



Smithtown Central School District

26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, New York 11787

Mark Secaur, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
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August 29, 2021

Dear Smithtown Community,

We are excited that the new school year is once again upon us and we will soon be returning to in-person instruction. Throughout the summer, the district awaited guidance as we planned for the reopening of our schools for the 2021-2022 school year. Our planning was guided by the following priorities:

- Health and safety of our students, faculty and staff
- Commitment to remain open in-person and full time
- Return to all in school and after school activities
- Adherence to public health guidelines

As you are likely aware, the New York State Department of Health has announced that **effective immediately**, in accordance with the Commissioner’s Determination issued pursuant to 10 NYCRR 2.60, any person over the age of 2 (including all students, personnel, teachers, administrators, contractors, and visitors) must wear masks at all times indoors in P-12 school buildings, regardless of vaccination status. This mandate is in keeping with the guidance provided by the [Suffolk County Department of Health Services \(SCDHS\)](#), [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#) and [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\)](#). The goal of the mask mandate is to limit the spread of Covid-19 infection and preserve in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible. A failure to impose mandatory masking would have necessitated a significantly increased need to quarantine students when a positive case occurs. We have created an infographic that we believe strongly illustrates this point. It can be accessed [HERE](#). Simply put, a decision to allow for parental choice would have resulted in the interruption of in-person instruction for a great many students.

Our planning is aligned with the CDC recommendations and the table below was designed to serve as an overview of the major changes we will make to our Reopen Plan for 2021-2022. The full plan will be posted on the district website in the very near future.

Guidance Topics	Reopen Plan Changes
Physical Distancing	Desks will be placed a minimum of 3 feet apart whenever practicable.
Masks	Masks are required for all students, faculty, staff and visitors when indoors regardless of vaccination status. Masks are also required for all individuals when on a school bus. Mask breaks will be provided. While recommended, masks are not required while outside on school grounds.
In-Person Instruction	All students will be expected to attend school in-person, five days a week. We will be returning to our regular, pre-pandemic schedules at all schools.
Remote Instruction	Students who are medically unable to attend school in-person will have an opportunity to attend the Western Suffolk BOCES Regional Virtual School.

Guidance Topics	Reopen Plan Changes
Locker Use	Students will be able to access their lockers, but they will be encouraged to do so quickly and not congregate with others.
Extracurricular Activities	All extracurricular activities can resume with universal masking and social distancing precautions in place.
Health Screening	Parents will complete the health screening questionnaire one time prior to the beginning of school confirming their daily responsibility and understanding to keep their child home if they display any of the noted COVID-19 symptoms. The questionnaire will be completed through the Parent Portal in PowerSchool.
Contact Tracing & Quarantine	<p>Positive cases must remain in isolation for a minimum of 10 days from symptom onset, or test date if asymptomatic. Contact tracing will be conducted with the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masked students who are at least 3 feet from a positive case who was also masked will not be required to quarantine. • Masked students less than 3 feet from a positive case for more than 15 minutes will be required to quarantine. • Adults should maintain 6 feet of distance between each other and students whenever possible. • Vaccinated individuals who are considered a “close contact” should be tested 3-5 days after exposure, but can remain in school if symptom free. • Live-streamed instruction will be provided for students who are quarantined.
District Reporting	Parents should contact the Principal and/or school nurse immediately to report positive cases.
Vaccinations	Vaccinations are not required for students, but the governor has announced plans for mandatory vaccinations, or an option of weekly testing for school staff. Information related to the COVID-19 vaccine can be found here .
Building Visitors & Events	Visitors must comply with all protocols that are in place, including masking whenever requesting access to any school facility. Please be prepared to complete a COVID health screening via an online questionnaire through the use of a QR code. Health screenings for all buildings are available here .

Without question, public health officials, policy makers and educators have been faced with a series of difficult decisions on the issues surrounding the pandemic, but please know that the district’s overarching goal is to preserve in-person instruction five days a week for all of our students and we feel this plan puts us in the best position to do that. Should you have questions related to this letter or the plan itself, please submit them to information@smithtown.k12.ny.us We will add them to a “Frequently Asked Questions” document that we will place on the Reopening Information page of our website.

We appreciate your support and cooperation with our health and safety protocols that are established to ensure that we continue to provide in-person instruction in a safe and healthy environment.

Sincerely,



Mark Secaur, Ed.D.
Superintendent