



February 26, 2021

Dear Seymour School Community,

We hope this communication finds you all safe and well. At the February 25, 2021 Special Board of Education meeting, Seymour Schools shared an amendment to our plan that was released on February 12, 2021 to safely introduce increased numbers of students for in-person learning in a progressive manner.

As previously shared, the team still holds the following goals in the forefront of all discussions:

- Maintain safety of staff and students
- Increase student and teacher in-person contact

It is very important that we share what this means for social distancing for a full return for our grade 6 – 8 students if all students opt to return. This would mean that instead of having an average of 6 feet of social distancing as we have in our in person hybrid learning model, we would now have an average of 3 feet in our grade 6 – 8 classrooms. This also means that our busses will be full in most cases as well as our cafeteria and foyer for lunches. Should an exposure occur once these spaces are at a full occupancy, please realize that large numbers of students would potentially have to quarantine. We will continue to assess each situation with the Naugatuck Valley Health District.

In consultation with our team of administrators and the Board of Education last evening, we feel that we can safely invite our grade 6 – 8 learners back in a phased in approach similar to the one we are using at our elementary level. This means that we will first invite our Grade 6 students to return in person at Seymour Middle School on March 8, 2021, we will then invite our Grade 7 students to return on March 15, 2021, followed by our Grade 8 students on March 22, 2021. Please realize throughout this staggered approach towards a full in-person return, our 3:2 hybrid learning model remains in place for all other students in grades that are not yet invited at that time.

We understand that the reduced social distancing may cause some parents to reevaluate their decision to send their children back to school. This is why we need for you to let us know as soon as possible if you are electing for your child to not return for in-person learning. If you do not want your child to return to full in-person learning, please email your child's school building administrator that you are requesting temporary full distance learning and include Mrs. Tencza (vtencza@seymourschools.org) and Mrs. Cathy Guerra (cguerra@seymourschools.org) on that correspondence by no later than Thursday March 4, 2021 for our Grades 3 - 6 students, then by no later than Thursday March 11, 2021 for our Grade 7 students, and by no later than Thursday March 18, 2021 for our Grade 8 students. This is needed so that our administrators and teachers can plan to welcome our students back.

Once we return to full in person learning, students who have been with their temporary full distance-learning teachers since the fall and who wish to remain temporary full distance learners will remain with those teachers. These students will not be able to re-enter until April 19, 2021, which is the midpoint of the last marking period. The only two options for families moving forward will be either fully in-person or temporary full distance learning with your child's current teacher. There will no longer be an in person hybrid learning model. Students will learn in person five days a week or will learn remotely five days a week.



Please review the chart below which outlines our target dates provided we continue on a positive trend in terms of our health metrics.

Phase 2: Updated Target dates:

-March 8

- **3- 5 schools welcome all students back for in-person learning.** At this point, it is anticipated that all Grade 3 – Grade 5 students are back in-person learning with the exception of those opting into the temporary full distance-learning model.

- **Grade 6 at SMS welcomes all of these grade level students back for in-person learning.**

All other **Grade 7 – Grade 12** schools will continue their hybrid learning days in a 3:2 rotation. Please view the color-coded calendar on our website.

-March 15

- **Grade 7 at SMS welcomes all of these grade level students back for in-person learning.**

All other **Grade 8 – Grade 12** schools will continue their hybrid learning days in a 3:2 rotation. Please view the color-coded calendar on our website.

-March 22

- **Grade 8 at SMS welcomes all of these grade level students back for in-person learning.**

All other **Grade 9 – Grade 12** schools will continue their hybrid learning days in a 3:2 rotation. Please view the color-coded calendar on our website.

Phase 3: Tentative Target date:

- April 12 - **9-12 grades welcome all students back for in-person learning.** At this point, it is anticipated that all students are back in-person learning with the exception of those opting into the temporary full distance-learning model.

Families must continue reporting to building administration or the district nurse all COVID-19 cases and quarantines during the coming weeks. This information is critical for us to ensure a safe reopening. In order for us to meet our targeted return dates, our partnership with NVHD and any state/government guidelines at the time, would determine the safety of allowing these to occur. Please realize that any significant increase in our metrics may halt this plan at any time. This will continue to be communicated from Central Office.

Answers to questions may still be found in the Frequently Asked Questions document that was shared and can be located on our covid webpage at:

https://www.seymourschools.org/uploaded/files/District/COVID/FAQ_for_BOE_12.21.20_updated_12.29.pdf

Please reach out to your building administrators with any specific questions that you may have. We remain committed to ensuring the safest possible return for all of our students and staff.

Sincerely,

Michael Wilson, Superintendent

Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent