

Bessie Weller Elementary Health & Safety Planning



The Importance of Reopening America's Schools this Fall

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/reopening-schools.html>)

The CDC is strongly recommending that schools reopen with mitigation strategies. “Aside from a child’s home, no other setting has more influence on a child’s health and well-being than their school. The in-person school environment does the following:”

1. provides educational instruction;
2. supports the development of social and emotional skills;
3. creates a safe environment for learning;
4. addresses nutritional needs; and
5. facilitates physical activity.

Parents are understandably concerned about the safety and well-being of their children at school, so I want to share the work we are doing to maintain their health and safety when we return to the building.



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Educational Instruction

Teachers have engaged in learning through our SCS University, in areas such as

- Best practices and structures for virtual learning
- Building positive relationships and supporting students
- Providing direct and explicit instruction
- Gathering formative assessment
- Differentiating Instruction

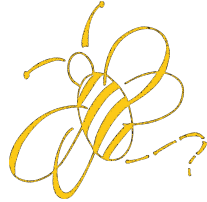
Training will include our new teachers and our instructional assistants.

Team leaders across the division have started thoughtful planning of instructional units

- Instructional time in school will focus on literacy/reading & math.
- Teachers are currently planning instruction to focus on the most essential learning standards.

Planning has also started for at-home learning days

- For the three at-home learning days, students will be provided learning activities for science and social studies, as well as supplemental reading and math work.
- Students will have access to online platforms to support learning:
 - Math – IXL, Reflex
 - Reading – Squiggle Park (K), Raz Kids (1-5)



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Educational Instruction (cont.)

Specials are important, too!

Students will still receive 45 minutes of Specials time each day.

- The Specials rotation will include Technology, Art/Music, and Library.
- PE and Counseling have been take out of the rotation...more on that to come!



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Social and Emotional Skill Development

Increased Time for Morning Meeting

Instruction will start at 9:00...during homeroom students and teachers will:

- Eat breakfast
- Organize themselves for the day
- Engage in important social and emotional activities to help students build relationships with their teachers and each other, and to re-adjust to being in school

Removed Counselor from the Specials Rotation

This leaves Mr. Chiles' schedule more open to work with students and families throughout the day.

Training for Teachers

We will be reviewing social and emotional strategies (such as morning meeting and circles) with teachers, and supplying them with suggested activities to use in supporting your children.

And because we see the importance of this as students return to school after five months, we are looking at other staff who can help Mr. Chiles, Ms. McGrath, and myself in supporting your children with their social and emotional needs.



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Safety

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- Staff will teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available.
- Students (and staff) will be encouraged/reminded to cover coughs/sneezes with a tissue, or to cough in their elbow.
- Staff will increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students.
- We will post signs in classrooms, hallways, etc. to promote proper handwashing, social distancing, and use of face coverings. Morning announcements will also be used to remind students and staff of important safety protocols.

Social Distancing

- Students will be socially distanced (at least 6 feet) from each other in the classroom.
- Each student will have his/her own desk...more on this to come.
- Hallways will have important signs as reminders:
 - Floor signs to designate 6 feet social distancing
 - Wall arrows to show traffic flow
- Student movement throughout the day will be minimal.



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Safety

Cloth Face Coverings

- Staff will teach and reinforce use of face coverings, and remind students not to touch the face covering.
- Face coverings will be worn by staff and students when physical distancing is not possible.
- Students will wear a face covering at the bus stop and on the bus, and at all times throughout the day (including in hallways) until their teacher instructs them to remove it.
- Face coverings will be kept in a safe, clean place when students are seated at their desks. (We will provide bags for this.)
- We do encourage all students to have their own face coverings, but we will have face coverings available for students who forget theirs or who need a replacement.

Adequate Supplies

- Staunton City Schools has ordered and will supply teachers adequate supplies to promote safe classrooms, including hand soap/sanitizer, paper towels, disinfectant sprays/wipes, extra face coverings, trash cans with lids, etc.
- The student supply list includes a box of tissues, and it's important that students each bring their own box of tissues as we are discouraging shared items/touching of items.



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Safety (cont.)

Shared Objects (including Water Fountains)

- We are eliminating sharing of items among students.
 - Each student's belongings will be kept in their desk or in their backpack (which they will hang on the back of their chair) so they are separated from others' and not shared.
 - It is important that all students come to school prepared with each item on the supply list.
- Students will use their own electronic device each day...these will not be shared.
- Any shared items, like books, will be quarantined and/or sanitized before other students are allowed to use them.
- Students should also plan to bring their own water bottle as all water fountains will be shut off or covered, with the exception of the three water bottle filling stations. (We will also have back-up water bottles for students who forget or lose theirs.)



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Safety (cont.) – Safe Seating Arrangements

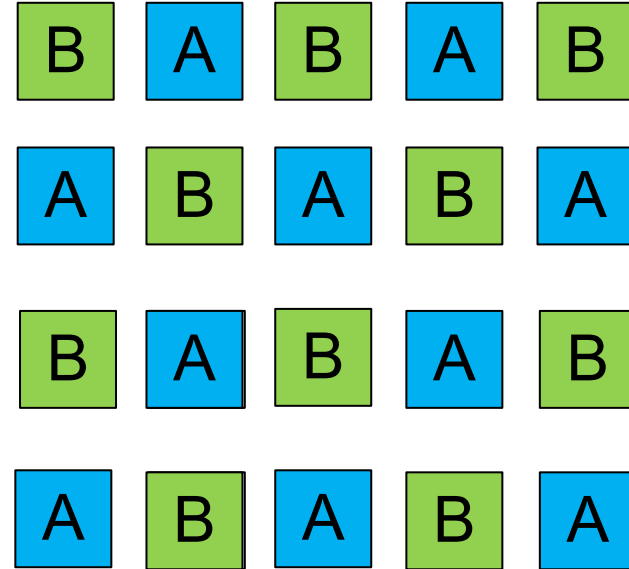
Modified Layouts

- Desks will be situated so that each child will be socially distance at least 6 feet, with all desks facing the same direction.
- Most other/extra furniture has been removed from the classroom to provide students this space.
- Rugs and pillows have been removed – students will not gather together in these areas.
- Each student will have his/her own desk to create personal space
 - They can leave crayons, scissors, notebooks, etc. in their desks.
 - They will put backpacks with other items on back of their chairs.

Teachers will also be encouraged to hold class meetings outside, when feasible.

- Students are encouraged to bring a small towel/blanket/sheet to sit on to mark their personal space. This needs to be something that can easily fit in their backpack with their other belongings.

Students will have assigned seats on the bus for social distancing.



Safety (cont.)

Shared Spaces

Cafeteria: We will not be using the cafeteria for meals (the cafeteria will be set up with large tables for instructional assistants to work with students while maintaining social distancing)

Playgrounds: Students will not be using the playground equipment, nor any other shared equipment.

Library: While the library will be closed to students, Mrs. Thomas will deliver books students want to sign out during her Specials time with them. When books are returned they will be quarantined before they are put back in circulation.

Restrooms:

- Hallway restrooms (grades 3-5) will be supervised by staff for numbers (no more than one student at a time) and they will be sanitized after each use.
- Classroom restrooms (grades K-2) will be sanitized after each use.



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Safety (cont.)

Cleaning and Disinfection

- All classrooms will have sanitizing materials/products so that frequently touched surfaces within the classroom (door handles, desks, sinks, etc.) can be frequently cleaned and disinfected.
- Use of shared objects will be limited to things like books – any items that have to be shared will be cleaned and/or quarantined between uses.
- Custodians will have a regular schedule for increased cleaning/disinfection; trash removal; etc.
- Restrooms, whether in the hallway or the classroom, will be disinfected after each use.

Maintaining Healthy Operations

- All students will have their temperature screened upon arrival at school.
 - Car riders who have a temperature of 100.4 or greater will return home with their parents; the school nurse will follow up with parent(s) to advise on next steps.
 - Bus riders who arrive with a temperature of 100.4 or greater will be escorted to a quarantine room (see below) for further evaluation by the school nurse, Mrs. Pyles.

The conference room will be set up as a quarantine area for bus riders who arrive at school with symptoms or students who start to present symptoms during the day.

- This allows these students to be separate from other students who visit the clinic.
- Cots will be set up for students, with large cardboard barriers separating them.



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Safety (cont.)

Maintaining Healthy Operations (cont.)

Staff Training

All staff will be trained on safety protocols, cleaning procedures, and recognition of signs and symptoms.

Social Distancing will be monitored during arrival and dismissal

- Staff members will be stationed in each hall during morning arrival to make sure students are following the traffic flow and maintaining social distancing.
- During car rider dismissal, staff will be in hallways to monitor for social distancing.
 - Students will be socially distanced while waiting to be called to their vehicle.
- Bus riders will be escorted to their bus by the classroom teachers in order to maintain and monitor social distancing.



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Nutrition

Cafeteria: We will not be using the cafeteria for meals (the cafeteria will be set up with large tables for instructional assistants to work with students while maintaining social distancing)

- Students will eat breakfast and lunch at their desks in the classrooms (breakfast will be grab-and-go when students arrive; staff will deliver sealed lunches to classrooms, wearing masks and gloves).
- After each meal, teachers and students will wipe down/sanitize student desks.
- Trash will be moved to large trash cans in the halls for custodial disposal.

This small group setting also promotes further social and emotional support for our students.

Meals for At-home Learning Days

- The School Nutrition Department is planning to provide students a meal to take home for their at-home learning days. Students will pick these meals up at dismissal on the way to their bus/car.
- Further communication will come out on how families who chose virtual learning can arrange for their meals.



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Physical Activity

To promote social distancing and a safe learning environment, student movement around the building will be minimal. Most of the time, students will be in the classroom in their personal space, so we realize the importance of prioritizing some physical activity.

PE/Recess: All students will get two sections of PE/Recess each day

- Coach Beyeler was taken out of the Specials rotation so he can provide students with this physical activity every day.
- Activities will take place outside, with social distancing and without any shared equipment.
- When weather is bad we will use the gym, which is large enough to maintain social distancing.



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CDC Safety Recommendations for Administrators

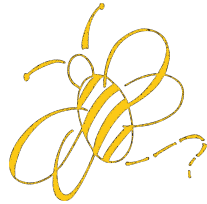
Recommendation 1: Approaches to **scheduling** that fit the needs of your school and using unused or underutilized **school spaces**, including outdoor spaces, to **increase classroom space and facilitate social distancing**

Recommendation 2: Implementing multiple **strategies in school to prevent the spread** of COVID-19 (e.g., **social distancing, cloth face coverings, hand hygiene**, etc.)

Recommendation 3: Best practices for your school and community to **communicate, educate, and reinforce** personal protective behaviors to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in school and in the community

Recommendation 4: Integrating strategies to reduce COVID-19 transmission into co-curricular and extracurricular activities (e.g., **limiting participation in activities where social distancing is not feasible**)

Recommendation 5: **Planning and preparing for when someone gets sick**



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How can families help with keeping our students & staff safe and healthy?

- Promote a healthy lifestyle at home – exercising, getting sleep, eating healthy, etc.
- Ensure your child is healthy when coming to school. (Please consider taking your child's temperature before leaving the house.)
- Provide your child with a clean face covering for each school day.
- Keep your child at home when not feeling well (and/or has a temperature of 100.4 or higher) and notify the school.
- Be sure the school has your current contact info.
- Notify the school if you or someone in your home has been exposed to or is diagnosed with COVID-19.



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Final Thoughts...

Parent Newsletter: A parent newsletter will be mailed to all families this Wednesday, July 29, so please be on the lookout for this. It will include

- Teacher assignments
- Information on Orientation Nights
- Detailed rules and procedures that will be different this year to promote a safe learning environment for our students and staff
- [Elementary School Supply List](#) (Belonging students left last year are still bagged at the school; parents may pick them up any day between 7:30 and 3:30, or on their Orientation Night.)

I realize parent communications include, and will continue to include, a lot of new information and procedures, and I understand much of this can be overwhelming. Please remember that our primary goal is the safety and well-being of your children, and the protocols are in place to keep them, our staff, and you safe and healthy. We will continue to work through this together and do all we can to support our students and make this a great year!

We hope your families remain well!



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