

New Soper School Covid-19 Plan

Timeline:

This plan will go into effect on November 30, 2020 and continue through January 4, 2021. At that time, the plan will be reevaluated to see how we want to proceed.

Main Goals:

The top priority for this plan is to reduce the spread of Covid-19. The safety and health of our students, faculty, and community members must surpass everything else during these difficult times. The second priority is providing a high-quality education. We have learned, as we already knew, that distance learning cannot compare to in-person learning. The best situation is for students to be at school with a teacher physically leading the class. Having stated this, it is not safe for people to assemble in large numbers at this time. This plan now becomes a way to keep students, teachers, and community members safe while still providing good educational opportunities.

Explanation of Plan:

Common sense would tell us that you cannot catch the virus if you are not exposed to the virus. So, a straight distance learning plan would be the best possible plan to prevent the spread until vaccinations have been disseminated. This would be aligned with our first priority, student and faculty safety. However, a straight distance learning plan could potentially hurt the students' learning process, which would not be aligned with our second priority, a high-quality education. This plan will try to create a social distancing policy while allowing students access to in-person instruction.

Kindergarten through 3rd grade would meet in person as normal. The rationale is that without a foundation for learning, students struggle more with the distance learning environment. Research also tells us that these early years are the most important to the overall success of learners throughout their lives. With this in mind, these students will come Monday through Thursday. The grades will be separated from each other so that if a student or teacher were to contract the virus, the other classes would not have to be quarantined and could maintain their schedule.

Grades 4 through 12 will be separated into four groups and students will be given one day a week where they come for in-person learning. These days are designed to allow students the opportunity for tutoring in areas they are struggling in on their distance learning curriculum. Again, classes will be separated from each other as much as possible to prevent widespread quarantine.

The main concern is too many teachers being infected with the virus or being put on quarantine to safely have school. We have gone to distance learning twice this school year already because of this. At one time, the entire cafeteria staff, two bus drivers, three coaches, and

several teachers were all exposed to the virus and were put into quarantine with some of them infected with Covid-19. The second time, all three administrators were put on the quarantine list with one of them infected with the virus. As you can see, it is hard to have school without adequate supervision.

The objective is to create a schedule that allows the school to only quarantine a small number of personnel when we have an active case. This is more difficult than it may sound. Take the high school math teacher as an example. Many students have a difficult time with this subject. Therefore, most of the high school students that come in on their day will need her expertise. This will probably mean that if a high school student is infected, the math teacher will now be on the quarantine list. What we must ensure is that other teachers with math abilities will not be on the quarantine list so that they can step in and help out for the two weeks the main math teacher is quarantined. In other words, certain teachers will be exposed to some groups but not others.

The hours of operation will also change from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This is to give teachers an additional hour to oversee their distance learning students. Teachers' workload will increase with this new plan. They will all still have many students to help and monitor with distance learning while at the same time teaching in-person. The schedule will be designed to give them hours throughout the day to accomplish this task.

Buses and Food

Bus routes will run but the hours may change some. Certainly, the evening routes will be one hour earlier and with less students coming each day, the morning times may shift slightly. We will have to figure this out as we go.

The cafeteria will also be preparing breakfast and lunch each day of the school week. Students in class that day will get their meals as normal. If a student wishes to pick up a meal on a day they are not scheduled, they may do so out front but will need to notify the school in time to prepare the meal.

Extra Help

Students that have a good handle on distance learning should move to this form of instruction and only come in when they need additional help and will not be counted absent on their scheduled day. Conversely, students who are struggling more in distance learning may require additional in-person days. As we go, we will adjust students to a schedule that fits their individual needs while keeping as few students in the school as possible.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We hope to keep as many extra activities as possible during these times. We have all lost so much, we hate to lose anymore. Ball games, speech contests, livestock shows, and many other activities are very important to our students but once again, health and safety is more

important. Although many events will be canceled, we will try to keep as many as possible. This will require that we limit participation and take other actions. Please be on the lookout for these changes as we go.

**Distance learning students have been added to this list as well to allow extra help as needed for those students. We understand this plan isn't ideal for every family. If for some reason this plan just absolutely cannot work for your family or if you have questions or concerns, please call or email an administrator.