

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This FAQ will be updated on an at least weekly basis, using different colored font so the community will know what is new information.

Hybrid Model / Student Learning:

Question	Answer
<p>Why is South Jefferson going with a hybrid model of only 1/3 students?</p>	<p>Other districts in our area have the facility capacity to have more than 1/3 of their students attend on any given day. Some of our smaller schools have buildings meant to house 600 or more students and their student population is far less than that.</p> <p>Some larger districts have 20 to 30 percent of parents opting not to send their children. In contrast, South Jefferson has only about 8 to 10 percent of students whose parents will not have them come to school this fall.</p> <p>Having 1/3 of the students in on any given day will allow for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A phased-in approach with a concentration on health, cleaning, and safety protocols. • Required social distancing. • Small learning groups to help better identify potential learning gaps from the spring. • Meet the requirement of only having appropriately certified teachers teach our students. • Prioritizing social and emotional supports as all adapt to this new normal. • Small group, targeted instruction. • Establishing and teaching required health and safety protocols and routines. • Decreasing density and congregation. • All students to be seated for instruction without having to wear a mask for the majority of the day.
<p>What will happen when my child is not attending on their assigned day?</p>	<p>There is an increased focus on accountability this fall. Students will be engaged in remote learning. This will be Standards based, new learning along with the review and skills maintenance. The remote learning will use multiple mediums to engage students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every student will receive a device. Children in grades PreK through 1st grade will receive an iPad. Children in 2nd through 12th grade will receive a Chromebook. • All students will be rostered for each class in Google Classroom. The Google Suite for Education and Class Link will be the primary platform to engage students during remote learning. • School staff will be checking in on students daily, prioritizing those who have yet to engage in remote,

	<p>online learning and those students who are not able to access remote, online learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will combine online learning with paper and pencil tasks and textbook/ literature assignments. • There is greater accountability with all learning, especially remote learning.
<p>Will this be the model for the year?</p>	<p>It is too soon to tell. A number of factors will influence when the District considers increasing the number of students on any given day, for example moving from one third to one half. Factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued low infection rate for our region and county. • Hospital capacity and local testing capacity. • Student, parent, and community understanding and demonstrating new safety requirements while in our buildings. • Students' comfort level with wearing masks for most of the day. Once we move to a model with more than 1/3 of students attending, children will be required to wear a mask for most of the day. <p>The goal is to get more students in front of their teachers more often in a way that is safe and helps mitigate risk.</p>
<p>How will I keep track of this calendar?</p>	<p>All families will receive a color-coded calendar in the mail. Each Friday, the District will push out a reminder for the following week. The District recognizes this impacts childcare, work schedules, and other aspects of family life. Other than eradicating the virus and having our students back full time, every day, there are no good options, only better options.</p>
<p>When will school start?</p>	<p>If all goes as planned, our first day with students will be Tuesday, 09/08/20.</p>
<p>Will I be able to visit my child's school?</p>	<p>Guidance recommend limited visitations. We ask that whenever possible to please call and make an appointment to come to the building.</p> <p>Any visitor entering our buildings will be required to complete a health screening including a temperature check.</p> <p>Only essential vendors and delivery people will be admitted into the building. They, too, will need to answer health screening questions and have their temperature taken if they enter our building.</p> <p>The goal is to limit the human footprint. This protects our students and staff as well as the community and region.</p>

<p>What if my child forgets something and I need to bring it in?</p>	<p>Unless it is absolutely necessary, like eyeglasses, lunch, or medication, we ask that you not bring forgotten items. We will have everything your child needs to help facilitate learning while in school.</p>
<p>I am very reluctant sending my child back to school during this pandemic. Do I have a choice to send them, keep them home to learn remotely through the district or home school them?</p>	<p>The District respects that every family needs to make this choice for themselves and for what is right for their child. Families in NYS always have the option to home school their children.</p> <p>We are still waiting to see if school districts will have to provide remote learning opportunities for students who do not have a medical condition or live with someone with a medical condition that would prevent them from attending school.</p> <p>If guidance and/or an Executive Order requires districts to provide the option for all remote learning or in-person learning with a hybrid to all students, regardless of underlying medical condition, the District would require families to commit to a decision to engage in remote learning for a full quarter (10 weeks) at a time.</p>

Health and Safety:

<p>Does my child have to wear a mask?</p>	<p>Yes. Unless they have a documented medical condition that may prevent them from wearing a mask, students will need to wear face coverings while on the bus, upon entering the school, while passing in the hallway, and anytime social distancing of 6' cannot be maintained.</p> <p>With a model of having only 1/3 of students attend on a given day, in most cases, students do not need to wear masks while seated in the classroom for instruction.</p>
<p>What if I do not have a mask for my child or my child forgets to bring a mask to school?</p>	<p>No problem. The District will provide masks to any family who needs them. The District will also have disposable masks on hand on the bus and in each building should a student forget to bring their mask.</p>
<p>Will mask/face covering and social distancing mandates be enforced this year?</p>	<p>Yes. Every student not seated and/or not socially distanced will be required to wear a mask in our buildings.</p> <p>Staff will also be required to socially distance when they are able and will be wearing face coverings/masks. Staff will also be required to socially distance. Students and staff will receive training in these mandates.</p> <p>Staff will also need to wear gloves if the need to physically interact with students.</p>

	<p>The District will work collaboratively with parents and students to help increase understanding and to help students make healthy choices.</p> <p>Some mandates like wearing face coverings and social distancing will become part of our Student Code of Conduct.</p>
<p>What cleaning and disinfecting efforts are being made to help decrease the risk spreading an infectious disease like COVID-19, the flu or a cold?</p>	<p>Our custodial staff has been working all summer on deep cleaning and disinfecting. They will receive specific guidance from the CDC on the required cleaning and disinfecting protocols to be used at school.</p> <p>Daily logs will be kept. These logs will track the cleaning and disinfecting in all areas of our District.</p>
<p>My child is at high risk or lives with someone who is at high risk. Will there be accommodations?</p>	<p>Students with documented medical concerns or needs will have the option of engaging in all remote learning. Remote learning is a combination of online learning and more traditional tools like texts, paper and pencils.</p> <p>Students who live with someone who is considered high risk will also have the option of engaging in all remote learning.</p>
<p>What are COVID-19 symptoms?</p>	<p>Most common symptoms include a new loss of taste or of smell, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, Fever (100 or greater), chills, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.</p>
<p>My child is presenting with symptoms of COVID-19 but I am not sure they have it. What should I do?</p>	<p>If your child is symptomatic, please do not send them to school.</p> <p>Please reach out to your primary care physician or urgent care center to review symptoms with them before a determination is made on whether or not your child should be tested.</p>
<p>Does my child need to have their temperature taken daily?</p>	<p>Yes. You will be responsible for taking your child's temperature daily.</p> <p>We will work with families who do not have the capacity to do this at home.</p>
<p>What will health screening look like for students each day?</p>	<p>Parents will use a module in Parent Square to verify that they did take their child's temperature, that the temperature was 100 F or below, and answer a few basic health screening questions.</p> <p>We will also screen students at school should a parent forget. Students will need to remain masked and socially</p>

	distanced until a screening has been done either at home or at school.
What will health screening look like for staff each day?	Staff will be using the same module daily through Parent Square.
What if I take my child's temperature and they have a fever?	If your child is symptomatic, please do not send them to school. Please reach out to your primary care physician or urgent care center to review symptoms with them before a determination is made on whether or not your child should be tested.
How soon after a fever is my child allowed to return to school?	<p>If the fever is not related to COVID-19, students need to be fever free without the use of fever reducing medicines for at least 72 hours.</p> <p>If the fever is COVID-19 related, parents will need to share documentation from a doctor indicating it is safe for the student to return to school after waiting the required quarantine period.</p>
What if someone in my family has COVID-19?	<p>If that family member has been in close proximity with your child, the District asks that the student not return to school without either something documenting a negative result on a COVID-19 test or a note from your child's primary care provider.</p> <p>All documentation will be reviewed by our nursing team and if need be, our Medical Director, before students are allowed to return to class.</p>
What if my child becomes sick during the school day?	<p>Our nursing staff is there to help take care of your child. If your child is showing symptoms of COVID-19, they will be isolated and supervised by our nursing staff. They will need to go home immediately/as soon as possible.</p> <p>To return, families will have to provide either proof of a negative COVID-19 test or a note from their provider. If there is no note or negative test verification, students will need to remain out of school for 14 days from the onset of symptoms.</p> <p>If after reviewing your child's symptoms, the nursing staff determine them to be non-infectious disease related like allergies, asthma, migraines, etc., your child will be treated accordingly and may be sent back to class.</p> <p>Sometimes high school age students reach out directly to their parents when they do not feel well. The new protocol will be for them to check in with one of our nursing staff, even if a parent comes to get them. This is critical to contact tracing and to plan for what returning to school looks like for a child.</p>

<p>What if a student in my child’s class is diagnosed with COVID-19? What is the District’s protocol?</p>	<p>In the event of a positive case of COVID-19, all parents and all stakeholders will be notified using all existing communication platforms including Parent Square, Facebook, and the District website. Information regarding the duration of a closure, nature of the events leading to a closure decision, and plans for re-entry will be shared. Included in this will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifying local health officials, staff, students and parents/guardians of any possible case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality consistent with applicable federal and state privacy laws. • In the event of a positive case in the school community, the District will follow all directives from the Jefferson County Public Health office. These directives could include closing down a classroom, a wing or hallway or the entire building. Public Health will also advise if some or all students have to quarantine for a mandated amount of time. • The District will protect private information of staff and students while assisting in contact tracing efforts. <p>The District will reduce the amount of time students spend outside of specific areas and classrooms. Reducing the amount of student travel in our halls will make it easier for contact tracing and for making decisions about what area in a building may need to be shut down.</p> <p>Unless otherwise directed by Public Health, the District will close off the area occupied by that student for at least 24 hours. After 24 hours, crews would deep clean and disinfect the area in accordance with CDC guidelines. Once the area has been appropriately cleaned, it can reopen for use.</p>
<p>Are schools required to provide COVID-19 testing to students and staff?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent comments led to some confusion around this topic. The guidance from both the Department of Health and from the State Education Department indicate we have to make available testing options and those options could be resources within our community. • The District works very closely with Jefferson County Public Health. If a test is needed, we would refer families to a local testing site and work with Public Health to help expedite this process. • The District is working closely with the North Country Family Health Center. Testing for students may be offered at one of their Community Based Clinics in either Mannsville Elementary or Wilson Elementary. This of course would not happen without a parent present nor without parent permission. Stay tuned as this plan is further developed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Random COVID-19 testing is NOT required of our students nor staff. • The District meets with Public Health and all area districts the week of 08/10/20 to continue planning for testing and contact tracing. Information from this meeting will be shared with families and staff.
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Nutrition:

<p>Where will my child eat their breakfast and lunch?</p>	<p>Breakfast may be served as a 'grab and go' for students to eat in their classrooms. The District will share more information as final decisions are made.</p> <p>Given the reduced number of students attending on any given day, children will be able to eat their lunch in the school cafeteria. This gives students a chance to practice social distancing, wearing masks in the hallway, and handwashing and disinfecting. It also gives them a chance to get out of their classrooms.</p> <p>The Buildings and Grounds and Food Services Teams will clean, disinfect and sanitize between cohorts of students eating lunch.</p>
<p>My child has a food allergy. How will I know they will be safe?</p>	<p>Our amazing Food Services team has been covering food allergies for many years. Students with food allergies will eat in the cafeteria in designated areas. The District will continue to follow required food allergen protocols that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A picture of the student and copy of the menu with acceptable items will be distributed to all cooks, servers, cashiers, teachers and distributors. • Preparation of food for the students with allergies will be done first, and packed in an area away from any potential contaminants. • Proper disinfecting of the work area will be handled prior to any food preparation to ensure that all tools and surfaces are allergen free. • Gloves will be worn when preparing food and changed frequently during preparation. • Limited staff will only handle approved food, to avoid cross contamination. • All ingredients/product labels will be checked thoroughly every time it is being served. • Students with allergies should be first in line to ensure all surfaces are free of allergens.
<p>If using the cafeteria, how will you clean, disinfect and sanitize?</p>	<p>Lunch schedules will allow for CDC recommended cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing between meals and cohorts of students. All students will be socially distanced while enter and exiting the cafeteria and during lunch.</p>

<p>My child qualifies for Free or Reduced Priced meals. How will this work on the days they are engaged in remote learning?</p>	<p>Daily attendance is required whether students are in our buildings working or working remotely at home.</p> <p>Parents will be required to check in with an attendance module and breakfasts and lunches will be provided to students using a pick-up system. The District does not have the capacity to deliver meals during reopening. More information will be shared before the start of school.</p>
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Transportation:

<p>Will my child need to wear a mask on the bus?</p>	<p>Yes. Unless your child has a medically documented reason they are not able to wear a mask, yes, all PreK through 12th grade students will need to wear a mask on the bus.</p>
<p>Will there be a seating chart?</p>	<p>Yes. Our Transportation Department has been hard at work developing seating charts that promote social distancing, members from the same households sitting with each other, and other measures (first on last off) that will reduce students crossing each other's paths.</p>
<p>Will students be socially distanced?</p>	<p>In most cases and on most routes, students will be socially distanced. They will also be dismissed by the driver to continue social distancing as they enter school.</p>
<p>How often will buses be clean and disinfected?</p>	<p>Our buses have always been cleaned at least once daily. That will continue this school year, along with CDC recommended disinfected protocols daily. High touch areas, like hand rails, will be disinfected more frequently.</p>
<p>Will there be continued flexibility with changing bus runs or pick up and drop off locations?</p>	<p>Unfortunately, the District will be less flexible than in the past – because we have to be. If there is a change to a pick up or drop off, we require that parents inform their child's school building giving at least 24 hours notice.</p> <p>We've also been able to accommodate parents with unique child care situations. An example may be a family who lives in the southernmost part of our district and have a baby sitter / child care in the northern part of our district. We often times have been able to accommodate this.</p> <p>While not required to offer these accommodations, we've prided ourselves on the ability to do so. We will look at these on a case by case basis and appreciate the understanding that we are not able to support this option in most cases.</p>

Social-Emotional Well-Being:

<p>My child is very anxious (and so am I) about returning to school and in-person learning. Is there support?</p>	<p>Yes, and you are not alone! Many parents and children are feeling the same way. Faculty and staff will receive training on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what to look for – signs of emotional need• supporting the social-emotional needs of our students• how to refer students or families to the building Pupil Services Team (PST). <p>Parents are able to and encouraged to reach out now by calling each building’s main line to talk with or leave a message with one of our school counselors. This is strongly encouraged so PST is able to proactively think about and plan for supporting students who may be anxious about returning to school.</p> <p>Much of the first few days of in-person instruction will focus on helping our kids feel connected, safe, welcome, and helping them understand where to turn to if they need help.</p>
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Technology:

<p>Will students be provided with technology devices this year?</p>	<p>Yes. Every child will be issued and loaned a district owned device. Students in grades PreK through 1st will receive iPads. Students in grades 2 through 12 will receive Chromebooks.</p> <p>To further help align and offer consistent opportunities, all professional staff will receive a Chromebook. Given the delays in the supply chain, staff will receive their devices in late September / early October.</p>
<p>We do not have internet access at our home. How will my child learn remotely without that?</p>	<p>The District will make every effort to ensure that each family has access to the internet.</p> <p>The District has set up remote Wi-Fi locations at each school building so that families can access the internet in their car. The District is also working with officials in Rodman and Lorraine to provide internet service spots in each of those towns.</p> <p>The District is also piloting the use of a limited number of cellular Wi-Fi hotspots that will be trialed at no cost to families.</p>

<p>The various learning platforms used this spring often led to frustration and confusion. Has the District thought about ways to reduce this frustration and confusion?</p>	<p>Yes, we heard parents loud and clear. The goal is to reduce frustration and increase the learning happening, whether the learning is in-person or remote.</p> <p>The primary and required platforms will be Google Classroom and Classlink. A primary tool for parents will be Parent Square.</p> <p>The District will be working with staff in all grade levels to continue striving for increased consistent virtual learning formats. Staff will receive professional development on how to use these tools.</p> <p>Students will be explicitly instructed in how to use these tools while in-person with their teachers. This will help when engaging in remote learning.</p> <p>The District is also setting up a parent help line. Parents can call this number and be pointed in the right direction for the following supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional needs • Technology needs • Social-emotional needs
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Teaching and Learning:

<p>During the closure, the primary focus was on review and skills reinforcement. Will this model continue?</p>	<p>While recognizing that review and skills maintenance is important, the District will move forward with State Education guidance and focus on new content and new learning. This is another reason why attendance and accountability will be so important. Skills maintenance and review will be imbedded in instruction.</p> <p>As required, learning and content will be prioritized using the NYS Next Generation Standards.</p>
<p>How will teachers know what learning gaps may have resulted from this spring?</p>	<p>Gaps will be identified in multiple of ways. Some students, primarily elementary age, will continue to be benchmarked using tools like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • running records that identifies reading levels • AimsWeb Plus – a tool that also identifies current levels in different areas of reading and math • Standards based formative assessment will be created and used as well <p>Identifying the learning gaps, along with supporting students’ social-emotional well-being will be a primary focus at the beginning of the school year.</p>
<p>How will students be assessed and held accountable?</p>	<p>Students will be required to attend and engage daily whether they are learning from home or in school.</p>

	<p>Grading will return to a more traditional model coupled with feedback that will help children grow and succeed. Student accountability and attendance, and the District's responsibility to ensure these things, are required elements of the plan.</p>
<p>What will special area classes look like this year? (PE, music, art)?</p>	<p>In a hybrid model, students will continue to receive instruction from these dedicated staff who are integral to a well-rounded education.</p> <p>These classes will look different as we move into this year. PE will continue to be health focused. Our PE teachers will play an integral part in helping the District cover required COVID-19 trainings and will also be focusing on socially distanced activities.</p> <p>Band and chorus will be following all requirements including increased social distancing.</p> <p>Special area teachers may be going to the students' classrooms to limit having cohorts of students come in to contact with one another, especially at the elementary level.</p> <p>Building principals, teachers and the District will inform parents as special area classes and schedules are further developed.</p>
<p>My child is attending BOCES. How will this work if we are coming back to school using a hybrid model?</p>	<p>A District goal will be to get BOCES students to that campus as often as possible, if not daily. That may mean students attend BOCES daily and engage in South Jeff work remotely. There are still many questions.</p> <p>Jefferson Lewis BOCES has been an amazing partner during these times. They are in the midst of further defining their in-person learning plan.</p> <p>The District and JL BOCES will share information once final decisions are made. The District values the education our students receive at BOCES.</p>
<p>My child has an IEP. How will special education programs and services be provided to my child this fall?</p>	<p>All regulations related to serving students with disabilities will be followed.</p> <p>With our hybrid model, students who have the highest level of need will attend in-person school daily.</p> <p>Some of our students with disabilities have health concerns that will not allow them to attend in person, regardless of the model. Those students will be offered remote learning only options.</p>

<p>When will interscholastic athletics be able to start up?</p>	<p>At this time, interscholastic athletics are on hold until at least September 21st. Our dedicated Athletic Coordinator is continuing ongoing conversations with area districts, the Frontier League representatives, and State Ed.</p> <p>Fall 2020 Regional and State Championships have been canceled.</p> <p>The District will be ready to start as soon as we are allowed. The State will most likely look at condensed seasons once given the green light to resume interscholastic sports.</p>
<p>Will extracurricular club activities be held this fall?</p>	<p>Extracurricular advisors will evaluate whether or not their activities can resume and what those will look like given mandated limitations.</p> <p>We will share information with students and parents as parameters continue to be developed.</p>
<p>What about after-school activities?</p>	<p>All after-school activities are on pause until further notice.</p>
<p>What about school supplies?</p>	<p>Please hold off on this for right now. The model allowed for reopening will dictate the type of school supplies needed.</p> <p>While we've always promoted sharing, less supplies will be shared between students to help reduce the risk of spreading infectious diseases like COVID-19.</p>