

SDPC Roadmap for Returning to Learning

A Framework for Reopening SDPC Schools

Revised July 28, 2020

Message from Dr. Danny Merck, Superintendent



Thank you for your patience and understanding during these times of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please know that our district completely understands your concerns and your need to know the 2020-2021 school schedule and instructional offerings. After researching various re-opening options and conducting parent surveys, focus groups, conference calls, and a thought exchange that involved hundreds of parents, staff members, students and community members we are now releasing the *SDPC Reopening Plan*. This detailed plan could be overwhelming, but we are confident it will answer many of your questions and concerns regarding the safe reopening of schools in Pickens County.

Our feedback and *Reopening Plan* has identified four distinct priorities:

1. Safety and well-being of students and staff;
2. Quality teaching and learning;
3. Economic perspectives for parent work schedules; and
4. Long-range district financial planning.

We firmly believe that student well-being requires face to face student-teacher interaction. Isolation leads to trauma and mental health issues for children. As a result, **school-wide face-to-face instruction will begin Monday, August 24th** for all SDPC students. As parents or guardians, you have a choice to allow students to attend school in person or to participate in the online SDPC Virtual Academy. We established a **Pickens County Virtual Academy enrollment deadline of noon Wednesday, July 22nd**.

In addition to our yearly calendar, we will release six-week schedules that may contain both face-to-face and online instruction. In our first month of school, we will attempt to create a sense of belonging in all grade levels and to prepare for eLearning instruction. The first two weeks of school will allow us to gather vital information to adjust moving forward. After the first two weeks of school, we may alter our daily routines to provide an even safer environment.

Six Week Schedule

Week 1	Aug. 24-28	All Students (at school face-to-face instruction)
Week 2	Aug. 31 - Sept. 4	All Students (at school face-to-face instruction)
Week 3	Sept. 8-11	Only Students in *Special Programs AND Early Childhood (3K – 2nd Grades) attend in person eLearning (online) for all other students (3rd - 12th)
Week 4	Sept. 14-18	eLearning for All (No students at schools)
Week 5	Sept. 21-25	All Students (at school face-to-face instruction)
Week 6	Sept. 28 - Oct 2	All Students (at school face-to-face instruction)

* for Week 3 - Students identified for Special Programs will be notified directly by District Leadership in Special Services

SDPC Reopening Plan



SDPC has identified our students in Special Programs and students in Early Childhood (3K – 2nd Grade) to be our highest priority for in-person face-to-face instruction. Note that we will provide face-to-face instruction to these groups at times when other student groups are being taught through Intermittent Virtual or SDPC Virtual Academy. Students targeted in the Special Programs group will be notified directly by our Special Services department.

Knowing that we must have key personnel to operate school including nurses, teachers, and SRO's, it is vital for families to keep in mind that within any six-week window, a school or grade level may revert to virtual online learning if the well-being of students or employees is compromised.

This is our best attempt in scheduling a month in advance, what is reality today may not be the same in August. Based on data from the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and Governor McMaster, be advised that the first six-week schedule may change prior to the scheduled start of school and force us to implement eLearning rather than face to face instruction on opening day August 24th.

We will attempt to provide as much in person instruction as possible during each six-week schedule, however, the flu season combined with the COVID-19 pandemic may result in more eLearning. Also, if our county continues to receive a high spread rating from DHEC, then it is likely we will continue with the same six-week schedule as the first six weeks.

We are thankful and extremely proud of our teachers, counselors and principals for their superb communication during the last quarter of the 2019-2020 school year. We failed to contact only 11 of 16,300 students. Of the 11, most, if not all, moved to another county. The staff of SDPC remains committed to quality teaching and learning as is evidenced by the return of all principals for the second year in a row and the retirement of just seven teachers this past school year.

In summary, these are challenging times, and this is uncharted territory for all of us. We believe in-person instruction is best for our students, parents, and the Pickens County community. We are conscious of the fact that many of our families and students have struggled during the past four months. Our goal is to support you and be as accommodating as possible when ensuring the safety of all students and staff. We are confident this plan will work because of people; not the plan. Every family is different, and we respect every parent's decision regarding in person instruction or the Virtual Academy. Whether your child is learning at home or at school, teamwork will be required to successfully navigate the upcoming school year. As parents YOU are a part of our team. We appreciate your feedback, promise to improve our delivery of eLearning this school year, and are looking forward to having your children safely back in school.

Best Regards,

Danny Merck
SDPC Superintendent

Questions ?

General Questions	Phone (864)397-1000	Email Reopening@pickens.k12.sc.us
HR & Employee Questions	Phone (864)397-1000	Email HR@pickens.k12.sc.us
Pickens County VIRTUAL Academy Questions	Phone (864)397-1000	Email Virtual@pickens.k12.sc.us

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Overview

The School District of Pickens County (SDPC), like other school districts, organizations, and businesses will gradually reopen for more in-person work, services, and instruction, all while working to ensure the safety of students, staff, and family members. Our chief goal is for offices and school buildings to be “COVID-Free” environments by working with partners to make COVID-19 testing available, establishing consistent on-site safety precautions that are regularly monitored, as well as relying on flexible arrangements like staggered scheduling, telecommuting, and virtual learning to supplement the work we would normally do in person. Because we want our students, families, and staff to feel as comfortable as possible returning, this plan is meant to be a draft for discussion and feedback.

Guiding Principles

Decisions about reopening are all guided by the latest recommendations provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), orders from state and local governments, as well as consultation with healthcare professionals. The day-to-day status of COVID-19 cases will likely fluctuate in the coming months and continue to vary from region to region. This means that while we cannot predict with certainty what the COVID-19 cases in Pickens County will look like in 1, 3, or 6 months, we can rely on a series of guiding principles to help us make decisions, evaluate those decisions, and adjust as necessary.

South Carolina Context

As is the case throughout the country, decisions about reentry and reopening are highly dependent on state and local policies, orders, and guidance. In South Carolina, Governor Henry McMaster has indicated that he is committed to reopening schools and has established an [“AccelerateED”](#) advisory council to generate guidance on how to do it safely, equitably, and efficiently. Knowing the commitment to reopen exists, the District will closely track the recommendations released from the state level or any upcoming Executive Orders and make any necessary adjustments or changes to our plans.

Likely Realities and Constraints

Our current situation may seem unpredictable; however, we believe that there are some likely realities that our staff, students, and families can anticipate. Some of those realities help our plans to reopen, while others may make it more challenging and constrain our efforts. It is important, as we plan, for everyone to be on the same page about what is likely so we can focus most of our effort on the most likely circumstances, while still ensuring that we plan for the various “what if” scenarios.

1. Schools will open for in-person learning in August. Students in all grades will begin returning to school on August 24 and in-person instruction will be offered in schools. It is likely, however, that schedules, classroom spaces, and day-to-day operations will be adjusted to allow for social distancing and smaller groupings.
2. Virtual instruction will expand. Even with schools opening in August for in-person instruction, SDPC will continue to offer virtual learning to students, including expanded live instruction in our distance learning rooms and additional online course options. SDPC will also launch a full scale virtual school option for students in grades K5 through 12, the Pickens County Virtual Academy.
3. The virus will not disappear by August, but its level of spread may change. COVID-19 will be present throughout the summer and fall, although the size and localization of the outbreak is to be determined and may change as businesses and communities reopen. Knowing that the number of cases is not a fixed amount, the District will remain committed to adjusting its approach based on the reality of the virus’ spread in the region.
4. The availability of COVID-19 testing will improve, but it is unclear by how much.
5. Funding is limited. The District is anticipating reduced local and state revenue due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The District budgets and spends responsibly; however, prolonged state funding shortfalls are possible and may lead to programmatic changes.

Timeline for Key Decisions

Planning the District's reentry will take ongoing coordination and collaboration across all District departments and schools. To ensure decisions are being carefully considered and recommendations vetted, the District relied on current medical best practices released by the [CDC](#), [DHEC](#), [AAP](#), and other organizations. The district will release the plan in early July to give families ample notice of the options and scenarios for the fall that may impact their decision and childcare preparations. Below is a timeline of objectives for reentry planning:

June

- Develop a re-entry plan taskforce to analyze data, propose options, and develop protocols around key focus areas
- Focus Areas include: Educational Models, Health and Safety, Transportation, Food Service, Communication, School Building & Scheduling Logistics, Professional Development
- Seek feedback from parents on educational model preferences (short survey)
- Seek detailed feedback from parents on eLearning, transportation, and safety priorities (longer survey)
- Get input on plan from stakeholders (school board, teachers, staff, parents)

July

- By July 10 - Release SDPC Fall Reentry Plan to district families
 - Communicate first 6 week plan for instruction
- Communicate timeline for families to indicate their preference to return with full-time online instruction or return for face-to-face instruction with social distancing in SDPC schools.
- July 20 - Revised plans to indicate that masks will be required for students in 3rd-12th grades when social distancing of at least 6 feet is not possible. Following the governor's request to delay school opening, SDPC proposed the 2020-21 start date to be August 24. This was approved by the school board on July 21.
- July 22 – Parents should respond to the enrollment survey to indicate their preferred instructional model for each of their children. This deadline will enable SDPC to plan class schedules for full-time online and face-to-face instruction.
 - Choices: 1) Return for face-to-face 2) Register for SDPC Virtual Academy
- Prepare school facilities, custodial staff, and administration for health and safety protocols
- Prepare teachers for educational models and new safety protocols
- Ensure sanitation supplies and PPE are available when school reopens

August

- Implement back to school professional development plan for all staff
- Revise options for Meet the Teacher to allow for safe social distancing

The Data and Information Guiding Our Decisions

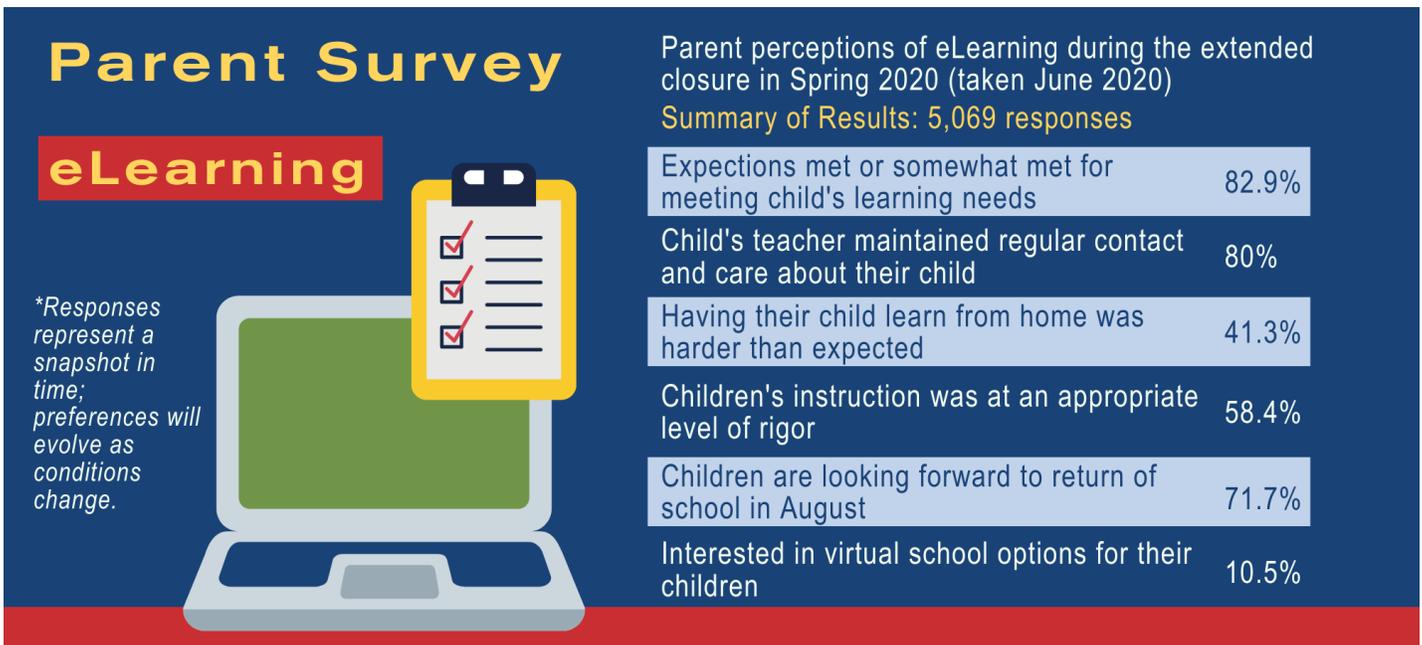
The District keeps a close watch on the development of public health recommendations, state and local guidance, and the information shared by our own families and employees. To date, our families and staff are telling us that reentry is important and something many are ready to do in the coming weeks, so long as appropriate safety measures are in place. We plan to continue collecting information from our community of students, families, and staff to refine the plan before and after implementation.

Stakeholder Engagement

As the plans for reopening evolve, the District is committed to engaging stakeholders on the various options and considerations for reentry. Throughout the development of our reopening plan, SDPC has sought and will continue to seek feedback from:

- School-based administrators
- Health-care professionals
- Teachers
- Support staff
- District office staff
- Students
- Parents and families
- Broader community including partners, faith-based community, and nonprofits

Parents



Parent Survey

eLearning

**Responses represent a snapshot in time; preferences will evolve as conditions change.*

Parent perceptions of eLearning during the extended closure in Spring 2020 (taken June 2020)
Summary of Results: 5,069 responses

Expectations met or somewhat met for meeting child's learning needs	82.9%
Child's teacher maintained regular contact and care about their child	80%
Having their child learn from home was harder than expected	41.3%
Children's instruction was at an appropriate level of rigor	58.4%
Children are looking forward to return of school in August	71.7%
Interested in virtual school options for their children	10.5%

As families return to work outside the home, the return to face to face instruction is a necessity for our families, community, and economy. SDPC seeks to offer personalized learning options for students. Therefore, SDPC is committed to maintaining high quality traditional options and to expanding flexible virtual options for students in grades K5 through 12.

Staff

Staff Survey

Return to School

**Responses represent a snapshot in time; preferences will evolve as conditions change.*



Teachers were asked about their comfort level in returning in the fall (taken June 2020)

Summary of Results: 910 responses

"Very" or "Somewhat Comfortable" with returning to normal school conditions	65.2%
"Very" or "Somewhat Comfortable" with a full return with protective equipment	52.6%
"Very" or "Somewhat Comfortable" with a full return with as much social distancing as possible	57%
"Very" or "Somewhat Comfortable" with a return to a "blended schedule"	47.4%
"Somewhat Uncomfortable" or "Very Uncomfortable" with a return of only Virtual	50.8%

Although the majority of teachers clearly support a return to normal school, approximately 10% reported being 'Very Uncomfortable' with each of the options for returning to face-to-face instruction. Balancing the preferences of the majority with the safety concerns of all is an important consideration as we develop our reopening plan.

Parent and Staff Survey

Fall Instructional Options

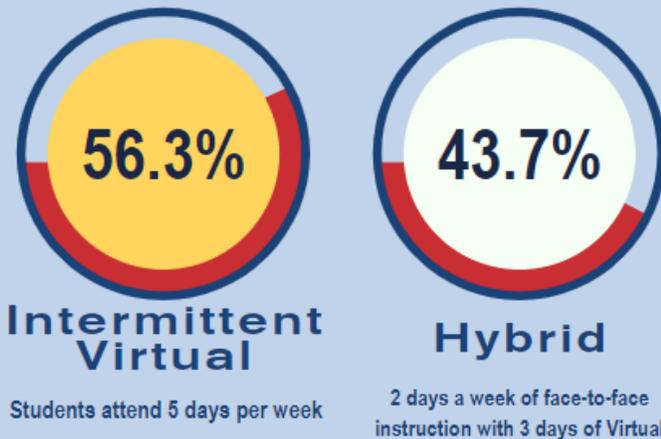
**Responses represent a snapshot in time; preferences will evolve as conditions change.*



Parent and staff input regarding the use of a Hybrid or Intermittent Virtual instructional schedule (taken July 2020)

Summary of Results: 3,571 responses

Which daily schedule do you prefer for SDPC to use ?



* Under both options, individual schools or areas may switch to full virtual in the event of COVID-19 outbreaks among students or staff.

Feedback

Sample of Comments We Received

Learning

"The children need this normalcy. A 1st grader can not learn at an adequate level via virtual learning. At this instrumental stage of development, particularly with reading, the face to face instruction of a teacher is unmatched.."

"I think intermittent virtual provides a more stable learning option. Teachers can either plan for an in-person week or a virtual week rather than juggling students in both situations simultaneously."

Support

"As a teacher, I feel that it is important for students to receive in person instruction. Students without the parental support at home will not do well in the digital only learning. Many parents still have to work and they might not have a childcare option. Having all students in class will allow for the lower learners to pick up from the others and will allow for the "bubble" students to not be left behind."

Social

"Social interaction is critical for students' overall well-being"

"My child needs in person support from his teachers. He has become socially disconnected from his peers, needs interaction with people. He needs regular routines and schedules."

"The children need to socialize, even at a distance. Parents who work are unable to assist their child with class work, hurting the child's learning."

Mental Health

"In-person instruction with a consistent schedule is better for teachers, students, and parents. Students need interaction with peers and teachers and access to related arts and recreational opportunities. Please let the students have as normal of an experience as possible--a five-day-a-week schedule, related arts periods, and interaction with friends and teachers for their mental, emotional, and social health and for the most effective learning experiences!"

All Educational Research – TEACHERS MATTER & RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

Kuhfeld, M., & Soland, J. (2020)

Predicted Learning Loss	30% of learning gains in Reading
	50% of learning gains in Math

John Hattie, Visible Learning (2016)

Effect Size of Distance Education	0.13
Effect Size of Teacher Efficacy	1.57
Effect Size of Teacher Estimate of Achievement	1.33
Effect Size of Teacher Credibility	.90

Note: The effect size of .4 or higher is considered to have a educational significant impact

Sharfstein and Morphew, American Medical Association (2020)

"There are major divides by race/ethnicity, geography, and economic class in access to home computers and high-speed internet."

"The 'COVID slide' will likely be greatest among those students who are already at educational and social risk."

“Reopening schools this fall is an urgent national priority.”

American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Pediatrics guidance "strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school."

Other Research

- Bauer L. The COVID-19 crisis has already left too many children hungry in America. Brookings. Accessed May 24, 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/05/06/the-COVID-19-crisis-has-already-left-too-many-children-hungry-in-america/>
- Bryant J, Dorn E, Hall S, Panier F. Safely back to school after coronavirus closures. McKinsey & Co. Accessed May 24, 2020. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/social-sector/our-insights/safely-back-to-school-after-coronavirus-closures>
- Kuhfeld M, Tarasawa B. The COVID-19 slide: what summer learning loss can tell us about the potential impact of school closures on student achievement. Accessed May 24, 2020. https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/05/Collaborative-Brief_COVID19-Slide-APR20.pdf

Why consider face-to-face instruction ?



- Top preference for parents and teachers
- Precautions to be put in place to limit exposure and to promote health and safety of students and staff
- CDC guidance to schools caution that recommendations and safeguards should be applied to the extent that is 'feasible, practical, acceptable, and tailored to the needs of each community.' (CDC 2020)

External Recommendations and Guidance

This plan and the recommended procedures are designed to align with the most comprehensive guidance released to date. We are relying on a variety of sources of inspiration, and specifically aligning our plan with:

- [South Carolina's AccelerateED Task Force](#) which outlines various stages of response and what needs to happen with the virus to move from one stage to the next
- Guidance released by [American Academy of Pediatrics - COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#)
- Guidance released by [S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control \(DHEC\) COVID-19](#) webpage
- Guidance released by the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) for schools
- Communication with Gov. Henry McMaster's office
- Input and support from Todd Walker, Chief Operating Executive, Prisma Health Baptist Easley Hospital
- Input and support from Denise Kwiatek SC CEM, Director, Pickens County Emergency Management
- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)

Preopening

The Preopening Phase (approximately the two weeks prior to the scheduled start of the school year) will be critically important for a successful return to school. While there is no way our students can gain back everything lost during the final months of the 2019-2020 school year, SDPC will take steps to ensure students are as prepared for learning as possible when the 2020-21 school year begins.

LEAP Days (Learn, Evaluate, Analyze, Prepare)

SDPC will provide select educational services August 10-14 in accordance with state requirements for LEAP Days. A menu of activities will be provided for students, such as social and emotional, diagnostic activities, and establishing routines and procedures. SDPC teachers will also be able to participate in LEAP. Opportunities to learn, analyze, and prepare with professional development, data analysis, and reviewing individual educational plans help regain time lost during COVID-19 closure.

Cleaning Checklists

As staff and students return to buildings, custodial crews will clean classrooms and office areas, focusing on disinfecting high-touch surfaces. Custodial staff will conduct regular walk-throughs with supervisors to identify areas that require additional cleaning and after each room/area is disinfected, custodial staff will be required to complete a visible “cleaning checklist” clearly indicating the space has been thoroughly disinfected.

Extracurricular Activities and Athletics

Based on the state’s current status and recommendation, small group programming will be allowable, but safety precautions must be taken to ensure students and staff are safe. Small group extracurricular programming can take place where social distancing is possible. This includes summer enrichment activities including academics, arts, and athletics. For these meetings/workouts it is recommended that they should be conducted at safe distances, and outdoors, where possible. Students and staff will be expected to wear face coverings when physical distancing is not possible. All activities must follow any [SCHSL](#) or [SCBDA](#) guidelines about the number and type of activities permissible.

Specifically, this means:

- Groups of 10-12 or less indoors
- Coaches and sponsors will need to be screened
- Symptom assessments must be taken for adults and students
- Any confirmed cases during activities must be reported to close contacts that may be directly impacted to encourage self- quarantine and possible COVID-19 testing as necessary and recommended DHEC exclusions will be followed

Community Use of School Buildings

To maintain safe and controlled access to buildings, as well as to prioritize cleaning and disinfecting for summer learning sites, community-use of school buildings will be extremely limited to programs providing direct support to SDPC. Any community-use participants must adhere to the same health and safety guidelines established throughout the District.

Supplies and Personal Protective Equipment

The District will provide face coverings to staff. At the time of this draft, the supply of such equipment is limited; however, the District is budgeting for the acquisition of these materials as they become available from a variety of sources and will ensure they are provided to employees in-person, with priority given to essential workers who are interacting with a large number of other people (e.g. food service).

Continuity of Operations

The District's plan is to open schools, as expected, with live instruction for all students occurring on August 24. We also know, however, that our day-to-day operations in schools and offices will not look the same as any prior year. Our fall reopening is focused on three possible scenarios for schools, each of which is outlined below. In all scenarios, it is generally understood that some families may want to make more use of virtual instruction while others may want students to attend school in-person. Each scenario is designed to allow for both possibilities, with an emphasis on making in-person instruction as safe as possible for students and staff.

Health and Safety Protocols

All reopening scenarios will require SDPC to establish and follow strict safety protocols to ensure the health and safety of students, families, and staff. Any in-person activities, whether school-based or in central offices, will be conducted with the following guidelines (see also: SDPC Path to Recovery Chart at bottom of document), all in alignment with the most recent state recommendations, [AAP](#), [DHEC](#), and [CDC guidance](#):

- Installation of foaming hand sanitizer dispensers in each classroom
- Online training via SafeSchools prior to return for employees and similar online training for students upon return that promote behaviors that reduce the spread of the virus
- Promotion of mitigation practices such as staying home when sick
- Practicing hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (including hand washing with soap and water regularly; covering coughs and sneezes with one's arm)
- Conducting daily health screens for staff and students
 - All staff will be required to confirm they are not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms prior to entering a building or office space
 - SDPC will implement age-appropriate screening procedures/questions for students (online app/survey for secondary students & oral questioning for elementary and at-risk populations). Those who are experiencing symptoms may be directed to the isolation area where an administrator, or designee, can further assess the student
 - The daily entry survey will ask the following questions (questions may be adjusted to align with public health guidance as necessary):
 - Are you experiencing:
 - Any one (1) of the following
 - Fever – or-
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing -or –
 - Loss of taste or smell -or –
 - Any two (2) of the following:
 - Sore throat – and/or –
 - Muscle aches – and/or –
 - Chills – and/or –
 - New or worsening cough
 - Have you been in close contact (within 6 feet for 15+ minutes) with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 or has exhibited symptoms of COVID-19?
- Face coverings (masks and/or face shield) required for all employees when physical distancing is not possible. SDPC and SDE will provide masks and/or face shields for staff. Individuals may also bring their own face coverings. All students in all grade levels K3- 2 are encouraged to wear a face covering during transition times and whenever else possible. Students in Grades 3 - 12 will be required to wear a face covering during transitions (in the hallways to and from class, during arrival/dismissal times, etc.) and any other times when 6 feet or more of social distancing is not possible.

- On buses, students and drivers will be required to wear face masks/coverings in accordance with S.C. Department of Education requirements.
- Employees whose role may require additional personal protective equipment (e.g. face shields and gloves) based on their job duties will have those items provided to them
- Posted signs throughout buildings promoting safe practices and social distancing
- Markings on floors for social distancing in areas where lines typically form
- Regular cleaning and disinfecting following [SDPC Comprehensive Cleaning Program](#)
- Proper ventilation and increased air circulation
- Limiting the sharing of objects and supplies
- Rearranging seating in classrooms and offices to allow for as much social distancing and physical space as possible - at least 3 feet will be attempted at all levels and required in Grades 6 & up.
- Food consumption in smaller, controlled settings (e.g. classrooms) or on staggered meal schedules to eliminate large group convenings. Self-service areas should be discontinued wherever possible
- Outdoor classes, whenever and wherever possible
- Seating should be assigned for virus tracking purposes and desks should face the same direction
- Group or partner activities should be limited or eliminated if proper distancing cannot be maintained
- Students and staff should bring their own water bottle and use the no-touch water fountains to refill them
- Transitions should be staggered with as much social distancing as possible
- Alternate recess times to minimize numbers of students, require social distancing, and disinfect shared equipment between classes. Encourage hand-washing before and after recess
- Bus routes will be set to limit the number of riders in accordance with AccelerateED and DHEC recommendations, which may impact travel and school start/dismissal times for students
- School schedules will be adjusted to reduce the number of exposures between teachers and student groups

Masks & Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Masks/face shields are required of employees if they cannot be socially distanced from anyone, including other employees. Face coverings should be worn by staff during all transition times as well.

Students in Grades 3-12 are required to wear a face covering during transitions and at other times when 6 feet of distance is not possible in the classroom. Students in early childhood grades (K3-2nd grade) will be encouraged to wear a face covering during transition times (arrival, dismissal, in the hallways) and may wear one at other times but it is not expected. Each student in Grades 3 -12 will be provided one cloth mask by SDPC at the start of the school year. Students may bring and wear their own face coverings if they choose. SDPC will respect medical exemptions from face covering requirements when a doctor's note is provided.

SDPC will abide by and observe any local, county, or state ordinances in regards to mandatory wearing of face masks.

In addition to following guidance around regular hand washing, hand sanitizing, daily cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces, and encouraging social distancing, through the state there are plans to procure and distribute personal protective equipment staff to use when in buildings. The district has already provided an initial supply for summer workers. Guidance will be provided to staff regarding the specific PPE that is expected for them based on their role and responsibilities. All PPE will be delivered to locations before students and staff return to school and work. The District also plans to purchase a limited supply of back-up materials; however, it is the expectation that any visitors or volunteers provide their own masks if/when they are in buildings.

In addition to PPE, the district will provide each classroom with a foaming hand sanitizer dispenser, a supply of disinfectant wipes, as well as making liquid hand sanitizer available throughout each facility. The district is working to place plexiglass barriers at frequently visited spaces such as the receptionist's desk at a school.

Exclusion

SDPC Reopening Plan



What if a positive case of COVID-19 is confirmed in a district location?

If a student or employee tests positive for COVID-19, SDPC will follow the most current DHEC guidelines for exclusion/quarantine of the infected individual. For students and staff potentially exposed to the infected individual, SDPC will base exclusion procedures on the most current guidelines from DHEC, the CDC, and local health information. As of the publication of this plan (7/28/2020), final DHEC exclusion procedures have not been released.

- [Interim COVID-19 School Nurse Protocol](#)
- Location of testing sites is available on the DHEC website: <https://scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-COVID-19/COVID-19-screening-testing-sites>
- Location of DHEC mobile and pop-up testing sites: <https://www.scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-COVID-19/COVID-19-mobile-pop-clinics>

Testing

One of the greatest needs we have as a district is access to our own test sites. Angela Watson, SDPC Coordinator of Nursing, is currently attempting to partner with DHEC or other agencies/facilities to establish a testing site(s) for our employees.

Monitoring and Accountability

As the District establishes safety guidelines for practices such as COVID-19 testing, temperature checks, social distancing, mask wearing, regular disinfecting, and limiting group gatherings, it will be important for students, staff, and families to share feedback and report issues that may be unsafe. Anyone wishing to report a safety issue should speak to their school principal or call the SDPC Safety Tip Line at 864-397-4444.

Social-Emotional Supports

We know that after this prolonged closure, many of our students and staff will require social-emotional support to help them re-engage and reenter work and school. School counselors and administrators will be equipped with tools and information on how to support students and maintain our whole-child commitment. Those supports will include resources available at both the school and district level. Additionally, all SDPC students have access to Pickens County Behavioral and Mental Health which offers many services including face-to-face and virtual counseling. Other information about all social-emotional supports at each school level will be made widely available to the SDPC community through school and district websites.

Partners and Visitors

In general, external partners and volunteers will be limited in buildings to reduce the number of individuals in buildings, offices and classrooms. Only essential visitors and partners will be allowed to regularly engage in District activities, and they must adhere to the same protocols as other adults, including daily symptom checks and wearing of face coverings.

Transportation

The District will follow DHEC and S.C. Department of Education guidelines as close as possible in regards to bus capacity and cleaning procedures in between routes. Assigned seating will be required for all routes and first priority for any shared seats will go to members of the same household. Parents are encouraged if possible to bring their students to and from school in an attempt to lessen some of the capacity issues that may occur on bus routes. Drivers and students will wear face protection in accordance with requirements from the S.C. Department of Education. Hand sanitizer will also be provided. Route times may still need to be adjusted prior to and after the start of the school year based upon results of an

upcoming parent survey in regards to planned bus rider participation. The number of riders, route times, and route descriptions may be impacted by enrollment in the Pickens County Virtual Academy. Route times may also be impacted by arrival and dismissal procedures at each school that will be different in order to maintain as much social distancing as possible

Virtual Learning Plan

In fall 2020, SDPC will introduce [Pickens County Virtual Academy](#) as a full-time online learning option.

Advanced planning and a robust digital ecosystem have positioned SDPC as a leader in virtual learning systems. SDPC's Tech It Home program provides 1:1 take-home devices for students in grades 3-12. These devices are a natural part of daily classroom instruction thanks to several years of training and support for classroom teachers. SDPC has invested in and trained teachers in the use of Schoology as our Learning Management System (LMS). Schoology provides the means for students to complete assigned lessons and communicate with teachers about their work. Classlink, our single sign-on platform, saves students time by allowing them to easily access a variety of instructional resources with a one-click login. One of our most recent collaboration tools, Webex, allows teachers to conduct live synchronous instruction with individuals, small groups, and entire classes of students. For the 2020-2021 school year, the District is expanding Tech It Home to include grades 5K through 2nd.

SDPC has been committed to using virtual options to address needs related to inclement weather and personalized choices for students. In 2018-2019, the district was one of five approved to use eLearning during inclement weather and in 2019-2020, SDPC mentored other SC districts as they implemented their own plans. Additionally, the district has an approved plan to offer virtual learning opportunities for students. This plan is part of our state's proficiency-based application and is revised and updated along with our strategic plan. For many years, the district has used an online curriculum through Odysseyware and VirtualSC resources to allow secondary students to learn in an online classroom environment. SDPC's franchise partnership with VirtualSC has afforded the district's secondary students increased flexibility in online learning over the past three years. The district will continue to use these options to increase offerings to our secondary students. In order to increase personalized choices for all K5 - 5th grade students, SDPC will partner with Edmentum to offer a full online school beginning August 2020. In July 2020, informational meetings for the district's new Pickens County Virtual Academy meetings will be held and enrollment in this program will be available. Schools and the district will provide information and offer guidance to help individual parents to identify what instructional settings will work best for their student(s).

Considerations for Students with IEPs and 504 Plans

Our students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans, along with the staff who work closely with them, will have those individual circumstances taken into consideration when developing additional guidance around reopening. We know, for example, that wearing masks may be challenging for students and staff who read lips, or that we may need to improve adherence to universal precautions when staff members are assisting medically fragile students. Special attention will be paid to issues around transportation, instructional models, medical needs, learning environment, and ensuring appropriate advocacy. Additional considerations will be made for students with special programming needs. The Special Services department will work directly with students, families, and staff to problem solve these needs.

IEPs will be amended, as needed, to reflect the instructional delivery model chosen by the parent so that appropriate special education and related services, supports, accommodations, and modifications are designed to provide meaningful educational benefit (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. 504 plans will continue to be accessible within all educational models.

Fall Re-Opening

Currently, SDPC is considering possible reopening scenarios for August 2020. Each scenario is designed to adhere to our guiding principles for reopening and maximize the amount of in-person instruction for students, while also keeping our community safe and following the guidance of public health officials and applicable laws and regulations. In any scenario, SDPC will make use of all available space and scheduling flexibility to promote social distancing and minimize the number of transitions a student might have during the school day. SDPC will attempt to maintain a consistent reopening plan across all of its schools. However, due to the variation in enrollment, building size, and student need, it is likely that individual schools will need some flexibility locally to implement the plan.

Six Week Schedule

Week 1	Aug. 24-28	All Students (at school face-to-face instruction)
Week 2	Aug. 31 - Sept. 4	All Students (at school face-to-face instruction)
Week 3	Sept. 8-11	Only Students in *Special Programs AND Early Childhood (3K – 2nd Grades) attend in person eLearning (online) for all other students (3rd - 12th)
Week 4	Sept. 14-18	eLearning for All (No students at schools)
Week 5	Sept. 21-25	All Students (at school face-to-face instruction)
Week 6	Sept. 28 - Oct 2	All Students (at school face-to-face instruction)

* for Week 3 - Students identified for Special Programs will be notified directly by District Leadership in Special Services



2020-21 Instructional Models

The charts below describe the student learning models the district will use for the 2020-21 school year.



VIRTUAL

- (o) Instruction will continue in a modified virtual format as scheduled OR during any targeted closure.
- (o) Personalized daily instruction & support via Schoology and WebEx.
- (o) Virtual learning will be used as scheduled and/or in the event that closures are needed at a specific school or attendance area.



TRADITIONAL

- 👤 School Building(s) Open - Implement preventative practices and additional proactive processes /protocols.
- 👤 5 Days a week in-person instruction.
- 👤 Schools will develop arrival and dismissal plans to decrease the number of students in communal areas.
- 👤 Full day structure with access to Before and After-school Childcare, & Extracurricular Activities

OR



Pickens County Virtual Academy

- 📖 Accredited curriculum
- 📖 Students attending the Pickens County Virtual Academy will be considered a student within SDPC
- 📖 A SDPC teacher will be available to assist students
- 📖 Requires a commitment to remain with program for a set time period

A new full-time learning program that will operate year round

The School District of Pickens County will re-open with enhanced disinfecting and preventative health measures that prevent the spread of germs



2020-2021 Schedule Impact on Student Contacts (Cohorts)

During face-to-face instruction, SDPC will adjust its schedule to limit the number of daily contacts between groups of students. By limiting the number of times students share a classroom with a new group, we can limit the number of students who may need to be excluded from school in the event of a positive case of COVID-19.

Grade Level	Daily Schedule	Estimated Daily Contacts
High School	4x4 Block Schedule	4 Student Groups (approx. 100 students)
Middle School	4 core classes with same cohort + 2 related arts	3 Student Groups (approx. 100 students)
Elementary School (3-5)	4 core classes (teachers switch) + 1 related art per day, all with same cohort	1 Student Group remaining with same cohort (approx. 25 students)
Elementary School/ Early Childhood (K-2)	4 core classes + 1 related art per day, all with same cohort	1 Student Group remaining with same cohort (approx. 25 students)

Considering Community Spread

LEVEL OF COMMUNITY
SPREAD AS DETERMINED BY
STATE AND LOCAL HEALTH
OFFICIALS

Substantial/HIGH Spread	Moderate/MEDIUM Spread	LOW/No Spread
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with local and state DHEC health officials • Participate in contact tracing efforts and specimen collection efforts as directed by local health officials (to the extent feasible) • Schools will implement distance/remote learning if needed to protect children, teachers/staff • Consider ways to accommodate needs of children, teachers/staff, and families at higher risk for severe illness (see <i>Protecting Vulnerable Populations</i> for considerations) <p>For additional guidance on addressing community spread, see the AAP, DHEC, and CDC guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain communication with local and state health officials • Participate in contact tracing efforts and specimen collection efforts as directed by local health officials (to the extent feasible) • Implement enhanced social distancing measures (see <i>Transitioning, Large Group Gatherings, and Teaching and Learning</i>) • Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread. COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols • Establish a protocol for students/staff who feel ill/experience symptoms when they come to school (see <i>When a Child, Staff Member, or Visitor Becomes Sick at School</i>) • Isolate and deep clean impacted classrooms and spaces • Consider ways to accommodate needs of children, teachers/staff, and families at higher risk for severe illness (see <i>Protecting Vulnerable Populations</i> for considerations) <p><i>Districts have the authority and flexibility to close school buildings and utilize distance/remote learning as needed.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain communication with local and state DHEC health officials • Participate in contact tracing efforts and specimen collection efforts as directed by local health officials (to the extent feasible) • Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread. COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols • Establish a protocol for students/staff who feel ill/experience symptoms when they come to school (see <i>When a Child, Staff Member, or Visitor Becomes Sick at School</i>) • Consider ways to accommodate needs of children, teachers/staff, and families at higher risk for severe illness (see <i>Protecting Vulnerable Populations</i> for considerations)

SDPC Path to Recovery

Instructional Model

	VIRTUAL	TRADITIONAL
<p>Practicing Prevention</p> 	<p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use social media and other communications to inform parents, students, and staff about COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures, good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols • Encourage COVID-19 testing <p><u>CDC</u> and <u>DHEC</u> Guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to Protect Yourself and Others • COVID-19 Symptoms • COVID-19 and Children • Communication Tools • COVID-19 Self-Checker 	<p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach and reinforce good hygiene measures such as handwashing, covering coughs, and face coverings • Provide hand soap and hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, paper towels, and no-touch trash cans in all bathrooms, classrooms, and frequently trafficked areas • Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread. COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols • Clean/disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily and shared objects after each use • Provide masks and other appropriate PPE to staff • Allow students and staff to bring hand sanitizer and face masks/coverings to use from home - See PPE section for details on face covering requirements by age/grade level. • Take steps to ensure all water systems and features are safe • Turn off water fountains and provide bottled water or allow students and staff to bring water bottles from home • Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, as long as this does not pose a safety or health risk to students or staff • Conduct deep cleaning of schools prior to students/staff returning; schedule additional cleanings during weekends or school holidays/breaks <p><u>CDC</u> and <u>DHEC</u> Guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Schools • Guidance for Reopening Buildings After Prolonged Shutdown

Instructional Model

	VIRTUAL	TRADITIONAL
<p>Transporting Students</p> 	<p>School buildings are closed unless specified for particular student groups; buses used to deliver meals to students</p>	<p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adjust routes and bus loads to reduce numbers in accordance with state guidelines ○ Providing hand sanitizer for students and bus drivers ○ Requiring bus drivers and encouraging students to wear face masks/coverings ○ Limiting field trips (to areas of limited/low transmission) ○ Inspecting buses prior to students returning and as part of a regular rotation ○ Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces on the bus at least daily ○ Airing out buses when not in use ● Provide hand sanitizer for students and bus drivers ● Screen students and bus drivers for symptoms of illness and utilize spaced seating (to the extent practicable) ● Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on the bus at least daily ● Establish protocols for bus stops, loading/unloading students to minimize congregation of children from different households <p>CDC Guidance What Bus Operators Need to Know</p>
<p>Entering School Buildings</p> 	<p>School buildings are closed; the district will determine which staff will report.</p> <p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District/school leaders must remain vigilant and purposeful as they determine roles, responsibilities, and reporting requirements for staff, refraining from blanket reporting requirements ● District/school leaders should leverage virtual tools and platforms wherever possible to conduct essential business and keep in-person reporting to an absolute minimum during school closures 	<p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide hand sanitizer for students and staff ● Limit unnecessary congregations of students and staff ● Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread, COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols ● Follow DHEC protocol for students/staff who feel ill/experience symptoms when they come to school ● Follow DHEC protocol for students/staff who feel ill/experience symptoms when they come to school ● Mark spaced lines to enter the building and designate entrance and exit flow paths ● Screen students and staff using age-appropriate screening procedures/questions. ● Screening may also include on an as-needed basis:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Take temperatures ideally before entering buildings ○ Isolate and send home if internal temperature over 100.4°F (38°C) ○ Consider safety and privacy concerns (confidentiality should be maintained) ● Establish a protocol for visitors: screening visitors, requesting use of face coverings/masks, etc. Restrict nonessential visitors and volunteers. ● Establish a protocol for student pick/drop up: staggered entry and release (by grade, class, or bus numbers), marked spacing for pickup
<p>Serving Meals</p> 	<p>When school buildings are closed.</p> <p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Buses used to deliver meals to students 	<p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing hand sanitizer for students and staff ○ See PPE section for details on face mask/coverings requirements by age/grade level during transitions such as lunch ○ Conducting cleaning of cafeterias and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day ● Require student hand washing before and after meal service ● Use disposable plates, utensils, etc. ● Mark spaced lines to enter the cafeteria and serving lines (to the extent practicable); designate entrances and exit flow paths; stagger use <p><i>Alternative Serving Models may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serving meals in classrooms ● Serving meals in cafeterias with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spaced serving lines (marked on floors) ○ Spaced seating (utilize outdoor space as practicable and appropriate) ○ Longer meal periods for more staggered meal delivery (utilizing state seat time waiver to extend meal periods) ○ Consider pre-packaged boxes or bags for each student instead of traditional serving lines. Avoid sharing of foods and utensils.
<p>Transitioning</p> 	<p>School buildings are closed.</p>	<p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See PPE section for details on face mask/coverings requirements by age/grade level during transitions ○ Conducting cleaning of hallways and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day ○ Designating areas of the hallway (i.e. lanes) to walk to keep students separated (to the extent practicable) ● Limit mixing between groups (to the extent practicable) ● For class changes and other transitions throughout the school day:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide additional time for transitions (utilizing state seat time waiver to extend transition period) ○ Designate areas of the hallway (i.e. lanes) as flow paths to keep students separated to minimize congregation of students ○ Plan staggered class (ex: by hall, odd/even room numbers, grade/ discipline) changes to decrease number of students in hallways at one time ○ Have the same group of students stay with the same staff (all day for young children and as much as feasible for older children)
<p>Conducting Large Group Gatherings</p> 	<p>School buildings are closed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Abide by the maximum number of people allowed to congregate as defined by the Governor's current statewide executive order 	<p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing hand sanitizer for students and staff ○ See PPE section for details on face mask/coverings requirements by age/grade level ○ Limiting unnecessary congregations of students and staff ● Follow SCHSL guidelines for sporting events and practices ● Abide by the maximum number of people allowed to congregate as defined by the Governor's current statewide executive order ● Discourage the congregation of students in parking lots and common areas ● Stagger the schedule for large group gatherings (i.e. recess and school meals) ● Identify and utilize large spaces (i.e. gymnasiums, auditoriums, outside spaces – as weather permits) for social distancing

Instructional Model

	VIRTUAL	TRADITIONAL
<p>Supporting Teaching and Learning</p> 	<p>School buildings are closed.</p> <p>District/School Considerations:</p> <p>Virtual/Distance Learning Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implementation of a robust Distance Learning Plan. ● Use of WebEx to provide synchronous instruction to students. ● Posting of the weekly learning plan for students in a consistent student-friendly format using Schoology. ● Offer up to 200 minutes of daily instruction and learning for students. ● Make new learning a priority to keep student-learning on pace to the fullest extent possible. ● Monitor attendance through student participation in WebEx and completion of assignments. ● Clearly establish which assignments are formative for feedback and which are graded assignments. ● If necessary, use printed instructional packets/ materials and district/school communications along with meals; designate and communicate collection/drop off points. 	<p>District/School Considerations:</p> <p>Intermittent Virtual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Targeted Intermittent Virtual in the event that short-term closures are needed at a specific school to help mitigate the spread and allow students to return to traditional instruction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teachers will need to deliver virtual lessons according to the district's Distance Learning Plan. ○ Closure could be for a few days to a few weeks depending on the severity of the spread. <p>Traditional Instructional Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Survey families July 2020 to gauge which students may want to conduct their schooling virtually for the 2020- 2021 school year. ● Virtual instructional options will operate under the umbrella of the Pickens County Virtual Academy while students will remain enrolled in the local school. ● Pickens County Virtual Academy will partner with Edmentum, Odysseyware, and VirtualSC to provide online learning for K5-12 grade students. ● Use the master schedule to limit student exposures to groups of students. ● Carefully examine classroom layouts to help remove unused desks and furniture in classrooms; maximize social distancing (to the extent practicable - at least 3 feet at secondary level). Consider how flexible seating might help with social distancing if available (i.e. standing desks, individual lap trays, or easily cleaned options). ● Limit physical interaction through partner or group work or use technology applications to help facilitate collaboration and communication between students. ● Establish distance between the teacher's desk/board and students' desks ● Identify and utilize large spaces (i.e. gymnasiums, auditoriums, outside spaces – as weather permits) for social distancing ● Consider how contact can be limited by proactive scheduling that includes minimizing class changes. ● Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing hand sanitizer for students and staff ○ Conducting cleaning of classrooms and high-touch surfaces each day ○ Limiting physical interaction through partner or group work ● Establish an academic baseline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use standards recovery planning template provided by SDPC ○ Administer formative assessments toward the start of the school year (NWEA Map and Certica Gap Analysis Assessments via Mastery Connect)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use PD opportunities to work with teachers to identify where students are academically and how learning gaps should be filled. ● Create opportunities for interventions and supports: ● Provide additional instructional supports for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students at-risk of not graduating on time ○ Students with disabilities ○ Students who struggled in the prior distance/remote learning environment (i.e. early grades, English Learners, etc.) ○ Other students identified as being behind academically by teachers and parents. ● Address learning loss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide extended learning opportunities through before/after school programs, etc. ● Use NIET resources to crosswalk SC 4.0 Rubric Instruction to virtual ● Prepare for potential future distance/remote learning by increasing current blended learning practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide virtual learning-specific professional learning for educators to help them refine virtual lessons. ○ Share best practices and exemplars.
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<i>Instructional Model</i>	VIRTUAL	TRADITIONAL
<p>Protecting Vulnerable Populations¹</p>  <p>¹ Vulnerable Populations -- Elderly individuals and/or individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system is compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.</p>	<p>School buildings are closed.</p>	<p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a point-of-contact with the local health department ○ Identify local COVID-19 testing sites ○ Provide hand sanitizer for students and staff ○ Provide PPE to vulnerable students and staff as appropriate ○ Allow vulnerable students to complete their coursework virtually ○ Allow vulnerable students and staff to wear PPE throughout the school day (to the extent practicable) ○ Establish a process for regular check-ins with vulnerable students and staff ○ Allow an early transition for vulnerable students to go to classes ● Survey at-risk staff members to gauge their intentions in returning to work while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws ● Survey families with vulnerable children to gauge their intentions in returning to a traditional school setting while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws ● Provide remote/distance learning opportunities for vulnerable student populations in consultation with parents and public health officials

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with local board attorneys and district human resources officials to offer special accommodations (such as an alternative teaching assignment) for personnel who are members of vulnerable populations • Adhere to FERPA and HIPPA requirements • Adhere to state and federal employment law and extended leave allowances • Offer an Employee Assistance Program to all staff members
<p>When a Child, Staff Member, or Visitor Becomes Sick at School</p> 	<p><i>The District will follow SC DHEC guidance on what to do when students and staff exhibit symptoms and when a case is suspected/confirmed. A student or staff member who develops symptoms of COVID-19 but does not get tested could limit DHEC's ability to appropriately respond to new cases and ensure the health and safety of other students and staff. PCR testing (nose or throat swab) is highly recommended and is strongly preferred over antibody testing.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim COVID-19 School Nurse Protocol <p>District/School Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administrators, school nurses, and other healthcare providers will identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms. • School nurses and other healthcare providers should use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for sick people. • Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws. • Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use before cleaning and disinfection. Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children. • Advise sick staff members and children not to return until they have met state DHEC criteria to discontinue home isolation • Inform those who have had close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and follow state DHEC guidance if symptoms develop. If a person does not have symptoms, follow appropriate state DHEC guidance for home quarantine <p>CDC Guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptoms of Coronavirus • What Healthcare Personnel Should Know About Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 Infection • Standard Precautions • Transmission-based Precautions 	



Ongoing Monitoring and Feedback

To ensure the District's reopening and reentry plan continues to adhere to our guiding principles and that we are doing our best to meet the needs of our community, the District will engage in regular monitoring of the plan and collect feedback through a District leadership team. Broadly, this team will monitor District operations in four key areas using the measures below.

What do we want to know?	How will we know?
1. Do our students, families and staff feel safe? Is our community adhering to recommended public health measures?	Regular site walk-throughs Student surveys Staff surveys Family surveys Focus groups
2. Are our students making enough academic progress?	Interim assessment data LMS (Schoology) data Web app data
3. Are our students receiving enough social and emotional interaction and support?	Student surveys Staff surveys Focus groups Observations
4. How are our employees adjusting to new ways of work and what support do they need?	Staff surveys Observations Focus groups
5. Are we allocating our resources to ensure long-term sustainability?	Budget reviews Staffing data Stakeholder surveys

Frequently Asked Questions

[Link to live FAQ page](#)

1. When is the start date for school ?

Our district's plan is for all students to return to school on August 24.

2. What is defined as a face covering and why do we need them?

[\(CDC Guidance on Face Coverings\)](#)

A face covering means a covering made of cloth, fabric, or other soft or permeable material, without holes, that covers only the nose and mouth and surrounding areas of the lower face. A face covering may include a scarf or bandana or any other homemade covering and does not need to be medical-grade. In light of new data about [how COVID-19 spreads](#), along with evidence of widespread COVID-19 illness in communities across the country, CDC recommends that people wear a [cloth face covering](#) to cover their nose and mouth in the community setting. This is to protect people around you if you are infected but do not have symptoms.

3. When sinks for hand washing are unavailable, does hand sanitizer disinfect effectively? Hand washing is the recommended method for disinfecting hands but in the absence of access to sinks, hand sanitizer can be used when students are unable to wash hands.

4. Will we have to close school in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19?

District and school administrators will notify local health officials of any cases of COVID-19. Local health officials, along with district representatives will determine if the school needs to be closed and the duration of the closure.

5. Will students and staff be allowed to bring backpacks and personal items to and from school?

Items transferred back and forth between environments do have some potential to introduce viruses. To the extent practicable, schools could provide options or solutions like allowing students to keep materials at home or leveraging distance learning resources as much as possible.

6. Will food service have to be provided in the classroom or can it be done in a large group setting?

Classroom based meal provision is likely the most direct way to ensure appropriate physical distancing during mealtimes, however other models (including staggered cafeteria use, outdoor seating, etc) may be considered.

7. Should students be allowed to play on playground equipment?

Children can exercise as cohorts. Use of shared equipment is discouraged because it would be a common point where cohorts mix and potential transmission may occur. Shared equipment should be cleaned/disinfected between use by different cohorts.

8. Should parents or visitors be restricted from campus?

To the extent practicable, parents and visitors should remain off campus to limit mixing and maintain stable cohorts.

9. How many students will we be allowed to have in a classroom?

No specific number of students has been specified and it will likely be determined taking into consideration the

ability to provide for physical distancing, maintain stable cohorts, and limit large group settings.

10. What is meant by cohorts?

Cohorts represent a group of students and staff members staying together through the course of a day to eliminate or limit the mixing of students and staff in classes or congregate settings. Using cohorts restrict the ability of a virus to spread beyond the cohort and allow for quicker more efficient tracing in the event a student or staff member contracts a virus. Consideration should be given to not only how stable cohorts can be maintained in the classroom but also the ability to keep these students together at lunch or during break times.

11. Are all grade levels not allowed to mix cohorts? What about middle and high school?

To the extent practicable, cohorts should be maintained. This may require out-of-the box thinking like rotating instructors rather than classes, staggering schedules, or shifting rooms around to limit the distances students may have to travel between rooms. When cohorts mix, ensure safety measures are in place such as wearing face coverings, social/physical distancing, and rigorous handwashing. Avoid congregate settings.

12. Will schools stagger arrival and pick up times?

SDPC has adjusted start times to allow for staggered drop-off. Considering the need to allow for social distancing at dismissal areas and on buses, pickup times may be adjusted, depending on individual school situations.

Questions ?

General Questions

Phone
(864)397-1000

Email
Reopening@pickens.k12.sc.us

HR & Employee Questions

Phone
(864)397-1000

Email
HR@pickens.k12.sc.us

Pickens County VIRTUAL Academy Questions

Phone
(864)397-1000

Email
Virtual@pickens.k12.sc.us

Resources

Health Resources

- [CDC Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs: Plan, Prepare, and Respond](#): CDC.gov
- [CDC Considerations for Schools](#): CDC.gov
- [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Schools](#): CDC.gov
- [COVID-19 Screening Checklist for Visitors](#): American Health Care Association
- [Coronavirus Warning Poster for Entrances](#): Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM)
- Guidance released by [American Academy of Pediatrics - COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#)
- Guidance released by [S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control \(DHEC\) COVID-19](#) webpage
- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)

Operations, Teaching and Learning Resources

- [AccelerateED SC Task Force Recommendations](#): *Dedicationtoeducation.com*
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- [South Carolina Band Directors Association](#): *Guidelines/Suggestions for Return to Summer Ensemble Rehearsals*
- [South Carolina High School League](#)

Forms and Funding

- [CARES Act and ESSER Funding for SC Schools](#): *ed.sc.gov*
- [SDPC Comprehensive Cleaning Program](#)