



Shelby County Schools Reopen Plan Overview August | 2020

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Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a number of new challenges, especially for preparing schools to reopen. While students, faculty and staff may feel a sense of urgency to get schools back to normal as soon as possible, there are new guidelines and revised practices that will be implemented to allow for a safe, stable return.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic is continuously evolving as we learn more about the virus and the best techniques to address the associated risks. The guidelines in this document are based on recommendations from the CDC, current available data and other medical and professional resources as of July 15, 2020. **This guidance may change and should be used only as a general reference.**

Guiding Principles

1. Decisions will be based on the safety of our students, teachers, staff and families.
2. We will partner with health and governmental officials at the state and local level to inform our decisions.
3. Under the current health circumstances, we will provide the best possible education that we can for our students.
4. We will be transparent about what we know, what we don't know, what we can control, and what is outside of our control.
5. We will have to change course at times, but our actions will be decisive and intentional.

Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread

Best practices for students and staff to protect themselves from COVID-19

1. Stay home

The following symptoms indicate that staff and students should stay home:

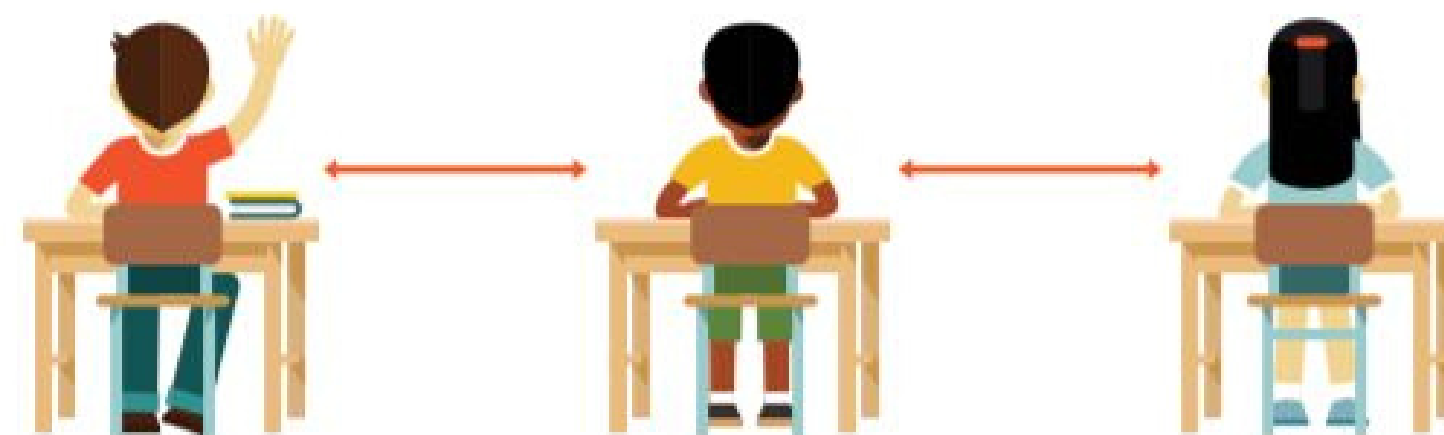
Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. Families should self-report symptoms of illness, which could include fever, new onset of cough, etc.

2. Hand washing

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

3. Social Distancing

Adopt practices to allow physical distancing of 6 feet whenever possible. Schools will implement measures to maximize space and movement to reduce spread. Desks will be separated as much as the physical space allows, and students will all face in one direction.



Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread

Best Practices for students and staff to protect themselves from COVID-19

4. Practice respiratory etiquette

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw away used tissues in a lined trash can. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

5. Clean and disinfect

Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, door knobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, etc.

6. Cover your mouth and nose

Covering your mouth and nose with a face mask/covering while within Shelby County Schools will be required. Face masks/coverings may help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others. The CDC recommends that people wear face coverings in public settings when around people outside of their household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

Exceptions for face masks/coverings

- Any person with a medical condition or disability that prevents him or her from wearing a facial covering
- Any person who is seeking to communicate with another person where the ability to see the person's mouth is essential for communication (such as when the other person has a hearing impairment)
- Any person while consuming food or drink

Plan and Prepare: Guidance for Parents

Wellness

- Parents are the first line of defense as it relates to health, wellness, and safety.
- Parents should check their children daily for a temperature or COVID-19 symptoms before sending them to school.
- Children should stay home if they are having COVID-19 symptoms.
- Encourage your child to support healthy hygiene behaviors (wash hands, use hand sanitizer, avoid touching face).
- Notify the school if your child has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Shelby County Schools is committed to serving the social and emotional health and well-being of our students via counseling services, social workers, and Central Alabama Wellness.



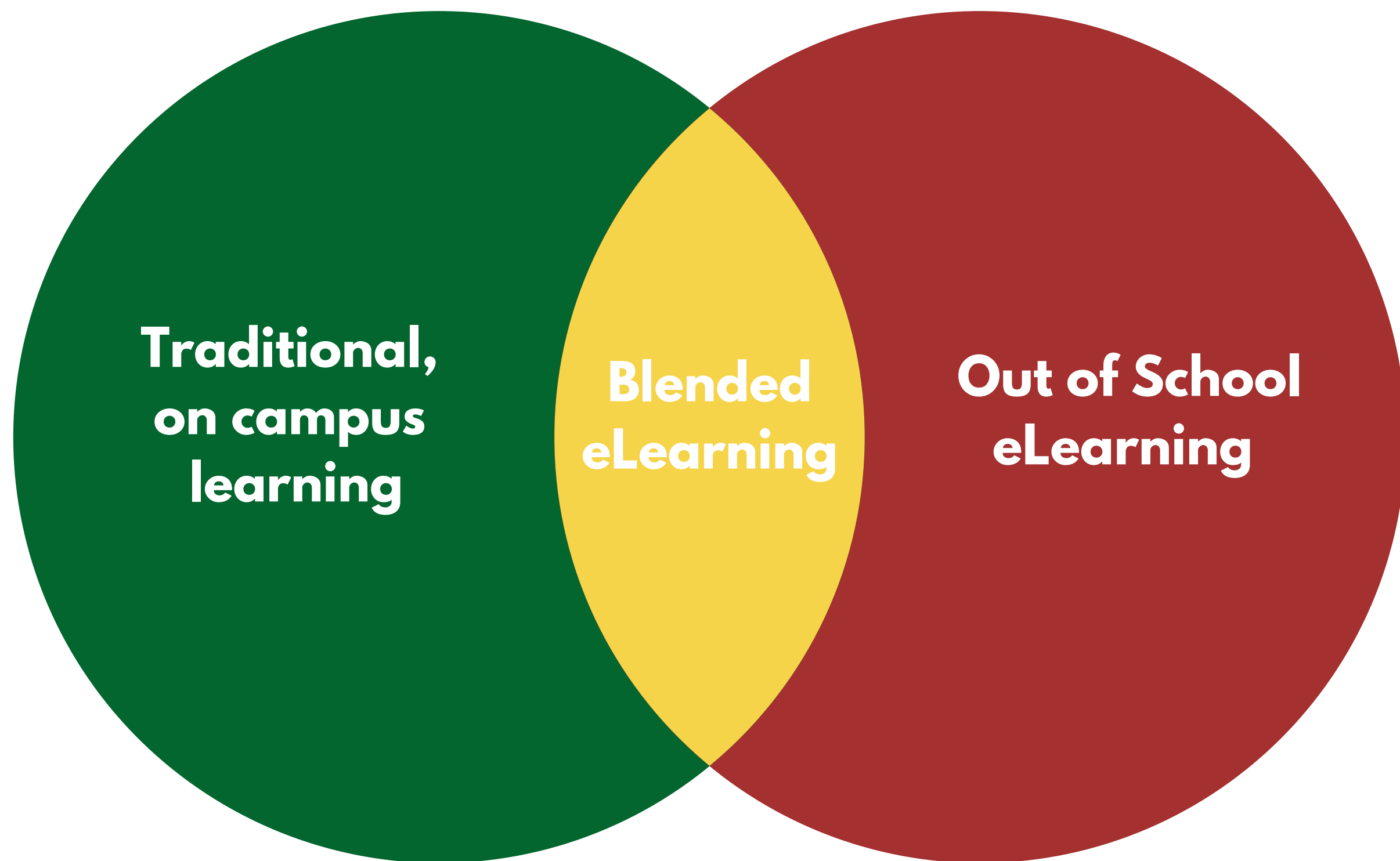
Nursing

- Health rooms and facilities will be prepared for isolation, triage and well areas based on the needs of students.
- School nurses will provide routine care with extra safeguards added to their health rooms and daily procedures.
- Limit well child visits with minor problems. (ex. Classrooms will keep bandages on hand for minor cuts and abrasions and clothing for student bathroom accidents.)
- Children showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be isolated until someone comes to check them out. The student will be asked to wear a mask while waiting.
- School Nurse will continue to develop Individual Health Plans for students with chronic health problems and address specific student needs with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- School Nurse will sanitize and disinfect patient care areas and equipment between uses to decrease the risk of incidental exposure.

Instructional Learning Options

Provide a Traditional On-Campus or Remote At-Home Learning option for students and families.

Option 1



Option 2



Instructional Learning Options

Provide a Traditional On-Campus or Remote At-Home Learning option for students and families.

Option 1: Traditional, On-Campus Learning

The student reports to the school campus daily. If a student has to be out due to quarantine OR if a campus has to temporarily close due to COVID-19, the student switches to **short term eLearning** and returns to campus when healthy.

- On campus and attends the school where zoned
- Quality in person instruction delivered by a teacher from his/her school
- Classrooms will be socially distanced to the extent possible
- If the student has to switch to eLearning:
 - remains in the same class with the same teacher(s)
 - participates virtually (assignments graded)
 - returns to school when healthy/when school reopens

Option 2: Remote, At-Home Learning

The student participates in all courses in a virtual format.

- Courses are online focused ALSDE on standards
- Students expected to work independently and take ownership of their learning
- Quality, virtual instruction administered by SCS teachers during designated school hours
- Assignments and tests will be rigorous and graded
- Elective and advanced options may be limited
- May still participate in athletics, extracurricular activities, but only attend practices before or after school
- Will still participate in ALSDE required assessments
- Student can transition back to face-to-face at the end of a nine week period

School Operating Status

**back
together**

**cautious
together**

**eLearning
together**



Operating Status Recommendations

In each of the school status categories, recommendations are classified as essential, guidance, or consideration.



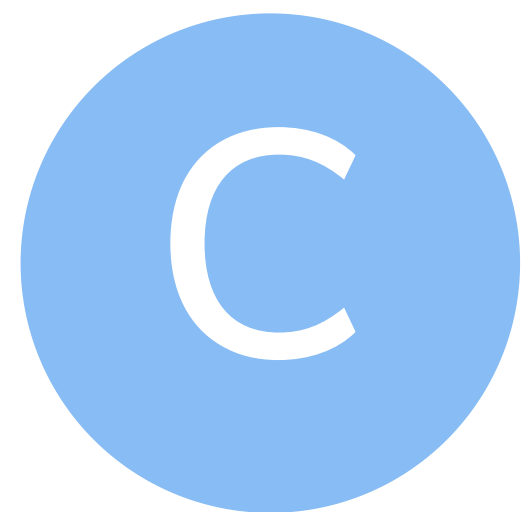
Essential

Required by law, policy, governmental order, or a critical practice.



Guidance

Practices gleaned from research and long-term experience and highly recommended for implementation when feasible.



Consideration

Additional best practices informed by emerging research, recent studies, and practical experience.

Back together

Back together welcomes students back to a new school year. Recommendations will be implemented to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Overview

Schools will open for students on August 13, 2020. The following is a list of guidelines that will assist in keeping the spread of the coronavirus at a minimal level:

Transportation

Implementing standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as:

- Encouraging parents to bring students to school **G**
- Buses will transport students as normal with minimal social distancing **G**
- Opening windows on the bus--while in transport and airing buses when not in use **G**
- Encouraging students to separate as much as possible **G**
- Face masks/coverings are required while riding the bus **E**
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of seats and frequently touched surfaces on the buses **E**
- Seating charts utilized for bus riders--buses will load from back to front--siblings riding the same bus will sit together **G**

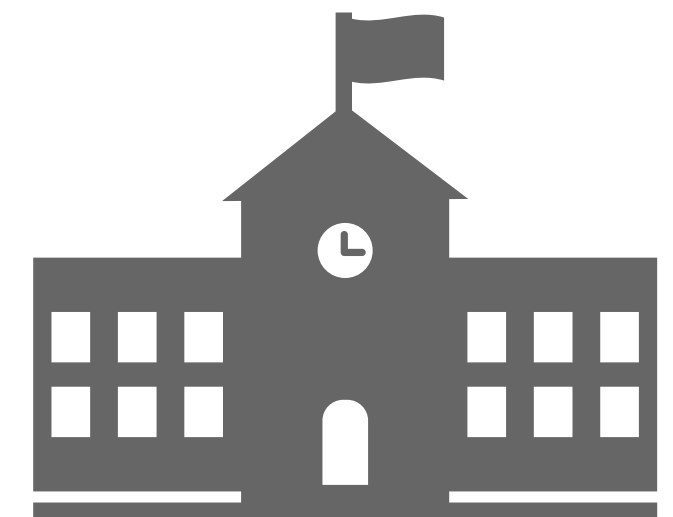


Back together welcomes students back to a new school year. Recommendations will be implemented to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Instructional Day

Implementing standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as:

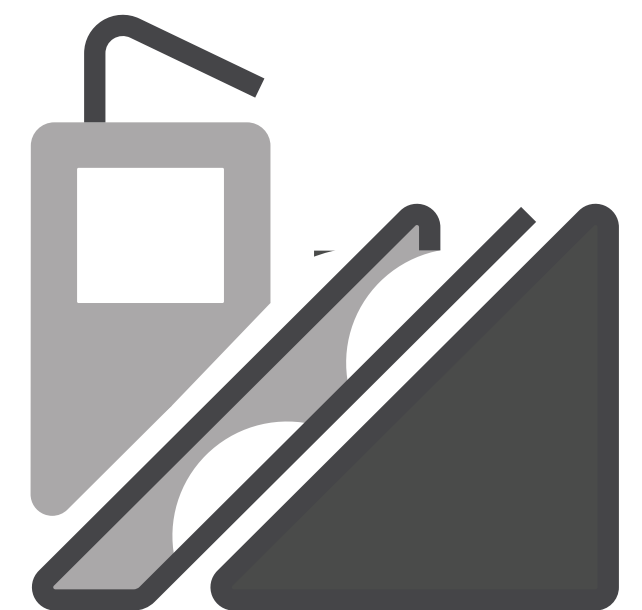
- Encouraging students to practice social distancing **E**
- Encouraging teachers to set up classrooms with as much space and distance as possible **E**
- Utilize seating charts **E**
- Encouraging frequent hand washing **E**
- Limiting the sharing of resources **G**
- Providing hand sanitizer for students and staff **E**
- Limiting unnecessary congregations of students and staff **G**
- Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread **E**
- Visitors, including parents, will only be allowed to enter the front office of the school for business matters **E**
- Visitors will not be allowed to eat with students, make copies for teachers, assist with class projects, etc. **E**
- Students and staff will be required to wear face masks/coverings **G**
- Conducting cleaning of hallways and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day **E**
- Designating specific halls (as one way) to keep students separated (to the extent applicable) **G**
- Students who have a specific learning plan (IEP, GEP, I-ELP, or a 504 plan) will receive instructional accommodations in either learning environment **E**
- Encouraging students to bring personal water bottles **G**



Back together welcomes students back to a new school year. Recommendations will be implemented to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Child Nutrition

- School meals will be served with as much social distancing as possible--a variety of spaces within the school building will be utilized at meal time **E**
- Hand-washing before and after eating is encouraged **E**
- Providing hand sanitizer for students and staff **E**
- Conducting cleaning of cafeterias and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day **E**



School Cleaning

- Increased cleaning and sanitization is required **E**
- Frequent sanitization of surfaces is required **E**
- Daily sanitization of school playgrounds **E**

Athletics and Extracurricular

- Athletics and extracurricular activities, such as marching band, will proceed with social distancing recommendations **G**
- Implement increased cleaning protocols **E**
- Encourage spectators to practice social distancing to prevent the spread of the virus **G**
- After school care will operate as normal, but will utilize additional spaces to help with social distancing **G**
- Follow Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) guidelines **E**

Cautious together

Cautious together will be implemented when the community spread of COVID-19 is at a higher risk as outlined by the ADPH and the CDC. Enhanced measures will be implemented to mitigate the spread.

Overview

Schools will remain open and exercise greater precaution as it relates to helping to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. The following is a list of guidelines that will be implemented to address the moderate risk of infection.

Transportation

- Encouraging parents to bring students to school **G**
- Greater distancing on the bus when on modified daily school schedule **E**
- Opening windows on the bus--while in transport and airing buses when not in use **E**
- Encouraging students to separate as much as possible **E**
- Face masks/coverings are required while riding the bus **E**
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of seats and frequently touched surfaces on the buses **E**
- Seating charts utilized for bus riders--buses will load from back to front--siblings riding the same bus will sit together **E**



Instructional Day

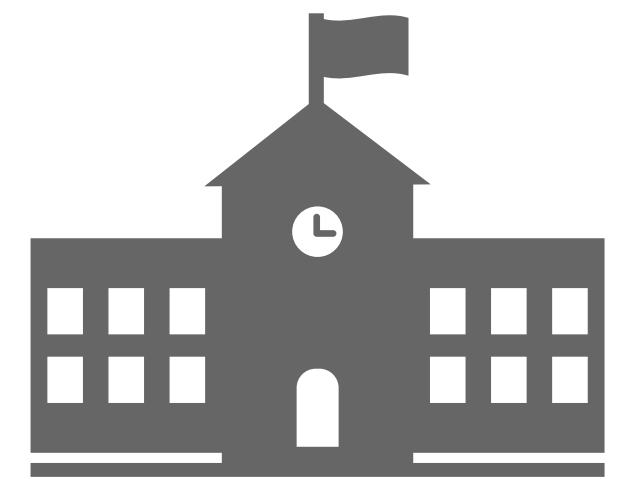
- A modified daily school schedule may be implemented in which only half of the student population would attend on a given day, with the other half staying at home and engaging eLearning. Students will be divided alphabetically to determine the number of students who attend school on a given day. **E**

Cautious together will be implemented when the community spread of COVID-19 is at a higher risk as outlined by the ADPH and the CDC. Enhanced measures will be implemented to mitigate the spread.

Instructional Day

Modified Instructional Schedule:





- **Monday & Tuesday** - Half of the student body would report to school building
 - **Wednesday** - All students would stay home for eLearning on devices
 - **Thursday & Friday** - Other half of the student body would report to school building
- Technology resources will be provided for students who do not have access **E**
 - Distance classroom desks as much as possible with desks facing the same direction--utilize seating chart **E**
 - Face masks/coverings are required for students and staff **E**
 - Social distancing is recommended during transitions on a staggered schedule **E**
 - Frequent hand washing is required **E**
 - A protocol for student drop-off/pick-up will be implemented: utilizing designated doors for entering and exiting the building **E**
 - Provide additional time for transitions **E**
 - Designate specific halls (as one way) to keep students separated (to the extent applicable) **E**
 - Students who have a specific learning plan (IEP, GEP, I-ELP or a 504 plan) will receive instructional accommodations in either learning environment **E**
 - Visitors, including parents, will only be allowed to enter the front office of the school for business matters **E**
 - Visitors will not be allowed to eat with students, make copies for teachers, assist with class projects, ect. **E**
 - Encouraging students to bring personal water bottles **G**



Cautious together




Cautious together will be implemented when the community spread of COVID-19 is at a higher risk as outlined by the ADPH and the CDC. Enhanced measures will be implemented to mitigate the spread.

Child Nutrition





- School meals will be served with as much social distancing as possible--a variety of spaces within the school building will be utilized at meal time 
- Hand-washing before and after eating is encouraged 
- Providing hand sanitizer for students and staff 
- Conducting cleaning of cafeterias and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day 



School Cleaning

- Increased cleaning and sanitization is required 
- Frequent sanitization of surfaces is required 
- Daily sanitization of school playgrounds 

Athletics and Extracurricular

- Athletic and extracurricular activities that cannot be continued with strict health guidelines may be rescheduled and/or postponed 
- Schools will remain open and exercise greater precaution as it relates to helping to mitigate the spread of coronavirus 
- After school care would serve students on the day that they attend school. Rates would be adjusted to accommodate the change 
- Follow Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) guidelines 

eLearning for all students would be implemented when schools are closed temporarily based on guidance from the ADPH and or an order is issued by the Governor.

- Schools will be closed temporarily based on guidance from the ADPH and/or an order from the Governor
- Instruction will pivot to a digital learning platform for **all** students
- School buildings will reopen when the state order is lifted
- School buildings will be cleaned and sanitized during the school closure period
- Grab and go meals will be provided for free and reduced students
- School closing could impact a single school or school zone based on community spread

Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

Will school campuses reopen for in-person instruction?

Schools will reopen for students on August 13, 2020. There are two instructional options: traditional, on-campus learning and remote, at-home learning for students who choose not to return to campus.

Will my child have to wear a mask or face covering on campus?

Shelby County Schools will require students to wear a mask/face covering. Certain requirements exist for students participating in extracurricular activities such as band and football. Masks/face coverings that violate the policies outlined in the Dress Code Policy of the SCS Student Code of Conduct will be prohibited.

Will the school take my child's temperature daily?

No. The school district is asking parents to monitor the health of their student(s) and watch for signs of COVID-19. If a student has any of the symptoms, the student should stay home from school and participate via short term eLearning.

Facilities/Operations/Transportation Related Questions

What are some examples of things that might be different on campus?

The school district will take measures to mitigate the spread to the greatest extent possible. Due to the highly fluid situation we are facing, we must be flexible. As a result, some day to day policies and procedures could be altered, such as the ones below. Visitors, including parents, will only be allowed to enter the front office of the school for business matters only. Visitors will not be allowed to eat lunch with students, make copies for teachers, assist with class projects, etc. Classrooms will be configured for social distancing to the greatest extent possible. There will be no large group gatherings during school hours. Please note: Even with mitigating strategies in place such as distancing, there will be times when students are near each other. Some tasks and movements will require proximities closer than six feet, such as passing in the hallway during class change, riding a bus, or a teacher moving around for supervision.

What extra cleaning will be done?

Cleaning and disinfecting will occur throughout the school day, especially on frequently touched surfaces such as tables, door knobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, etc. Custodial staff will use EPA approved, hospital grade chemicals to clean and disinfect and will be using newly purchased equipment to spray/sanitize large areas. Additional supplies have been purchased to accommodate increased/frequent hand-washing for students and staff.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will car rider and bus rider waiting areas be changed?

Each school will devise ways to social distance students to the extent possible during arrival and dismissal. Your child's school will have information on specific procedures.

What about bus transportation?

Parents are encouraged to transport students, if possible. However, bus transportation is also available. Various preventative measures will be implemented including (but not limited to) cleaning and disinfecting buses twice daily, airing out buses when not in use, and encouraging social distancing to the extent possible. Students are required to wear masks on the bus, since social distancing will be difficult to accomplish.

Will my child eat lunch in the cafeteria?

All classes will not eat in the cafeteria every day. Some will eat in classrooms, some in hallways and some in other areas on campus. This will vary from school to school in order to best socially distance students and to free up cafeteria space in order for large classes such as PE to subdivide and socially distance.

Will a school close if a student is diagnosed with COVID-19?

Not necessarily. Once a case is confirmed, parents will be informed of possible exposure, but the public health department will be responsible for contact tracing. The school's response will vary depending on several factors, including the extent of exposure and spread, but enhanced cleaning and sanitizing will take place.

Instruction Related Questions

Who will be the virtual teachers?

We will not be able to determine this until we know the number of students selecting the remote option.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will remote instruction be supported by a teacher?

Elementary

A teacher from Shelby County Schools will be assigned a classroom of students. The students will participate in whole group and small group activities at least three days a week. There will also be assignments that will be completed online and graded. Meetings with teachers will take place during normal school hours. If a student receives specialized instruction (IEP, I-ELP, GEP or a 504 plan), he/she will still receive the additional support. If the student receives specialized services such as OT, PT, speech, etc., the delivery of these services will be determined by the IEP team.

Middle and High

Students involved in remote learning are expected to work independently through the virtual content. A teacher from Shelby County Schools will check in with students during the week but there will not be direct instruction in addition to the virtual content. The teacher will assign virtual content, release assignments and monitor the student's progress through the course. If a student receives specialized instruction (IEP, I-ELP or a 504 plan), he/she will still receive the additional support. If the student receives specialized services such as OT, PT, speech, etc., the delivery of these services will be determined by the IEP team.

If my child starts in the remote option and isn't doing well and would like to return to school, is that allowed?

Yes. At the end of each 9-week period students can transition in or out from remote learning.

Can my child take some courses online and some at school?

No. Students may return to campus before or after school to attend practices/scheduled meetings for extracurricular activities.

How will specials such as PE, art and music be handled at the elementary schools?

Larger classes, such as PE could be subdivided. Additional areas of the buildings and outside areas would be utilized in order to spread out and socially distance. Students selecting the traditional option will still attend classes such as art and music. Students with a GEP will attend GRC classes as usual. Students will transition to elective classrooms but will take their own school supplies. Any items shared will be wiped down between use by students.

Will the students change classes or will the teacher rotate to the classrooms?

Students will change classes and additional time will be given for transition between classes. Students will be required to wear a mask or face covering during class changes and will be asked to walk in designated areas of the hallway to encourage social distancing.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will students still have lockers or will they have to carry a book bag?

Our plan is to assign lockers as usual. If this changes, you will be notified by your child's school.

Other Health and Safety Related Questions

What if a child or teacher tests positive for COVID-19?

A student or teacher who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 will be expected to remain at home. A student who has to be out of school due to illness will temporarily transition to eLearning supported by their regular teacher until he/she is allowed to return to a traditional on-campus learning environment. Any COVID-19 related illnesses will not be counted towards parent note restrictions outlined in the Shelby County Code of Conduct attendance policy.

What if a student is showing symptoms while at school?

School nurses are prepared to adapt health room environments in order to isolate students who might be showing symptoms until he/she can be picked up by a parent/guardian. The student will be required to wear a mask until they are checked out. Well child visits to the health room will be limited.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Can my child choose remote learning and still participate in high school band or football?

Yes. Students choosing the remote learning option may still participate in extracurricular activities, including band and football. However, this group of students may attend practice before or after school and should remain off campus during the school day. Traditional students that take band or choir class will practice social distancing to the greatest extent possible. Our district supervisor is working with these teachers on strategies to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Will the After School Care Program be open? What about enrichment activities?

After School Care will be open and is currently accepting online registrations. Due to space and staffing concerns, enrollment will be limited and larger sites will be capped once enrollment capacity has been reached. A waiting list will be established to allow more children to enroll in ASCP as staff and space permit. Enrichment activities will not begin at the start of the school year. More details will be announced later regarding enrichment-related activities.