



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS S.A.F.E. RE-ENTRY PLAN

Parents & Students – UPDATED 8/14/2020

The District's comprehensive [S.A.F.E. Re-Entry Plan](#) was announced on July 6. Please understand that portions of the plan are subject to change based on direction from the Shelby County Health Department and State officials, as well as CDC guidance. Additional updates will continue to be shared as we work toward the start of the school year.

The District announced on July 27 that the 2020-21 school year will begin fully virtual and continue until further notice.

Procedures may vary to an extent at individual schools, so families should also expect to hear directly from their principals and teachers leading up to the start of the school year.

Don't forget to update all contact information in PowerSchool this summer to receive important updates from the District and schools. Also be sure to stay tuned to SCS and school websites and social media pages for news and announcements about the reopening of schools.

FAQ CATEGORIES:

- VIRTUAL LEARNING – #1 - #31
- IN-SCHOOL LEARNING – #32 - #44
- HEALTH & SAFETY – #45 - #51
- SPECIAL EDUCATION & CLUE – [VIEW FAQs HERE](#)
- DIGITAL DEVICES & INTERNET ACCESS – [VIEW FAQs HERE](#)
- MENTAL HEALTH & SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT – [VIEW FAQs HERE](#)

**Please note, a few questions are repeated in the virtual and in-school learning sections.*

VIRTUAL LEARNING

1. When is the first day of school for the 2020-21 school year?

The School Board approved an [updated 2020-21 school year calendar](#) on July 13. The new year will begin fully virtual on August 31. The calendar update was based on the Governor's extended state of emergency declaration through August 29 due to rising cases of COVID-19.

2. How long will the District operate fully virtual? What factors will be considered to reopen schools?

Students will learn at home virtually until further notice, but we remain determined to return stronger to in-person learning this school year. We will continue to rely on local science and guidance from the SCHD in our decision-making to keep educators and students safe.

3. Does my learning option commitment still apply when in-person learning resumes?

Yes. We will honor our commitment to provide families with learning options when in-person learning resumes. Parent selections made during the commitment window (July 6-24) and new student registration will apply when schools reopen.

4. Is the decision to start the year virtually due to a lack of planning for reopening schools?

No. It was always the District's intent to reopen schools on day 1 with enhanced safety protocols and supports, as outlined in the S.A.F.E. Re-Entry Plan. It has always been communicated that our plan could be adjusted based on the latest health data available. [This timeline of action and support](#) documents key planning steps, decisions and awareness efforts made since March with the goal of reopening schools in mind, including: creation of Re-Entry Task Force, community surveys, listening sessions, re-entry protocols (cleaning, signage, etc.), summer PD for teachers, training for parents, etc.

5. How will students make up for lost instruction due to school closures in the spring?

We will be offering optional Saturday learning academies throughout the year, as well as learning academies during Fall Break and Spring Break, to provide additional enrichment for our students.

6. What are the start/end times for students during the virtual day?

In order to provide consistency in scheduling and support across the District while we are operating fully virtual, the universal bell time will be 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

7. Will universal bell times apply to iZone schools?

No. Virtual learning bell times will not apply to i-Zone schools, which are regularly scheduled for 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

8. What are the daily office hours for parents/community to reach someone for assistance during all-virtual learning?

Parents and the community will be able to contact the school by phone and email 7:45 a.m. – 4 p.m. each day.

9. Will nutrition services still distribute meals to schools every day?

Nutrition Services will distribute five-day student meal packs to schools every Thursday. Parents can pick up meals from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. and 1 – 5 p.m. Parents who cannot pick up on Thursdays may get their meals on Fridays, 7 – 9 a.m.

10. Will all students take a lunch break at the same time?

Each school will determine student lunch schedules based on their master schedule.

11. How will attendance be taken during virtual learning?

Attendance policies and expectations will remain the same for the 2020-21 school year. However, for virtual classes, the method for taking attendance will be done by teachers via Microsoft Teams, and parents of students who participate in online learning will need to email the homeroom teacher the reason for any absences within two (2) days. Also, any reason for checking in late to or leaving early from online learning will

need to be sent by the parent via email to the homeroom teacher. *Please note, advanced courses have specific attendance criteria, as outlined in Policy 4004.

12. What will a typical day for a child who is attending virtually look like?

Students learning at home will participate in virtual classes throughout the regularly scheduled school day. Independent work and physical activity will be built into the daily schedule. This [Digital Learning Guide](#) contains learning expectations for students, families and staff, sample virtual learning schedules, supports and interventions, digital resources, training information and more.

13. Will children be expected to sit for seven (7) consecutive hours on a computer to learn? How will their breaks be structured, particularly for younger students?

The typical school day will align with the required allotment of time for each content area, elective, and intervention period. Students will have the opportunity to participate in independent learning, along with guided instruction from the classroom teacher through the use of Microsoft TEAMS. This [Digital Learning Guide](#) contains learning expectations for students, families and staff, sample virtual learning schedules, supports and interventions, digital resources, training information and more.

14. When will students receive their digital devices for virtual learning?

Device distribution will begin August 3 with a select set of schools and continue each week with scheduled dates and times for device pickup for every school. You can view frequently asked questions about the device plan [here](#) and find more information, including pickup schedules, Internet access and support resources, at scsk12.org/accessforall.

15. How will the District provide access to meals while students are learning virtually at home?

Shelby County Schools is committed to ensuring children are served healthy meals, even during this public health crisis. Meal preparation will still happen at every school site with enhanced procedures for health and safety. Multi-day meal packs will be available for pick-up to reduce the number of times families have to come to campus. Meals will be served from a modified menu of cold items and items that can be easily reheated or stored at home. Families will receive more details about meal pick-up plans from their child's school.

16. Does the District have a plan to support exceptional children or students with disabilities or special needs (IEPs, 504, CLUE)?

Virtual educational options will be developed by each student's respective IEP team. Students served in the CLUE environment will use the District-approved curriculum with enhanced and enriched, project-based supplemental curriculum guides and materials. Virtual learning will happen in the CLUE901 Google classrooms. Students will meet online with teachers and complete independent learning within the online space. All students with IEPs will be provided with services and accommodations that are agreed upon by the IEP team. Resources are available for parents, teachers and students at www.edugoodies.com. View a comprehensive set of frequently asked questions about special education services [here](#).

17. Does the District have a plan to support English language learners?

English learners will continue to receive all necessary instructional support virtually.

18. Will teachers be teaching virtually at home or at school buildings?

All teachers will have an option to teach remotely. If they agree to the remote virtual instruction criteria, principals may grant permission to teach from a remote setting. While school administration, substitute teachers and central office staff will be working in the schools/workspaces, teachers will be able to select the virtual option after meeting specific criteria in the District's Virtual Telework Agreement. If teachers fail to adhere to the agreement, they may be asked to teach from the school site.

19. Will there be specific expectations and criteria for teachers and students?

Yes. View the Student-Parent Digital Learning Guide [here](#). View the Digital Learning Guide for teachers [here](#).

20. Will grading be the same for virtual learning?

Regardless of the type of learning environment provided to our students, teachers will continue to follow all grading protocols established in 2019-20. However, teachers will also ensure students receive credit for time spent using intervention software, such as iReady, Edgenuity or similar programs. Whenever a student completes at least 45 minutes on any day for ELA or Math, a 100 should be included as a class participation grade for the student in the relevant subject area for that day.

21. Will virtual students receive a teacher from their assigned school, or will they receive any District teacher?

Students will receive in-person or virtual instruction from a teacher at their zoned/registered school.

22. How will virtual students receive classroom materials/books/projects etc.?

Classroom materials will need to be scanned and uploaded into the virtual classroom for the student to access. In some cases, parents may need to make arrangements to pick up special texts or materials from the school for the student.

23. What is the plan for hands-on courses, such as CTE, labs and project-based learning?

Elective courses that require hands-on learning will receive the same attention as traditional courses. Educators will be asked to deliver instruction to their students virtually, assign tasks, provide feedback, and score individual projects and assignments.

24. Will students enrolled in the virtual option still have access to arts instruction (visual, performing, etc.)?

Yes. The arts are an important part of the total learning experience, and creative and performing arts programs will still be offered virtually in the fall. Students will receive live instruction from teachers at their school and participate in teacher-led projects and activities. Families will receive more information from their schools about the availability of supplies, instruments, etc. that may be needed for virtual learning at home.

25. What does virtual learning look like for CLUE students and CLUE teachers in the Fall?

Students served in the CLUE environment will use the District-approved curriculum with enhanced and enriched, project-based supplemental curriculum guides and materials. If students are learning virtually, classes will be organized in the CLUE901 Google classrooms. Students will meet online with teachers and complete independent learning within the online space. All students with IEPs will be provided with services and accommodations that are agreed upon by the IEP team. Resources are available to parents, teachers and students at www.edugoodies.com.

26. Will there be special accommodations for Pre-K?

Pre-K students will engage in virtual learning that aligns with the scope of sequence for the Early Childhood Department. Supporting videos for parents will accompany instructional materials to ensure the academic, fine motor and social-emotional needs are being met. For students with disabilities, Individualized Education Programs (IEP) will be implemented, and accommodations will be made as appropriate.

27. Will after-school/extracurricular activities be offered?

Involvement in after-school and extracurricular activities is an important part of a student's school experience. We are exploring potential virtual options for some extracurricular activities, staff permitting. Guidelines and availability of certain activities may vary by school and program type, so parents should expect to hear from their principals about the available after-school/extracurricular offerings at their school.

28. Will athletics be offered?

We share the commitment of Governor Bill Lee and Education Commissioner Penny Schwinn to prioritize health and safety in our communities. Given the alarming daily increases in COVID-19 cases in Memphis and Shelby County, we will continue athletic conditioning without changes until further notice. We will provide updates as additional information becomes available. Each school will determine the sports that participate in conditioning, and coaches will communicate directly with student athletes and families. All conditioning activities will prioritize the health and safety of our student athletes and coaches. Coaches and athletic staff have participated in required training based on CDC recommendations and guidelines from state and national health officials. Only outdoor workouts are allowed at this time, with a maximum of 50 total people in a single conditioning session. Student athletes will also stay in small groups - or "pods" - of 10 people max at all times. Additional protocols include daily health screenings, social distancing guidelines and required masks for player/coach interactions, among others.

29. What is the end time for athletic conditioning after school, or will it be at the discretion of the principal?

Coaches will establish conditioning times and communicate directly with student athletes and families.

30. Will students be required to wear uniforms?

After receiving feedback from our families, we have added guidance to the student dress code for the virtual learning environment. Students will not be required to wear uniforms during virtual learning. The following update explains the adjustment to the rules and regulations of the [District's dress code policy](#).

"Students are expected to look presentable regardless of the location in which learning occurs. To ensure continuity of expectations for appropriate dress while participating in the virtual learning environment, dress code requirements outlined [see policy #6021] for elementary, middle, and high shall apply. However, when a video of a student's full body will not be captured, reasonable flexibility is provided for bottoms (e.g. pants, shorts, skirts) and footwear."

31. Will the District share information about childcare resources for employees and parents?

As we prepare for the start of school, we know childcare will be an essential resource for families with essential workers. Click [here](#) to view a list of community childcare sites available in the Shelby County area for families.

IN-SCHOOL LEARNING

32. When in-school learning resumes, will universal bell times for all-virtual learning remain the same?

Schools will return to their normal bell times when in-school learning resumes.

33. When in-school learning resumes, what is the anticipated class size for in-school and virtual?

Class sizes will be determined based on data results from our learning option commitments.

34. When in-school learning resumes, will grading be the same for in-school and virtual learning?

Regardless of the type of learning environment provided to our students, teachers will continue to follow all grading protocols established in 2019-20. However, teachers will also ensure students receive credit for time spent using intervention software, such as iReady, Edgenuity or similar programs. Whenever a student completes at least 45 minutes on any day for ELA or Math, a 100 should be included as a class participation grade for the student in the relevant subject area for that day.

35. What is student cohorting?

Cohorting is the grouping of a certain number of students to stay together for the school day as a way to avoid the possible widespread of the virus that causes COVID-19. When reasonable and appropriate, schools will make every effort to limit the movement of students on elementary and middle school campuses. This means a group of students, a cohort, will be assigned to a classroom for the majority of the school day instead of the student traveling from classroom to classroom for special activities or other classes, and the teachers rotate from one classroom to another. Cohorting practices may vary from school to school.

36. How many students will be included in a cohort?

Cohorts will be determined based on data results from our learning option commitments.

37. Will middle and high schools change classes?

The District is working to reduce class transitions as much as possible to support social distancing guidelines in schools.

38. If there is an outbreak and schools have to close, what is the plan for continued instruction?

In the event of an outbreak, students will continue to receive instruction from their assigned teacher of record virtually through the use of Microsoft TEAMS. Digital devices will be provided to students who do not have access to a device at home.

39. Will schools offer before- and after-care programs?

The District recognizes that before- and after-school care is important for working parents. So long as schools are open, regular before- and after-care programs will be offered.

40. How will pick-up and drop-off procedures be handled at schools?

Parents should expect to hear directly from their principals about pick-up and drop-off procedures, as it will vary by campus. Parents should not expect to walk their students to class when school opens in order to allow

for temperature checks and maintain social distancing in buildings. Staggered drop-off and dismissal schedules may also be implemented to reduce the volume of people on campus at one time.

41. Will students eat breakfast and lunch together in the cafeteria?

Convening a large number of students in cafeterias for the purposes of breakfast and lunch increases the risk of virus spread. Where possible, schools will continue to utilize the cafeteria for the consumption of student meals with modifications to ensure the health and safety of students. School lunch and breakfast procedures will vary by campus, but parents should expect some combination of grab and go meals, shorter lunch periods or lunches consumed in the student's classroom or outdoors.

42. Will after-school/extracurricular activities be offered?

Involvement in after-school and extracurricular activities is an important part of a student's school experience. We are exploring potential virtual options for some extracurricular activities, staff permitting. Guidelines and availability of certain activities may vary by school and program type, so parents should expect to hear from their principals about the available after-school/extracurricular offerings at their school.

43. Will athletics be offered?

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44. Will students be required to wear uniforms in the fall?

Beyond the classroom, we've provided meals, instructional resources and launched social emotional hotlines to help our families during this public health crisis. We understand the increased economic burdens and will be mindful as we set expectations for the virtual dress code. We want to be flexible and accommodating enough for home learning, and we look forward to providing updates soon.

HEALTH & SAFETY

45. Will students be required to wear a mask in the fall?

Yes. Until there is a vaccine for COVID-19, face masks will be a part of our daily lives. Face masks will be required for students, staff and visitors in all buildings and on buses when school begins. Masks should be added to every family's back-to-school supply list, as it will be the responsibility of the parent to ensure students arrive at school each day with the necessary face mask. Mask requirements may change over time due to the latest guidance from health officials. *Please check with the Department of Exceptional Children and Health Services for guidance about students with respiratory problems and those who are incapacitated/unable to remove the mask without assistance or have sensory sensitivities.

46. What types of masks are acceptable for students?

Since facial coverings/masks are to serve as a barrier to prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and potentially onto other people, masks must be cloth or disposable. Cloth masks can be more cost effective because they can be cleaned regularly. Masks should not contain any inappropriate images or messages.

47. Will students be denied entry in school or on the bus they are not wearing a mask?

Students are required to wear a mask; however, students without a mask will be provided one.

48. How will social distancing be implemented in schools?

Schools will be utilizing all available classroom and learning spaces and making necessary modifications to help ensure social distancing to every extent possible. While social distancing may be challenging at times in smaller buildings or where there are very large student populations, additional safeguards will also be in place for all schools, such as daily health screenings, face masks for all students and staff and hand sanitizer access for all classes. Social distancing signage and floor decals will be displayed prominently throughout all schools and buildings. We will also be limiting interactions of classes and discouraging all group gatherings, as well as limiting visitor volume.

49. What health and safety measures are being implemented on buses?

Students who ride a school bus will be required to wear a mask and will undergo temperature checks at the school each day. Buses will also be cleaned and disinfected between routes and at the end of each day. Based on the District's protocols for student bus transportation, parents must decide if they want their child to continue to ride the bus or find another option of transportation.

50. Will the District be providing or requiring COVID-19 tests for students and staff?

No. We will not administer or require COVID-19 tests of students or employees. However, we will check temperatures and ensure that people inside our schools and office buildings are symptom-free. We will also strongly encourage all students and staff who are not feeling well to stay at home.

51. How will parents be informed if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs at a school?

We will continue to work closely with the Shelby County Health Department to ensure we follow the proper guidance for responding to any potential cases of COVID-19 in our schools. We will be implementing safeguards, such as daily temperature checks, and creating isolation areas in all buildings for anyone displaying symptoms to help prevent the spread of illness. We will also strongly encourage all students and staff who are not feeling well to stay at home. In the event that a positive case is identified, families will be informed in a timely manner, including any possible Health Department guidance regarding precautionary testing that may be necessary. Parents should also be prepared for the possibility of an unexpected short-term school closures based on guidance from health officials.

MENTAL HEALTH & SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

View a comprehensive set of frequently asked questions about special education and CLUE services [here](#).

SPECIAL EDUCATION & CLUE

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DIGITAL DEVICES & INTERNET ACCESS

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