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SPPS Fall Planning Staff Update - August 12

After careful consideration of our students, families and staff, local health metrics, and our ability to safely reopen our doors this fall, Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) will start the 2020-21 school year in distance learning for all students. For the full plan and most up-to-date information, please visit spps.org/reopen2020.



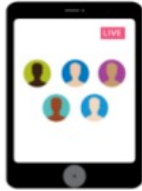

Why did we choose this option?

While the current COVID-19 case rate in Ramsey County highlighted by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) allows public schools to open for some students, SPPS needs to meet several other criteria to safely welcome students and staff back to our buildings. This list includes site logistics for social distancing, known enrollment numbers, sufficient staffing and personal protective equipment, and major modifications to school schedules, class groupings, transportation and meal service to accommodate a hybrid learning schedule.

Committing to distance learning now allows our educators to start preparing their curriculum, gives students time to process this information, and helps families move forward with their plans for supporting their students this fall.

We know this decision will not please everyone, and want to assure you it was based on data and science, with a focus on our community's health, safety and well-being. SPPS is committed to reopening our buildings when it is safe to do so, and will reevaluate our learning model throughout the school year.

Distance Learning 2.0

 <p>Full "class" meeting/Morning Meeting→ SYNCHRONOUS and recorded for students who aren't able to connect.</p>	 <p>Independent work time→ ASYNCHRONOUS</p>	 <p>Small groups/Tutoring/Check-In → SYNCHRONOUS set times to work on specific assignments/ discussions/ projects/etc.</p>	 <p>Office Hours→ set times each week when teachers are available to answer questions/work with students in specific classes.</p>
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When Distance Learning was introduced this spring, it was an emergency response to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in Minnesota. Since that time, SPPS has engaged several stakeholder groups for feedback. We listened to that feedback, and will introduce Distance Learning 2.0 as an improved platform for learning for the 2020-21 school year.

We know our educators are committed to providing students and families the high-quality learning opportunities they expect. This fall, students will experience a new way of organizing lessons, one that aligns the look and feel of Schoology and Seesaw between courses to make them easier to navigate.

There will be more “same time” learning, and grading expectations will be explained at the beginning of the course.

Instruction for Distance Learning 2.0 will have daily same-time (synchronous) lessons for all students. Using technology tools we have in place, there will also be daily student-to-student interaction. More information about [Distance Learning 2.0](#) will be shared in the coming weeks, including [family and student checklists](#) and supports.

Academic Support Centers

Multiple sites throughout Saint Paul will be staffed for in-person academic, social-emotional, health and technical support. Students will be referred by staff and parents, with priority for those with the greatest need. More information will be available after the start of the school year.

SPPS Virtual Learning School



The [SPPS Virtual Learning School](#) is an option for PreK-12 students who prefer to remain in 100% distance learning for the entire 2020-21 school year. **Students who enroll in the Virtual Learning School will begin the school year with their currently assigned class at their home school.**

Virtual Learning School students will stay in their currently enrolled home schools and classrooms until a transition is made to a hybrid model. As the district moves through the various levels of hybrid learning, students enrolled in the Virtual Learning School will transition to their Virtual Learning School classrooms.

When transitioning to their Virtual Learning School classrooms, dual language and immersion students will continue to receive immersion instruction, though possibly at a reduced level compared to their hybrid or in-person peers.

We are asking families to enroll by Friday, Aug. 21. Learn more at spps.org/virtualllearning.

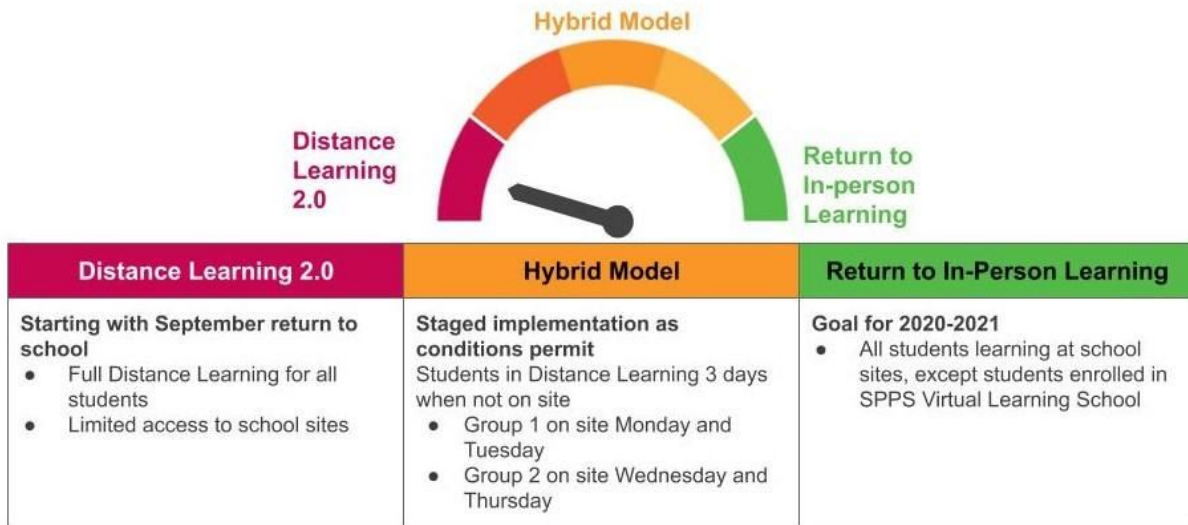
Professional Development for Educators

SPPS educators will receive the following professional development to help prepare for a successful start to the school year in distance learning:

- **3 hours of PD for all teachers on DL 2.0 design and teacher expectations**, to be completed between Aug. 17-30 at the regular contracted rate of pay
- 16 hours of PD for teachers opening week
- 2.5 hours of English Language Learning PD, focus on vocabulary and language supports in DL 2.0 (CABPML)

- 2 full days of Specialized Services PD on compliance and special education expectation of services/supports
- Schoology, Seesaw, and other technology tool PD for teachers and paraprofessionals based on need and interest

Transition to In-Person Learning



Our ultimate goal is to welcome students and teachers back to our buildings when it is safe and possible to do so. SPPS has two dates when we will consider transitioning to a hybrid learning schedule:

- **Sept. 25** - Determine whether to start a hybrid schedule on Oct. 19
- **Oct. 14** - Determine whether to start a hybrid schedule on Nov. 16

Social-Emotional Learning

Distance Learning and the COVID-19 pandemic has created high levels of stress for many students, staff and families. This emphasizes the importance of **social-emotional well-being** . As we begin the new school year, it is vital that we find ways to genuinely welcome students and staff back to school, create connections and re-establish relationships under new circumstances.

To meet the social-emotional needs of students and staff, SPPS will:

- Focus on developing and maintaining relationships
 - Begin and end a school day or a class with routines, such as community building circles, morning meeting and checkout
- Continue and deepen implementation of the **Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Framework**
 - Staff and students will work together to create clear, agreed upon behavior expectations and methods of responding to unexpected behaviors
 - Develop rituals and routines and take time for celebration
- Support schoolwide implementation of Restorative Practices as a way to build a positive and inclusive culture
- Support mental health and wellness resources for students and staff

- Develop a mental health support team at each school site
- Continue a school-based mental health program, using our community mental health partners to their full capacity
- Support the Trauma Informed Schools work lead by the School Social Work Department

Special Education

We know that distance learning in the spring was particularly challenging for our special education and English Language (EL) students. Special education teachers will meet with families at the beginning of the school year to discuss individualized student needs and services for the 2020-21 school year. Meetings with families will be done virtually. Trained interpreters will be available to support communication with families as needed.

Health & Wellness

SPPS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all of our staff. To ensure this commitment is met, we have updated and will continue to revise the [COVID-19 Employee Workplace Manual](#) in response to the everchanging COVID-19 pandemic. This manual includes expectations around social distancing, face coverings, health screening, cleaning protocols, and what happens when a positive or suspected case of COVID-19 is reported by a student, employee or visitor.

COVID-19 Leave Requests & ADA Information



Enacted in April, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) requires employers to provide employees with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. The current provisions are applicable through Dec. 31, 2020.

There may be additional benefits within your collective bargaining agreement and SPPS leave policies.

For more information:

- [COVID-19 Leaves of Absence](#)
- [Americans with Disabilities Act Information](#)

Childcare Options



SPPS will offer two childcare options while the district is in distance learning. School-age students 12 and under who are children of [Tier 1 essential workers](#) will be cared for at no cost during normal school hours. This includes educators and childcare providers who are providing *in-person* instruction or childcare. For registration, locations and other details, visit spps.org/ekidscare.

For families who do not qualify as Tier 1 essential workers, fee-based childcare will be available at four schools. Find more information on locations, fees and registration on the [Discovery Club website](#).

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