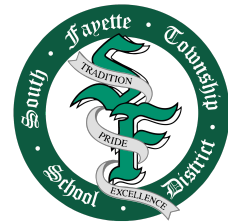


# South Fayette Township School District



## Return to School FAQs

Depending upon the conditions of community spread of the COVID-19 virus, the South Fayette Township School District may open with a five-day in-person instruction option (green phase) or with a hybrid blended option (yellow phase) in which students will be divided into two groups where they will attend in-person two or three days out of a five-day schedule. Groups will be assigned on a weekly rotating basis. On non-attendance days, students will participate in remote learning. Finally, the District may begin fully online if district, state or local authorities close all schools (red phase). There will be a full-time cyber option for all in-person scenarios through the District's South Fayette Cyber Academy.

## COVID-19 Responses

**What do I/we do if my child or other members of my household begin to show symptoms of COVID-19?**

*If your child begins to show symptoms of COVID-19, do NOT send your child to school but please contact your healthcare provider or the Allegheny County Health Department at 412-687-ACHD (2243). For information on symptoms, please consult the CDC Guidelines at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>*

**What are symptoms of COVID-19?**

*Per the CDC: People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:*

- *Fever or chills*
- *Cough*
- *Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing*
- *Fatigue*
- *Muscle or body aches*
- *Headache*
- *New loss of taste or smell*
- *Sore throat*
- *Congestion or runny nose*
- *Nausea or vomiting*
- *Diarrhea*

*This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list.*

**How will health screenings be handled?**

The District will require students, faculty, and staff to complete a [self-assessment](#) and take their own temperature before reporting to school buildings each day. It is critical that the District and community work in collaboration to help mitigate risks of COVID-19 spread. Faculty, staff, and students who are ill must stay home from school and must be sent home if they become ill at school, particularly if they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms as determined by building nurses.

**What happens when a student or staff member tests positive?**

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the District will notify and follow the guidance from the health experts at the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD), which will require that individual to self-isolate at home for at least 10 days. Any student or staff member who tests positive will not be able to return to school until after the 10-day isolation, until the individual is symptom-free, and until the individual receives clearance from a healthcare provider. The ACHD may recommend additional actions for students and staff who test positive.

**What happens when a student or staff member is exposed to a confirmed positive case of COVID-19?**

If a student or staff member is exposed to someone with a confirmed positive case of COVID-19, either in or out of the school environment, the District will notify and follow guidance from the Allegheny County Health Department, which requires that student or individual to quarantine for 14 days. A student or staff member may not return to school until after the 14-day quarantine, until the individual is symptom-free, and until the individual receives clearance from a healthcare provider. This applies even if the student does not exhibit symptoms.

**Will a school or the district be closed if a student or staff member tests positive?**

The District will follow guidance from the Allegheny County Health Department and follow protocols established by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit in keeping all students and staff as safe as possible during these circumstances, which may include closing individual classrooms, buildings, or the school district for a period of time. To the extent possible, the Continuity of Education Plan will be implemented depending upon each situation. Situations will vary depending on the building and course assignments or schedules.

**Are there other instances related to COVID-19 that would prompt school or district closure?**

The District may decide to close schools for emergency reasons, such as but not limited to:

- Community spread of the illness in classrooms, individual school buildings, and across the District
- Lack of bus drivers to cover necessary runs to bus students to and from school for the day
- The number of teachers absent leading to the inability to cover classrooms in a manner that ensures the safety and welfare of students
- Lack of custodial staff to be able to clean buildings nightly
- Lack of coverage in health offices due to nurse(s) absence

**How will students receive an education if isolated or quarantined at home?**

*In the case of isolation or quarantine, students would communicate and receive instruction, activities, and feedback from their teacher or teachers through our learning management system. There will be allowances with the completion of work at the discretion of the teacher in cooperation with the student. For long-term absences, we will work with the family for appropriate solutions, which could involve a full online option. We will work with each situation individually.*

**How will families be notified when positive cases are identified?**

*If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in any of the District's buildings, parents will be notified through the District's email and automated call systems. An alert will also be posted on the District's website. With this communication will be information detailing the District's response, which would be made in consultation with the Allegheny County Health Department.*

**How many positive cases will constitute closing a school?**

*There is not a magic number for school closures. Decisions to close a school will be made in conjunction with the Allegheny County Health Department or by the Allegheny County Health Department.*

**Does the district plan to conduct contact tracing if a student or faculty/staff member exhibits symptoms at school and is sent home?**

*Contact tracing will be completed by the Allegheny County Health Department. However, the District will cooperate with and supply any requested information to the ACHD to complete the process. The District has intentionally structured groupings and limited movement where possible, which will assist in contact tracing and containment efforts by the ACHD.*

**What will the protocol be if a teacher needs to quarantine?**

*The District is contacting our substitute teachers this summer and further recruiting and securing additional substitutes in the case that a teacher is quarantined. In the case that a teacher falls ill during the day, the District will use a combination of internal coverage as needed, which could also include administrative staff and other adult resources so that students remain in their socially-distanced classroom structures. Substitutes will be trained in health and safety protocols.*

**If a student attends brick and mortar and the student must quarantine, can they attend the cyber academy?**

*If a student enrolled in the brick and mortar environment is exposed or tests positive for COVID-19 and must quarantine, they will continue to receive their educational program from their brick and mortar instructor through the learning management system. Considerations for enrolling a student in the cyber academy for extended absences in this scenario would be determined on a case by case basis.*

**Will the District be requiring quarantine after travel?**

*The District is not mandating quarantine after travel but recommends that families follow the [Allegheny County Health Department's recommendations](#). Families should keep in mind that failure to follow these guidelines may put others at risk.*

## Attendance

### How will reporting of student health-related absences be handled?

*In the case of COVID-19 symptoms, home isolation, or quarantine, if able, students would receive instruction, activities, and feedback by their teacher or teachers through the District's learning management system and not be counted as an unexcused absence. If a child is exhibiting symptoms and/or under home isolation or quarantine (due to their own health or exposure to others), parents/guardians are required to submit an excuse upon the student's return if a doctor's excuse cannot be supplied. Students must still attend instruction through the District's learning management system, coupled with the parent or doctor excuse, for these absences to not be counted against a child's total missed days and to be denoted as "excused". Other absences unrelated to COVID-19 will be subject to the District's typical attendance policy. Health-related absences will be determined by a student's ability to participate in education through the learning management system, while at home and determined on a case by case basis.*

### Does the [Governor's Targeted Mitigation Order](#) apply to schools?

*The Order does not apply to classroom settings but does apply to school activities outside of the classroom that are not related to educational instruction. School activities and gatherings not related to educational instruction that are held indoors are limited to no more than 25 people. This includes meetings, assemblies, etc. However, to maintain proper, safe social distancing, it is a challenge to have 25 or more people in one classroom. Activities and gatherings held outdoors are limited to no more than 250 people (Allegheny County Health Department limits outside gatherings to 50).*

## Education Options

### In-Person Brick and Mortar & South Fayette Cyber Academy

#### How long do I have to commit to cyber academy or brick and mortar setting?

*The District asks that students commit to in-person or cyber learning for at least one nine-week period. If a student has health concerns after beginning in the brick and mortar environment, the District requests that parents notify the respective principal. Such requests will be addressed on an individual basis. Committing to a nine-week period will allow us to have appropriate class sizes for cyber and brick and mortar classrooms and will assist the District in appropriating the needed human and material resources.*

#### How will Parkway students be accommodated in the hybrid scenario?

*The District is prepared to support Parkway students as needed based on Parkway's back to school plan. This includes transportation. For more information about Parkway, go to the following link: <https://www.parkwaywest.org/>*

#### Will advanced courses (Advanced Placement, college-in-high school, honors) be offered through the SFSD Cyber Academy?

*Yes, advanced courses will be offered through the cyber academy. Please see the [South Fayette Return to School Plan](#) for information about available courses.*

**Will siblings in different buildings be scheduled on the same day for hybrid classes?**

*Yes, siblings across the district would be scheduled to attend school on the same day for the hybrid option. Families with students in the same household with different last names will also be accommodated.*

**In the event of a school closing after a school session has begun, what happens to the students who have chosen the brick & mortar option? Do they join the SFSD Cyber Academy already in progress or do they get assignments online from their teachers?**

*In the event that all schools must shift to remote online learning after the school year begins, the students who have selected brick and mortar will shift into remote online learning with their teachers. This will look different than the remote online learning provided last spring. Please see the next question for more information about remote online learning. Students who are enrolled in the SFSD Cyber Academy will remain enrolled.*

**How will remote online learning be different than spring 2020?**

*In all remote learning scenarios including the hybrid option, online remote learning, and the cyber academy, students will be required to follow synchronous schedules (same schedule as brick and mortar classes) to complete their work throughout the school day. This includes logging in to the learning management system at specific times to receive information, assignments, and live instruction when appropriate. Teachers will determine what the most appropriate mechanism for content delivery will be on a given day, but the expectation is that there will be a blend of live meetings, instructional videos, and other teacher-created assignments and resources available through the learning management system. Please note that certain specific courses may be run entirely asynchronously in the cyber academy due to enrollment and human resource constraints.*

**What is the online/cyber platform?**

*In June, the South Fayette Board of Directors approved the purchase of the learning management system Canvas. The District is phasing in this tool for our teachers and students and will be providing training at the beginning of the school year. In the transition period, Google Classroom may continue to be used in certain scenarios while Canvas becomes more readily available.*

**Will high school elective classes be offered in the SFSD Cyber Academy?**

*A limited number of electives will be offered in the high school cyber academy.*

**How will students be graded this school year?**

*In all scenarios, student assignments will be graded based on the standards established by the teacher using the standard South Fayette School District grading system. In many cases, this will mirror the traditional brick and mortar environment. Certain assignments may need to be altered by design to grade with fidelity in order to assess the same learning outcomes. Grading will NOT be pass/fail as it was during online learning last spring.*

**Can students come into the building for one course at the high school, then complete their day with the Cyber Academy?**

*Students must commit to either the in-person or cyber option and cannot do a combination of both.*

**If students choose to opt for online learning, how will science labs be handled?**

*Science labs in the online environment will be utilized at the discretion of the teacher. In many cases, there are virtual labs and simulations that can be employed.*

**What is the maximum number of students that will occupy a classroom?**

*With full five-day instruction, classes may be at their normal capacity with desks spread to the maximum extent possible, which could range from 2 - 6 feet. In the hybrid model, classes will be capped at the maximum limit to allow for 6 feet of distance between students in the classroom. Because not all rooms are the same size, this will vary from 12-17 students, with some classes having more and some less depending on the classroom.*

## **Student Supports**

**Will there be any type of assessment done with the students to determine whether or not they are prepared for the grade they will be entering?**

*Our teachers will be assessing learning gaps once the students return. They will use instruments or assessments that are based on the learning goals and appropriate standards for the respective grade level or course. Teachers will use this data to inform group and individual instruction.*

**How will the enrichment program be implemented in the five-day, hybrid, and cyber academy models?**

*Enrichment will be provided and will be determined by the enrollment of the three scenarios. More information will be forthcoming.*

**How will the health and academic needs of IEP/504 students be addressed in the brick and mortar setting or online learning environment?**

*Plans specific to each student's individual needs will be addressed through the IEP or 504 processes prior to the beginning of the school year. Arrangements will be made with families to provide the best environment for each student.*

**How will the district support students with mental health concerns related to COVID-19?**

*The District anticipates that there will be an increase in student mental health needs. The District is adopting the use of a social/emotional universal screener to identify all students who may be experiencing or have experienced social/emotional distress and deploy student support services as needed. The District has also added additional student support personnel to support the increase in needs. Additionally, the District will continue to utilize the safety nets already in place such as the student assistance program and school-based mental health providers.*

## **Transportation**

**How does the District plan to alleviate increases with traffic with more students possibly being driven to school?**

*In the hybrid setting, only half of our students will be on campus at one time, which will alleviate traffic concerns. In the case of the five-day in-person schedule, campus enrollment will be reduced by the number of students who opt for the cyber academy. The District will also work with the South Fayette Township Police Department for traffic control. Drop off/pick up routes may also be modified.*

**Who determines when bus windows will be opened, and what criteria are used to make that determination?**

*Although we understand allergies may be a concern to some parents, it is important to have windows open throughout the bus, as the weather allows, to circulate as much fresh air as possible. If your child wishes that their window be closed, have your child speak with the driver, this will be determined on a case by case basis by the bus driver.*

**Will anyone, other than the bus driver, be monitoring the children's PPE participation and social distancing while the bus is en route?**

*While some buses have aides on the bus who would be able to assist in monitoring distancing and the use of face coverings, many do not. We ask that families reinforce with students the importance of distancing and wearing face coverings on the bus.*

## **Physical Distancing**

**How much distance will be between students?**

*In the hybrid model, at most, half of the students are in the building at one time, student desks would be spread out to achieve 6 feet of distance between students, with all desks and chairs facing the same direction. In the full five-day scenario, if all students return to brick and mortar, students will be spread out to the maximum extent possible with all desks and chairs facing the same direction, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines for schools. This may range from 2 - 6 feet depending on the classroom and the number of students in the class. During lunch times, 6 feet of distance will be maintained.*

**The plan references social distancing measures to include facing desks/chairs in the same direction, what about classrooms with tables?**

*Where possible, the district will replace classroom tables with desks. The District will limit the number of students at each table, depending on the scenario and number of students in the room.*

## Hygiene and Cleaning

### **How and when will cleaning occur and what is being used to clean?**

*Daily cleaning checklists have been made detailing the items to be cleaned and disinfected by both daylight and evening custodial staff, including high-touch surfaces. Daily cleaning includes all learning spaces, offices, restrooms, communal/common spaces, and buses. All cleaning will continue in the evenings to ensure that the buildings are ready for the following day.*

*Disinfectants being used include:*

- *Virex 256 EPA 70627-72*
- *Oxivir five EPA 0627-58*
- *AlphaHP EPA 70627-92*

### **Will time be built into the school day to ensure all students and faculty practice proper hygiene?**

*Students will be asked to wash hands before and after lunch, and teachers will develop routines related to hygiene. There are sinks and soap in all the K-5 classrooms, and hand sanitizer will be provided in all classrooms across the district and in common areas. The schedule in each school building may be reasonably altered to adjust to any changes that may need to happen based on the health and safety protocols to be followed.*

### **Will desks and classrooms be wiped down throughout the day?**

*Cleaning supplies will be provided in all classrooms to use at teacher discretion. Daytime custodians will wipe down high touch surfaces throughout the day. All classrooms, offices, cafeterias, and learning spaces will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized nightly.*

### **How will shared supplies (i.e. art supplies, scissors, etc) be handled?**

*Shared supplies will be limited in use unless absolutely necessary. In those situations, items will be disinfected between uses. Supply kits for K-5 can be purchased from the schools. Supply lists will be provided for students 6-12 to purchase needed materials. All buildings will have additional supplies on hand as needed.*

## Face Coverings

### **Are face coverings required in school?**

*Per the [PA Department of Health July 1, 2020, order](#), face coverings are to be worn in all public spaces, including inside school buildings and on buses.*

### **What type of mask complies with this Order?**

*The Order requires individuals to wear a "face covering." "Face covering" means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. A "face covering" can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk,*



or linen, and, for the purposes of the order, can include a plastic face shield that covers the nose and mouth. "Face coverings" may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or improvised from household items, including but not limited to, scarves, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. While procedural and surgical masks intended for health care providers and first responders, such as N95 respirators, would meet these requirements, these specialized masks should be reserved for appropriate occupational and health care settings. From:

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/Waivers/MaskWearing/Pages/default.aspx>

### **Under what circumstances are students permitted to remove their face coverings (e.g. masks and face shields)?**

Students will be required to wear masks throughout the school day. However, schools will provide face covering breaks throughout the day and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet during these face covering breaks. Students are allowed to remove face coverings when eating or drinking when spaced at least six feet apart.

### **Do students with disabilities need to wear face coverings?**

Children two years and older are required to wear a face covering unless they have a medical or mental health condition or disability, documented in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or IDEA, that precludes the wearing of a face covering in school. Accommodations for such students should be made in partnership with the student's health care provider, school nurse, and IEP/504 team. From: <https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/Waivers/MaskWearing/Pages/default.aspx>

### **Does the Order apply to athletics and sports activities?**

Yes. Everyone must wear a face covering, such as a mask, unless they fall under an exception listed in Section 3 of the Order. Coaches, athletes and spectators must wear face coverings unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet. Athletes are not required to wear face coverings while actively engaged in workouts and competition that prevent the wearing of face coverings, but must wear face coverings when on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. and anytime 6 feet of social distancing is not possible. From:

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/Waivers/MaskWearing/Pages/default.aspx>

### **How will mask-wearing be enforced?**

Masks are **mandated** to be worn inside schools by the state. However, schools will have extra masks available and will work with families to discuss safe solutions if an exemption applies such as with a student with disabilities.

### **Will students and faculty be required to wear a mask with a face shield?**

Although the Pennsylvania Department of Health only requires that a face covering is used, the District recommends that students and staff wear a mask with a face shield as the CDC does not recommend face

shields as a replacement to a cloth covering as the state allows. The CDC does recommend that “If face shields are used without a mask, they should wrap around the sides of the wearer’s face and extend to below the chin.” The face shields provided by the District do wrap around the sides of the wearer’s face and extend to below the chin. Pediatric size face shields are available for our younger students.

**Are parents responsible for cleaning masks and face shields?**

Per the state’s July 1, 2020, face covering order, all students and staff are to wear a face covering (mask, shield, scarf, etc.). The District will provide face shields to all students and staff but ask that students and staff have their own masks as well. Any of the face coverings will be worn when in the buildings and when entering and exiting the buildings, and staff and students/families are responsible for cleaning their own face covering(s) for the next day.

**What type of PPE will be provided to employees? What type of PPE training will be provided to employees?**

Faculty and staff will be provided with masks, face shields and gloves. Gowns will be available when the situation requires the use of a gown. All faculty and staff will receive training and professional development at the beginning of the school year around new health and safety procedures including the use of PPE.

## **Food Service**

**Will social distancing be in place for breakfast and lunch?**

In the Elementary School, students will eat in the classroom, cafeteria, and other designated spaces to maintain six feet distance during lunch times.

In the Intermediate School, each grade level will be split in half to reduce gathering size. Depending upon whether the District is in a hybrid schedule or in school fully, students will either eat lunch in the classroom or cafeteria and other designated spaces as needed to maintain six feet distance during lunch times.

In the Middle School, student seating will be assigned and split between cafe and gymnasium (and possibly other locations in order to maintain 6 feet of physical distance.) Students will be sent to lunch by their team cohorts in staggered shifts. Students will report to their assigned seat or directly get in line to obtain purchased lunch and then to seat. For those eating in the gymnasium, they will report to the gymnasium after purchasing their lunch and not return to the cafeteria. Those who pack their lunches and are assigned to the gymnasium will report directly to the gymnasium. Staff supervision will be split between gym and cafeteria (and other locations, if utilized).

The high school will utilize large group spaces and the cafeteria. Other spaces will be utilized to maintain six feet of distance during lunch.

**How will lunch be different?**

Limited lunch menus will be offered to streamline the process in all buildings. There will be no soup and salad bars. Only one lunch option will be available each day. All items will be “grab and go,” and all lunch items will be pre-packaged. Menus will be published in advance so that families/students can decide if they wish to buy or pack. Plexiglass has been installed around checkout stations, and social distancing floor markers have been placed in all cafeteria areas.

**Will breakfast and lunch be provided for those qualifying for free and reduced meals if in the cyber option?**

In the Elementary and Intermediate, lunch will be provided for those qualifying for free and reduced meals to those students who opt for the cyber academy. For the Middle and High School, breakfast and lunch will be provided for those qualifying for free and reduced meals to those who opt for the cyber academy.

**Visitors****Will schools restrict visitors in the buildings?**

At this time, the District will be restricting “non-essential” visitors from entering the buildings. Essential visitors are those who are essential to the continuation of educational services for students, which includes but are not limited to support service personnel (occupational therapy, social services, etc.), delivery persons, and maintenance persons.

**Will visitors be screened prior to entering the building?**

Visitors will be screened for temperature and will have to successfully complete the self-assessment tool. Visitors will be required to wear face coverings.

**Will the District’s facilities be available for outside rental?**

At this time, the District will not be renting its facilities to outside groups. Only District sponsored activities will be allowed. This may change as conditions change.

**Will the Extended School Services (EDS) AM and PM programs run?**

EDS is its own entity and will run. However, it will be subject to the District’s schedule.

**How will arrival and dismissal be organized to limit contact with parents, guardians, and students?**

Elementary/Intermediate/ and Middle School Parent Pick-Up: Parents/guardians will wait outside at the designated location for each building. Staff members will complete the sign-out process outside the building, and the student(s) will meet the parent/guardian outside. Social distancing reminders will be placed outside to remind parents/guardians of appropriate distancing.

High School Parent Pick-Up: Parents/guardians will be permitted inside the first set of exterior doors in small increments to complete the sign-out process and retrieve their student(s). Social distancing markers will be in place.

## **Sports and Activities**

**With the school calendar beginning two weeks later, does this affect athletics?**

*No, this does not affect the athletics schedules.*

**Will clubs and afterschool programs continue to be offered if we are fully open in the fall? If we are in a hybrid model? If we are all online, would clubs continue to meet online?**

*Some clubs and activities may run if the current circumstances allow at the discretion of the club or activity sponsor.*

**Will Cyber Academy students be permitted to attend any in-person clubs, activities, or athletics?**

*Yes. Cyber Academy students are permitted to attend in-person clubs, activities, or athletic programs.*

**Does the District's Health and Safety Plan apply to athletics and marching band?**

*The District approved its required Athletics/Marching Band Health and Safety Plan June 23, 2020. This plan is available at the following link: [Athletic/Marching Band Health and Safety Plan](#)*