



Re-Opening of School Information (2020-2021)

August 14, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This communication serves to inform you of the upcoming changes to SWCEC's calendar for the 2020-2021 school year as it relates to the guidance received from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). As you are all very aware, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has gone through many different scenarios since the state-wide shut down in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools were forced to adjust quickly to an all-remote learning environment. SWCEC was no exception to this and I believe the educators and staff here not only rose to the occasion but found many ways to excel at developing systems of two-way communication, improving our connections with students and families, as well as delivering curriculum in a thoughtful and varied manner. While the remote learning environment is not beneficial for many, if not all, of our students, we certainly all did our part in partnership with your herculean efforts to engage your children with us for the fourth quarter of last school year.

With summer, and for those students who qualified for Extended School Year (ESY) services, SWCEC made the commitment to developing a safe environment for a hybrid of in-person and remote learning for the last weeks of the ESY sessions. In short, we were able to open our doors for a couple of days each week for our Grow Elementary, Middle, and High School and for three days per week for our Developmental Program students. Today is the last day of in-person services for our Developmental Program students as they enjoyed a full week of in-person learning due to the intense nature of their educational needs. I am happy to report that based on the last three weeks of a measured re-entry into partial in-person schedules that our students, staff, and families have enjoyed incident-free (meaning, no instances of COVID-19 infection) learning.

Earlier this week SWCEC's Executive Board of Directors unanimously accepted our Fall 2020 Re-Opening Plans. These plans were developed with direct consultation, feedback, and participation by a Re-Entry Planning Committee of just over twenty SWCEC staff from all facets of the Collaborative. The plan was developed using our experiences from our ESY programming as well as numerous meetings that I had with DESE Commissioner Jeffrey Riley and DESE Associate Commissioner Russell Johnston. As you are likely aware, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts shifted from a 180-day school year to a 170-day school year for all students, and that includes students attending collaborative schools such as our own.

With all these pieces, along with consultation with the Dudley and Southbridge Boards of Health back in late July, SWCEC will be re-opening its doors to all of its students in a phased approach to in-person learning using a hybrid of in-person and remote learning opportunities.

The schedule of our buildings and programs are as follows:

Phase I (Hybrid Learning Model):

September 14 – October 23 = 6 weeks (2 or 3 days per week of in-person learning)

- Mondays and Tuesdays: GES in-person learning (regular start /end times)
- Wednesdays and Thursdays: GMS/GHS in person learning (regular start / end times)
- Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays: Developmental Program in person learning (regular start / end times)
- Note: on those days when students are not attending SWCEC in-person learning, remote learning shall be conducted

Phase II (Hybrid Learning Model):

October 26 – December 4 = 6 weeks (4 days per week of in-person learning):

- Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays as in-person (all programs) with Friday as remote learning and allowing for deep-cleaning of the buildings.

Phase III (Full In-Person Learning): December 7 – end of year (5 days per week of in-person learning):

- If this start date happens with back to fully in-person learning, then students would have 13 days (2.5 weeks) of this phase before the December break.

Start and end times for our programs are as follows:

Grow Elementary School 121 Ashland Avenue, Southbridge, MA 01550 Kristine Hersey, Principal	8:00am – 1:45pm
Grow Middle High School 185 Southbridge Road, Dudley, MA 01571 Jeff Croteau, Principal	8:15am – 2:00pm
Grow Career Development Program 185 Southbridge Road, Dudley, MA 01571 Jeff Croteau, Principal	8:15am – 2:00pm
Specialized Developmental Programs 185 Southbridge Road, Dudley, MA 01571 Dennis Todd, Director	8:00am – 2:00pm

Our school calendar can be found here: [SWCEC 2020-2021 School Calendar](#)

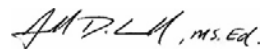
The SWCEC Re-Opening Plan can be found here: [SWCEC Re-Opening Plan](#)

These documents can also be found on the home page of our website at www.swcec.org

Prior to the new school year starting, SWCEC employees will be engaged in ten days of work preparing for the school year for both in-person and remote learning, and developing the curriculum and lessons for the year along with receiving training and professional development to enhance learning opportunities for your students. We will be following up with you with communication in the coming weeks with information about electronic daily screening for your child that shall be required before entering school as well as our usual communications regarding student handbooks and procedures to follow so that we have a safe and great return to school. Despite the challenges that we have all faced both individually and together given the COVID-19 pandemic, I am fully confident that SWCEC will continue to be here to support all our students and their families. We are all very excited to start this next phase of education and look forward to helping our students grow.

Should you have any questions, I encourage you to reach out to your building Principal or your program Director. I am also more than willing to assist in answering your questions as I am sure we will all be working together to make this school year a success!

Sincerely,



Arnold D. Lundwall

Executive Director, SWCEC

508-764-8500