

Southern York County School District **2020-2021 Health and Safety FAQ (Updated 12/10/20)**

We know that there are many questions concerning the reopening of schools for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year. Please note that we will add questions and answers on a frequent basis, as information becomes available. Answers will be updated if there are changes in the guidance from Governor Wolf's office and the PA State Department of Health.

Education

1. When will students be able to transition to a traditional (5 days a week, in-person) instructional model?

The School Board at its meeting on [November 4](#), approved an updated school reopening plan that establishes the start of a new marking period as the time to transition from our current hybrid model to a traditional five-day model. It has not yet been determined which marking period this planned change may take place. We feel using the change in marking period will be an ideal time for the District to rebalance class sizes, staffing requirements, and cause less disruption to student learning.

The Board of Education will consider approval of transitioning from the current hybrid instructional model to a traditional (5 days a week, in-person) instructional model at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 3, 2020. If the Board approves the transition at the December meeting, transitioning to a traditional model of instruction would begin on January 19, 2021, which is the first day of the third marking period. If the transition is not approved at the December 3, 2020 meeting, then the Board will revisit the instructional model transition at the regularly scheduled School Board meeting on February 18, 2021. If the transition is approved at the February 18, 2021 meeting, the traditional model of instruction would begin on March 19, 2021, which is the first day of the fourth marking period.

2. Will non-employees (i.e. volunteers) be permitted into school buildings?

Visitors will be limited to military recruiters and college representatives, as needed, and others deemed necessary and safe by the building principal. Volunteers will also be extremely limited during the 2020-2021 school year. Verbal screening (for COVID-19 symptoms and close contact with cases) for all visitors and volunteers on entry will be performed. If possible, potential visitors and volunteers will be informed before they travel to the school that they should expect to be screened for COVID-19 and will be unable to enter the school if they do not clear the screening process or if they decline screening. Visitors and volunteers who do not clear the screening process or who decline screening will not be able to enter.

In order to limit the number of non-employees in buildings and using facilities, we will have very limited use of facilities by outside groups and affiliated organizations.

3. How will social distancing be maintained?

Schedules will be as static as possible by having the same group of students with the same group of staff, where possible. Staff will develop and implement classroom procedures that encourage social distancing to the greatest extent possible such as, but not limited to, turning desks the same direction, students only sitting on one side of the table, and seating that is arranged in a U shape.

4. I am not yet comfortable sending my child to school. Can I have them continue with virtual learning only this school year?

Full-time distance learning is available through our [Southern York Digital Academy](#) for those families uncomfortable with in-person instruction.

5. What will the attendance policy be for the District?

If your child is ill or unable to attend school, a note is required upon his/her return.

6. How is attendance recorded during a quarantine period?

If your student is quarantined as a result of being identified as a close contact, they will be marked as absent on the days that they are scheduled to be physically present at school. However, they will still be able to make up their work and/or participate in their class virtually. Please contact the school nurse if you have additional questions related to attendance tracking during a quarantine.

7. Will there be physical education classes and music classes?

Physical education and music classes will follow CDC social distancing guidelines and limit the sharing of equipment. For music classes, the District will follow Covid-19 Instrument Cleaning Policies. Teachers will provide students instruction on these cleaning policies prior to resuming instrumental music lessons or classes.

8. Will there be recess?

To facilitate social distancing, but allow our students the needed time to run and play, recess will be limited to one group of students at a time. Recess equipment (balls, jump ropes, etc...) will be utilized by a single class and disinfected daily. Access to playground structures may be restricted, but we will fill that need with other activities that maintain social distancing. We understand that students need to get up and move around so we will be making every effort to have movement time.

9. Will there be field trips for the 2020-2021 school years?

Field trips and transitional activities will be eliminated to maintain social distancing and reduce exposure to the public.

Sports and Extracurricular Activities

1. What about sports events?

Sports and Extracurricular activities will adhere to the [Athletic Health and Safety Plan](#).

2. Are spectators allowed to attend extracurricular activities?

Attendance at extracurricular activities will be limited to participants, parents, coaches/staff, and essential district employees only. We encourage our families and community members to take advantage of the live streaming that will be provided for many of our home athletic events. The videos will be accessible through our new [SYCSD Athletics YouTube account](#).

Transportation and Operations

1. Will the District provide bus transportation? What will be different?

Yes, the District will provide bus transportation. We will limit students on school buses and vans with the understanding that all students and drivers are required to wear a face covering while on the bus. Assigned seating will be implemented at all grade levels, keeping students from the same household together. Additional bus runs may be added, if needed, to support social distancing on buses. Weather permitting, windows will be opened to increase air circulation and ventilation. One rostered bus assignment per student, if able. AM/PM could be a different bus.

2. How will school buses be sanitized?

Hand sanitizer will be available on all buses and vans. Interior of vehicles will be sprayed following all regulations and guidelines.

3. Since water fountains are high germ transfer areas, will bottled water be available for students?

We will limit the use of drinking fountains and promote the use of bottle fillers and safer alternatives for providing water, when possible. Students and staff are encouraged to bring water bottles or use disposable plastic bottles. All buildings have touchless water bottle fillers at various locations throughout the building.

4. How will you ensure the building is cleaned and ready to safely welcome staff and students?

We will ensure buildings are cleaned and ready for staff and students by utilizing our trained maintenance and custodial staff. These staff work in shifts to clean and disinfect our buildings each day while students are present and before they return the next day. Hard surfaces are both cleaned and disinfected by our staff.

Custodians perform *cleaning* tasks by removing germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces or objects by using detergent and water. An example of this practice includes using microfiber rags and good old-fashioned elbow grease to clean surfaces and other frequently touched areas. Another example includes utilizing motorized auto scrubbers to agitate and clean hard surface flooring.

Custodians perform *disinfecting* tasks by killing germs on surfaces or objects by using chemicals listed on the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection Agency, Disinfection List N: Disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), which is promoted by the CDC to combat COVID-19. Frequently touched surfaces, including desktops, are disinfected by applying disinfectant and then wiping them dry after the dwell time. Motorized auto scrubbers are used to apply disinfectant to disinfect hard surface flooring.

For soft surfaces, such as carpeting, custodians will perform *sanitizing* tasks by lowering the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level. An example includes extracting carpets utilizing appropriate chemicals, water and an extracting machine.

5. What protocols will be put in place to clean and disinfect throughout an individual school day?

Custodial staff during the day will routinely go throughout the building, cleaning and disinfecting restrooms and touch points, and responding to cleaning needs.

6. How often will desks be cleaned and disinfected?

Desks will be cleaned and disinfected daily and more frequently as specific needs arise.

Desks will be disinfected throughout the day when there is a need for a different student to use the desk. We have minimized the number of student class movements in all buildings to reduce the number of students using a desk. Also, because there are less students in each class, students in class one may use the even numbered desks and class two may use the odd numbered desks. All staff will be trained and work together to accomplish this.

7. How will restrooms be kept safe and low risk for spreading germs?

Restrooms will be cleaned periodically throughout the day and again after school so they are ready for the next day. Disinfectants that are specified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and recommended by the CDC will be used.

8. How will you procure adequate disinfection supplies for COVID-19?

We work with numerous local and national suppliers to fulfill the needs for disinfection supplies, as well as utilize several cooperative purchasing agreements. We stock an adequate supply on hand and continue to monitor inventory. We work with suppliers on a daily basis to understand lead times for when we need to purchase additional supplies. Wall mounted hand sanitizers throughout the buildings have also been installed that have the recommended alcohol content by CDC. Hand sanitizer will also be provided in classrooms that do not have sinks.

9. Will additional training be provided to staff on the implementation of the Health and Safety Plan?

Yes, custodial and maintenance staff were trained on various COVID-19 details from Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to cleaning protocols from CDC.

All staff were trained on the use of disinfectant so as a team, we may work together to keep areas clean throughout the buildings. For example, noncustodial staff will assist in disinfecting areas such as desktops.

10. How does the ventilation system work in a normal classroom?

Fresh outdoor air is now brought into the classroom 24/7 through the HVAC system. This system brings in air similar to opening a window, but has the added benefits of control and conditioning. Outdoor air will be increased, while considering environmental factors such as heat and humidity. Building mechanics check the systems to allow for optimal ventilation on a daily or more frequent basis.

11. Can teachers/staff open windows throughout the day?

Our HVAC system is bringing in outdoor air. Our HVAC system can't accurately control indoor environments with the windows being open (for temperature and humidity).

Cafeterias and Food Service

1. Will my child still have lunch in the cafeteria?

Students will either eat lunch in the classrooms or the cafeteria. Classrooms may be utilized as dining areas to avoid large gatherings. Some tables will be removed or staggered to prevent gathering and increase social distancing.

2. How will meals be served?

Staff will serve students all meal components and/or provide pre-packaged meal components to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Meal condiments will be limited and provided to students on the serving trays and/or disposable placemats. Students will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer and/or wash hands prior to consuming food or beverages. Established marked paths of travel and one-way traffic lanes will be created to reduce cross-traffic and minimize the chance for close contact.

3. How will the cafeterias be kept safe and low risk for spreading germs?

Cleaning in student dining areas (including classrooms) and cafeteria serving areas will be enhanced in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Staff will clean and disinfect cafeteria tables before, during, and after lunch shifts. Cashless transaction opportunities for the cafeteria will be established. Shielding at checkout registers and food service stations will be installed.

Other Safety Protocols

1. What is the District's policy on students wearing masks?

Per the order from the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health on July 3, student and staff face coverings are required at all times (including the school bus) except when students and staff are:

- a. *Unable because of a medical condition;*
- b. *Eating or drinking when spaced at least 6 feet apart;*
- c. *At least 6 feet apart during “face-covering breaks” to last no longer than 10 minutes.*

2. Will students and staff be screened before entering buildings?

Parents / Guardians should complete a symptom screening at home before their child leaves the home that includes a fever, shortness of breath, headaches, body aches, fatigue, loss/altered sense of taste or smell, diarrhea, and runny nose/congestion. All district staff will perform a symptom screen on themselves prior to leaving for work and will stay home if symptoms are present. Individual symptom screening by district staff will not be required for student entrance to school. Students, coaches, and staff will undergo a COVID-19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. Students and staff showing signs of illness are expected to stay home.

3. What if my student feels ill during the school day?

Students and staff will go to the nurse immediately if feeling ill or if they are displaying any symptoms. Any person showing signs of illness will be placed in an isolated check-up room until they are dismissed from school.

4. Will the community be notified of any confirmed COVID-19 cases?

Our District has recently created a [COVID-19 dashboard](#) on our website to share as much information as we are able with our community. This dashboard contains the number of individuals at each building who have tested positive, and the total number of individuals who have been, and are currently, quarantined. Individuals include students and staff of the District.

Staff and families will still be notified of any confirmed COVID-19 cases, while maintaining the confidentiality of the affected individual. Families will be notified via School Messenger email service if their child has possibly been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 to support monitoring for signs and symptoms. Documentation of possible cases and contacts will be maintained while awaiting results of COVID-19 testing.

5. When may students or staff return to school if they are being isolated or quarantined?

District staff and students may return to school after being isolated or quarantined under the guidelines of the Pennsylvania Department of Health. The District will adhere to the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s “Public Health Guidance Regarding COVID-19 for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools” Follow this link for more information: <https://bit.ly/2CBFnYd>.

Our promise is to make the school year the best we possibly can for our students and our entire Warrior family, regardless of the model that is in place.