

Soper School 2020-2021 Plan

Introduction

The chance that Soper School will once again need to change its approach to education because of the Covid-19 seems to be 100%. As of writing this, the number of cases in the state grows every day and is a hotspot within the nation. Our neighboring county (McCurtain) seems to really be struggling with this illness right now. With this in mind, a plan needs to be in place before the start of school in August. Below is an outline of that plan. It is not perfect and may need modifications as we proceed, but for now gives us a place to start.

Don't come if you are sick

We ask that everyone does a self-evaluation every morning. Ask yourself, "Do I feel good?" Being tired is normal in the morning and this is not the question. How do you feel? If you are sick, please stay home!

Watch for symptoms

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness.

Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list **does not include** all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

Soper school

Every student, teacher, and visitor will have a temperature check before entering a school bus or building. The school has purchased **non-contact** infrared thermometers for this purpose. Anyone running a fever will be sent home and not allowed to return until cleared by a doctor. This may seem extreme but every effort to keep our doors open is being implemented.

Attendance and exemptions

The attendance requirements for students for the 2020-21 year will be relaxed. We will not be being doing exemptions as this reward sometimes makes students come to school when they shouldn't. We will also not be giving no-credit for students who miss more than the allotted sick days. If you feel well, we want you at school. If you don't, we want you at home recovering. The school understands that some people will take advantage of the situation and this simply cannot be avoided. However, the education plan that will be in place for the 2020-21 year means that students will be able to complete a school day even if they are home. As a matter of fact, if parents want their child to stay home all year and still receive an education, they will have this option. Read on for more information on the academic plan.

Cleaning/ safety gear

Teachers will be issued a reusable mask at the start of the year. It is recommended that teachers use this mask. However, wearing a mask all day brings with it certain risks as well. For this reason, protective gear is optional. Students and teachers alike will have the option to wear protective gear if they want. Everyone's comfort level is different and we try to take this into account. The school has purchased new cleaning equipment that will spray the buildings down every day to help kill the virus on surfaces.

Shut down

If/when we have a confirmed positive case of Covid-19 at the school, we will go to distance learning for two weeks. The school will immediately be cleaned and closed up during this time. At the end of two weeks, administration will evaluate the situation and hopefully return to normal operations. It is possible that we may be bouncing in and out of distance learning but because of how school will be conducted, education should be seamless regardless of where we are at any given moment. We also understand the burden of child care and can only offer our regrets about this inconvenience.

If we find out during the school day that we have a positive case, we will keep students in the class they are presently in for the rest of the day. Students will be brought lunch and social distanced from each other for the rest of that day. The two-week quarantine will start the following day. Parents will be notified immediately through the one call system and allowed to pick their child up as soon as we know. Keeping students safe is our top priority which includes not sending children to a home that has not prepared for child care that day.

Academics

Soper School will be using an educational program called Acellus for the 2020-21 school year. As we learn more and more about this program, we become more and more excited. Acellus is a nonprofit organization with the goal of helping students get more from their education. At school, the students and teachers will watch the videos and work on the lessons together. The teacher will be able to help the students with their lessons and provide additional information with their own personal knowledge on the subject areas.

During distance learning, students and parents will have access to Acellus and watch and do the lessons from home. They will have to get help from their teachers through email or other digital means. We should be able to pop in and out of class without any break from education. If a student is sick for a week or a day, they can still keep up with the class as if they were there.

Internet/devices

What about internet? Most families have access to the internet through their cell phones. If not, if the students can get to a place outside but near the school, they can log into the wireless internet from there and complete assignments. The school will also try to provide devices to families that are struggling with technology needs. If you do not have access to the internet or a device that allows you to log into the school's educational program (Acellus), come and see us. We want to help you! However, times are hard for public schools too and we are limited. If you can handle the technology yourself, great. If not, please let us know and we will see what we can do. No shame either way.

Sports and activities

This is probably the hardest thing to plan for because it involves other schools and organizations. We hope that FFA, FCCLA, sports, academic contests, college visits, and all the other things we do are not affected too much during this time. When we close school, all sporting events and activities will be canceled during the two-week period. Soper School obviously cannot speak for other schools or other organizations but we will try and err on the side of caution. Health is the most important thing to our students and their families. For this reason, we will have to play this portion of education on a day to day basis.

So, basically that's the plan. It is not perfect and thousands of little things will need to be changed along the way but at least we have a direction that leads to a quality education during these uncertain times. Soper School wants everyone to feel as safe as possible while getting an education that will lead to our students becoming productive citizens. Please feel free to call and ask us any questions you still have. We will get through this together and be stronger for it.

School Buses

We have ultimately decided to continue running school bus routes because we know this is a needed service for our Soper families. It will be impossible to properly social distance on the buses for an obvious lack of space. Since transportation is an optional courtesy offered by each school district, parents can choose whether or not to utilize this service.

Conclusion

I wish we were not in this situation. Winston Churchill said, "Never let a crisis go to waste." We are trying to use this horrible pandemic to change our approach to education for the better. It has forced us to look for more and better ways to educate our children. This includes technology, educational programs, curriculum and more. Parents and teachers alike need to come together and work as a team so our students grow into productive citizens. Thank you for your understanding and dedication to our school!