

October 8, 2020

Dear Southwest Schools Community:

It is my sincere hope that this communication finds you well! I am excited to share information regarding Southwest Schools' plan to welcome students back onto campus in phases.

While our opening of school has been very non-traditional (i.e. 100% virtual), I hope that all of our students and families are becoming acclimated to the new learning platforms. We acknowledge that there have been some hiccups along the way. Please know that we are working diligently to provide quality instruction to all students. I can say with certainty that our teachers and administrators continue striving to perfect this new mode of learning.

The information that I am sharing is important to all students and families as we move to phasing in face-to-face (F-2-F) instruction. This information is based on guidance and regulations from both the state and Harris County. All decisions are made with safety as our first priority. The following is the basis for our reopening plan:

- **Capacity:** All campuses will reopen with 25% capacity (based on our Certificate of Occupancy).
- **Phased in F-2-F:** Students returning for F-2-F instruction will be phased in by grade level and designated populations while maintaining 25% capacity and social distancing, as follows:
  - **Elementary:** grades K-2
  - **Middle:** grades 6-7
  - **High:** grades 9-10
  - **Nehemiah:** grades 6-7
  - **Archway:** by current student plan

ELEMENTARY DESIGNATED POPULATIONS\*

Elementary campuses will use Harris County Public Health's (HCPH) list of "priority populations" #1-9 and campuses will prioritize students who fall into multiple categories.

SECONDARY DESIGNATED POPULATIONS\*

**1.** SpEd **2.** Homeless **3.** Students not engaging in online work (attendance & grades)

Secondary campuses will use HCPH's list of "priority populations" after the above three designated populations are filled.

- **Transportation:** Self-transportation is the safest form of transportation and is highly recommended when possible. District transportation will require physical distancing (every other seat) except for siblings who can sit together. Students will be required to wear a mask, sanitize their hands upon boarding, and sit one per seat by the window. Transportation will be first come, first served.
- **Meals:** Breakfast and lunch will be provided for F-2-F in the classrooms. Weekly Grab-n-Go (Mondays) will continue for students who are learning virtually.



- **Classroom ventilation:** Air purifiers with HEPA filters have been ordered for classrooms, and classroom doors will remain open during instruction.
- **Room arrangement:** Classrooms will be reconfigured to allow for social/physical distancing.
- **Cleaning protocols:** All campuses will be thoroughly cleaned each day with an emphasis on cleaning high traffic and high touch areas. Cleaning staff have been trained on thorough cleaning techniques and will use approved disinfectant products.
- **Screenings, masks and sanitizer dispensers:** Students and staff will be screened prior to entering the building. Students and staff are required to wear masks while on campus. Students and staff will receive a reusable mask, and disposable masks will be provided as needed. Hand sanitizer stations will be located in multiple areas throughout campuses. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be installed in all classrooms. *If your child exhibits COVID-19 symptoms while on campus, you will be contacted and must pick-up your child immediately.*
- **Schedules:** Principals will communicate the schedule for your campus for students attending F-2-F and students remaining online.
- **Campuses with afterschool programs:** Afterschool programs will remain 100% virtual at this time.
- **Early dismissal:** Early dismissal will resume per the approved academic calendar when F-2-F resumes. Please see the Southwest Schools Academic Calendar for 2020-2021. Yellow highlighted days are early dismissal. Early dismissal days apply to students in virtual instruction.
- **Changing between virtual and F-2-F Instruction (capacity and designated populations still apply):**
  - Changing from **virtual to F-2-F** is only allowed per grading cycle and selection must be made 3 weeks prior to grading cycle change.
  - Changing from **F-2-F to virtual** is allowed anytime. However, if a student changes from F-2-F to virtual, the F-2-F slot will be allocated to another student who is on the waiting list for F-2-F.

This summarized information highlights our **Southwest Schools Reopening Plan**. The complete plan with details can be accessed on our website [www.swschools.org](http://www.swschools.org). Additionally, all campuses will communicate directly with families regarding specifics of their campus. At this time, we anticipate returning October 19, 2020, per our original reopening plan, and we are making preparations and planning as such. However, I will make a final decision Wednesday, October 14, 2020, based on several indicators reported by Harris County's Metrics for Success.

All of us look forward to resuming F-2-F instruction. We know that our students miss being on campus, and we miss them! Thank you for your consistent support as we navigate the difficulties that COVID-19 has forced upon our learning community! Together we will get through this and eventually we will return to a more normal educational experience.

Warmest regards,

Janelle James  
Superintendent of Schools

