



# Shenendehowa

## Central Schools

*the  
great  
plains*

## Reopening Fall 2020

Governor Cuomo, the State Education Department, and Department of Health recently released guidelines for the reopening of schools. School districts were required to submit a plan by July 31. In addition to this Q & A, we encourage people to read the Shen Reopening Plan (<https://www.shenet.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Shen-Reopening-Plan-for-2020-2021-1.pdf>) submitted to the state on July 29.

It is important to note that there are still many unanswered questions out there and this is a very fluid process with things changing daily.

As plans are finalized and more guidance from state and federal authorities becomes available, information will be provided.

The new reality of living, working and learning in the COVID-19 era requires us as a school community to engage in an three-pronged approach: Prevention-Mitigation-Reinforcement:

- Prevention: daily health check certification by all employees, wearing of masks by all, social distancing, disinfecting and sanitizing, and engaging proper hygiene practices.
- Mitigation: follow-up with DOH and families for contact tracing, disinfecting as needed, communicating with impacted parties.
- Reinforcement: learning from every instance, retraining and reminding of prevention practices and protocols.

Safety is everyone's responsibility. The safety and wellbeing of our learning community is our top priority and protocols will continue to evolve as we learn more about this virus.

Questions are organized into the following sections:

- Reopening Framework
- Instruction
- Grading
- Special Needs
- Elementary
- Middle and High School
- COVID-related
- Masks/PPE
- Food Services
- Transportation
- Facilities
- Before and After School Programs
- Staff-related



## REOPENING FRAMEWORK

### **Why is the framework limited in how it addresses the potential of, and plan for, another prolonged closure?**

The framework is a "Reopening Plan" that is required by NYS for reopening. Plans for what will be required in the event in-person learning must return to virtual learning are being developed. Students at the secondary level will follow their typical, in-person schedule when at home. Expectations for student learning at the elementary level will be increased from what it was in spring 2020. Instructional provisions will be much more robust.

### **Was there solicitation for staff, and parent feedback in developing this framework before this point?**

On July 13, the Governor announced that schools could reopen and had to submit a plan. On July 16, a survey was sent to parents and staff asking for feedback, with almost 1,800 people responding. On July 21, presentations were made with the opportunity to provide feedback via email.

### **Will opening fully be revisited during the school year if guidelines allow? And would it be quarterly? Or 1/2 year? Or at any given time?**

Yes. The district will make adjustments as new guidance becomes available.

### **What is the final date for filing a homeschool plan for those who choose it over distance learning?**

The NYSED extended the deadline for home schooling to August 1st. However, the district will accept and approve plans submitted after that date. Families signing up for the Shenendehowa Completely Virtual Learning (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LqPuJNtRGQ-xoW76DE5JT1PGFTg5mIs9g/view>) option have until August 14. The CVL form is available on the reopening web page: <https://www.shenet.org/about-us/reopening-school-2020/>

## INSTRUCTION

### **For those of us who may not want to send our children back to in-person instruction, will there be a 'homeschooling' option at the K-6 level and at the 7-12 level?**

To be clear, there is a distinct and significant difference between homeschooling and the Completely Virtual Learning option (CVL) being offered by the District. The homeschool option has always been available to parents. It is a NYSED Regulation that allows parents to officially withdraw their child from the school district and perform all the requisite instruction on their own. The parent is responsible for developing and submitting an individualized home instruction plan (IHIP) for each child of compulsory attendance age who is to be taught at home.

On the other hand, the Completely Virtual Learning option (CVL) being offered by the District due to the COVID-19 pandemic does not require a student to withdraw from Shen. Please see details: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LqPujNtRGQxoW76DE5JTIPGFTg5mls9g/view>

### **If families decide to send their children to school and then change their minds, can they easily switch to 'homeschooling?' Vice versa, if families decide to 'homeschool,' can they easily switch to in-person instruction?**

Parents may switch between the option of receiving instruction virtually or in-person (on site) pursuant to the parameters of the CVL option (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LqPujNtRGQxoW76DE5JTIPGFTg5mls9g/view>):

- Switching between CVL and in-person: Elementary students (K-5) must be committed for at least a trimester (end of December)
- Switching between CVL and in-person: Secondary students (6-12) must be committed for at least a semester (end of January)

A parent who formally withdrew their child and submitted the applicable forms for homeschooling, may return to in-person instruction at any time.

### **What are the plans for high risk families/children?**

Pursuant to NY State Department of Health and NYSED, a Completely Virtual Option (CVL) is available. Please see details: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LqPujNtRGQxoW76DE5JTIPGFTg5mls9g/view>

### **Who is responsible to provide instruction for students who opt out of on-site learning?**

While the Completely Virtual Learning option (CVL) instructional

experience will be substantive, it will not be equivalent to an on site/ in-person or hybrid learning experience. The district will use both in-district instruction and resources as well as regional instruction and resources. Instruction will be delivered synchronously and asynchronously (synchronous learning is online education that happens in real time, whereas asynchronous learning occurs through online channels without real-time interaction). It will not be interactive at all times. For more information go to: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LqPujNtRGQxoW76DE5JTIPGFTg5mls9g/view>

### **For parents choosing the virtual option, I know there was some language that it will not be as substantive as in-person. Will there be a school wide meeting about what virtual learning will entail before the deadline to choose? Or are parents supposed to be contacting the district individually with specific concerns?**

Not as substantive may not be the best choice of words. A virtual option will not be equivalent to an in-person session. Instructional materials will be provided both asynchronously (videos) and synchronously (interactive streaming) by Shen teachers, as well as through regional sources from other school districts. The objective is to provide students with the resources and instruction to master the course content.

### **I would like to know if honors/accelerated classes will be taught through the Completely Virtual Learning model, or is this more of a "basic" curriculum.**

The first objective is to maximize capacity to effectively provide core courses - ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies, both in-person and virtually. Plans are being developed to assess how enrichment supports can be supplemented virtually.

### **Are you continuing the Honors programs for in-person learning if the kids can't leave the classroom?**

At the secondary level, students will take classes as scheduled. At the elementary level, plans for how QUEST and accelerated math may be delivered are being developed.

### **My question is whether the school will provide mandatory interactive learning on a daily basis during homeschooling?**

Homeschooling and Completely Virtual Learning Option are two different things, please see Q&A #1. If you decide to homeschool, then the district has no involvement at all. If you decide to opt in the Completely Virtual Learning, that is provided by the district, you can find information here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LqPujNtRGQxoW76DE5JTIPGFTg5mls9g/view>

### **Will teachers be taking attendance when kids are remote learning?**

Yes. The NYSED guidance requires that attendance be taken daily when students are remote learning.

### **Why are you opening school full time in-person for elementary school and not for middle and high school kids? How would you manage ~1000 kids everyday, 8 hours a day? Are you tripling your staff?**

None of our elementary schools are at 1,000 students (they are each in the 400-600 range with Arongen being the largest at approximately 660). Elementary students do not move through the building as much as secondary students do. They also benefit more from in-person instruction, particularly in terms of developmental needs and ability to learn / function independently. Also, the instructional day for students is not 8 hours, it is approximately 5 ½ hours.

### **Can you please detail what you have done to prepare for remote learning? We have had six months and it is clear we should have been procuring video cameras, increasing bandwidth, identifying students who can't access the Internet at home.**

We have been working on all of that. Access to technology is a primary goal. The district is committed to modernizing the educational program where high-quality teaching is fully integrated with technology.

In the event that elementary students are required to participate in at-home instruction the district will provide loaner Chromebooks for students who may need one (per request from the parents to the building principal). Students in grades 6-12 were already a part of the 1:1 technology provision.

The market for technology is absolutely saturated, recognizing the global nature of the pandemic and the fact that, in many cases, the technology is being produced by countries that are challenged to deliver. Consequently, the district has engaged in regional purchasing efforts.

### **How many students will be in class at one time?**

The maximum for the standard size classroom is 18 students. There are some larger spaces that allow for more students while adhering to social distancing protocols.

### **Will the school (not the teachers) set the class schedule for remote learning? Will there be guidelines for the teachers to follow regarding the remote learning?**

Yes, the District will set the schedule for grades 6-12. At the elemen-

tary level, some parts of the schedule may be set by the district with other parts determined by the teacher. Guidelines are in the process of being developed for K-12.

### **I would like to know when/how students will be evaluated to gauge what material they did not receive and or retain, when schools closed in March.**

Teachers will assess student learning formally (assessments) and informally (conversation, review of classwork) to determine what areas need to be retaught.

### **Can homework be done on PCs and Chromebooks to eliminate exchanging of paper?**

Yes, where feasible, the goal is to maximize technology.

### **If the school closes and resumes virtually, will the teacher be expected to provide consistent instruction just like in the classroom? Will the district monitor that all students receive the same quality of instruction?**

Yes. Learning course content will continue at home, following a similar sequence and timeline as in school for most courses. At the elementary level, some instruction may be broken into small group work given the developmental level of students. Instruction will be monitored.

## **GRADING**

### **If a child must stay home, how could the evaluation/grade be affected? Still Pass/Fail or will be graded?**

At the elementary level, we are recommending that all students receive a report card for every trimester. Numeric grades are only given for math and ELA in grades 3-5.

At the secondary level, a learning-focused rubric will be used to help standardize grading practices for students in the in-person, hybrid, and Completely Virtual Learning models. Numeric grades will still appear on the report card.

### **Why can't we have normal grading procedures?**

The idea of normal is a misnomer, since there are many different ways in which grading occurs and final grades are determined. It is important that grading practices promote student learning and provide feedback to the student on how much they are demonstrating their learning relative to the curriculum. Students will get a numeric grade for courses, contributing to GPA calculations.



## SPECIAL NEEDS

**I would like to know what accommodations and support will be in place for those children with IEPs? How will IEPs be reviewed or amended? For example, if a student's IEP requires the student to spend half time in regular education classes and half time in a special ed classroom, how will the student be accommodated or will the school be requesting to amend the IEP?**

Students with disabilities returning to school full time must be provided with special education services per their IEP in accordance with IDEA and NYS Part 200. At this time there has been no exception to the requirement to implement Individual Education Plans as written. In cases where students are attending school within a hybrid model, special education services will be delivered as outlined on the IEP through a service delivery model that is equitable to the provision of general education.

Students with severe disabilities in self-contained classes (NYS Alternately Assessed students) will have the option to attend school daily in order to ensure equitable access to their education. For parents who opt to keep their children home due to health concerns, Complete Virtual Learning will be available.

**Will students with a 504 plan be able to attend classes on campus each day?**

All students K-6 will attend daily. Only students with severe disabilities in grades 7-12 in self-contained classes (NYS Alternately Assessed students) will attend school daily.

**Are the students who take Connection classes and have resources in high school considered the self-contained population that will be going to school 4 days / week?**

No. Students in the Connections program will follow the hybrid schedule.

**Are the AIS classes still going to be offered, if yes how many days a week?**

AIS services will be offered. Specific delivery models are being finalized.

## ELEMENTARY

**Will the students that will be remote in a different classroom be in the classroom with the teacher the following week? Or are they going to be in that remote option the whole school year?**

The goal is to have teachers rotate between groups of students during

the day/week. All groups of students will have access to some in-person instruction each week.

**As an elementary parent and staff member in an elementary setting, I'm curious about outdoor / indoor activities for recess. Will the children have an opportunity to have that break and get those wiggles out? What would that look like?**

Yes, when feasible, recess will be part of the elementary school day. Details are currently being worked out.

**What will the bathroom protocol be in elementary schools?**

This will be determined by school principals and shared this fall. We are fortunate that most classrooms have bathrooms.

**Will students in grades 1-5 still have music and art?**

The elementary school program will focus on core instruction (ELA, math, science and social studies). All other offerings will be provided only if/when feasible. These changes are necessary to ensure social distancing and to meet health safety requirements.

**How will the kindergarten half-day schedule work with this new in school learning plan?**

It will be similar to the traditional kindergarten schedule. Specific start and end times will be announced in the coming weeks.

**I still have some questions for elementary reopening: Please clarify and further explain the "other times supervised by school personnel (please define "school personnel") during times of independent or remote/livestream instructions from other areas of the building".**

"School Personnel" include other certified teachers (e.g., AIS teachers, art, music, PE, ELA,) as well as school aides. These professionals work with students each year in support of learning.

**In the Spring, elementary students did not receive science and social studies. Will it be taught in the Fall?**

Yes.

**Will there be orientation/walkthroughs for kindergarten and grade 6?**

Yes.

## MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

### Which core classes will be taught in the block? What about PE, music, art, technology?

The four core courses are English, math, science and social studies.

At the secondary level (grades 6-12), the District anticipates students will be able to take all classes they signed up for. Some courses with low enrollment may be canceled in late August due to the need to shift staffing to cover all required courses.

Special area courses such as physical education, art, music, etc., will be offered based on final determination of capacity and support needed to provide the core courses, particularly those at the secondary level needed for graduation requirements.

### Will classes such as Jazz Band and choir be able to take place in-person given that students may need to remove their mask to play an instrument or sing?

We continue to evaluate space for our music performance groups. They are required to be 12 feet apart and we are looking at using large spaces on a rotating basis. At 12 feet apart the HSE auditorium goes from a capacity of ~1200 to ~68.

### How will labs be addressed if a student is taking two science classes?

Science labs will be scheduled in addition to classes much like they have been in the past.

### How will PE be modified? Changing in and out of PE clothes and close activities with extra breathing required will increase the risk of exposure.

Plans for the delivery of PE are being developed. Locker rooms will be closed and students will be 12 feet apart for physical activities.

### How will Counselors be working with seniors in specific ways to help them through the college application process?

Some will be in-person and other times virtually, continuing with the successful efforts employed this past spring.

### Will colleges reflect and understand our process to help our children when they are looking to get accepted? Are we doing similar or same to schools around the state or country?

With most colleges offering virtual classes and modified grading practices for their own students, we are confident they embrace the various models being employed.

### Have we heard anything in terms of Regents exams and

### graduation requirements for seniors? That being said, how will gym requirements work?

No. We are still awaiting word from the NYSED. For now, we are assuming that Regents exams will be offered.

### When will fall sports tryouts be held if New York State allows fall sports?

NYSPPHSAA (the New York State Public High School Athletic Association) has announced that the start date for Fall sports has been pushed back to September 21st and the Fall Regional and State Championships have been canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic. The determination for sports will be made by NYSPPHSAA.

### If students play a sport will they be able to participate if they choose to do the Completely Virtual Learning option?

A ruling will need to be made by the NYSED. Although students are still Shen enrolled students, it seems illogical and counterintuitive to have students select the Completely Virtual Learning option due to risk or major concerns about being exposed to others in the school setting, then congregate in close proximity for sports.

### Will students have their in-school days the same days each week? For example, group 1 always goes in on Monday and Tuesday.

It is a two day rotating schedule. It is two days on, two days off, two days on, two days off for students in grades 7-12.

### Will high school seniors still be allowed to drive to school?

Yes, parking passes will be provided to all seniors who want one. With 50% of the class attending each day we should be able to accommodate all seniors.

### With only half the high school students on site each day and to help with encouraging fewer students taking the buses, will juniors be allowed to drive to school and park on campus this Fall? Or will that still be a senior only privilege? If juniors can drive, how do they go about getting a parking permit?

No, giving passes to all seniors means that there will not be enough parking spots for juniors.

### Will there be late arrival or early dismissal for seniors this year?

Yes, we are discussing the possibility of providing a late arrival / early dismissal option to all students in grades 7-12 when they have a study hall during first or last block.

### **What is the framework attending the HS BOCES (VO-TEC) program?**

The plan is to still offer these programs. We are working with BOCES to get more information.

### **As we plan for January 2021, will the school go back to normal scheduling (non-block schedule) when it is determined that the risk is minimal or when there is a vaccine?**

Changing back from a block schedule to a 9-period day is unlikely, given the plan to shift to block schedule in 2021-22. Shifting a schedule mid-year also poses many other issues (i.e., students having to switch teachers, sections, different classmates, etc.)

### **With no lockers are backpacks going to be allowed? Are kids going to have to carry their coats with them all day?**

Middle and high school administrators are working on these procedures now, balancing safety and what is reasonable for students to carry.

### **How will the desks be cleaned for grades 6-12 when kids move between classes?**

There will be cleaner and paper towels in each classroom available for teachers and students to wipe down desks and frequently touched areas.

### **How are you determining which upper level kids go on what days?**

It will be done alphabetically. For example, students with last names from A-L (may be a little different based on balancing enrollments) will be in-person for two days, followed by two days of learning from home. Students with last names M-Z will start with two days at home, then attend two days in-person. Families with children with different last names in the same household, may reach out to the school to request the children attend school on the same days.

### **Will siblings in the same school be on the same schedule?**

Yes, that is the intent.

### **Will middle school students living in close proximity to each other be more likely to attend school on the same days to allow for families to cohort and carpool with our neighbors?**

No, students will be divided by last name rather than address. Families and neighbors are encouraged to carpool and opt-out of transportation, where feasible.

### **Do we plan on doing modified events for the spirit rally and homecoming at this time?**

The Class Council and SFA Senate will be having this discussion. We will work to support all ideas that fall within safety guidelines and parameters from the state.

### **Are there plans to resume after-school clubs even if by Google meet? As mentioned last night, the closure of schools is taking its toll on our kids and any opportunities to promote socialization are welcomed.**

Yes, that is the plan.

### **Will there be orientation / walkthroughs for grade 9 and grade 10?**

Yes.

## **COVID-RELATED**

### **How will notification be handled when there is a confirmed case?**

The district has a single point of contact who communicates with the Saratoga County Department of Health to engage contact tracing protocols, which includes directly contacting potentially exposed parties.

As far as district-wide communications, the district will follow the same process that it uses for all communicable diseases (MRSA, Meningitis, Pertussis, etc.). When a confirmed case is reported in a building, we send notification to the entire district (all parents and staff) to make everyone aware that the infection is present in a building so that they can take necessary precautions. Due to privacy laws, we will not disclose details about individuals who test positive for COVID-19. Any follow-up communication will be done if the situation warrants it.

### **What is the purpose of the self-certification health form. How often do staff members need to complete it?**

Employees that are reporting to work on-site, contractors and visitors are required to certify their health on a daily basis prior to coming to a building by completing this self certification form. While on-site, everyone must also adhere to the additional safety guidelines and expectations.

### **What is the link and/or where can I find the link to the Contractors/Visitors Self-Certification Health Form?**

Contractors/Visitors Self-Certify Form: (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScX9DGu6aUCw5HghK5Hj12gYlcvWwL5CixbX-zYV-tiffvYvQ/viewform>)

**What happens when an employee or visitor response to the self-certification health form includes a YES? What is the proper protocol for employees to follow?**

Employees should stay home and adhere to standard attendance/absence procedures as well as the District guidelines that are posted on InsideShen.

**The framework states that students and staff MUST stay home if sick. Can you please define the parameters of being “sick”? During the fall/winter months, it is common for children to have seasonal illness: common colds, stuffy/runny noses, etc.**

COVID-19 Symptoms:

- Fever or chills (temp above 100)
- 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 as we learn more about COVID-19.

**What if a child displays other symptoms of illness but not a fever?**

The expectation has always been to keep sick children home.

**If any student or staff member travels to other states or countries, do they need to self-quarantine and pass a COVID-19 test before going back to school? How will school enforce this if it is required?**

We expect students and staff to comply fully with New York State guidelines or mandates in effect. Currently people who travel from hotspot states are required to quarantine.

**I would also like to know whether every time a child has cold/flu symptoms that child needs a COVID-19 test to return to school.**

That is a parental decision and one to be determined by a personal health professional. The district cannot administer or mandate a COVID-19 test.

**If a student is diagnosed does the entire class have to quarantine for 14 days? What about a teacher? What percentage of the school has to be in quarantine/positive before the school closes?**

That determination will be made by the NYS Department of Health in coordination with the Saratoga County Department of Health. A 14-day quarantine is the current practice.

**What is the role that the district will play in ensuring testing and contact tracing for students and staff that contract COVID-19 or are exposed to another student or staff member that is positive?**

The district works with the Department of Health to provide information for contact tracing.

**Will the school be able to screen the kids temperatures instead of the parents?**

The NYSED and NYS Department of Health guidance calls for temperature taking prior to arrival to work or school. It is expected that parents will monitor to ensure a child doesn't have a temperature that exceeds 100. The district will complete some random temperature checks or will take a temperature if a student isn't feeling well in school.

**Will teachers be given thermometers to check students' temperatures upon entering the classroom?**

No. Only nurses or other health (medical) trained professionals can administer.

**Can students be required to be tested prior to school opening?**

At this juncture, the District is not authorized to mandate a COVID-19 test.

**Where can a person go to get tested?**

If you live in Saratoga County, here are the places closest to you: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h6SAbGr8BA\\_Sl-EQWfKv8k-K6Rvw5CTYG/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h6SAbGr8BA_Sl-EQWfKv8k-K6Rvw5CTYG/view)

**Is there any plan on having more monitors on the school buses to ensure social distancing? Will someone be able to do temperature checks BEFORE students get on the bus?**

Monitors will work to diligently assist with the upholding of rules. However, there is a high reliance on students. With almost 10,000 students, it is not feasible to have enough staff to check the temperature of students at bus stops.



### **What if my child misses class for being ill or the need to quarantine or self-isolate due to COVID-19 related circumstances?**

Administrators and teachers are being asked to prepare for students who may be ill and not able to come to class (and not just because they've tested positive for COVID-19). We are asking employees and students who are feeling ill to stay home and we will look to support them remotely when that is the case. Students who may have to self-isolate due to exposure to someone who tests positive for COVID-19 will also be able to complete their work. A student should plan to communicate immediately with their teachers should they need to stay home due to illness or because they've been instructed to self-isolate.

## **MASKS/PPE/DISTANCING**

### **If I am going to school or work around others, what is being done to make it safer?**

The district has implemented multiple measures to limit the density of students and employees in buildings. These measures include staggered breaks and lunches, limiting the density of common meeting spaces (such as conference rooms), limiting the density of students in classrooms, and limiting the number of courses taught in-person.

All employees will go through additional COVID-19 specific training (safe schools) and are expected to adhere to the Shen COVID-19 Tip Sheet ([https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FK\\_rzwGLF\\_AGkHNKaxR2N-p0bmBun88q0/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FK_rzwGLF_AGkHNKaxR2N-p0bmBun88q0/view?usp=sharing)).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises wearing a mask or face covering in public settings where social distance is difficult to maintain. In April, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed an executive order that requires masks or a face covering to be worn out in public and in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.

Students, employees and visitors will be informed of and expected to comply with standards for social distancing and for face coverings that are also established for employees and students. Signage will be placed around campus reminding students, employees, and visitors of these standards.

Guidance for student musicians using performance or practice spaces and student-athletes is still to be determined.

### **Do I have to wear a mask or face covering? I believe I understand it to be that they have to wear a mask everywhere except when at their socially distanced desk. Is this correct?**

Yes. Students, staff and visitors to our schools will be expected to wear face coverings when six-foot physical distance is not possible, including on and outside the school bus. Students will be allowed to remove face coverings during meals, portions of instruction under the guidance of the teacher, and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance.

Students with a physical or mental impairment who cannot wear a mask will not be required to do so.

### **You mentioned that there will be masks provided by the school, do we have to wear those masks, or can we bring our own masks?**

Students and staff will be required to wear a face covering. The district will provide a washable mask. However, people may elect to wear their own mask.

### **Can face shields be worn by children instead of or in addition to masks?**

Yes. You can send your child to school with a face shield in addition to a mask. There are situations, medical or otherwise, where the face shield is most applicable.

### **How will the district supply masks when they break, get lost or become soiled?**

Students and staff are expected to keep masks clean or personally obtain a new one. The Shen logo mask being issued by the district is a symbolic gesture to promote mask wearing. There will be single-use masks available for these exceptional instances.

### **It sounds like you are suggesting that these young children (mine is 6) wear a face mask even while seated in the classroom. I think this is too much. Won't they be socially distanced at that point?**

Teachers are expected to provide mask breaks, such as when out on recess. Students, staff and visitors to our schools will be expected to wear face coverings when six-foot physical distance is not possible, including on and outside the school bus. Students will be allowed to remove face coverings during meals, portions of instruction under the guidance of the teacher, and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance.



**How will the schools address students and faculty that actively resist adhering to social distancing measures or proper PPE usage?**

Any such actions will be deemed a violation of the Code of Conduct and/or insubordination, and it will be acted upon accordingly.

**I have a question about how we will be enforcing the mask policy for our kids. Will there be a “mask monitor”? Someone in the classroom, to help the teacher enforce the masks?**

No. Just like normal, classroom management is a key component of an effective classroom experience.

**The proposed scenario means our teachers and staff will be potentially exposed for a long period of time. Will they have appropriate PPE including N-95, face shield and goggles? And what will you have available to protect the kids?**

The school nurses will have N-95 masks available.

Students, staff and visitors to our schools will be expected to wear face coverings when six-foot physical distance is not possible, including on the school bus and outside the school bus. Students will be allowed to remove face coverings during meals, portions of instruction under the guidance of the teacher and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance.

**What cooling resources will be used on the busses and in the classroom while the students are wearing masks? Will students be given instructions on what to do if they feel too hot, or out of breath while wearing masks in school? Finally, will mask breaks be incorporated throughout the day?**

Mask breaks will be implemented, including consideration for room temperature factors.

## FOOD SERVICES

**Both of our children have severe food allergies. While eating in the classroom, rather than the cafeteria, sounds like a good idea, if other students bring in allergens the room becomes contaminated. What are the plans to cleanse the room? Hand sanitizer does not remove allergen proteins from hands or surfaces. What is the plan to mitigate this risk?**

All protocols related to allergies will be followed. It is important to inform the principal and teacher again at the start of school. The

school nurse shall also assist and areas will be dedicated and offered to students with food allergies if needed (i.e., nurses office, separate table in the cafeteria or another classroom).

## TRANSPORTATION

**What about transportation for non-public schools? When will this be announced and explained?**

The Transportation Department is working on various scenarios. Once the details of schedules for Shen schools are finalized, determination about capacity for non-public will also be finalized.

**Will there be changes in pick-up procedures at elementary school (in prior years parents had to go in the school, sign kids out and wait for them)?**

Yes. Protocols for visitors to schools will be very stringent.

**I was hoping you could talk about arrival and dismissal times. I have a child in elementary, middle and high school would make driving them to/from school hard with 3 different arrival/dismissal times.**

Specific parental drop-off and pick-up times and locations are being defined and will be communicated.

**I am planning to drive my daughter to and from school (HSW) this year, however, if I am ever unable to drive her, will the option for her to occasionally take the bus be available to her? Or is it either to take the bus daily or not at all? I know that transportation is a challenging issue for the district.**

Yes, if a bus is already scheduled for that route/area.

**How early will students be allowed in the building on school days? Will students be required to stay in their cars/buses until a certain time?**

That is currently being determined and will be communicated.

## FACILITIES

**How will rooms and common spaces be cleaned?**

Classrooms will be stocked with paper towels and disinfectants. Much like supermarkets provide cleaning supplies so customers can wipe down their shopping carts before use, we will be asking our Shen community (staff and students) to do the same before they use commonly touched items, such as their desks, etc..

General sanitizing, including high-touch areas, will be conducted

daily by custodial staff. Classrooms will be cleaned minimally twice a day. During one shift, they will be mopped, wiped down, have the trash removed, etc. During another shift, when the buildings are vacant, high-traffic buildings and classrooms will be cleaned using a new sanitizing machine by a specially trained custodian wearing personal protective equipment (PPE). The new sanitizing machines use electrostatic technology to sanitize hard-to-reach surfaces, including the backs and undersides of chairs, desks and teaching stations, and any soft surfaces removing bacteria and viruses in 2 minutes or fewer. The custodians will maintain a cleaning log. The log will be kept in the Facilities Department.

### **Will cleaning supplies be available in classrooms?**

Yes. Classrooms will be stocked with paper towels and disinfectants. Much like supermarkets provide cleaning supplies so customers can wipe down their shopping carts before use, we will be asking our Shen community to do the same before they use their desks, etc.

### **Will hand sanitizer be available?**

The district has purchased hundreds of bottles of hand sanitizer and has installed stations located throughout buildings including each entryway. The Facilities Department monitors and refills these stations.

### **Has any thought been given to placing several large tents on the fields around campus to provide extra outdoor classroom space?**

The state has very specific guidelines about what structures can be used as learning spaces. If it becomes necessary, other outside spaces like courtyards can be used.

### **I know that there is no air conditioning in certain classrooms and there is hot water heat. Is there any ventilation system present in that building?**

All classrooms, like almost all rooms in the school buildings, have a unit ventilator that draws fresh air over the hot water coils. The dampers are controlled by the digital control system, Metasys.

Each unit contains a MERV 8 filter that is the highest MERV that can be installed in systems applicable for that size space. The filters will be changed 4 times per year. (Prior to COVID-19 it was 2 times).

Larger spaces have rooftop air handlers that provide outside air in a similar manner. Those units will have MERV 13 filters installed as they are the highest that can fit in those units designed for the applicable space sizes. As with classrooms, they will now be changed 4 times per year. We are meeting and exceeding expectations.

For spaces identified with ventilation concerns, specific instructions will be provided to those using the space, with strict limitation on occupancy.

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

### **How will school-hosted before and after school programs be managed?**

At this point, there will not be any school-sponsored before or after school programs, other than those designed as a part of the overall provision of instruction.

### **Will after school care be allowed in elementary schools by the YMCA?**

Yes. The District will continue to work with the YMCA to provide child care, where permissible.

## **STAFF-RELATED**

### **Where can staff find the link to the Employee Self-Certification Health Form?**

It's on InsideShen (<https://sites.google.com/shenschools.org/insideshen-humanresources/employee-resources>), in your shenschools email every morning by 5 am and also posted on the District Staff Resources web page (<https://www.shenet.org/about-us/staff-resources/>). Considering the volume of users, the district is also investigating other technology applications.

### **Will staff members receive confirmation that our self-certification health form was received? Who is responsible for reviewing that information? Is the information secured to protect against release of our personal information?**

All employees and visitors are required to complete the self-certification health form for each day that they are reporting to work on-site. This information is secured and reviewed by the District's COVID-19 Safety Coordinators. At this time, no receipt confirmations are being sent.

### **What is your solution for covering classes when too many teachers are unable to attend for one day or multiple weeks?**

We will use the same substitute system and protocols that we do during non-COVID times. If there are no certified teachers, other staff members may supervise classes.

### **How will time off policies be adjusted to avoid penalizing staff that are absent due to quarantine or COVID related illness and complications?**

Applicable laws, rules, regulations, and contractual obligations will be addressed and adhered to accordingly.

### **What is the plan to fill faculty positions in the event that there are large numbers of faculty who decide to resign/take leave or are expected to quarantine and can't report to buildings?**

Staff are being polled and that information will drive the need for recruitment and hiring.

### **What support is being given to teachers to implement block scheduling?**

Specific professional development will be offered along with on-going coaching.

### **What support will be given to teachers who are unable to plan for both in-person learning and virtual learning within our planning time?**

Specific professional development will be offered along with on-going coaching.

### **With staggered arrival and dismissal, does this mean that students will be in school for a shorter amount of time than in the past? Will teachers be asked to work outside of our contractual hours? Staggering arrival worked for about a week in ESY, now pretty much all the students are let off at the same time - just earlier than what is typical. And that is a very small number of students.**

Yes, technically students will be in school for short periods. Staff will be expected to work the same number of contracted hours. Specific start and end times will be determined and communicated in the coming weeks once programmatic offerings and schedules are finalized.

### **What, if any, are the training requirements for all employees, including substitutes?**

All employees, including substitutes, are required to complete all the mandatory training outlined in Safe Schools (<https://shenet-ny.safeschools.com/login>) prior to reporting to work on-site. This year, additional mandatory training specifically related to COVID-19 is included on the Safe Schools (<https://shenet-ny.safeschools.com/login>) platform. The District also plans to provide additional training opportunities prior to the start of the school year.

### **What are the responsibilities for all employees under the new safety precautions?**

All employees are responsible for following District guidelines, which currently include the Shen COVID Tip Sheet ([https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FK\\_rzwGLF\\_AGkHNKaxR2Np0bmBun88q0/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FK_rzwGLF_AGkHNKaxR2Np0bmBun88q0/view?usp=sharing)).

### **What is a reasonable accommodation?**

A reasonable accommodation provides for additional support and/or changes to a position or workplace that enables the qualified employee to do their job despite having a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Examples of reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to making adjustments to existing facilities, acquiring or modifying equipment, providing additional training materials or PPE, modified work schedules, and remote work.

### **How do I request a reasonable accommodation?**

Employees must request reasonable accommodation and provide supporting documentation that identifies the type of accommodation necessary for completing their job. The reasonable accommodation form can be found on the InsideShen Employee Resources page.

### **What is the deadline for submitting a request for a reasonable accommodation?**

Generally, requests for reasonable accommodations have a rolling deadline and are reviewed on a case by case basis as the need arises. However, for planning and staffing purposes, instructional staff are encouraged to submit their requests for reasonable accommodations by Friday, August 7, 2020 for the upcoming school year.

### **What if I am unable to submit my request for reasonable accommodation by the suggested deadline?**

Requests for reasonable accommodations can be submitted at any time. However, accommodation requests for remote instructional work must be submitted by August 7th so that the District can begin the review process and plan for staffing. In the event that you do not have supporting documentation to substantiate your request by the deadline, please indicate in your request, when you intend to send the supporting documentation to the Office of Human Resources.

### **When can I expect to receive notification of whether or not my request for a reasonable accommodation is approved?**

Requests are reviewed on an ongoing basis and determinations are typically made within 5 business days. Given the circumstances, determinations may take longer than anticipated. However, determinations will be provided at least two weeks prior to the start of the

school year.

**If a teacher requests a reasonable accommodation to instruct remotely do they have a choice of what assignment they teach?**

If a request for remote instruction is approved, the teacher will be assigned to class(es) within their certification area consistent with student and program needs.

**If personal circumstances exist that prevent me from returning to on-site work and the nature of my work can be completed remotely, is that permitted? If so, what is the process?**

Upon reopening, any request for remote work will need to be made through a request for reasonable accommodation and discussed with your supervisor and the Office of Human Resources.

**What do I do if I am unable to return to work and/or wish to request a leave of absence?**

A leave of absence is defined as five (5) or more consecutive days when an employee has permission to be absent from work, excluding vacation. To utilize a leave of absence, any regular full and/or part-time employee must provide written notice of the need for leave at any time prior to the actual day of leave or no later than the first five (5) consecutive days of absence by completing the leave of absence request form.

In the event that an employee needs to be absent from work for COVID-19 specific reasons as outlined below, they must complete the FFCRA request form. Reasons include:

- Subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
- Advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
- Experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking medical diagnosis;
- Caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2); or
- Caring for a child under 18 whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) for reasons related to COVID-19.