



Shenendehowa

Central School District

the
great
plains

COVID-19 brings many changes...

Learning during a pandemic

The year 2020 is certainly one for the history books. The district's students, staff and community have risen to the challenge created by a pandemic and have proven that the commitment to excellence remains the standard bearer.

The 2020-21 school year combines in-person learning with virtual learning to keep all students and staff safe and social distanced and to provide options to families.

- In-person learning for K-6 students is onsite daily.
- Combination of In-person and Virtual Learning (Hybrid) for Gr. 7-12. Students are split into two groups by last name Group A-L (attend in-person Monday and Tuesday/virtual on Thursday and Friday) and Group M-Z (attend in-person Thursday and Friday/virtual Monday and Tuesday). Wednesdays are used for extra help and opportunities to meet with teachers in small groups.
- Complete Virtual Learning (CVL) option is for families who have concerns about their child's health or impact on a family member with high risk factors. Those students are virtual all week.

Every morning, staff members and parents of students receive an email with a link to submit a Self-certify COVID-19 Screening Form. School personnel will receive notification of those flagged for non-compliance or symptoms. Visitors must also fill out the form.

All students and staff are required to wear masks and classroom seats are spaced with appropriate social distance and students have assigned seats. Seating assignments also occur on buses and in the cafeteria.

Classrooms are cleaned regularly throughout the school day, and deep cleaned and sanitized at the end of each school day. Buses are also cleaned and sanitized.

The district is piloting temperature screening systems at the high school and transportation department. These perform random temperature screening of those entering the building. The goal is to have it available at all building entrances, if the pilot proves them to be effective.



Coach Dan Palmerino doing physical education with first graders at Okte.



Gowana technology students working on Autodesk Inventors Tinkercad 3D modeling software. They are then taking the 3D computer models and building small electric cars from their designs.

The NYS Department of Health has created a COVID Dashboard. School districts must report daily whether or not any COVID-19 cases have been confirmed within the district. (<https://schoolcovidreportcard.health.ny.gov/#/home>)

USDA Approves Free Meals for ALL for the 2020-21 School Year Due to COVID-19

Meals provided by the Shenendehowa Food Service Department are free for ALL. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is covering the entire cost for these meals. Only a full breakfast or lunch are free. Payment is still necessary for milk and ala carte items.

Please contact the Food Service Department at 518-881-0630 with any questions.

Return of Interscholastic Athletics

New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Section II athletics began low-risk sports on September 21. The low-risk sports include soccer, field hockey, cross country, golf, girls swimming and diving, and girls tennis. There were only varsity sports in the Fall 2020 with no Athletic Placement Process (eligibility for gr. 7-8 students to play interscholastic athletics). There were no state tournaments or sectionals for the fall. Football, volleyball, and fall cheerleading are postponed until March.

In accordance with NYS Department of Health Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation, each student-athlete is only allowed two spectators per contest. All spectators must self certify and fill out a contact tracing form when attending any contest. Masks must be worn at all times and all social distancing is in effect.

Live Streaming Athletic Contests

Because attendance at athletic events is so limited under COVID-19 restrictions, Shen Athletics joined the National Federation of High School network. The NFHS network is home to thousands of schools across the country and allows members to broadcast athletic contests to their communities. Shen launched its NFHS network program this fall by broadcasting field hockey games, and will continue to expand content throughout the school year. We look forward to being able to feature our student-athletes games as the year continues.

The public can subscribe to the NFHS Network at:

- <https://www.nfhsnetwork.com/>

Bus Drivers needed

Shen Transportation Department, a Nationally recognized Quality Operation, is looking for substitute school bus drivers. No experience driving a large vehicle is necessary. They will train to help you obtain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). These substitute positions often lead to permanent work which comes with medical benefits. If you are interested, please call the transportation department at 518-881-0240.



Keeping Shen Safe...



Chango Food Service staff delivers breakfast to the classrooms on carts!



Superintendent Dr. L. Oliver Robinson tests out the temperature screening system piloted at the high school.



Shenendehowa Information Management Systems (IMS) staff members set up a Chromebook sanitizing machine in the Middle School ChromeCare Center.



All surfaces are wiped down regularly thanks to Shenendehowa's maintenance staff!

What else is new this year?

There are many new things happening at Shen...some as a result of the pandemic and others were in the works prior to COVID-19.

Elementary trimesters

Based on the recommendations of a committee that was charged with the refinement of grading practices and parent-teacher communications, the district has transitioned from quarterly to trimester report cards/grading for elementary schools only. The increase in instructional time between reporting periods provides significant opportunity for a more accurate measure of academic and social/emotional growth.

Secondary Block Scheduling

In the Fall of 2017, the district began evaluating the secondary scheduling model to determine if a different approach could improve student engagement and achievement.

After best practices research and soliciting stakeholder input, it was determined that the district would begin the process to move towards a block schedule for the 2021-22 school year. Block scheduling organizes the day into fewer, but longer, class periods allowing teachers to delve more deeply into the curriculum (depth over breadth). Then COVID-19 happened.

It was determined that a block schedule would be the most effective to manage the social distancing requirements while advancing one of the district's goals (albeit much earlier). In September, the secondary schedule transitioned from a 9-period day to an alternative block schedule with 4-periods.

Text Messaging System

The district invested in a text messaging system so that parents can receive text and voice messages during an emergency. Parents must opt-in to text messaging because text messages may be subject to fees depending on the phone carrier and plan.

Instructions for signing up for text messages...

- From your Portal app on your mobile phone click the person icon in the upper right
- Select Settings
- Next click on Contact Preferences. You will now see the list of phones on your portal account (household phone and cell phone).
- You will see boxes for message type (i.e., Priority, Attendance, General, Behavior Messenger, Emergency and Staff). We suggest that you select all the boxes next to cell phone under the Text(SMS) column. Only district officials have the ability to send text messages, so the use will be limited.
- Click the blue SAVE box at the bottom

Voice Messaging System

The system also allows for recorded voice calls, again, only by district-level officials. Right now, everyone is set to receive those, just like e-mail. We will provide directions in the future how to opt out of those if you wish to do so.



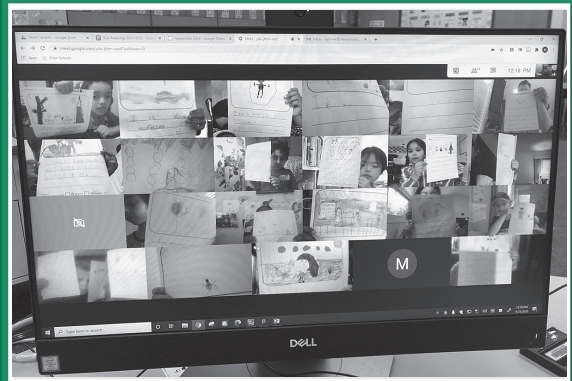
Nurses reworked their offices to create well entrances/areas and sick entrances/areas.

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Happenings at Shen...



Miss Venditti's sixth grade reading students at Acadia take a socially distanced mask and reading break.



First-grade Complete Virtual Learning (CVL) class



Shenendehowa High School is still making music!

Capital Project Updates

This summer, the district completed a number of projects that were part of the capital project approved by voters in December 2017, including:

- Exterior wayfinding and field signs as well as building/entry identifiers.
- Rt 146 entrance reconfiguration, campus map pull-off lanes, Moe Road entrance reconfiguration, secondary access to student parking at High School East, student drop-off single entry/exit for circle in front of High School East and improved parking lot for faculty parking and bus loading.
- Modernization of eight science and four prep rooms on the 2nd floor and conversion of four art rooms into three modernized science/prep room on the 1st floor of High School East.

Another part of this project is currently underway...the modernization of the high school technology wing, making it a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) Wing. The project is on schedule to be open in February 2021.

Smart Schools Project

In 2014, Governor Cuomo called for New York State to invest \$2 billion in its schools through a Smart Schools Bond Act. Shenendehowa's allocation is \$3,926,194.

- Fiber is being run through all buildings in preparation for new phone and public address (PA) systems.
- Phones are switching to internet-based system
- Phone system is being integrated into security system for emergency notifying blue lights, automatic door closures, pin pad devices and fire alarm panels.
- IT disaster recovery plan.

Happenings at Shen...



The new technology wing at Shenendehowa High School East is on track for its grand opening September 2020!



The entrance at HS East was reworked to add a welcome vestibul to provide entrance into the building during the school day.