



Smithton R-VI School District

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Dear Smithton R-VI Parents, Staff and Community:

We hope everyone is having a safe summer and are ready for the start of another school year. This week a task force made up of staff members met for a second time in order to develop plans to reopen the Smithton R-VI Schools. We appreciate your feedback and look forward to cooperating with everyone in order to serve our community safely and effectively. Please watch for additional opportunities to provide input during this process.

As we develop this comprehensive plan for reopening our schools and a return to learning in our community we are in frequent communication with local health officials and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Our challenge is to take all of this guidance and put it into a plan that works the best for our students and offers the least compromise to learning while keeping staff, students and families safe.

Our final task force meeting will be held on July 30. Our goal will be to share the complete plan following that meeting. The following is a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) that attempts to summarize this group's interpretation of this guidance as it relates to education at Smithton R-VI:

How will sanitation look different in the Smithton R-VI Schools during the 2020-21 school year? Specific cleaning schedules will be followed for both custodians and teachers including increased frequency and intensity of sanitation. There will be ample cleaning supplies available for classroom and building use. Note: There will be a plan in place in case of a COVID-19 case within the school.

How will social distancing be addressed during school hours? We will maintain social distancing standards as feasible, encouraging 3-6 feet of spacing and increased personal hygiene and hand sanitation. Work areas will be regularly sanitized following each use. Masks will be encouraged in times where social distancing is challenging. Students are allowed to carry backpacks to limit locker usage and practice social distancing.

What learning platforms will be utilized for the 2020-21 school year? While students are in attendance, we will continue to use the most effective educational strategies. In the event that learning will have to occur at a distance, we will continue to utilize Google Classroom as our primary digital platform. Please take the opportunity to familiarize yourself with Google Classroom and the applicable passwords.

Will there be any change in our school calendar?

No, there will be no change to our school calendar. First day of school will be August 26.

What staff safety measures will be in place?

Staff are encouraged to wear masks, when working closely with children and other staff, however they are not required. Staff will be trained on signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and encouraged to remain at home when not feeling well, or when their personal risk level is high.

How will students be held accountable for work?

Regardless of the setting (in class or distance), student performance will be measured the same as in past years. Modifications and accommodations will be utilized on a case by case basis.

What reasons could cause us to shift to distance learning?

A shift to distance learning could be a result of a drastic decrease in staff and/or student attendance, recommended quarantine of students and/or staff as well as State and local requirements.

Will the school provide transportation services?

We will continue to provide morning and afternoon bus service through our partnership with Apple Bus Company. There will be an emphasis on sanitation, personal hygiene and limited exposure. Boys and Girls Club will still be available after school to provide child care and they are partnering with us to keep our students safe.

How can parents assist us in our plan to return to learn?

- As we know, information and data about COVID-19 is continually changing. Please begin to think of the possibility that we may need to shift to distance learning. This shift could be short or long term and parents may not always have ample notice. As each family's situation is different, you may need to think about having an alternate plan readily available.
- Be aware of and monitor your child/children's possible symptoms and do not send them to school if they exhibit any signs of illness.
- Once school begins, make sure we have the most up-to-date contact information on file so that, if needed, we can reach you.
- Please continue to respond to any future district communications in a prompt manner.

As always, we appreciate your interest in Smithton R-VI Schools and your continued support as we face this challenging time. Please understand that these decisions are based on guidance from the Center for Disease Control, Pettis County Health Department, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, local school leaders and this task force, and are subject to change based on updated information from any or all of these groups.

Sincerely,

Smithton R-VI Administration
Reopening Taskforce