



SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DIGEST

Evolving EDUCATION



There's no doubt that 2020 brought with it a unique set of challenges for those in the school community. From administrators to educators to nurses to custodians, responsibilities, protocols, teaching, guidelines and more have changed considerably. The staff and faculty at Smithtown Central School District have realized the need to remain fluid and adapt quickly to the ever-changing needs of the community.

to the rise in COVID-19 cases in the community. The continued safety of the students and staff is the top priority, Dr. Secaur said in a Board of Education meeting report. The current plan, if all COVID-19 metrics remain the same, is to have all secondary students back in buildings full time by March 15, slowly phasing in two grade levels over a two-week period which began on March 1.

When schools reopened in September, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mark Secaur gathered an advisory committee tasked with evaluating and discussing the district's current and future reopening plans. The goal, as outlined by Dr. Secaur, has been a safe return to fully operational schools at normal capacity. Currently, the elementary schools are operating on a normal schedule while secondary students are using a hybrid learning model. At the start of the year, students were also given the option to choose a fully remote schedule.

Each group within the school district has faced a unique set of challenges. Each area of support – whether administrators, nurses, custodians, special education teachers and others – has had to reimagine the traditional ways they conducted their daily routines. Administrators, staff and faculty have gone above and beyond to make sure their students and staff members feel safe and secure.

On the inside pages, we have outlined some examples of the ways the various groups involved in the Smithtown Central School District community have adapted during these times. Their tremendous efforts have ensured that the students in Smithtown continue to receive the highest level of education.

"The Smithtown school community has much to be proud of. We continue to meet the challenges associated with the pandemic with an eye towards what is best for the children we serve. I have been very impressed by the students, parents and our staff and their collective ability to work together to make the changes that have been necessary to ensure the safe operation of our schools during this crisis."

- Dr. Mark Secaur, Superintendent of Schools

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Shifting Gears, Pivoting Roles **Thinking Outside the Box**

Clerical/ Administrative Assistant Staff

Clerical staff and administrative assistants have taken on a more fluid role within their buildings, assisting students and staff members. This group greets students every day as they enter the buildings. Big smiles and positive interactions with students first thing each morning means that they are an integral part of daily school life for students. This year, the clerical staff has helped to support the PTA by photo documenting events within the building and intramural events. The clerical staff has also worked hard to support one another, in cases when colleagues have been quarantined, by picking up additional work and duties.

Aides/Monitors

Aides and monitors have remained flexible in their positions, allowing for daily coverage where needed for their co-workers. This group has also shifted gears a bit, increasing modeling and instruction to students on best practices for handwashing, mask-wearing and social distancing in age-appropriate terms.

Security Guards

All security guards assigned to work in schools took on additional COVID-19-related duties. They have assisted with the disbursement of Chromebooks to all students, helped in the lunch program and monitored students for safety and compliance during the intramural sports program. Security guards are aiding in guiding the traffic flow during arrivals and dismissals, which has increased due to the influx of traffic from parents driving students to school. Security guards are enforcing social distancing and mask requirements, taking temperatures, escorting students to isolation rooms and waiting for parent pickup.

Special Education

Special education teachers, assistants and aides continue to modify and adjust ways to instruct and support their students when they are learning remotely. The special education staff have collaborated to make sure students' IEPs have been followed appropriately. Using different applications, websites, streaming services and learning tools, the teachers have been able to modify curriculum in terms of how it is presented.

Nurses

The nurses throughout the district are focused on sharing in-house expertise regarding medical needs and questions with families as well as staff members. They have communicated closely with parents and staff to follow COVID-19 protocols and quarantining orders.

Pupil Personnel Services

School counselors, social workers and psychologists staff have increased collaborative efforts with every other support staff member to support the well-being of students and families in each building as everyone manages and responds to new needs in social-emotional learning, wellness and instruction. They have increased their availability to colleagues to assist in managing students' needs as they relate to the classroom experience and respond to concerns that arise from the current method of instructional delivery.

At the elementary level, the guidance program has gone completely virtual. The guidance team has created virtual lessons to deliver the elementary guidance curriculum. The secondary guidance staff have increased meetings throughout the year and added a virtual format to their existing guidance activities to accommodate all learners. Google Classrooms have been created to assist with social-emotional learning and provide mental wellness web pages so students can access support and information.

Pupil personnel services staff have increased their daily building presence to identify and proactively reach out to students and families who may need support. They play a vital role in ensuring families and staff are informed and supported in an environment that is constantly changing. Pupil personnel services staff are supporting colleagues on quarantine by taking on additional responsibilities such as covering classes and assisting students not on their caseload.

At the secondary level, counselors are creating informative virtual parent presentations covering topics such as college admissions, high school transitions, scheduling, financial aid and college admission testing. Counselors are linking up students with virtual college visits and informing families of virtual college tours.

Custodians

New guidelines and regulations due to COVID-19 have shifted the way custodians do their day-to-day duties. They have taken extra steps to maintain a clean and safe learning/work environment for all students and staff, including regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces and other enhanced day and evening cleaning routines.

Administrators

Health and safety is constantly at the forefront for the administrative teams, with student, teacher and family well-being top of mind. Teams are responsible for handling contact tracing during days, nights, weekends and holidays. Administrators have come up with out-of-the-box ways to conduct traditional events (such as virtual cultural arts, virtual holiday singalong, etc.). Districtwide meetings are now held virtually via Google Meet.

Special Areas

Special area teachers have also been creative in their endeavors. Art teachers have continued to find ways to display artwork in the community. Secondary music teachers adapted their program and developed a safe plan to bring the students together outside of the school day. This enabled the students to have a winter ensemble performance. Elementary music teachers came up with creative ways to hold socially distanced holiday singalongs.

Teachers

Teachers are hard at work balancing in-person and livestreamed instruction while also supporting students and families academically and emotionally. Teachers have embraced new technologies in hopes of engaging students with opportunities to be creative. They are regularly using programs such as Flipgrid, Kami, Nearpod and Pear Deck to offer students a unique virtual experience with traditional curriculum. Google Meet allows students to connect with their teachers for extra help and support in a way they've never done before. Utilizing Google Meet functions, such as breakout rooms and presentation mode, students can work in collaboration and share their documents both virtually and in-person.

"This has been an incredibly challenging year for just about everyone. What strikes me regularly is how hard people are working to support each other in this community. There's been so much volunteerism and care - students, parents and staff going above and beyond for almost a full year now. While walking the schools looks and feels different, the Smithtown community's love for our students has never shone stronger."

- Jennifer Bradshaw, Assistant Superintendent
for Instruction and Administration

2021-2022 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

If you have not yet enrolled your kindergarten-eligible child (children who will reach their fifth birthday on or before Dec. 1, 2021), please send an email to aanderson@smithtown.k12.ny.us in the central registration office. All registration is being handled via email.

In addition to the kindergarten registration packet, parents/guardians must provide the following information for registration:

1. Proof of child's age.
2. Parent/guardian photo identification.
3. Record from a physician with all inoculations listed with a doctor's signature or stamp.
4. Proof of residency.
5. Proof of custody or guardianship.

For more information, please see the SCSD central registration site:
http://www.smithtown.k12.ny.us/district/central_registration.

TRANSPORTATION NOTICE FOR PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL STUDENTS

Any returning students who have no changes from last year may fill out the form on the district's website at www.smithtown.k12.ny.us and mail it as directed on the application before the April 1, 2021, deadline.

All newly registering students or any returning students who have changes to their school or address will need to register in person with the Smithtown Central School District to be considered for transportation, receive textbooks and/or other educational services.

To meet the April 1, 2021, transportation application deadline, registration for new private and parochial students is taking place at the Joseph M. Barton Building, 26 New York Avenue, Smithtown. Registration will be held Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding transportation, please call the transportation department at (631) 382-4100. Should you have questions regarding registration, necessary documentation or any other concerns, please call the central registration office at (631) 382-2024.



Community Resources

Emergency Mental Health Services

- COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline: (844) 863-9314
- DASH - 24-hour Mental Health Crisis Hotline (24-hour Psychiatric Mobile Crisis Team): (631) 952-3333
- Stony Brook Hospital - CPEP (24-hour psychiatric ER): (631) 444-6050
- Response 24-hour Emergency and Referral Hotline for all services - as well as 24-hour free confidential counseling: (631) 751-7423
- Family Service League - Provides mental health services, food, shelter and youth and family services: (631) 427-3700; for emergencies: (631) 952-3333
- New Horizons Counseling Center in Smithtown - Provides counseling to youth and families on a long-term basis: (631) 656-9550
- Suicide Hotline: (800) 273-8255
- Help and Free Counseling for Victims of Crime, Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse: (631) 360-3730
- Long Island LGBT Network: (631) 665-2300
- Suffolk County Coalition Against Domestic Violence: (631) 666-8833
- Child Abuse and Neglect: (800) 342-3720
- Serenity Lodge Group - 24-hour addictions helpline for people seeking help with substance abuse or mental health addictions: (855) 942-3414
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration - For people without private insurance who are seeking help with addictions: (800) 662-4357

Medical

- New York State COVID-19 Testing Appointment Hotline (on the South P Lot of the West campus): (888) 364-3065
- The Dolan Family Health Center - Low-cost medical clinic (help with Medicaid applications to pay for treatment): (631) 425-5250
- Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine Dental Care Center - Low-cost dental clinic: (631) 632-8989

Emergency Food/Clothing:

- Long Island Cares - Provides free food to be picked up or dropped off: (631) 582-3663 on weekends or emergency hours call (631) 582-3663, ext. 109

- Smithtown Emergency Food Pantry: (631) 265-7676
- The Salvation Army of East Northport: (631) 368-1170
- The Salvation Army of Riverhead: (631) 727-3338
- Smithtown Children's Foundation - Charity to help Smithtown families: (516) 835-1219

Housing and Utility Services

- Emergency Housing - Suffolk County Department of Social Services until 3:30 p.m.: (631) 854-9547; from 4:30 p.m. throughout the night - Suffolk County DSS Emergency housing hotline: (631) 854-9100
- United Way 2-1-1 Emergency Helpline - Mental health, financial assistance and children's services: (888) 774-7633
- Social Services of Suffolk County - Smithtown Center - (Medicaid and financial assistance - SNAP): (631) 853-8714
- Emergency heat for your home: (800) 342-3009, ext. 3
- PSEG Long Island advocacy and assistance with electricity bills and heat: (516) 454-4331
- Free Optimum Wi-Fi: (866) 200-9522 or speak to your child's school counselor about your need for Wi-Fi or Chromebooks or about any technology problems: (631) 382-2000
- Verizon - Assistance for paying Verizon bill during pandemic: (800) 837-4966
- Child Care Council of Suffolk: (631) 462-0303
- Affordable Housing Rentals - Housing Help Resources: (631) 754-0373

Services for Immigration/Spanish-Speaking Families

- Catholic Charities Immigrant Services - Immigration problems: (631) 789-5210
- Adelante of Suffolk County - Assistance for Spanish-speaking people with all services: (631) 434-3481
- Legal Aid Society of Suffolk County - Low-cost legal services: (631) 853-5212
- Hispanic Counseling Center: (516) 538-2613

If you need help with translation or interpreting, please contact Diane Keating at dkeating@smithtown.k12.ny.us or call (631) 382-3068.

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY DIGEST

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