ST. JOSEPH
SCHOOL DISTRICT

REENTRY PLAN
2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR
TRADITIONAL RETURN

Preventing the Spread

- Staff or students who exhibit symptoms must stay home
- All students needing immunizations must receive them before the first day of school
- Students who are sent home from school with a fever may not return for 72 hours
- Students who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 may not return to school for 14 days and must be symptom free

Health Actions at Every School

- Staff and students are expected to wear masks at times when it is difficult to maintain social distancing
- Social distancing will be practiced to the greatest extent possible
- Frequent hand washing and hygiene practices will be encouraged
- Signage addressing social distancing and hygiene will be posted throughout the buildings
- 500 hand sanitizing stations have been added throughout the district to increase accessibility
- Installation of bottle filling stations will begin to replace drinking fountains
- Maintenance staff have undergone additional training for increased cleaning protocols
- Assemblies and other large group gatherings will not take place
- Expect symptom screening for all staff and students
- Ensure any staff or students who exhibit symptoms are not at school or in the workplace
- The attendance policies have been adjusted to accommodate COVID-related illness and recovery

In the Classroom

- Items students are allowed to bring into the school will be limited to decrease possibility of surface-contact virus spread
- Communal/shared supplies will be eliminated when possible, when it is not possible, shared items will be sanitized after student use
- Seating charts will be utilized in every classroom to assist with contact tracing

Elementary Education

- Enrollment and Back to School nights will be conducted online
- Arrival and departure will be staggered
• Breakfast will be taken to the classroom
• Lunch shifts will be staggered and satellite areas will be utilized to allow for social distancing
• Specials and recess will be staggered
• Assemblies and field trips will not take place

Secondary Education
• Lunch shifts will be staggered and satellite areas will be utilized to allow for social distancing
• Passing periods will be staggered to limit the number of students in the hallways at one time
• Assemblies and field trips will not take place
• Hall lockers will not be issued, students will be asked not to bring items from home that are not necessary for school and use backpacks for their school issued device and supplies

Early Childhood
• In-person appointments will be scheduled for students to meet their teacher
• Parents as Teachers will continue with Virtual Home Visits
• Staff are expected to wear masks or face shields when social distancing isn't possible
• Students are encouraged to wear a mask but young children may be unable to wear a cloth face covering properly, particularly for an extended period of time, wearing of cloth face coverings will be prioritized at times when it is difficult to maintain social distancing
• Toys and play equipment will be sanitized frequently
• Early Childhood Special Education students will have the option to learn remotely, these families will be contacted before school starts to discuss options

Special Programs
Students with an IEP will receive a personal phone call from staff prior to the first day of school to discuss:
• CDC Guidance regarding children who may fall into a high-risk category for illness
• How IEP services can be provided in a traditional return or a virtual return
• Review of the student’s IEP
• Methods of instruction
• District-wide safety measures
• Transportation options
School Bus Safety

- Students and bus drivers are expected to wear face coverings on the bus
- Students will be assigned two to a seat, families will be placed together when possible
- Buses will be cleaned and sanitized between routes, school start and end times will be adjusted to accommodate extra cleaning
- Hand sanitizer will be provided for students boarding and exiting the bus
- Bus boarding and exiting will be staggered at schools

Technology

- Students K-12 will be assigned a district device for their individual use to help limit transmission of infection through the sharing of devices
  - There will be a limited supply of devices available at each school for students to borrow if they leave theirs at home, these devices will be disinfected prior to being issued to the student for the day
  - Information will be provided to parents regarding regularly disinfecting student’s device at home.
- In shared device settings, such as computer labs, classroom iPad carts, etc. the following procedures will be followed:
  - Students will be asked to use hand sanitizer before and after using a shared device
  - At the end of each classroom use of shared devices, the teacher will disinfect the used devices
- Building techs will follow the procedures listed below when supporting users with technology needs:
  - Frequent hand washing and/or use of hand sanitizer
  - Disinfect device brought in for support or repair prior to working on the device
  - Disinfect device and sanitize hands prior to returning device to user
  - Track close contacts

Building Usage, Visitors, and Volunteers

- No outside facility usage
- Visitors will not be allowed in buildings except for IEP meetings or scheduled meetings
  - No walking students to class
  - No lunch visits
  - No volunteers
• Visitors will self-screen and must wear masks
• Visitors will be logged in Raptor for contact tracing
• No college or military recruiters, counselors will help facilitate video meetings

Activities

At this time no decisions have been reached in regards to fall sports, as we are still waiting for guidance from the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA), the Midland Empire Conference (MEC), and the Greater Kansas City Suburban Conference (GKCSC). We will release this information when it becomes available.
You must enroll in the Virtual Academy by July 31, 2020. You can enroll online, print a form, or pick up a form from Academic Services. Forms must be completed and returned by fax, mail, or dropped off to Academic Services. [Click here to view the handbook for the SJSD Virtual Academy.](#) Students can only enter and/or exit the Virtual Academy during the first 5 days of each semester. Students who register for the fall session may exit the Virtual Academy January 13-19. Students who attend traditional school in the fall may register for the Virtual Academy January 13-19.

**ADDRESS:**
Academic Services  
925 Felix Street  
St. Joseph, MO 64501

**Instructional Expectations**  
Teachers will create age appropriate amounts of content-related work each day for their students. This may include practice, interactions with presentations or lectures, research, or the completion of assignments. In total, here are the guidelines for the SJSD (from the DESE Task Force for Learning Acceleration):

- K-1—45 minutes daily; 5 to 10 minute increments
- Grades 2-3—60 to 75 minutes daily; 10 to 15 minute increments
- Grades 4-5—90 minutes to 2 hours daily; 20 minute increments
- Grades 6-8—3 hours daily; 30 minutes per class; build in breaks
- Grades 9-12—3-4 hours daily; 30 minutes per class; build in breaks

**Other Information**

- Grades will be recorded for work during instances of remote learning
- The SJSD has also developed a fully online virtual academy that allows students to retain access to high-quality instruction under the supervision of certified teachers
- Students can only enter and/or exit the Virtual Academy during the first 5 days of each semester
- Courses currently developed include a full slate of core and elective courses for grades K-12
- Parents of elementary students will be enrolled as “observers” in their child’s online coursework
- The SJSD has developed specific guidelines for course creation, ensuring a quality learner experience
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General

Has the start date for the 2020-2021 school year changed?
At this time we expect to start the school year on August 24, 2020.

Will school start and end times be different?
Yes, to allow cleaning and sanitizing between routes school times will need to be adjusted. The new start and end times will be communicated as soon as they are finalized.

Will student safety be a priority?
Student and staff safety is a high priority in the St. Joseph School District. Handwashing, social distancing and the expectation of students and staff wearing face coverings is a part of the safety plan. Cleaning/disinfecting classrooms, common areas and buses will occur frequently during the school day.

Will parents and volunteers be allowed in school buildings?
Parents, visitors and volunteers will not be allowed in schools unless they have a scheduled meeting. Parents will not be allowed to walk their child to their classroom and visit during the lunch period.

How will the district communicate important information to stakeholders?
The district will provide frequent and ongoing communication with staff, students, parents and community stakeholders. Please know that as information changes, the district will communicate with our stakeholders through the district website, social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) parent notification systems (School Messenger and Parent Link) and local media outlets.

Academics

Once I choose a learning option, can I change my mind later?
A continuous and consistent learning environment is best for student success. For the sake of continuity, transfers from one learning option to another should occur after the completion of a semester.

If I choose the SJSD Virtual Academy option will I need to have my own computer or laptop?
A device and an internet connection will be necessary. When you select your option you can indicate whether you have a device and whether you have access to the internet.

Elementary Education

Under the Traditional model, will elementary students be able to have recess?
Yes. Recess will be organized to emphasize social distancing and to minimize exposure.

What will elementary specials scheduling look like?
All elementary specials arrangements in the Traditional setting will have procedures in place to support the health, safety and wellness of students and staff.
Will schools host Back-to-School nights?
Enrollment and back-to-school nights will be conducted virtually.

Will schools hold assemblies?
Assemblies and class field trips will not take place during the first quarter.

Secondary Education

How will safety and social distancing work in the high school setting?
Students, teachers and staff will utilize Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as face coverings and gloves in settings with several people and when social distancing is not possible, e.g. passing periods, offices, cafeteria, large classes, etc. Seating charts and arrangements in the classrooms will be changed to maximize the distance between students.

Will AP courses be offered in the traditional and SJSD Virtual Academy model?
At this time, AP courses have not been developed for the Virtual Academy, but that will be included in the upcoming phase of classes to be rolled out.

How will Dual Enrollment Courses work?
Students interested in Dual Enrollment would be able to enroll in online courses through local universities.

Virtual Academy

Is the Virtual Academy a year-long commitment if I choose to enroll at the beginning of the year?
A continuous and consistent learning environment is best for student success. For the sake of continuity, transfers from one learning option to another should occur after the completion of a semester.

Is the Virtual Academy just like the online learning during the closure?
The Virtual Academy design is very different than the experience students had during the closure in the spring. The Virtual Academy is a flexible online learning platform that allows students to engage in the learning process and keep connected with peers without physically being inside a classroom or face-to-face interaction. It includes a full scale of core and elective courses for grades K thru 12 that can be personalized to each individual’s needs and learning goals.

Special Education

My child has special needs. Will I hear from anyone regarding their plan for starting school?
A personal phone call from special education staff will be made prior to the first day of school to discuss their student’s IEP, what options are available, and to answer and questions or concerns

How will Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings take place in the fall?
IEP meetings will be held virtually unless they are special circumstances requiring an in-person meeting. Any in person meetings will be held in a location where social distancing guidelines can be appropriately followed.
May students with special needs sign up for SJSD Virtual Academy?
Parents of children with an IEP may sign their child up for SJSD Virtual Academy if they feel it is an appropriate option. If you sign up, your child's case manager will work with you and the rest of the IEP team to determine whether SJSD Virtual Academy is the best fit for your child's needs.

If your child has a 504 plan and you sign them up for the SJSD Virtual Academy, your child's counselor will work with you and the rest of the 504 team to determine appropriate accommodations to meet your child's needs in a virtual learning environment.

Early Childhood Programs

What are the options for children enrolled in the Pre-K program for the 2020-21 school year?
SJSD preschool children are enrolled through our Early Childhood Special Education program or through our Title-funded peer program. Some of our classrooms serve only ECSE students; some serve primarily Title/peer students; and some serve a blended group of children with Individualized Education Plans alongside children who are peers.

What health guidelines will be followed for preschool children?
Early childhood will be following best practices for handwashing, cleaning and sanitizing, and use of PPE set forth by the CDC and the St. Joseph Health Department.

What will the number of Pre-K children will be assigned to a classroom?
This varies from 7-20 children according to the programming of the classroom (ECSE, Blended/Integrated, Title).

Health and Wellness

Will students wear masks or face coverings in classrooms?
The wearing of face coverings and/or face shields will be expected for staff and students. Face coverings will be prioritized at times when social distancing is difficult to maintain, such as, school arrival and dismissal, riding on the bus, and when passing in common areas.

Will students be expected to socially distance?
In many school settings students will be socially distanced to the extent possible. At the elementary school level, where social distancing will be extremely difficult, students will spend most of the school day interacting only with students in their class. By limiting their exposure to a small number of students, we reduce the chance of infection. And if a student becomes ill, the immediate class is affected, not the entire school.

What steps will be taken to ensure that surfaces are clean in classrooms?
Maintenance workers and school custodians will clean frequently touched surfaces throughout the day and conduct overall cleanings at the conclusion of every day. Other non-custodial staff members will be expected to do their part keeping surfaces clean. Teachers will have access to cleaning supplies for their classroom.
What other steps are being taken to ensure a healthy environment?
The SJSD will continue to educate students on the importance of hand washing, hygiene, and social distancing. Hand sanitizer will be made available in classrooms, workplaces and on school buses. Sick children and staff must stay home if showing signs of Covid-19. All schools have a registered nurse on staff.

What will my student’s school do if a classmate or staff member exhibits symptoms of COVID-19? If a student or staff member exhibits any symptoms, they should not come to school or report to work. If a student exhibits symptoms at school, they will be taken to a designated location within the school and their parent or guardian will be notified to take them home or to visit a medical professional.

What if a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19? The Buchanan County Health Department will notify the district if a student or staff member tests positive. We will notify parents, while not specifically identifying the student or staff member. We will cooperate with the Health Department as they conduct the appropriate notifications of individuals who have been in contact with the person infected.

Mental Health

If my child is anxious or concerned about returning to school, what can I do to help? Talk to your child and find out the reason for their concern. Provide them reassurance and answer their questions, share information pertaining to their concern and seek answers if you are unaware. If you still need support, reach out to your child’s school for additional assistance.

Food and Nutrition

If my child selects the SJSD Virtual Academy option will they still be permitted to receive their free or reduced meals? Yes. A plan is being developed so students can receive their meals if they signed up for virtual learning and meet the federal guidelines to qualify for the breakfast/lunch program. More information to come before the start of school.

What steps will be taken to limit exposure in the school cafeteria? Pre-packaged utensil kits will be used to reduce student contact. Students will not be allowed to self-serve on items that are not pre-packaged. Hand sanitizer will be available in all dining areas and nearly 500 handwashing stations have been placed in school buildings through the district.

Will my child eat in the cafeteria or their classroom? Lunch shifts will be staggered and satellite areas will be utilized to allow for social distancing. Cleaning and sanitizing will take place between each lunch shift.
Transportation

Will students be required to wear masks or face coverings?
It is the expectation that all students choosing to participate in school transportation wear a face covering while being transported.

How will social distancing be enforced on school buses?
Students are expected to wear a face covering as social distancing will not always be possible on school buses. Siblings will be directed to sit together and students will utilize space available to distance when possible. There will be no more than two students allowed per seat.

My student has health issues that make wearing a face covering impossible. Will they have to still wear a face covering?
Accommodation will be considered relative to this expectation. Please communicate concerns with school staff for further direction.

Technology

If we choose the online options and we don’t have a device, will the district provide one?
Yes, we will provide a device for all K-12 students to use for either in-school or online learning. For K-2, the device will be an iPad. For 3-12, the device will be a Windows laptop.

If we have several children, do we need devices for each child?
Every student will be assigned a device, and, if several children in the home are involved in online learning, it would be best for them to each have their own device.

Will the District support my child’s device if I send one from home?
The district will provide a device for each student, and these will be set up with all of the district-purchased software, filtering, network access, etc., students will need. While students participating in online learning from home may be able to use a personal device for some parts of the online learning experience, a district-issued device will be provided and necessary for use at school.

Athletics

Will students participate in sporting activities this fall?
The SJSD values the importance of the educational opportunities that athletics provide and recognizes the threats presented by COVID-19. The district has developed a reentry plan for summer athletics that will allow students to workout and compete in the safest manner possible. At this time no decisions have been reached in regards to fall sports, as we are still waiting for guidance from the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA), the Midland Empire Conference (MEC), and the Greater Kansas City Suburban Conference (GKCSC). We will release this information when it becomes available.
Before and After School Enrichment Programs

Will the district provide after school care and enrichment programs?
Yes, the YMCA will provide before and after school programming for students. Please contact the YMCA for more information.
FALL 2020 REENTRY GUIDELINES

Students will return to school in a classroom setting or learn from home through the district’s virtual learning academy. Parents will be required to choose which option they want for their child.

- Breakfast will be grab and go and students will eat in the classroom. Lunch shifts will be staggered and satellite areas will be utilized to allow for social distancing.

- Bus transportation will be provided with social distancing guidelines in place. Families are encouraged to transport their child or carpool if possible. Students and bus drivers are expected to wear face coverings.

- Disinfecting will occur frequently each day throughout the classroom and high-touch areas in the building. Buses will be cleaned and disinfected between routes.

- Visitors will be permitted in buildings for scheduled meetings only. Parents will not be allowed to walk their child to the classroom or have lunch with their child.

- Recess will be allowed with grade level peers only. One grade level on the playground at a time will be permitted. No field trips or assemblies first quarter.

- Staff and students are expected to wear face coverings at times when it is difficult to maintain social distancing.

- Breakfast will be grab and go and students will eat in the classroom. Lunch shifts will be staggered and satellite areas will be utilized to allow for social distancing.

- All kindergartners, 8th graders and seniors will need to be up-to-date on immunizations before the first day of school.