

This document provides information and guidance for a continued safe full return to in-person learning in the fall of 2021. This document has been reviewed by all Administrators, Teachers, staff, and the Board of Education and their input is reflected here.

We understand that this may change based on state and local guidance, however this captures where we are as of June 2021.

Please share any comments on this document via email to:

ldauerty@seymourschools.org by no later than 12:00pm on Friday June 18, 2021.

**SEYMOUR PUBLIC
SCHOOLS
2021-2022 FALL
RE-OPENING PLAN
DRAFT**

June 14, 2021

Vision of the Seymour Public Schools

The Seymour Public Schools work diligently in order to promote individual student learning. We strive to have all students succeed in all social and academic areas so they can become well rounded individuals who show compassion toward others and who can confidently confront and solve any problem with which they are faced.

Mission of the Seymour Public Schools

The mission of the Seymour Public Schools is to fully know our students as learners, to educate and inspire them through a range of experiences that reflect high expectations for learning and prepare them to meet the challenges of an ever changing world.

Our Beliefs

- *All students can learn*
- *Everyone in our school community will be learners*
- *Accountability leads to growth*
- *All learners have individual interests, needs and talents*
- *All learners will be physically and emotionally safe in the learning environment*
- *Home, school, and community will act as team members in the educational process*
- *By working together collaboratively toward common goals with cooperation and teamwork all learners will succeed.*

Seymour Public Schools remain committed to providing all students with a high-quality education. We want all students to feel both emotionally and educationally prepared as they begin the 2021-2022 school year. Per the Connecticut State Department of Education, all learning will take place in person. There will no longer be an option for temporary full distance learning. If a parent chooses to keep their child home from school, they will have to alert the district that they are choosing to home school their child prior to the start of school.

Remote Learning will only be used in the unfortunate event that a student(s) are placed on Mandatory Quarantine from the District related to the coronavirus.

Remote Learning when on Mandatory Quarantine from the District

Seymour Public Schools will provide a remote learning opportunity for each child that is placed on mandatory quarantine from the school district. Our remote learning structure is as follows: The student will follow their normal schedule as if they were in school and our teachers will teach through a video means live. Our students are expected to attend at those times, just like they would if they were in school. These live/synchronous sessions are mandatory for attendance. They are not optional. Schedules at all levels will not be altered and will remain the same. Students at all levels will be expected to attend all synchronous instructional activities their teachers organize throughout the day and have their cameras turned on.

Please realize that remote learning is not used for a child who is home sick. In the unfortunate event that a student is sick, they need to stay at home and rest and then make up the work when they return to school.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR OUR SCHOOLS

- Please click here for all bus stops:
<http://www.infofinderi.com/ifi/?cid=SPSD5PPCD92KN>
- All students will ride on their assigned bus to and from school with their mask on and sit in their assigned seat.
- Please feel free to contact Patricia Boyle in the BOE Central Office at pboyle@seymourschools.org or by phone at 203-888-4564, ext. 1902. Email is preferred, but phone calls are always welcome. Please know that during the first week of school, bus related issues can reach a high volume and you may be asked to leave a voice mail. When emailing or leaving a message, please be sure to include your child's name, school, current bus stop and number, your name, a number that you may be reached at, and a brief description of your issue. We will get back to you within one business day.
- Please take the time to review your child's bus assignment and pick up/drop off times, as they may have changed from previous years. Times posted on Transfinder are approximate and may vary by five minutes before or after the posted times. As noted above, please direct any concerns or questions to Patricia Boyle at the BOE Central Office.

How will cleanliness and safety measures be addressed on the school bus?

- Our Bus Transportation Company, All-Star Bus Company, takes cleanliness very seriously. All buses will be sanitized before students are transported to and from school. They will also be sanitized between each bus run. For us that means that they will be sanitized after the High School students are dropped off, then after the Middle School students are dropped off, then after the Elementary students are dropped off.
- While on the bus, all students and drivers will always be required to wear a mask, as well as comply with all bus safety guidelines.
- Upon school arrival, school staff members wearing masks may ask students to remove their mask briefly for identification purposes so that we can ensure student security.
- Bus seating charts will be maintained.
- Masks will be worn on buses.

OPERATIONS PLAN FOR **OUR SCHOOLS**

What cleanliness measures will be in place during a regular school day?

- Maintaining building cleanliness is a priority and as such, our custodians have implemented enhanced cleaning protocols, which will be continually reviewed and, if necessary, revised in consultation with state and local health officials.
- Our wonderful custodial staff have been, and will remain, diligent in cleaning and sanitizing all buildings both during and after the school day.
- Restroom Sanitation - Restrooms will be sanitized multiple times daily. Soap and/or sanitizer will be available in the bathroom and throughout the school buildings.
- Common Area Sanitations - Common areas and surfaces (handrails, doorknobs, etc.) will be sanitized daily by custodial staff. All efforts will be made to minimize contact with common surfaces.
- Classroom sanitation and cleaning will be a joint effort by the school custodial staff, classroom teachers and other school personnel. All classrooms will have extra cleaning supplies on hand to wipe down desks and equipment after each use.
- Signage about frequent hand washing/hygiene will be widely posted, disseminated, and encouraged through various methods of communication throughout the day.
- Water fountains will be disabled. We will continue our current practice of encouraging individual clear only water bottles for students. Please be sure your child's water bottle is clearly labeled with his/her name on it. We are working on replacing water fountains with refillable water bottle stations, which are hands-free.
- In order to better promote the flow of traffic in buildings and to maintain social distancing, our Director of Facilities and our Safety and Security Director will place signs and visual markers for foot traffic within each building as well as limiting the number of entry points for each building.

DAILY OPERATIONS PLAN

FOR OUR SCHOOLS

What preventative measures will be in place during a regular school day?

- While each school will have a specific plan for the following topics, typical guidance is as follows:
 - Masks will be worn on school grounds by both students and staff when indoors. While at outdoor recess, during physical education, masks may be removed. Masks will be removed to eat once students are seated in the cafeteria.
 - **Morning Arrivals** - Students will report directly to their first-period classroom. No congregating in groups.
 - **Dismissal** - Students will go to their assigned bus or to their parents' vehicle in an orderly, socially-distant manner outlined by your child's school.
 - **Lunchroom** – All cafeterias will be back in use at all building levels. All students will sit in their assigned seats and will always wear masks except when they are eating their lunch.
 - **Elementary Snack** - Elementary students will have a break within their classroom or in an assigned area outside the building.
 - Play areas at the Elementary level will be sanitized after each recess.
 - **Classroom Seating** – It will remain the same as it has since we returned in full in April, 2021. Seating charts will be maintained. However, small group tables will be allowed.
 - All rooms will remove and minimize the inclusion of cloth and other soft surfaces within the classroom environment. (rugs, beanbags, reading tents, etc.)
 - All staff will educate students on best practices for self-care for themselves as well as others (hand-washing, limit sharing of personal items, sneezing in elbow, etc.). When feasible, desks, counters, and table surfaces will be cleaned during transition times.
 - Backpacks and lockers will be in use.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN OUR SCHOOLS

- As you know, two committees, one from the 2 elementary schools, and one from the middle and high schools, began the work of identifying a new Social Emotional Learning program during the 2019-2020 school year.
- At the time of school closures, each committee had selected 3 Social Emotional Learning programs to pilot which were centered around CASEL’s study on Social and Emotional Learning. This pilot ran in the fall of this year.
- Programs to be piloted were:
 - Elementary Level: Caring School Community
 - Secondary Level: Suite 360
- The Elementary Schools will continue with the above, while our Secondary Level will utilize Suite 360 for the 2021 – 2022 school year.
- Seymour is aware of the need for robust social and emotional supports for our students, as well as our school community. We have adopted CASEL’s pandemic re-entry theme of Social and Emotional Learning which is “Reunite, Renew, Thrive”. The District has three areas of focus (Pre-Entry, Entry, and Implementation) <https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SEL-ROADMAP.pdf>
- **Pre-Entry:**
 - The school staff will identify at-risk students and prepare supports for a safe return to school in the following ways:
 - In person of our buildings for students who are new to the district or those who are transitioning from one school building to another;
 - Social stories for students who require repetition and support in understanding the changes in the school day;
 - Develop transition plans for students struggling with re-entry; and

- Respond proactively to families and students through regular communication, meetings and phone calls.
- **Entry:**
 - Staff will identify students in need of social and/or emotional support;
 - SRBI teams will develop and implement intervention plans to support students in need;
 - Counselors and teachers will provide opportunities for at-risk students to receive support in developing social skills and relationships;
 - Continued consultation between teachers, counselors, and families; and
 - Adopting scientific research-based instruction in social skills and emotional regulation.
- **Implementation:**
 - Evaluate and measure student growth and response to intervention; and
 - Provide additional supports to students/families experiencing difficulty with re-opening or ongoing transitions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING INFORMATION FOR OUR SCHOOLS

- It is our collective responsibility to ensure that all students get what they need to learn and meet with success. During Professional Development days, our teachers will vertically align themselves with teachers who had the students the year prior in order to discuss areas of weakness as well as areas that were not covered. In the spring of 2021, all educators PK-12 worked to identify “bridge standards” - those standards they deemed essential for students to focus on - helping to smooth their entry to the next grade this fall. This will help the current year’s teacher to determine where to begin.
- Educators have also analyzed data gathered from MAP assessments as well as from SBAC in order to ascertain where are students are and to continue to further promote growth.
- In an ongoing fashion, teachers will continue to assess where their students are and provide the necessary supports for them to achieve the learning targets set for each grade level.
- District MAP assessments will continue to be administered as usual, however our first few weeks of school will not be filled with testing. MAP and other formative assessments are critical to assist in individualized instruction and planning purposes and will take place after students and teachers reconnect with the classroom environment and each other.
- Necessary Curricular adjustments will be made on a grade/class level basis after consultation with and approval of the Associate Superintendent of Schools, Director of Pupil Services, and building Administrators. It is recognized that the traditional pacing of curriculum and/or individual lessons will need to remain flexible due to the unpredictability of the school year and the addition of

COVID related activities (such as hand-washing, mask breaks, social-emotional needs, etc.) embedded within the school day.

- Students' return to school in September - There will be a clear need to spend time reconnecting with students, and build strong relationships with teachers and each other following summer vacation.
- In order to prepare our community to engage with the levels of challenge and rigor appropriate to each individual student within these new learning models, staff will monitor student social-emotional needs for returning to school before addressing academic content. In all grades and classes, students and teachers will begin the year with a unit that bridges those social-emotional needs with important priority content standards from the previous spring that need reinforcing or explicit teaching.

FREQUENTLY ASKED **QUESTIONS**

- **Can I still home school my child?**
 - Yes, you may still choose to home school your child. Please note that parents should file with the Central Office (ldauerty@seymourschools.org), to make us aware of your decision to home school. You will be required to submit a withdrawal form within ten (10) school days of your child's withdrawal from school to start home schooling.
- **What type of mask should students and teachers be wearing?**
 - An appropriate cloth mask that is washed daily is preferred. The cloth mask should be generic in nature with no inappropriate images on it. Bandana or other face coverings that wrap around the entire head are prohibited for security reasons.
- **Can my child still wear a hat or a hood in school?**
 - No, these will not be allowed as it prevents us from identifying our students from a security standpoint.
- **What if I do not have an appropriate mask for my child?**
 - Please call your child's guidance counselor and/or school nurse and they can assist you.
- **What happens if my child refuses to wear a mask?**
 - We want all children to physically be in school and the mask is needed to mitigate the spread of germs. If your child continually refuses to keep his/her mask on, you will be contacted to pick your child up from school. Please work with your children on wearing the mask and in reminding them of the importance of wearing a mask while at school.

- **Regarding the Fall Sports season, can I go to watch?**
 - Currently, per the CIAC, yes there will be a fall sports season and spectators will be allowed. A mask would have to be worn while entering and exiting the event. Keeping it on during the event is also be encouraged.

- **Will I be allowed to visit my child's school?**
 - We are discouraging any unscheduled visitors to our buildings. In the event that you are asked to come in for a meeting, serve as a room parent, or as a mentor, you must wear your mask and have your ID to enter the building. If you are picking up a sick child, you will be asked to remain in the sally port to ensure the health and safety of all. Your child will be brought out to you. All visitors must remove their mask when at front entrance when they ring our doorbells requesting approval for entry. They must continue to hold their photo identification up to the entry cameras so our staff can match up the ID to the face of the person.

- **How will safety guidelines impact extra-curricular activities, including athletics?**
 - The CIAC is the governing body in charge of making state decision on sports. Information on all Athletics will be disseminated from the Athletic Director and the Assistant Athletic Director after it has been reviewed with Central Office. All clubs will meet in person next fall.

- **Can my child bring his/her own hand sanitizer to school?**
 - Yes, as long as it is clearly labeled with his/her name on it.

- **Will there be an in-person Open House/Parent Teacher Conferences?**
 - Yes, we will conduct back to school meetings, meet the teacher nights, and parent conferences in person for the 2021 – 2022 school year provided all participants wear masks.

- **Will students continue to take their Chromebook home daily?**
 - Yes, students will continue to take their Chromebook home daily.

- **Will I be notified if a classmate of my child has tested positive for Covid-19?**
 - In the unfortunate event that a student or employee tests positive, persons within that class setting will be notified to the greatest extent possible without revealing any confidential student information. Student and employee information will remain confidential as required by law. We ask that all respect people's confidentiality.

- **Will before and after school programs be allowed?**
 - Yes, SONCCA will be allowed to use our buildings for before and after school care provided they adhere to all safety guidelines set forth for them from the State.

- **How can I reach my child's teacher or school counselor?**
 - We encourage you to contact your child's teacher or school counselor in the same manner that you have in the past, which is via email or via phone. All staff email is available on our website.

- **What are the Immunization and Health Assessments from the State of CT?**
 - Immunizations: Guidance from the Department of Public Health was issued dated June 17, 2020 (<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2019-20/update-DPH-letter-to-SDE-back-to-school-6-17-2020-final.pdf>) emphasizing the importance of protecting students by staying up to date on immunizations.
 - Health Assessments: Guidance from the CSDE was issued dated June 26, 2020 (<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2019-20/Health-Assessments-for-the-2020-2021-School-Year.pdf>) outlining the requirements for Health Assessments (<https://portal.ct.gov/->

</media/SDE/Digest/2019-20/Health-Assessments-for-the-2020-2021-School-Year.pdf>) prior to students enrolling in school.

- **If I have been diagnosed with COVID-19, when can I return?**
 - At a minimum, it would be for 10 days if exposed to minimize the student or staff missing school. The students may test out after day 5 and return on day 7, or stay with the 10 day quarantine. However, while out for those days, the students who are physically able will be required to participate in remote learning.
- **What else can we do as parents to help?**
 - Your constant support is always appreciated. We feel that you reminding your children of safety precautions in terms of mask wearing and constant hand washing will go a long way in helping us to transition back to school.
- **My child participates in the district's integrated pre-school/pre-kindergarten program. What will that look like when schools reopen?**
 - Our pre-school/pre-kindergarten program will continue as previously discussed. We will continue to hold AM and PM sessions 5-days per week.
- **Will my child have a mask break?**
 - When possible, during the day, students will be taken to an area (outside preferably) where they can safely remove their mask for a short period of time.
- **Can I drop something off at the school if my child forgot it at home?**
 - You may drop items off at the entryway doors provided it is clearly labeled. You will not be allowed into the office to drop it off.

- **Can I send in a classroom snack/birthday/holiday for the entire class?**
 - No, at this time we are not allowing outside food to be brought into school to share with others.
- **How can I make sure I receive up-to-date information?**
 - It is very important to ensure that your child's school has accurate and up-to-date contact information. If your contact information has changed or if you are unsure about its accuracy, please update your PowerSchool account and contact your child's teacher and/or the school secretary to make sure accurate information is available.