

Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative

2020-2021 Re-Entry Plan



This document is a framework for re-entry that is subject to change based on State guidelines, feedback from families and staff, and continues to require a great deal of work by the Re-entry Planning Committee to finalize details as we move into the upcoming school year.

SWCEC Board of Directors Approved August 11, 2020

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# Re-entry Planning Committee Membership

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## **Special Thanks to:**

Alicia McCartin, Southbridge Health Inspector  
Roberta Johnson, Dudley Public Health Nurse  
Tom Purcell, Dudley Health Agent  
Jennifer Cournoyer, Dudley Board of Health Administrative Assistant

August 10, 2020

Dear Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative Community,

While we closed the 2019-2020 school year with the entire last quarter in a remote learning environment, we have learned a great deal about our resilience, our capacities, and our students' needs. Our community of educators and families have demonstrated a strong desire to work toward an eventual return to normalcy in this unprecedented time of global pandemic with the spread of COVID-19. We have done so with the assistance of a great deal of input and thought toward a safe return to school. What follows in this document is a framework of protocols and procedures that we shall use upon re-entry in the 2020-2021 school year.

SWCEC is deeply committed to the safety and security of its students, their families, its staff and their families and we look forward to having our students back in front of our teachers yet again. The SWCEC Re-Entry Planning Committee is comprised of 22 members of its staff from all aspects of our operations and has been working tirelessly since the end of May 2020 to develop cohesive plans for our students. As a result of following national, state, and local guidance as well as receiving regularly updated guidance from DESE, our processes are designed to not be a static re-entry / re-opening plan but one that is responsive to local and statewide changes.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requires each school district and collaborative to develop a singular Reopening Plan for 2020-2021, accounting for three models of reopening: fully in-person (as prior to the statewide shutdown on March 13, 2020), a hybrid model of reopening, or fully-remote model of learning. Regardless of which model is selected, grading and attendance will be taken just as it was prior to March 13, 2020.

SWCEC has been fortunate in that the last weeks of Extended School Year, starting on July 27, allowed us to examine and explore in real time the use of a hybrid model of instruction. In this model we have successfully run two full weeks of a mix of face-to-face instruction as well as remote learning. With our two campuses and using this model of slow re-entry to in-person learning, we provided instruction and re-establishing connections with our students in what seems to be the most feasible and safe manner.

Please keep in mind that throughout all of the ups and downs of the statewide shut down of schools and the planning toward a fully in-person model of instruction our first priority is the safety and well-being of our students and staff. What is abundantly clear is that there is a need for prior planning time for our educators before the first day of school commences. To that end, DESE has issued guidance that the school year will begin with ten (10) days of professional development, training, planning, and curriculum design for its educators across the state. As a result, SWCEC's calendar shall reflect that change, with a student start date of September 14, 2020. The schedule for this re-opening can be found later in this document.

As we move toward the upcoming school year, parents and guardians must continue to be vigilant of the health and symptoms of their children, keeping in mind that any student feeling unwell must be kept at home when any type of in-person instruction happens. Similarly, parents and guardians will continue to be facilitators when students are engaged in remote learning. Establishing and maintaining daily schedules will be important to the success of our students. Much appreciation to all parents and guardians for everything they have taken on since March 13<sup>th</sup> is very much overdue and cannot be overstated. Continued partnership with our families and your understanding as we work toward reopening continues to be much needed and applauded.

This plan is the culmination of massive amounts of work and careful planning and I hope it reaches you with the shared understanding that any plans and recommendations moving forwards will likely require examination and re-calibration at times, and that we will work to always be student-centered in our decision-making. You will find that this plan has a

phased-in approach to re-entry that will allow for transitions between models, if circumstances require. At this time, SWCEC shall begin the 2020-2021 school year with a Hybrid Model of learning, which shall be described hereafter.

With great appreciation, I look forward to a productive school year with our students here at SWCEC, as well as continued partnership and good will with our member school districts and families.

Yours in education,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arnold D. Lundwall, MS. Ed." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A".

Arnold D. Lundwall

Executive Director

# Getting Started – What You Need to Know

## When does school start

For those interested, a copy of the planned 2020-2021 SWCEC school calendar can be found [here](#). The state has reduced the required number of the school days from 180 to 170 for this school year allowing Massachusetts educators to participate in additional back-to-school planning and safety preparation. Staff members will be participating in professional learning and back-to-school preparations from August 27 through September 11, 2020.

- New 2020-2021 school year start date for students: Monday, September 14, 2020.
- Last day of school = Monday, June 14, 2021
- New Teacher Orientation: August 25, 2020
- All Staff Orientation Day: August 26, 2020
- Professional Development Days (10): August 27, 28, 31  
September 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11
- Days off for Labor Day: September 4 and 7 (per contract)

The Board of Directors is responsible for approving the modifications to the school calendar. Once this has been made official, the Executive Director will notify you of the specific changes. In the absence of any notification of changes to school start dates, please plan to follow the dates outline in the school calendar.

## Disclaimer

SWCEC reserves the right to change the Re-Entry Plan at any time given State or local requirements or changes in the transmission rate relative to our student populations.

# TEACHING AND LEARNING

## Continuum of Learning Plans

DESE has asked each school district and collaborative to plan for three possibilities on the continuum of reopening. This includes: 1) in-person learning with safety requirements; 2) a hybrid of in-person and remote learning; and 3) remote learning.

### *In-person Learning*

In-person learning most closely replicates the traditional school day. Students physically attend school and receive instruction as has been the established routine. Enhanced safety protocols using established DESE and/or Center for Disease Control (CDC) mitigation practices regarding personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitation and social distancing requirements would be implemented based upon a rolling guidance model. To maximize instructional space and to best adhere to established safety protocols, educators will utilize outdoor space, as appropriate, to deliver instruction in any educational model that calls for students to be physically at school. At this time it is not feasible for SWCEC to return to a five-day per week in-person learning schedule. A phased-in approach analogous to the approach taken by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker shall be undertaken and described below as it relates to SWCEC.

### *Hybrid Learning*

The Hybrid Learning Model incorporates elements of in-person instruction as well as remote learning instructional opportunities in a blended learning format. The intent behind SWCEC's Hybrid Learning Model will be to provide students and families with a phased-in approach. The proposed schedule for Hybrid Learning is 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 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):

Proposal of 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<sup>1</sup>: 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.

### *Remote Learning*

In the Remote Learning model, students learn from home. The Remote Learning model will be delivered via the use of a computer. Students will be provided instruction based upon a clearly defined schedule to be provided by the student's homeroom teacher(s). There will be opportunities for students to connect with peers remotely for the purpose of building and maintaining relationships. These relationships are essential to building and maintaining social and emotional health. Students will also be on a regular assessment schedule, clearly delineated and congruous with established metrics.

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to change: if 9-week Phase II, this Phase would begin on January 4, 2021



## Program Schedules

### GES Daily In-Person Schedule Fall 2020

TIME	ACTIVITY	STAFF
8 – 8:45 45min	Arrival, Breakfast, Handwashing, Morning Meeting	Teacher, Tutor/EA/ Counselor
8:45 – 9:25 40 min	Math	Teacher Break out to small groups tutor/EA
9:25 – 9:30	Brain Break	
9:30 – 10:10 40min	Reading	Teacher Break out to small groups tutor/EA
10:10 – 10:20	Snack/Movement Break	
10:20 – 11 40min	Writing	Teacher Break out to small groups tutor/EA
11 – 11:30 30min	Enrichment (art, music, mindfulness, PE)	Teacher Tutor/EA/ Counselor/Art/Music
11:30 – 12 30min	Social Studies	Teacher, Tutor/EA
12 – 12:30	Lunch/Movement Break/SEL	Counselor/EA/tutor
12:30 – 1 30min	Science	Teacher, Tutor/EA
1 – 1:30 30min	Read Aloud/Text-based Writing	Teacher, Tutor/EA
1:30 – 1:45	Contracts and Dismissal	Teacher, Tutor/EA

### Grow Elementary School Remote Daily Schedule

TIME	ACTIVITY	STAFF
8:30 - 9	Morning Meeting – greetings, shares, activity, daily agenda	Teacher, Tutor/EA/ Counselor
9 – 9:40	Math	Teacher Break out to small groups tutor/EA
9:40 - 10	Off line Break	
9:40 – 10:20	Reading	Teacher Break out to small groups tutor/EA
10:20 – 10:30	Online Break	Teacher/tutor/EA
10:30 – 11 40min	Writing	Teacher Break out to small groups with tutor/EA
11 – 11:30 30min	Enrichment (art, music, mindfulness, PE)	Tutor/EA/ Counselor/Specialists
11:30 – 12 30min	Social Studies	Teacher, Tutor/EA
12 – 12:30	Lunch/Movement Break	Counselor/EA/tutor
12:30 – 1 30min	Science	Teacher, Tutor/EA
1 – 1:30 30min	Read Aloud/Text-based Writing	Teacher, Tutor/EA
1:30 – 1:45	Journal	Teacher, Tutor/EA

Grow Middle School **In-Person** Sample Schedule

Students will remain in their classroom cohorts with the three teachers rotating for the core subject areas of ELA, Math and Science. All will teacher Social Studies and writing to their cohort.

TIME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:20 – 9:09	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA
9:10 – 9:59	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
10:00 – 10:49	Elective	Elective	Elective	Health	Writing
10:50 – 11:30	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
11:30 – 11:40	Movement Break	Movement Break	Movement Break	Movement Break	Movement Break
11:40 – 12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:30 – 12	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
12 – 12:19	SSR/Study	SSR/Study	SSR/Study	SSR/Study	SSR/Study
12:20 – 1:09	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
1:10 – 2:00	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Art

Grow High School **In-Person** Sample Schedule

Students will not move from their classrooms. Two teachers will teach the core subject areas noted.

TIME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:20 – 9:09	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA
9:10 – 9:59	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
10:00 – 10:49	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
10:50 – 11:10	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:10 – 11:30	SSR	SSR	SSR	SSR	SSR
11:31 – 12:19	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
12:20 – 1:09	Elective	Art	Health	Elective	Elective
1:10 – 2:00	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective

Grow Middle School / High School **Remote** Learning Schedule

TIME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:45 – 9:35	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
9:40 – 10:30	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
10:35 – 11:25	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA
11:25 – 11:55	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:00 – 12:55	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
1:00 – 1:55	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective

Developmental Program Sample Schedules (Both In-Person and Remote)

	<b>In-Person Learning</b>		<b>Fully Remote Learning</b>
<b>7:45-8:15</b>	Student Arrival/Toileting Procedures/First Position of the Day/Bracing if applicable	<b>8:00-8:30</b>	*All materials uploaded to Teams Classroom including a new story in literacy section, a narrated slide presentation (recorded) centered around the weekly theme with teacher-led worksheet or activities embedded in presentation, current event articles and activities narrated by teacher with teacher-led activity or worksheet at end & any applicable videos added to skill builder section to target specific students objectives. (Monthly Morning Meeting also available in recorded form to be accessed at anytime) * Weekly email to go out to families on Monday during this block as well
<b>8:15-9:15</b>	Individual Work Sessions: All students will complete their morning jobs as well as work on objectives as stated in their IEPs. Therapies make take place intermittently during these times as well as bracing, positioning changes & toileting procedures.	<b>9-9:45</b>	Synchronous Learning Opportunity: Morning Meeting & Current Event Activity via Microsoft Teams. *ALL subjects incorporated *All classroom staff to attend including teacher, tutor, ed assistant (related service providers may also attend).
<b>9:15-10:15</b>	Morning Meeting/Informational Text - Incorporates all subjects	<b>9:45-10:15</b>	Student break for changing, repositioning, outside activities, etc.
<b>10:30-11:00</b>	Position change/toileting procedures if necessary	<b>10:15-11:00</b>	Synchronous Learning Opportunity: Break-out sessions with teacher, ed assistant or tutor. Students will work virtually one-on-one with a staff member (will rotate so teacher has opportunity to work with all students on a rotating basis) *All subjects incorporated
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	Lunch 1 (Changing)	<b>11:00-11:30</b>	Student break for lunch, changing, repositioning, outside activities, etc.
<b>11:30-12:15</b>	Weekly Unit-See Scope & Sequence for details *Incorporates all subjects	<b>11:30-12:30</b>	Asynchronous Learning Opportunities: May include pre-recorded videos uploaded to Teams classroom, completion of worksheets or activities sent home in packets, family field trips to explore opportunities in a student's community or neighborhood related to lessons with an opportunity to share experiences with staff and peers at the end of the day, etc.

<b>12:15-1:00</b>	Reading Group - Chapter Book	<b>12:30-1:30</b>	Synchronous Learning Opportunity: End of day check in via Microsoft Teams. Opportunity to share what was learned today, what student did during asynchronous learning, ask any questions. Story Time or Activity related to weekly theme or unit may also be included during this time. *All classroom staff to attend including teacher, tutor, ed assistant (related service providers may also attend).
<b>1:00-1:45</b>	Getting Ready for dismissal	<b>1:30-2:00</b>	Teacher available for meeting with parents, other staff for consultation. Could also have end of day meeting with class staff to see how break-out sessions went or answer any questions. Prep for next day.

## Attendance, Assessment & Grading

Student attendance in the upcoming school year will be compulsory and monitored daily as per pre-COVID-19 statewide shut downs observed in March 2020. Both the use of formative and summative assessments shall follow the rigor of SWCEC’s educational processes while also following the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and Standards. Grading shall move from the credit/no-credit model observed in the last quarter of the 2019-2020 school year to grading based on the quality of work completed by students.

## Technology

### *Learning Platform*

Students and teachers shall use applications and software found within the Microsoft 365 suite, along with the use of increased synchronous instructional opportunities.

### *Student Devices*

Students will be provided with equipment so as to foster and fully implement SWCEC’s commitment to the 1:1 initiative that was begun during the 2019-2020 school year. Surveys to families shall be completed to ensure that adequate and equitable access to internet is available to students.

### *Learning Materials*

The sharing of learning materials and equipment will be kept to a minimum, as close to zero tolerance as possible. This shall include but not be limited to: electronic devices, writing utensils, toys, games, learning aids, art materials or other items that may be difficult to sanitize. Regular cleaning and disinfection of any shared equipment across groups of children will happen between each use. Books and other paper-based materials are deemed low-risk for transmission as per DESE and Department of Public Health and therefore do not require additional sanitizing processes. Individual student school supplies shall be kept separate by student and labeled as such with individual student containers away from other students’ materials.

## Social Emotional Learning

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is critical for student progress and success. SWCEC is committed to continuing its exemplary level of care and trauma-informed instructional practices so that all of its learners reach their potential. Working with our students includes frequent mental health check-ins, emotional well-being contact, as well as regular and sustained two-way communication between families and our teachers, paraprofessionals, and counseling staff. Establishing routines and consistent schedules is an important factor in promoting effective SEL opportunities. Dedicating regularly scheduled check-ins with students and their families will continue, along with monitoring of student participation, readiness, and progress in each model of instruction. Independence and self-management skills are also paramount in our students' success.

## Resources and Operations

### Safety Protocols

The SWCEC Re-Entry Planning Committee has worked collectively with administrators, teachers and staff, community members and input from parent surveys to develop protocols, based on guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), to keep our students and staff safe.

- SWCEC will identify staff who will need to be trained and what that training should address.
- SWCEC will determine who will provide the training and what materials will need to be procured for the training. SWCEC will ensure trainers are qualified to conduct associated training and utilize resources from accredited organizations when possible.
- SWCEC will develop a timeline for training needs including what training needs to be conducted prior to the start of in-person instruction and what training needs to be provided as ongoing support.
- SWCEC will develop a system for monitoring staff completion of required training and identify staff responsible for ensuring all staff have met the training requirements prior to beginning in- person work.
- SWCEC will consult current vendors and/or affiliated health and safety organizations to determine what resources are readily available.
- SWCEC will consult with districts, collaboratives, and approved special education schools to share resources related to training.
- SWCEC will develop a mechanism for staff to communicate additional training needs. Said training needs should be communicated to the staff member's direct supervisor.
- SWCEC will determine what training, if any, may be needed for families of students with disabilities.

### Staff Training

In order to ensure an efficient re-entry process, all staff shall participate in self-guided video tutorials and training regarding safety precautions, understanding symptoms, and donning and doffing PPE. After viewing these training documents, staff shall successfully complete and pass a post-training assessment. Any incorrect responses shall require the Lead Nurse to review with individual staff to insure competency and readiness for duty.

Training will be provided by qualified professionals.

- Training will include all staff who have contact with students, including but not limited to educators, support and related services staff, administrators, clerical staff, custodial staff, and food service providers.

Training for staff will include the following but should not be limited to:

- Safe and effective use of protective equipment (putting on and taking off protective equipment and disposing and/or washing protective equipment);

- General information related to COVID-19 from the CDC;
- How COVID-19 is spread;
- How to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Symptoms of COVID-19; and
- When to seek medical assistance for students or staff who exhibit symptoms or become sick.
- Routine/procedures at specific school site

### *Student Training*

- Students will be provided with training through direct instruction and/or embedded content in lessons and activities, as developmentally appropriate.
- Training content will include general information related to COVID-19 from the CDC as well as content to ensure students are familiar with changes to their regular school practices, such as routines for entering and exiting the school, snacks/meals, assembling, passing in hallways, being transported via bus or van, and accessing the bathroom.
- Students will be explicitly trained on how to use protective equipment, as appropriate.
- Training will include how to put it on, take it off, dispose of it, and where it should be placed in instances where it needs to be cleaned by staff.
- Social stories, visual cues, and other appropriate developmental strategies will be used to reinforce these new concepts and protocols.

### *Screening Upon Entry*

- Parent/guardians and staff will **sign written attestations daily** regarding any household contacts with COVID-19, symptoms (e.g., fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, or diarrhea), or if they have given students medicine to lower a fever.
- Individuals who decline to complete the screening questionnaire will not be permitted to enter the program space.
- Teachers and staff will self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus. Staff will not be allowed on site without completing said self-screening.
- Students will be screened daily by both parent/guardians and staff.
  - Parent/guardians should complete the self screening form PRIOR to their student's arrival on campus: This document will be offered in translation, as appropriate.
  - Parent/guardians who do not have access to email may complete the form with an SWCEC nurse via phone prior to arrival or in person upon arrival.
  - Students who arrive on campus on non-parent/guardian provided transportation without having a form completed will be quarantined while the parent/guardian is contacted and a form is completed. If the parent/guardian cannot complete the form, the student will be required to be picked up. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, SWCEC will contact the student's emergency contact and ask that the student be picked up. Only parent/guardians and/or guardians will be allowed to complete the screening form on behalf of a student.
  - SWCEC will establish a single point of entry to the program to ensure that no individual is allowed to enter the building until they successfully pass the screening.
  - SWCEC will establish clear policies for student entry and dismissal from the building including a plan for traffic, drop-off, and pick-up that complies with social distancing guidelines.
- SWCEC will minimize visits inside the school building to reduce the number of individual interactions during ESY. Any parent/guardian who enters the building will be required to abide by the rules and regulations set by SWCEC.
- SWCEC will implement all or some of the following policies, as needed, based on the number of students who intend to attend in-person sessions:

- Staggering school start and end times,
- Assigning students to entries to ensure even distribution of students entering/exiting at each door,
- Providing guidance to students to enter one at a time and wait six feet<sup>8</sup> apart outside the entrance,
- Where appropriate, encouraging parent/guardians to remain outside during drop-off and pick-up.
- SWCEC will designate specific program staff to conduct all screening activities, and establish a designated screening area (e.g., a side room or enclosed area close to the point of entry) that will allow for more privacy in order to ask questions confidentially or conduct a temperature check. Unless a physical barrier, such as a plexiglass screen, is used, the space used for screening will allow for social distancing of staff from student/family while screening is being conducted (i.e. at least 6 feet of separation).
- Staff will make a **visual** inspection of each student for signs of illness, which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness. Staff will confirm that the student is not experiencing coughing or shortness of breath. In the event a student is experiencing shortness of breath or extreme difficulty breathing, call emergency medical services immediately.
- Staff will actively monitor students throughout the day for symptoms of any kind, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting, abdominal pain, and unexplained rash. Students who appear ill or are exhibiting signs of illness must be separated from the larger group and isolated until able to leave the facility. SWCEC will have a thermometer on site to check temperatures if a student is suspected of having a fever (temperature above 100°F). Special care will be taken to disinfect the thermometer after each use.
- If any student or staff appears to have severe symptoms, SWCEC will call emergency services immediately. Before transferring to a medical facility, SWCEC will notify the transfer team and medical facility if the individual is suspected to have COVID-19. Severe symptoms include the following: extreme difficulty breathing (i.e. not being able to speak without gasping for air), bluish lips or face, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, severe persistent dizziness or lightheadedness, new confusion or inability to rouse someone, or new seizure or seizures that won't stop.
- Health check responses and individual temperature check results will be recorded and maintained on file.

## *Masks*

SWCEC will ensure all students and staff wear face coverings or masks, unless not possible for medical or behavioral reasons. In cases in which face coverings or masks are not possible, strict social distancing of 6 feet will be required.

- Parent/guardians will ensure their student arrives at school wearing a face covering and ideally has an extra on hand.
- To slow the spread of COVID-19, SWCEC staff will be encouraged to wear a cloth face covering while serving students and interacting with parent/guardians and families. Program staff will be required to wear a cloth face covering whenever 6 feet of physical distancing is not possible.
- Parents/guardians will be asked to provide their students with a sufficient supply of clean masks and face coverings for their child to allow replacing the covering as needed.
- Parent/guardians will be asked to have a plan for routine cleaning of masks and face coverings, clearly mark masks with the student's name and room number, if applicable, and clearly distinguish which side of the covering should be worn facing outwards so they are worn properly each day.
- If families are unable to provide masks, SWCEC will provide masks for students as necessary.
- SWCEC masks and face coverings will be routinely washed (at least daily and any time the mask is used or becomes soiled) depending on the frequency of use. When possible, masks will be washed in a washing machine in hot water and dried fully before using again. If a washing machine is unavailable, masks will be washed with soap and hot water and allowed to dry fully before using again.
- If using a disposable mask, staff will follow CDC guidance on proper daily removal, which includes grasping bottom ties or elastics of the mask, then the ones at the top, and removing without touching the front, and discarding the mask in a covered waste container and washing hands or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately.

- SWCEC will enforce the wearing of face masks by parent/guardians when on the premises and at all times during drop-off and pick-up.
- SWCEC will regularly remind families and staff that all individuals are encouraged to adhere to the CDC’s recommendations for wearing a mask or cloth face covering whenever going out in public and/or around other people.
- SWCEC will teach and reinforce use of cloth face coverings among all program staff.
- Staff will be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.
- Information will be provided to all staff on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
- **Exceptions for wearing face masks** include situations that may inhibit an individual from wearing a face mask safely. These may include, but are not limited to: (1) Children under the age of 2 years; (2) Children who cannot safely and appropriately wear, remove, and handle masks; (3) Children who have difficulty breathing with the face covering or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance; (4) Children with severe cognitive or respiratory impairments that may have a hard time tolerating a face mask; (5) Children where the only option for a face covering presents a potential choking or strangulation hazard; (6) Individuals who cannot breathe safely with a face covering, including those who require supplemental oxygen to breathe; (7) Individuals who, due to a behavioral health diagnosis or an intellectual impairment, are unable to wear a face covering safely; and (8) Individuals who need to communicate with people who rely upon lip-reading.

### *Physical Distancing*

- When possible, social distancing with other members of the classroom and cohort will be observed
- Group sizes must be restricted to a maximum of 10 students, with a maximum of 12 individuals including students and staff in each room
  - Classroom location and groupings will be modified to follow DESE guidance
  - There will be limited movement through the school building to minimize cross contamination
- Teachers will minimize close contact to the extent possible except when students need help with feeding, toileting, or other routines
- Instructional areas will be modified or relocated to help promote social distancing prior to the start of the school day

### *Transition and Physical Distancing*

SWCEC will develop a plan for safely moving students in and out their classrooms while maintaining 6 feet of social distance when feasible; necessary student access to common areas, including bathrooms, will be managed by staff to avoid crowding.

SWCEC will install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart (e.g., reception desks).

SWCEC will provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to ensure that staff and students remain at least 6 feet apart in lines and at other times (e.g. guides for creating “one way routes” in hallways).

### *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*

- DESE has advised that *“All staff and students must wear face coverings or masks at all times with the exception of those for whom it is not safe to do so due to age, medical condition, disability impact, or other health and safety considerations”*.
- Clinicians and Behavior Specialists will determine appropriate shaping and desensitization protocols to help students tolerate wearing masks and practice hand washing



- Employees should wear gloves for feeding and hygiene routines

### *Handwashing and Hand Sanitizing Stations*

SWCEC will establish a regular hand washing routine upon entry; before and after meals; after sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing; after using any shared equipment such as computer keyboards; and before dismissal. Hand washing will use soap and water or hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol content.

#### When to Wash Hands:

Children and staff will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer often, making sure to wash all surfaces of their hands (e.g., front and back, wrists, between fingers).

Staff will ensure that staff and students will be regularly washing their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds when the following criteria are met:

- Upon entry into and exit from program space;
- When coming in to the program space from outside activities;
- Before and after eating;
- After sneezing, coughing or nose blowing;
- After toileting and diapering;
- Before handling food;
- After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated;
- After using any shared equipment like toys, computer keyboards, mouse, climbing walls;
- After assisting students with handwashing;
- Before and after administration of medication;
- Before entering vehicles used for transportation of students;
- After touching one's face
- After contact with facemask or cloth face covering; and
- Before and after changes of gloves.

Students will be instructed in good handwashing techniques and given frequent opportunities to wash their hands. Students will engage in supervised handwashing for at least 20 seconds at least two times each day, in addition to being encouraged to wash hands after using the restroom and before eating. Graphics will be posted in ALL bathrooms.

#### Use of Hand Sanitizer

SWCEC will have hand sanitizer at each entrance and require students, teachers, and staff to use it whenever they enter the building. Hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom, and students and teachers will be encouraged to use it frequently. Students, teachers, and staff will also wash hands or use hand sanitizer after they have touched something another person recently touched. All employees will wear cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth). If available, employees will consider wearing non-medical grade face masks.

### *Hygiene Protocols*

- One student will be allowed in a bathroom at a time, being escorted to the bathroom by a SWCEC staff member.
- Bathrooms are being cleaned on a hourly basis. A log is maintained in the bathroom for review

For the Specialized Developmental program the following toileting protocols will be in place:

- Staff will change students' clothing and their own clothing when soiled with secretions or body fluids. Students' soiled clothing will be bagged and sent home sealed in a plastic container or bag.

- Toileting and diapering areas (including tables, pails, countertops, toileting chairs, sinks/faucets, toilets, floors, etc.) will be cleaned and disinfected after each use by custodial services. Cleaning and disinfecting will be treated as two separate tasks:
  - **Clean:** To physically remove dirt, debris, and sticky film by washing, wiping, and rinsing.
  - **Disinfect:** To kill nearly all of the germs on a hard, non-porous surface with a recommended chemical to remove bacteria.
- Disinfect when students are not in the area. Surfaces should be dry by the time students use the area.
- Toileting/diaper procedures (including extra COVID-19 steps) will be **posted** in the bathroom changing area.
- All SWCEC staff will be trained on proper removal of gloves, gowns, facial masks, and other protective equipment and on handwashing before donning and after removing equipment in order to reduce contamination.
- All necessary supplies will be assembled and prepared before bringing the student to the changing area.
- Student's hands will be washed after the toileting/diaper change.

### *Clearing and Disinfecting*

SWCEC will establish systems for frequent cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing all utilized materials and spaces, especially bathrooms and frequently touched surfaces.

SWCEC will institute more frequent cleaning practices, including additional cleaning by janitorial staff, as well as provide the opportunity for students to clean their own spaces before and after they are used, in ways that are safe and developmentally appropriate. Cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces that are touched in public areas will be do throughout the day. If a classroom needs to be used by different class groups' the room will be cleaned after each class groups use. This would include objects such as door handles, common tables/desks, and high touch devices such as shared laptops or tablets.

SWCEC will follow the CDC's guidance on cleaning community buildings to prevent COVID-19 spread.

Resources and Supplies: The following supplies will be used for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting.

- SWCEC will use EPA-registered disinfectants and sanitizers for use against COVID-19. Follow directions on the label, including ensuring that the disinfectant or sanitizer is approved for that type of surface (such as food-contact surfaces).
- Many cleaning agents can be irritants and trigger acute symptoms in students with asthma or other respiratory conditions. SWCEC will not prepare cleaning solutions in close proximity to students.
- SWCEC will follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation.
- SWCEC will use child-safe cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting solutions and students will never be present when mixing solutions.
- Only single use, disposable paper towels will be used for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. Sponges shall not be used for sanitizing or disinfecting.
- All sanitizing and disinfecting solutions will be labeled properly to identify the contents, kept out of the reach of students, and stored separately from food items. Sanitizing and disinfecting solutions will not be stored in beverage containers.
- SWCEC will avoid aerosols, because they contain propellants that can affect breathing.

Proper guidelines will be followed when cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting.

- All sanitizing and disinfecting solutions will be used in areas with adequate ventilation and never in close proximity to students so as to not trigger acute symptoms in students with asthma or other respiratory conditions. Do not spray chemicals around students. If possible, move students to another area or have someone distract them away from the area where a chemical is being used.

- To ensure effective cleaning and disinfecting, always clean surfaces with soap and water first, then disinfect using a diluted bleach solution, alcohol solution with at least 70% alcohol, or an EPA approved disinfectant for use against the virus that causes COVID-19. Cleaning first will allow the disinfecting product to work as intended to destroy germs on the surface.

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- Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for concentration, application method, and contact time for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- Surfaces and equipment must air dry after sanitizing or disinfecting. Do not wipe dry unless it is a product instruction. Careful supervision is needed to ensure that students are not able to touch the surface until it is completely dry.
- Keep all chemicals out of the reach of students both during storage and in use.
- Keep chemicals in their original containers. If this is not possible, label the alternate container to prevent errors.
- Do not mix chemicals. Doing so can produce a toxic gas.

SWCEC General Guidelines for Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting:

SWCEC will follow these general guidelines for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting.

- SWCEC will intensify the program's routine cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting practices, paying extra attention to frequently touched objects and surfaces, including doorknobs, bathrooms and sinks, keyboards, and bannisters.
- SWCEC will clean and disinfect **activity** items used by students more frequently than usual.
- While cleaning and disinfecting, staff will wear gloves as much as possible. Handwashing or use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after these procedures will always be required, whether or not gloves are used.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures. SWCEC will conduct regular inspection and disposal of books or other paper-based materials that are heavily soiled or damaged. Machine washable cloth toys or products cannot be used at all. Materials that students have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions must be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered sanitizer, and air-dry or clean in a mechanical dishwasher.
- For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls, remove visible contamination if present. SWCEC will consider putting a wipeable cover on electronics, as needed. SWCEC will follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfecting. If no guidance is available, SWCEC will use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol, wait in accordance with manufacturer's directions and then dry surface thoroughly or allow to air dry. SWCEC will provide cleaning materials for older students to clean their own electronics.
- The playground will be cleaned and disinfected between each group's use.
- High touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, including play structures, tables and benches, will be frequently cleaned and disinfected.
- Cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces or groundcovers (mulch, sand) is not recommended.
- In the event that SWCEC suspects a potential exposure, SWCEC will conduct cleaning and disinfecting as follows.

- Close off areas visited by the ill persons. Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area. Wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection. SWCEC will plan for availability of alternative space while areas are out of use.
- Cleaning staff must clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment (e.g., tablets, touch screens, keyboards) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

### *Ventilation*

- Appropriate mask usage remain the best defense against all forms of respiratory transmission.
- DESE calls for schools to work to increase outdoor air ventilation instead of using recirculated air and increase air filtration as much as possible for the ventilation and filtration system.
- Schools will work with contracted vendors to review each buildings’ HVAC system to help maximize ventilation and filtration.
- Building HVAC systems will be cleaned and filters changed on a more frequent basis.

### *Visitors*

- At this point in time, outside visitors and guests are discouraged, except for contracted service providers for the purpose of special education, required support services, or program monitoring as authorized by the SWCEC.
- For those who need to conduct business in the collaborative, we are encouraging you to call the office first to see if the information can be provided via an electronic method.
- Masks or face coverings will be expected from all visitors and guest
- Visitor Screening will be required prior to entry into any collaborative building. The screening can be done online through a link provided to visitors and guests or completed on paper prior to entry. All paper forms will be maintained electronically.

### *Playgrounds*

Playgrounds can be used with staff monitoring to ensure physical distancing and masking. High-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily or between use for recess or by individual students.

### *Outdoor Spaces*

As feasible, outdoor spaces will be supported for classes, breaks, meals and other activities.

## **When a Staff or Student is Ill**

Staff and students should not come to school if they become sick with COVID-19 symptoms, test positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case. Staff and families are asked to report an illness symptoms that precludes them from attending school, to be able to identify symptom surveillance.

Symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Signs of a lower respiratory illness (cough, shortness of breath)
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Runny nose or congestion

- Headaches
- Body aches
- New loss of sense of taste or smell
- Other less common gastrointestinal symptoms (i.e. nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)

If a staff or student becomes symptomatic, SWCEC will follow the protocols below:

- Immediately call the nurse to assess symptoms.
- Upon assessing the symptoms, the nurse will isolate the individual from others and minimize exposure to others.
- Whenever possible, a mask or cloth face covering must be used.
- Contact the student's parent/guardian and send home as soon as possible.
- Follow SWCEC's plan for the transportation of a student who has developed symptoms and who relies on program transportation.

Families need to provide the school nurse with at least two emergency contact, indicating individuals who will be able to come to the school and pick up their child if they become sick during the school day. Dismissing sick children (and staff) in a timely fashion (within 30 minutes) is imperative for the safety of all.

In accordance with state and local laws and regulations, school nurse/administrators will notify the Dudley or Southbridge Office of Public Health, immediately of any case of COVID-19.

The Executive Director, while maintain confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act \*(ADA), will notify families of any identified cases with the school community.

Any teacher, staff member, or student who experiences any of the symptoms of COVID-19 will self-isolate until the below conditions have been met.

In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to SWCEC premises when all three of the following criteria are met:

- At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications); and
  - The individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared;
- or**
- In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and does **not** get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, the individual will be **assumed** to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to work until the individual has completed the same three-step criteria listed above;
- or**
- If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to work before completing the above self-isolation period, the individual will be asked to obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis.
  - Any student, teacher, or staff member living with someone who experiences any of the symptoms of COVID-19, whether they have a positive COVID-19 test or not, will self-isolate for two weeks. If they do not experience any COVID-19 symptoms during that period, they can return to their ESY program. If they experience symptoms, they will self-isolate until the conditions outline above have been met.
  - Student's parent/guardian and send home as soon as possible.
  - Follow SWCEC's plan for the transportation of a student who has developed symptoms and who relies on program transportation.

**Self-Isolating Following Exposure or Potential Exposure:**

**Separate room for suspected COVID-19 cases.** SWCEC will set up a separate area (different from the nurse's office) where students suspected of having COVID-19 can go until they are picked up by a parent/guardian. Said isolation room will be the cafeteria at the Dudley Campus and the conference room at the Southbridge campus.

In the event that a staff member or student is exposed to a sick or symptomatic person, the following protocols must be followed.

- If a student or staff has been exposed to COVID-19, regardless of whether the individual has symptoms or not, the student or staff will not be permitted to enter the program space and must be sent home. Exposed individuals will be directed to stay home for at least 14 days after the last day of contact with the person who is sick. SWCEC will consult the local board of health for guidance on quarantine for other students and staff and what additional precautions will be needed to ensure the program space is safe for continued student care services.
- If an exposed student or staff subsequently tests positive or their doctor says they have confirmed or probable COVID-19, they will be directed to stay home for a minimum of 10 days from the 1st day of symptoms appearing AND be fever-free for 72 hours without fever reducing medications AND experience significant improvements in symptoms. Release from isolation is under the jurisdiction of the local board of health where the individual resides.
- If a student's or staff's household member tests positive for COVID-19, the student or staff will self quarantine for 14 days after the last time they could have been exposed.

### *Medication Administration*

Any medication administrations that are needed must be done by the school nurse, per healthcare provider order.

- When a parent provides an inhaler to be used at school, orders from the child's physician, as well as an asthma action plan is required.
- Due to COVID-19 risks, use of nebulizers is not allowed in school. Therefore our nurses will not be accepting albuterol with nebulizer equipment or orders until the threat of COVID-19 is over or as determined by the MA DPH.

### *Food Service*

Students will be provided with a bagged breakfast and lunch each day. These meals are provided to SWCEC through the Dudley Charlton Regional School District and the Southbridge Public Schools. To the extent possible, students will eat lunch at their desks or outside. SWCEC will follow the food safety guidelines below.

- To minimize potential spread of infection and to promote physical distancing, cafeterias will be avoided.
- Plastic or paper plates and utensils will be used.
- Staff will ensure students wash hands prior to and immediately after eating.
- Staff will wash their hands before preparing food and after helping students to eat.
- Tables, chairs and trays used for meals will be cleaned and sanitized before and after use.
- All food contact surfaces, equipment, and utensils used for the preparation, packaging, or handling of food products will be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before each use. Additionally, SWCEC will frequently clean non-food contact surfaces, such as doorknobs, tabletops, and chairs. SWCEC will use sanitizers approved by the EPA for use against COVID-19 and for food-contact surfaces.
- SWCEC will be sure to follow the label directions for FOOD CONTACT SURFACES when using the chemical near or on utensils and food contact surfaces.

## Assumptions

With this plan we make several assumptions that include but are not limited to the following:

- We will continue to consult with our local Boards of Health and Health Agents to assist in decision making.
- We will act in good faith for the safety, security, and welfare of our students and ourselves.
- We shall be able to open our doors to in-person student learning based on reduced transmission rates in our state and locally.
- We shall endeavor to provide students with consistent schedules in any model of instruction.
- We understand that families can choose the option of being in a fully remote learning model and we shall endeavor to provide those students with equitable and appropriate education to their needs.

## Recommendations

- SWCEC proposes beginning in a Hybrid Model of learning with a phased-in approach, allowing for the first six weeks of instruction to be a blended learning model of in-person and remote learning opportunity
- If, due to state and / or local transmission rates, we need to begin in a fully remote learning model, we shall work toward getting students back to in-person learning as quickly as feasible.
- Modification to the current SWCEC calendar to allow for ten (10) days of educator professional development and preparation prior to the start of school on September 14, 2020.
- Continued assessment of staffing and PPE needs as we re-open our doors to the entire cohort of SWCEC students as planned.

## Guidance Documents

[Commissioners Initial Guidance Document \(6/25\)](#)

[Additional Special Education Guidance \(7/9\)](#)

[FAQ from the Commissioner's Office \(7/10\)](#)

[Two Step Process for District Reopening \(7/15\)](#)

[DESE Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 \(7/17\)](#)

[Facilities & Operations Guidance Document \(7/22\)](#)

[Transportation Fall Reopening Facilities and Operations Guidance Document \(7/22\)](#)

[Remote Learning Guidance Document \(7/24\)](#)

[Additional Staff Training Days for the Fall \(7/27\)](#)