

Brookville Center for Children's Services Town Hall FAQ's

These FAQ's were gathered at the Town Hall Meetings held for each of Brookville Center's schools.

Children's Education Center (Silver and Birnbaum Buildings), Brookville Campus:

1. Q: The slide says that there were only 3 weeks to prepare. The date given is 6/5 and school was to start 7/6. This is 4 weeks. How are they coming up with 3 weeks? Additionally, the guidelines say that you can delay the start date. If more time is/was needed, you could start summer program later, like 7/13 or 7/20. Why wasn't this explored? Was a hybrid model explored for summer?

A: You are correct, the time frame is 4 weeks. The reference to 3 weeks to prepare took into account the week of 6/23 to 7/3 during which the education staff is on vacation. Three weeks was the total time all staff was available to plan and complete all necessary trainings. We delayed our decision regarding summer so that we could extensively explore all re-opening options, including hybrid models and phased in start dates. Our first preference was in-person learning, however it was determined that in order to safely execute our plans, physical modifications and extensive staff training was necessary to meet all of the guidelines. The health and safety of our students and staff remains our highest priority, and the decision to remain remote was made.

2. Q: Why are the completion dates so late?

A: Our anticipated completion date of 8/11 for the training requirements of staff reflect the last day of summer program the educational staff will be working. Throughout the six-week summer program, staff will be required to come into the sites in small cohorts to receive the various trainings all while ensuring remote education continues.

3. Q: Will children be screened for temperature every day?

A: Yes, both students and staff will receive temperature screenings daily.

4. Q: So, if you cannot procure the antiviral wipes what does that mean for reopening?

A: We continue to procure the necessary PPE and cleaning materials for re-opening. Throughout the pandemic, certain materials have been harder to obtain. We will need to keep an appropriate on-site supply and continue to actively work with vendors and explore alternate vendors to ensure that appropriate supply across all programs.

5. Q: Can children just eat lunch in class or outside, and schedule more outside time (weather permitting)?

A: The cafeteria in the Cissy Birnbaum Building will be closed. Students will eat lunch with their class in the classroom. Outside time/areas will be encouraged and scheduled. The

Brookville location does have outside eating areas and can be used while following appropriate social distancing.

6. Q: Other than OT, PT, and Speech, what are the children getting for the summer?

A: The summer remote learning plan will remain the same. We will continue to offer Teletherapy, Google Classroom/Drives, individual and group Zoom classes/sessions, music, art and gym classes. All specific delivery methods arranged will continue for the 6-week program.

7. Q: In order to isolate the well students, in the event someone is to be found symptomatic, how many students can the "safe room" hold? Will it be just the symptomatic student's class sent to that room?

A: The isolation room will be used for the symptomatic student until they can be safely picked up by the family. In the event the room is necessary, disinfecting of the room will occur immediately after the child leaves.

8. Q: How will the hybrid model work for students? Bussing? What's happening with transportation?

A: The hybrid model being considered would be alternating in-person days for students and staff. Remote teaching will occur on the day's students are not in program. For school age students, bussing is the responsibility of the school district. We will notify the districts of our Fall plans so that they can make the necessary arrangements. Pre-school bussing is arranged by the county of residence, so similarly we will notify them of our Fall plans/schedules. We will update families after learning more regarding transportation.

9. Q: For the older children will they be on campus only, no off-campus activity?

A: Initially, yes. All transition activities will be modified to be done on campus. This will be monitored on an on-going basis, and as local health information changes and/or we receive regulatory guidance from our governing agencies, we will modify accordingly.

10. Q: Can individual/group Zoom classes occur more frequently?

A: Every effort will be made to accommodate more "live" sessions. Please discuss your child's needs with the classroom teacher and administrator for each program.

11. Q: Will aides from districts be included in staff training?

A: 1:1 aide arranged by district are either district employees or contracted through various agencies. We are not permitted to include them in our staff trainings. All the training they receive will be provided by their respective employers. They will receive all our safety policy and procedures in writing to review on their own and will be expected to follow our requirements. Additionally, they will receive the same daily screening as the BCCS staff.

12. Q: Please elaborate on the hybrid model. What does it look like?

A: Although no definitive model has been decided upon; the most likely model would be alternating days of in-person and remote education for students and staff. This would allow for smaller class size on each given day, making social distancing possible. The current remote platform would be available on the days the student is not receiving in-person education. Depending on therapy frequencies, a combination of in person and therapy and tele-therapy would be necessary.

13. Q: What about off campus trips? Will children be on campus all day?

A: Initially, to eliminate as much cross contact as possible, all field trips and off-site programs will be on hold. This will be reevaluated on a continual basis as we receive additional information and guidance from various health and governing agencies.

14. Q: When returning to in-person school, will this be full time or on a staggered part-time schedule?

A: The Hybrid model being considered is alternating days. It was determined that due to the bussing considerations, the distances some of our students travel, and with the added daily screening measures, staggering times and half days would not be as productive.

15. Q: Will students need larger buses to keep 6 feet apart?

A: Since bussing is arranged by district or county, there is no way of knowing at this time what safety modifications they will make. It is possible that they will explore larger busses, less people on each route, removing seats etc. Those decisions may vary among districts and bus companies.

16. Q: What about respite programs?

A: The Saturday Respite Program, Saturday Social Skills, and Vacation Respite Program are OPWDD programs. We will await their guidance and instructions on when and how we will be able to resume these programs. At this time, all safety protocols and building modifications the education program is implementing should assist with any safety requirements/plans OPWDD may require for the re-opening of those programs.

17. Q: What is or if any consequence if families continue to send in their child that presents with symptoms.

A: If a child is symptomatic at screening or becomes symptomatic during the school day, the child will be moved to the isolation room and the family will be contacted to pick the child up. The school nurse will provide the family with clearance requirements for the child to return to school. In the event a student tests positive for the virus, all DOH requirements will need to be met for return. We have complete faith that our families recognize the importance of these guidelines and will comply. It will take all of us working together to make this successful.

18. Q: I noticed in the presentation about the wearing of masks, you stated, “children will be encouraged” Can you expand on that? What if a child does not wear or removes the mask while in the building?

A: Requirements for preschool students may be different than for school age. If a family wants their child of any age to wear a mask in school, we will assist with that request. We will be **encouraging** our school age students to wear masks particularly in situations in which social distancing can not be maintained. We are aware that some of our students may have difficulty with wearing masks or face coverings. We will be utilizing social stories, and integrating safety/hygiene into the curriculums, which would include face coverings in certain situations. Medical concerns that could impede face coverings and masks will be considered.

19. Q: Will staff and students be required to wear masks?

A: As stated in the previous question, students will be encouraged to wear masks, especially when social distancing can not be maintained. All staff will be required to wear masks.

20. Q: Will there be transportation for the fall if we are open? How will the maintain distance?

A: Transportation is the responsibility of the county and individual school district. We will be working very closely with them to discuss our schedules and needs for the fall. Each bus company and district will be responsible for ensuring they meet the safety requirements, including maintaining appropriate distance. This could result in less students on the buses, no sharing of seats, removal of seats, larger vehicles, changing routes etc. As always, families will have the option of providing their own transportation. Drop off and pick up procedures may be altered for the fall. All information regarding those alterations will be provided to the families prior to the start of the Fall program.

21. Q: Isn't possible to use any outdoor areas at the schools so that guidelines aren't as strict for the summer?

A: Each BCCS campus is very different in terms of location and outside space. In the Fall, outside time will be strongly encouraged and utilized weather permitting. Gym classes, music as well as some instructional time could be moved to outdoor to allow for more fresh air movement for the students. Areas will need to be designated to ensure spacing and safety measures are in place. Consideration for students who have health conditions that prohibit long term outside time would need to be considered.

22. Q: The google drive is a poor system for delivering materials. Will there be a better system going forward?

A: The Brookville Site will continue to use google, however all teachers have now all created Google Classrooms and the drive material transferred. This will hopefully be more user friendly and take less site navigation. We understand that no platform can replace face to face instruction. In addition to the Google site, zoom, face time and direct email materials

will continue. If has specific needs or technology requirements, please contact share those with the classroom teacher so that alternate arrangements may be made.

23. Q: If the intent is to re-open what are the top three hurdles?

A: Continuous supply of PPE, Physical space requirements and the training of staff.

24. Q: If a student has a small classroom how can you create a safe learning space? Will you be bringing in trailers on campus since your classroom areas are very limited?

A: Classroom's are being evaluated, furniture will be removed, and some cubby walls may be removed depending on the classroom to allow for more physical space to distance. Tables will be swapped out for desks for certain rooms. A hybrid model will decrease the number of people in a room on a given day which would assist with the need for physical distancing. At this time, there are no plans to bring in trailer or additional outbuildings. Overflow areas have been identified as gyms and cafeterias to be utilized to assist with larger ratio classrooms and therapy spaces. Smaller areas will be constructed within these overflow areas for that use.

25. Q: How can we be sure the disinfectant being used are safe for the children and staff?

A: All materials used are approved by the DOH and CDC. We will make a list of all cleaning/disinfectant supplies and methods available to all families.

26. Q: Is there a consequence, if we the parent, do not send our kids to school in Sept.? If we do not feel comfortable?

A: We respect every family's decisions in regard to sending your child to school based on the current situation. We will continue to work with each family and school district CPSE/CSE to provide education and a program to accommodate all our students.

27. Q: How did other districts open now? Can't we use their systems they created as our own in order to open?

A: Each district and school have its own unique set of needs and challenges in regards to re-opening. We cannot specifically address every other district and programs plan or process. We know our needs and our expectations regarding providing a safe opening. The decision to remain remote was the right one for BCCS to ensure all safety measures and procedures are in place.

28. Q: With the remote learning over the summer is there an intention to have work packets delivered to homes each week? Right now, a majority of the learning is requiring me the parent to find, organize, print, cut, and then oversee the remote learning. My daughter's public school started delivering materials after 3 weeks of Covid quarantine.

A: We certainly understand the additional work that has been put on families. At this time, although we cannot commit to delivering weekly packets, we have made arrangements with

some families to mail materials/packets and have packets and materials available to be picked up on campus. The classroom teacher and Curriculum Coordinators can assist with specific needs and preferences of each family.

29. Q: Are professionals cleaning the classrooms, desks etc.?

A: We employ a professional cleaning company to disinfect and clean the building. Full scale cleaning and disinfecting will occur daily. Porters are on site to disinfect all common areas throughout the school day such as doorknobs, handrails, elevators, bathrooms etc. Classroom staff and therapists will be given the necessary disinfecting wipes/materials and will receive training from the cleaning company regarding continual cleaning/disinfecting of classroom and therapy spaces.

30. Q: Would you consider having therapies on campus for the summer? And if we can't return for the fall session would you consider therapies on campus then?

A: Unfortunately we cannot consider therapies for the summer with the decision to go full remote. With a hybrid program allowing for in-person learning considered for the fall, we hope to offer in person therapies. If school cannot reopen fully, this is something that we will consider.

31. Q: Why is it going to take 6 weeks to train teachers how to wear and clean a mask? This training can be done via zoom or webinar. Teachers and staff seem capable enough to learning this in 1 day or less of training. Why is the anticipated completion date on this August?

A: The completion date of August 11th reflects the completion of all training for staff not just the face covering policy. There will be multiple trainings occurring throughout the summer dates, 7/6/20-8/11/20.

32. Q: What will arrival and dismissal look like in regard to students gathering in the lobby waiting to get on or off the bus?

A: For arrival, each student will be taken off the bus by a member by a staff member from their own classroom, screened and be brought directly to their classroom. During dismissal, students will remain in their classes and buses will be announced once they are ready to accept the children. Smaller amounts of buses will be called at a time to avoid large movements in the hallway and lobby. Standing areas of 6 ft apart will be clearly labeled for staff and students if a short wait becomes necessary.

33. Q: What type of masks will therapists and teachers use? Will they only use masks or will face shields possibly be used as well?

A: Approved masks will be supplied for the staff however they will be free to wear personal masks if they choose. While most staff will utilize masks, face shields have been ordered and will be maintained on site for anytime that level of PPE is necessary. In addition, speech therapists may utilize clear face shields during therapy sessions so that their mouths are visible.

34. Q: While I understand some people are anxious to get their kids back to school which I understand, my child's health comes first. At this time, I don't feel like there is a 100% certainty that we know enough about this disease. Is there any thought about a split school week and home and remote learning?

A: A hybrid model, mixture of in person and remote learning, is currently being reviewed. This would allow for less capacity in the building on any given day. We will work with each individual family and School District if a family prefers to stay remote.

35. Q: I really commend your efforts here, however if you are considering a hybrid model we will need to know now. Is there a decided date on when a decision regarding utilizing a hybrid model will be decided?

A: We understand the need for families to make Fall plans. We will be communicating with you frequently throughout summer session in regards to all the planning efforts for the Fall re-opening.

36. Q: Will staff be required to wear gloves?

A: Gloves will be made available to staff at all times. They will not be mandatory to be worn throughout the entire day, however the use of them will be incorporated into trainings and policies for specific times of the day and tasks as per recommendation from the DOH, OCFS, CDC, our nursing departments and cleaning departments.

37. Q: How is it determined whether a child is immunocompromised? Is it determined by child's pediatrician? The DOH? The school?

A: We will be reviewing all students IEP and health records to determine if there are any recommendations necessary to the school district for any students based on their specific circumstances and needs. A child's pediatrician can assist in determining any risk factors that the school would need to be aware of or assist in determining when or at what capacity it is deemed safe for a child to return to in-person learning.

38. Q: Will there be an A week B week type schedule for the Fall?

A: A hybrid model could be either alternating days or alternating weeks. At this time, a specific model has not been finalized.

39. Q: How will you incorporate parents in the decision-making process on reopening plans for Sept? Many families continue not to get emails from the program.

A: We strongly believe that parents will need to be part of our Fall planning. Surveys will be sent, and your feedback will be used to assist various subcommittees. In addition, members of subcommittees from each individual site, may reach out to families asking for volunteers to sit in on various planning meetings. Communication on this large of a scale needs to be done via email or blackboard. If a family member is not receiving emails, please make sure

you contact the main office of your school so that Blackboard and Community Resources can be updated.

40. Q: I thank you for the careful planning and protocols you are putting in place. School will look differently for the children. One-way hallways and stairs. Will an opportunity be provided for students to visit the school prior to the start of school to become familiar to the changes?

A: This is not something we considered, however it's a great idea and will be further explored. What each site will be able to do will be take photographs of the buildings, specific to new or changed areas to incorporate into returning to school social stories. Video tours of the buildings could also be created and shared on your child's classroom platform and the teachers, psychologists, social workers etc. would be able to utilize the video on individual and group sessions as well.

41. Q: Will students be moving to new classrooms in the summer or fall?

A: Some children may, although every attempt will be made to keep children in their current room for stability. However, it is a new school year, students have graduated and are leaving us, new students had been accepted prior to March and current screenings continue to happen, so some changes will be necessary. Transition planning with all team members will take place for those students who may move classes or have staff changes.

42. Q: If staff training is a key element of reopening has there been any resistance from staff regarding returning because they're not comfortable?

A: Overwhelmingly, our staff are anxious to return to "pre-covid" teaching, we want nothing more than to be back working with your children in person. The virus has affected all of us in different ways. We recognize that some staff may have concerns, health issues etc. and our HR department will work with them on any specific concern.

43. Q: Since a hybrid model is being considered, will the related services be done remotely?

A: With a hybrid model and based on therapy frequencies, most likely therapies would be a combination of both in-person and remote.

Marcus Ave/New Hyde Park Center

1. Q: Do you have any information about busing when returning to school?

A: The NYS Association for Pupil transportation recently released its task force guidance related to transportation. Transportation is provided by your county of residence and questions concerning transportation can be directed to your local school district

2. Q: Can you also clarify more by what you mean by hybrid program? Does that mean students will be going to school on alternate days?

A: There are several hybrid models to be explored, and we would value your input in discussing this process.

3. Q: Are children going to have to be 6 feet apart one another in the classroom?

A: While the DOH guidance recognizes that 6 feet of distance between students is very difficult when caring for young children, classroom configurations and seating arrangements will provide additional spacing options.

4. Q: When will have more information on hybrid learning for September?

A: Discussions are in the works at this time and we would love your input. Please reach out to your program Director.

5. Q: Will the size of integrated classrooms be reduced?

A: Class sizes may need to be reduced to accommodate physical distancing requirements.

Barbara C. Wilson Preschool & SUNY Old Westbury School

1. Q: Will children be able to play and socially interact? How will IEP goals of social interaction be met?

A: During Remote learning socialization skills are challenging but we have also had to readjust expectations for socialization by first focusing on skills such as recognizing peers and adults on screen, responding to and initiating greetings and turn taking with peers and adults on remote learning platforms. These are all social skills that can be practiced during large and small group live sessions. In addition social stories and Social Curriculum lessons have been offered on the Class Dojo. Those families' with siblings can practice skills at home as well as with relatives.

2. Q: Could the presentation be sent to all the parents?

A: Yes, the presentation will be available to all parents, and will be posted on the website.

3. Q: Will children be able to attend full time without remote learning if the parents are willing to send them?

A: Part of our reopening plan will be determining if we are able to accept students full time while being able to adhere to regulations for physical distancing in every classroom.

4. Q: Is short outdoor classes, being discussed for summer?

A: No we are unable to provide classes during the summer session.

4. Q: At this point in time, as obviously this can change as time moves forward, but as of now, are you planning on having bussing for September?

A: Bussing is provided through your district and Department of Health. Every child with an IEP is entitled to transportation. We will update you when we hear details regarding transportation.

5. Q: Will bussing still be available?

A: As long as bussing is on the child's IEP it must be arranged for by the district and provided by the DOH.

6. Q: In the fall, would all students be allowed in the building at the same time, or would they have to go in cohorts?

A: The class size maximum has changed to 15 but we are required by regulation to provide 6 foot physical distancing between desks within every classroom. As part of our reopening plan we will be determining maximum class size based on our ability to provide appropriate physical distancing. Additionally we will have to follow current regulation as it pertains to maximum number of occupants per building.

7. Q: What happens if we go to our district and request in home learning? Will that affect our placement at BCW?

A: All parents are entitled to ask district for a change in educational programming at any time. If you decide that you would like home services for summer that would not affect your Fall placement.

8. Q: Will COVID-19 test and antibody test required for reopening for staffs and students in September?

A: Students are not required to have a COVID test unless it is mandated by the DOH or NYSED for admission to program. Regarding staff, that would be a decision made by our HR department and it is being discussed.

9. Q: Do you have multiple reopening plans forming? (hybrid, full opening, continuing remotely)..

A: Yes, because we do not know what will happen by September with the virus and governors orders, we will be prepared for all possibilities including, full opening , hybrid or fully remote.

10. Q: What about children with preexisting conditions like asthma? What are the considerations on them?

A: Children who are considered to be at frisk and unable to attend due to medical issues will be provided with an alternative remote program and that model will be discussed at CPSE with district and parent.

11. Q: What if our district chooses to close? Will our children still be able to attend Barbara Wilson?

A: Yes, if district chooses to remain closed your child can still attend Barbara Wilson unless the governor mandates all school to be closed.

12. What if we cannot attend remote lessons due to child care? Will there be AM/PM classes or will we just miss the summer session?

A: The Class Dojo activities can be accessed at any time day or night and on weekends. Some Therapists may be able to provide later session's dependent upon their schedules. You can contact your therapist to see if they have availability and try to can come up with a mutually agreed upon time. If this is not possible you can contact your district to discuss other options.

13. Q: Unfortunately the remote plan is not working for my child and I'm sure he isn't the only one. Unfortunately the summer session was my child's last chance to get help at BCW before going to kindergarten. His regressions have thrown away all the progress made. Is remote the only option this summer?

A: Yes at this time Remote is the only option for Brookville Center Programs for the summer. You can contact your teacher to try to adapt the day for your child or contact your district to discuss other options that may be available.

14. Q: If our child is asthmatic would they be able to have their nebulizer at school?

A: Yes, as long as your child has doctor's clearance that deems that he/she is not at risk to attend program, he/she would be able to have their nebulizer at school.

Westbury @ Post Avenue School

There we no questions after the presentation.