Facial coverings will not be required outdoors as long as individuals are maintaining social distancing of 6 feet or more.
- Staff will be encouraged to hold class time outside when possible and take mask breaks as needed. Due to this it is of utmost importance that children always have adequate and appropriate clothing for the weather.

Can you add an additional option for education, such as hybrid?

- At this time there are three options for learning:
 - Full time in person learning
 - Full time remote learning
 - Homeschooling

Will remote learning (Canaan Virtual Academy) be in front of the computer all day?

- Middle School/High School Grades 6-12
 - Visit VTVLC website for details: <https://www.vtvlc.org/parents/>
 - Middle School and High School Courses help support students develop self-direction and improve their communication skills. Assessments include; pre-assessments, discussion forums, discussion-based assessments, collaboration activities, and written assessments. Re-assessments are offered with teacher feedback that helps build student proficiency.
- Elementary K-5
 - What Does A Typical "Online" Week Look Like? We will encourage families to connect online students with their local classmates via homeroom/advisories to maintain school connection.
 - Each course teacher meets with students both as a group, and individually throughout the week. Course work is assigned weekly v. daily to allow more flexibility for when work is completed. Teachers have online office hours to provide additional 1:1 student support. All coursework is online and K-5 courses include printable activities. They use the following curriculum, <https://www.flvs.net/elementary>.
 - Amount of Time 3-5 hours per core course 1 hour per specials course,
 - Number of Assignments 2-4 per core course 1 per specials course
 - Assignments may include, attending class time, collaborating with classmates, reading, playing games, listening to audio clips, and watching videos.
 - Hands on with handwritten worksheets, coloring/matching worksheets, projects, and performing experiments.

Will the school supply the masks?

- If a student arrives at school or the bus stop without a mask, they will be provided a mask. It is however recommended that families find a style mask that fits well and can be tolerated. There are multiple styles available and comfort is important. Due to the requirement for masks to be cleaned it is advised that students have several masks available.

What will the policies be for illness?

- A student can not come to school with any of the following symptoms; fever over 100.4, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.

What will be required for a student to return to school after an illness?

- Unless COVID testing is recommended, the student will need to remain out of school until they have been symptom free for 24 hours. A doctor's note will not typically be required for return to school, but could be requested by the school nurse if symptoms warrant one.

What will communication be if there are positive cases in the community and or school?

- Community case information can be found at <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19/current-activity-vermont#town>
- We would communicate with staff and parents/caregivers with general information about the situation. It is critical to maintain confidentiality.
- If a staff person or student is identified as a close contact to someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, they will need to self-quarantine: stay home and the Vermont Department of Health will contact them for further instructions.

Can face shields be worn instead of masks?

- Cloth or disposable masks that go over the nose and mouth are expected.
- Clear face shields do not protect against the spread of the virus as well , and are recommended to be used only if there is a medical concern with use of masks. Face shields may be necessary for speech/language or hearing impairment needs. Schools will make this determination and will provide shields to students and staff members who work in these rooms and spaces.

How can you screen out seasonal allergies?

- Students with diagnosed allergies, asthma and some other health conditions that can cause symptoms similar to COVID-19 will be assessed by the school nurse and a determination if the student can remain at school.

What happens to learning if students are sent home for the day?

- Students in grades 3-12 will be issued chromebooks and will be able to access the classroom and class work using google documents and google meets.

What if we don't agree with the mask rule?

- The mask rule is non negotiable. This is not a Canaan Schools specific rule, it is a requirement outlined in the Safety and Health Guidance for Reopening of Schools issued by the Vermont Department of Health and the Vermont Agency of Education and has recently become a State of Vermont mandate, effective 8/1/2020. If you do not feel comfortable with this rule, we do have two other options to consider for your family. It is important that families feel comfortable with the school setting chosen.
- Educational settings require both social distancing and masks since it is prolonged exposure all day.