District Plan to safely open schools in the fall during COVID-19 pandemic
Dear Parents,

We hope you are all enjoying your summer with many opportunities to spend time together with family and friends. As we prepare for the reopening of schools, we want to keep you informed of the planning process, state accountability requirements, and expectations moving forward to accommodate parent concerns through the continued COVID-19 situation. Please know that the requirements for schools and reopening are continually changing, and as such, plans made today may need to be adjusted to align with state and health department requirement changes.

We recognize the importance of students returning to school with as much normalcy as possible to help facilitate the learning environment. Currently, we are planning a REGULAR school opening on August 20 as scheduled. We hope to have all students return to school with in-person instruction while taking precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, we will provide at-home learning options as well to accommodate parents and students who choose to remain at home.

In cooperation with the Utah State School Board and the local health department requirements, South Sanpete School District has created a plan for the reentry of school on August 20. We encourage parents and students to review policies for the reopening of schools in the fall. The plan is available on the district webpage at https://ssanpete.org/ and a summary is included with this letter. School districts are required to follow directives from the Governor’s Office, Public Health Departments, and the Utah State Board of Education when preparing plans for reopening schools.

- We recognize the conversations regarding face-covering requirements can be controversial on both sides of the issue. In an effort to protect over 500 teachers and employees (including some who are in the high-risk category) and over 3,200 students in the SSSD schools, we ask for your support to provide a safe working environment and protect ALL employees and students and for masks to be worn at school. Please view the public health order and FAQ links below:
  - https://www.ssanpete.org/images/FAQs_Face_Covering_Order_FINAL.pdf

What we will do as school and district personnel:
- Mitigate risk/spread by encouraging physical distancing, proper hand hygiene, sanitization, face coverings, hallway flow adjustments, the spacing of students in classrooms, and common areas.
- Work with parents and students individually to provide opportunities for students who may need accommodations relating to underlying health issues.
• Be aware of student illness/symptoms and inform parent/guardian immediately if a student exhibits symptoms.
• Monitor positive COVID-19 cases and its spread in South Sanpete School District, and follow the recommendation of the health department regarding school dismissals or additional in-school adjustments.
• Continue to implement digital curriculum (via iPad and Canvas, etc.) to allow parents one central landing place to access learning resources when needed.
• Modify our delivery of instructional materials to ensure the health and well-being of students and staff.

What you can do as a parent:
• Understand that these guidelines are determined by health, educational, and civic professionals who care for your child’s health as it relates to the physical environment, time spent in school, potential risk factors relating to students, faculty, and staff.
• Monitor your child’s health and keep them home if they have symptoms such as fever, cough, cold, or flu symptoms.
• Communicate with your child that the changes they may see at school are put in place to preserve their health and the health of others.
• Send your child to school with a face covering and encourage them to wear it as required.
• Be adaptable to change. As we found out last spring, things can evolve quickly, which precipitates the need to be flexible as schedule changes and school closures may be unavoidable.
• Speak with your local building administrator if your student needs alternative learning options.
• Know that you, as the parent/guardian, have the right to keep your child home at any time as you assess risk for your student.

Please understand that procedural processes and programs may vary from school to school, depending on their unique situation and circumstances as they address solutions to complex issues. Building administrators will communicate directly to you through email, voicemail, and text messages.

As an additional reference to parents, South Sanpete School District has included a Reopening Summary to help assist as a quick reference for questions you may have. We are making every effort to return to school in the fall and provide an exceptional learning experience for all of our students.

We appreciate your support throughout this process.

Respectfully,

Ralph C. Squire
Superintendent
Please read through this material carefully and take the time to talk with your children about the information and how it relates to them. Being prepared will help them be more comfortable going into this new school year.

South Sanpete School District will work with the local health department to establish a plan to respond to confirmed cases and outbreaks if school dismissal occurs.

**Faculty & Staff**
- Employee safety is a priority. Employees may address any concerns with the point of contact at their school
- Point of contact at each school will be the local building administrator
- Professional development will be provided to educate and train on the district’s reopening protocol and action plans
- Employees will be directed to wear face coverings on buses and in schools, when appropriate
- Employees will receive ongoing training on virtual learning

**Transportation**
- South Sanpete School District will continue to pick up and drop off at regular stops
- Bus drivers, students, and staff will wear face coverings in buses in accordance with USBE requirements
- Students will have assigned seating on buses, where possible
- Students from the same household are encouraged to sit together
- Bus drivers will sanitize their buses after routes/trips
- Hand sanitizer will be available on school buses

**Face Masks**
- In an effort to protect over 500 teachers and employees (including some who are in the high-risk category) and over 3,200 students in the SSSD schools, we ask for your support to provide a safe working environment and protect **ALL** employees and students and for masks to be worn at school.
  
  Please view the public health order and FAQ links below:
  
  - [https://www.ssanpete.org/images/FAQs_Face_Covering_Order_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ssanpete.org/images/FAQs_Face_Covering_Order_FINAL.pdf)
Entry/Exit Points

- Entry/Exit flow paths will be designated to minimize congestion and will use outside access points where possible
- Hand sanitizer will be made available upon the entry/exit of schools

Visitors, Non-Regular Staff, and Volunteers

- All visitors will be required to sign in
- The number of visitors/volunteers who enter the building will be minimized and might not be allowed into classrooms
- All visitors admitted into the buildings (not just dropping off or picking up items in the office) will be required to wear a face-covering

School Schedules

- Educational choices available to you: face-to-face and online/at-home options. Please speak with your local building administrator if you have extenuating circumstances
- Regular
  South Sanpete District plans to open schools on a regular class schedule, including the safety measures listed in the SSSD plan for monitoring, face coverings, social distancing, transportation, and lunch, etc. Seat students 6 feet apart where possible; otherwise, students should be seated as far apart as reasonably practicable
- Modified
  We will go to a modified schedule only if 6 feet student spacing is necessary or mandated. Elementary and secondary students would have a split schedule: no school-wide assemblies or social gatherings. Schools will adjust schedules based on the local health department recommendations
Classrooms
• Student desks and seating will be distanced as far apart as possible
• Employees and students will be asked to wear face coverings in the classroom
• Teachers will watch for student symptoms
• Proper handwashing and hygiene will be taught to the students
• Classrooms will be sanitized frequently

Unique Courses with Higher Risk of Spread
• South Sanpete School District will identify courses that would be more at risk (such as choir, physical education, weight lifting, CTE, and band), and work with the local health department to mitigate the risks
• Six foot spacing for students where possible and utilize alternative spaces
• Student numbers may be limited in order to allow student spacing
• Classrooms will be sanitized frequently

Special Ed, Counseling, Speech
• Students will be required to wear face coverings; however, face shields will be used, where necessary in order to provide appropriate special education services when masks cannot be worn

Transitions
• South Sanpete School District will identify high traffic areas and apply signage to accommodate directional flow patterns
• Staff and students are required to wear masks during transition times
• Minimize the length of transition times when possible, depending on the school
• Airflow to buildings will be increased, if possible
• Exterior doors will be utilized when possible to minimize the congregating of students
• Signage to encourage physical distancing and hygiene
• Faculty will monitor for symptomatic students
• Hand sanitizing stations will be made available
• Water bottle usage is encouraged to avoid high touch surfaces

Cafeterias
• Foodservice workers will wear face coverings
• Students will be spaced as far apart as possible
• Staggered lunch schedules will be used depending on the school
• Marked lunch line spaces and serving line flow paths will be designated when needed
• Where possible, lunch will be provided in the classrooms or have assigned seats in the lunchroom
• Outside eating spaces will be available and utilized
• Self-serve salad bars and buffets will be removed
• Disposable plates and trays may be used
• Grab and go lunches may be used
• Social distance signage will be posted
• Hand sanitizers will be made available prior to and after eating lunch
• High-touch areas will be disinfected regularly

Recess and Playground
• Playground area may be limited or closed according to the school COVID status
  Playgrounds and recess will be managed with health and safety principles and requirements in place, as needed, in consultation with local health departments
• Masks are not required, but encouraged, on playground as long as proper 6’ distancing is followed
• The number of students will be limited on the playground at the same time
• Playground equipment will be sanitized regularly

Extracurricular Activities
• We will follow the UHSAA (Utah High School Activities Association) guidelines
• For UHSAA information, visit: https://www.uhsaa.org
Restrooms

- Restrooms designated for age groups, when possible
- Hygiene signage will be displayed on the restroom doors
- Deep cleaning will be performed regularly

Group Gatherings & Assemblies

- Group gatherings will be organized with health and safety principles and requirements in place and, as needed, in consultation with local health departments
- Large group in-person gatherings will be limited (assemblies, recitals, dances, etc.).
- Electronic broadcasts will be used to limit large group gatherings

Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Custodians and staff will frequently sanitize high touch areas, restrooms, weight rooms, locker rooms, and playground equipment throughout the day. The restrooms will be deep cleaned daily
- Employees will be trained to use disinfectant certified by the EPA to kill bacteria, viruses, and COVID-19

Plan Changes

- This plan is subject to change depending on changes in guidelines or requirements from the State of Utah or the local health department. We will post any changes and continue to share information with you on the district website: https://ssanpete.org/