



## **Southwest Cook County Cooperative Association for Special Education**

### **Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan**

On June 26, 2020, Governor Pritzker announced that the state had reached Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan. In Phase 4, schools open under the following conditions:

- Require the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings;
- Prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space;
- Require social distancing be observed, as much as possible;
- Require that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require the individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings; and
- Require an increase in school wide cleaning and disinfection.

P.A. 1001-0643 requires that school districts “adopt a Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan.” The Southwest Cook County Cooperative Association for Special Education (SWCCCSE) created a 26 member Transition Planning Team in preparation for a return to in-person instruction. This public act requires that the Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan to address the following:

- A) Accessibility of the remote instruction to all students enrolled in the district;
- B) When applicable, a requirement that the Remote Learning Day and Blended Remote Learning Day activities reflect the Illinois Learning Standards;
- C) Means for students to confer with an educator, as necessary;
- D) The unique needs of students in special populations, including, but not limited to, students eligible for special education under Article 14; students who are English Learners as defined

in Section 14C-2; students experiencing homelessness under the Education for Homeless Children Act [105 ILCS 45]; or vulnerable student populations;

- E) How the district will take attendance and monitor and verify each student's remote participation; and
- F) Transitions from remote learning to onsite learning upon the State Superintendent's declaration that Remote Learning Days and Blended Remote Learning Days are no longer deemed necessary.

## **Preparation for Developing the Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan**

- SWCCCASE conducted Family and Staff surveys during June 2020.
- SWCCCASE contacted parents to complete the "Student Intake/Needs Assessment" form. This assessment allowed for parents to share information on the impact the pandemic has had on their family, family needs, the availability to technology and the internet in the home, concerns about returning to school, the ability of the child to wear a mask, the preference for remote learning, and mental health/social emotional concerns.
- SWCCCASE created a Transition Planning Team that began meeting on July 6, 2020. This Team reviewed all of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Department of Health (IDPH) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Guidance documents available.
- SWCCCASE has or will provide technology and internet access for all students.
- Teachers and related service providers have access to technology and the Internet and are available to assist students during regular school hours.
- Teachers and Related Service Providers are available via email or a Google phone number.
- Links to additional resources for students, parents and teachers appear on the SWCCCASE website. These resources include but are not limited to: Community resources, homeless shelters, food pantries, utility assistance, domestic violence assistance, COVID-19 testing centers, technology assistance and instructional resources.

## **Instruction**

SWCCCASE will provide in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible when we can reasonably ensure the health and safety of students and staff members. This Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan will provide for instructional delivery using multiple models.

Each student and Cooperative program are unique. Based upon the data collected, the Cooperative procedures relating to mandatory health and safety protocols and conversations with families, Principal or Program supervisors developed individual program plans for remote and blended learning. All students attending Cooperative programs will have a “Remote Learning Plan” developed. All remote learning plans will primarily focus on English/Language Arts and Mathematics.

On July 15, 2020, the Board of Directors of SWCCCASE supported the recommendation of the Transition Planning Team to begin all Cooperative programs on remote learning. All programs will move students into classrooms when we can reasonably ensure student and staff safety.

The next section will define the types of instruction that may be provided.

### **Definitions**

**Remote Learning-**Remote learning is learning that happens outside of the traditional classroom because the student and teacher are separated by distance and/or time. Remote learning can be in real-time, flexibly timed, and it may or may not involve technology. Instruction will be guided by the student’s remote learning plan. ISBE strongly recommends that on “remote learning” days at least 2.5 hours per day of synchronous learning with real-time instructions and live interaction between students and their teachers take place. For students who would normally receive a half day of instruction, a minimum of 2 total clock hours per day is required. Time schedules and the topics being taught should be provided for families at the start of the week. Students may be engaged in online instruction or may receive work packets. All student and family needs will be considered while a student is on remote learning.

All remote learning will ensure that students have access to equitable educational opportunities. Remote learning will be documented by educators using PowerSchool. SWCCCASE purchased chrome books for para-educators to be involved in providing rigorous instruction during remote learning.

**In-Person Learning-**In person learning occurs when a student is present at school and receives instruction in a classroom with a teacher and other students present. In-person instruction should be provided outside or in large spaces when possible.

**Blended Learning-**The blended learning model occurs when a student participates in in-person instruction as well as remote learning. Blended learning can have different models. These are a few examples of how blended learning may be implemented:

- Students may attend certain days of the week and receive remote learning on the other days;
- Students may attend in-person for a half-day and participate in remote learning for the other half of the day: or

- Students may receive instruction primarily through remote learning and receive in-person instruction for their related services.

All students will receive five (5) hours of instruction per day. Learning activities may include, but are not limited to, in-person instruction, the teacher delivering instruction via recorded video or synchronous platform, remote small group works, breakout rooms or conference calls, independent/flexible student work times, and virtual/telephone teacher-student check ins. If using non-interactive platforms, students will have a means to confer with an educator and receive feedback before assignments are graded or assessments are administered. The “ISBE Fall 2020 Learning Recommendations” document provides suggestions for teaching and learning for the school year. SWCCCASE staff members will utilize these suggestions for instruction including social emotional learning. On pages 58-98 of this document general recommendations for instructing students by grade level are provided.

Regardless of the instructional model, all students will be assessed to determine if there was any regression due to the absence of in-person instruction. Areas of concern will be noted and teachers will work to address areas of learning loss.

Online instructional platforms that are appropriate for use include but are not limited to Zoom, ClassDojo, Google Voice, Google Classroom, Google Hangouts, Google Meet, and Skype. Facebook Messenger is NOT acceptable. Educators must ensure confidentiality when working with groups of students using an online platform. An online platform may be used with individual students. In this situation, signed consent is not required. When working with more than one student, all parents must be informed that their student will be participating in a group and secure written consent using the “Agreement to Provision of Group Special Education and/or Related Services through Alternative Means” form. Parents may decide if they want their child to participate. No video sessions with students may be recorded. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced, effective immediately, that it will exercise its enforcement discretion and will waive potential penalties for HIPAA violations against health care providers that serve patients through everyday communications technologies during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency. SWCCCASE will comply with Illinois state law, FERPA, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services guidance and the Office for Civil Rights guidance.

Additionally, mental health/social emotional assistance will be available for students, families and staff members in need.

### **Grading**

Traditional grading practices will be utilized. Grading will focus on the continuation of learning prioritizing the connectedness and care for students. All students will have the opportunity to redo, make up, or try again to compete, show progress, or attempt to complete work assigned.

## **Health and Safety**

### **Signs and Messages**

Signs developed by the CDC have been placed in school buildings and classrooms to remind students and staff to practice social distancing, to wash hands to wear face coverings, to clean surfaces, etc.

Messages will be sent home via email and through phone calls to remind parents of the COVID-19 symptoms. Digital resources available from the CDC may also be used to educate students.

### **Social Distancing**

SWCCCASE classrooms will promote social distancing to ensure a 6-foot physical distance from other persons to the greatest extent possible. Floor dots and other visual cues will be used in classrooms. Staff members may need to teach students to social distance. Social stories and videos may also be used for instruction.

### **Hand Hygiene**

SWCCCASE will encourage frequent and proper handwashing. Soap and paper towels will be available. SWCCCASE has purchased portable sinks that may ONLY be used for handwashing in classes that don't have access to water. Hand sanitizer will also be available in every classroom. Students will be taught how to wash their hands properly and use hand sanitizer to prevent the spread of infection.

It is recommended that hand hygiene be performed upon arrival to and departure from school; after blowing one's nose; coughing, or sneezing; following restroom use; before food preparation or before and after eating; before/after return from the playground/physical education; and following glove removal.

Students will be directed and encouraged not to touch their faces.

### **Face Coverings**

All students and staff members must wear a face covering in SWCCCASE schools and classrooms. If the wearing of a mask is contraindicated for a student or staff member, reasonable accommodations will be provided, or the Cooperative may determine that an exclusion is warranted due to health/safety considerations. If a student is unable to wear a face covering in school for an extended period of time, with breaks, parents must provide the program supervisor with a doctor's note explaining the reason why the student is unable to wear a mask and how long the student can wear a mask. The doctor's note must be provided, and the student's circumstances must be reviewed before the student will be able to participate in any form of in-person instruction. The student would be placed on remote instruction until the supervisor receives the note and determines if alternate protocols and procedures can be implemented to provide sufficiently safe conditions and to support your student in the classroom.

Staff and students may take breaks from wearing face coverings if they are outdoors or in a large area and socially distance.

While the ISBE "Part 3 Transition Guidance: Starting the 20-21 School Year FAQ-Last Updated: June 30, 2020" states that face shields are not effective protection against coronavirus

we had significant concerns for our students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students who receive speech/language therapy and those who rely on facial expression to understand situations.

On July 8, 2020, Dr. O’Neil received the following guidance from Barbara Moore, ISBE Director of Special Education:

*Situations where a face mask may not be appropriate include instruction for speech/language therapy, English Learners, or deaf/hard of hearing students who may need facial visualization – to see words being formed by the mouth – for language acquisition. The Illinois Department of Public Health recommends video instruction for individuals for whom a face mask is not appropriate. IDPH, after lengthy consultation with communicable disease experts, infection preventionists, and infectious disease specialists, informed ISBE that face shields are not effective for source control. Individuals may wear a face shield only if face masks or video instruction are not available or appropriate and with strict adherence to social distancing.*

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

SWCCCASE has purchased/ordered all recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff and students. This includes: a number of different types of face coverings of various sizes including masks (paper, polyester, cotton, and cloth masks expected from ISBE), gaiters (a different type of face covering), face shields, student hats with face shields, gloves, gowns, "no touch" thermometers, hand sanitizer, disinfectant for the classrooms, paper towels, red garbage pails (for non-hazardous PPE disposal), and portable sinks.

### **Infection Control Procedures**

It is recommended that student groups remain together and do not integrate with other student groups. SWCCCASE strongly discourages the borrowing or sharing of any items. This includes electronic devices, toys, books, games, learning aids, etc.

Electronics or other items should be cleaned before and after use with a disinfectant wipe or spray with at least 60% alcohol and dry completely.

### **School-wide Cleaning**

SWCCCASE is following the procedures and recommendations of the CDC, IDPH and the local health department. SWCCCASE is more frequent cleaning and disinfecting schools to reduce exposure. All classrooms will have disinfectant to clean surfaces that have been touched throughout the day. Cloth toys or other cloth items that cannot be disinfected should not be present in any classroom.

All disinfectants used are approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Procedures are in place to conduct thorough disinfecting of classrooms when students are not present.

### **Planning for Possible Illness**

SWCCCASE will make every effort to ensure the health and safety of all students and staff members using the following guidelines. Students, parents and staff members will be made aware of the symptoms of COVID-19.

### **Symptoms of COVID-19 (CDC)**

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

Students and staff members will be excluded from school using the following information provided by ISBE and the IDPH. There will be no exceptions.

<b>School Exclusion Chart - source <a href="#">ISBE IDPH guidance document 6/23/2020</a></b>	<b>Period</b>
Student tests positive for COVID-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>IDPH will clarify whether this period of exclusion starts from the date of the positive test or date of onset of symptoms (for now, we recommend from date of positive test)</i></li> </ul>	14 days
Student exhibits one (or more) symptoms of COVID-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea</i></li> <li>• <i>Period of exclusion starts on the date of onset of symptoms</i></li> </ul>	14 days
Student had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Close contact" means that the student was within 6 feet of a symptomatic person for more than 15 minutes</i></li> <li>• <i>Period of exclusion starts on the date of the most recent close contact</i></li> </ul>	14 days
Student had close contact with someone who is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Close contact" means that the student was within 6 feet of a symptomatic person for more than 15 minutes</i></li> <li>• <i>Period of exclusion starts on the date of the most recent close contact</i></li> </ul>	14 days
Student has a temperature higher than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>At least 72 hours must elapse from resolution of the fever without fever reducing medication before the student can return to school</i></li> </ul>	72 hours
Student has a temperature higher than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) and exhibits one or more additional symptoms of COVID-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Student must not return to school until 10 days have passed after symptoms first appeared</i></li> </ul>	10 days
Student has returned from a location with sustained widespread transmission, potentially including areas located within the United States ( <a href="#">Travel Warning of Level 3</a> )	14 days

Close contact means the individual was within 6 feet of the individual who tested positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19 infection for more than 15 minutes.

Please note that if a student or staff member has a temperature of 100.4 and/or is reporting symptoms of COVID-19 and believes they have been in close contact with a person with COVID-19 they will be sent home. Whether the student or staff member was tested or not, they must be fever free, without fever-reducing medication for 72 hours and then 10 days must pass after symptoms first appeared before they can return to the school setting.

Any student who is excluded from in-person instruction due to quarantine, will temporarily participate in remote learning until they can return to school.

### **Student Attendance**

Student attendance will be taken daily. Attendance may be taken in-person, via video "check in," by phone call, text or email engagement, participation in lessons or packets collected by school personnel.



As per the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) memo dated May 6, 2020, if staff members are unable to contact a student for over a week, they should attempt to contact the parent. If the wellbeing of a student is still unknown, a wellness check will be initiated. The police may be contacted to conduct a wellness check, or two staff members may make a home visit wearing face coverings.

### **Reporting Absences**

**Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 or who shows signs or symptoms of the illness should stay home.**

#### **Students**

When reporting an absence, parents will be directed to report any COVID-19 symptoms, a positive COVID-19 diagnosis or COVID-19 exposure to the school. If this information is reported, the Principal or Program Supervisor will contact the parent and determine the length of quarantine based upon the CDC guidance. The student will be immediately placed on remote learning for the period of exclusion. If a student is called in sick and there is no reason given for the absence, the attendance secretary will contact the parent to ascertain the reason for the absence and contact the Principal or Program Supervisor, if necessary.

#### **Staff Members**

Staff members who are utilizing a sick day(s) should report any COVID-19 symptoms, a positive COVID-19 diagnosis or COVID-19 exposure in the comments section of the request in AESOP. If this is reported, the Principal or Program Supervisor will contact the employee and determine the length of quarantine based upon the CDC guidance. The staff member may participate in remote learning if they are well enough to perform such duties.

### **Daily “Check In”**

All students, staff members and visitors will participate in a daily “check in” or they will not be permitted to enter the building. Two types of “check ins” are allowable. “Check in” may take place via a temperature and symptom screening or via “self-certification.” SWCCCASE will not maintain records of any individual’s temperatures.

#### **Students**

Prior to entering the building, students will have their temperature checked with a touchless thermometer and asked if they have any symptoms on the COVID-19 Checklist. If a student has a temperature of 100.4 and/or is reporting symptoms of COVID-19 and believes they have been in contact with a person with COVID-19 they will be escorted to the “Isolation Room” and will be under the constant supervision of a staff member. The student’s parents will be called to take the student home.

Parents of students or students over the age of 18 who do not have a “legal guardian” may “self-certify” that they are fever-and symptom free before entering a school building in lieu of conducting symptom and temperature check. “Self-certification” must be done daily and

documentation will be maintained by the Cooperative. If a student arrives at school without a “self-certification” document, they will participate in a temperature and symptom screening for that day.

### **Staff Members and Visitors**

Prior to entering the building, staff members and visitors will have their temperature checked with a touchless thermometer and asked if they have any symptoms on the COVID-19 Checklist.

or

Staff members or visitors may “self-certify” that they are fever-and symptom free before entering a school building in lieu of conducting symptom and temperature check. “Self-certification” must be done daily and the Cooperative will maintain this documentation.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are fairly common. It is important to remember that an individual may come to the school building exhibiting symptoms, that are also symptoms of COVID-19, but they know they have a condition that is causing the symptoms that is not COVID-19 related. These individuals may safely enter the building. Examples would be an individual with chronic migraines or irritable bowel syndrome. These individuals may have symptoms but they are not COVID-19 related.

### **Communication**

- SWCCCASE will provide clear, consistent, accessible and concise communication to students, families, staff members and districts.
- The Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan will be posted on the homepage of the SWCCCASE website.
- Teachers and related service providers will be available via email during school hours.
- Teachers will provide support and feedback to parents via email or telephone contacts.
- All Principals and Program Supervisors and the Executive Director are available via email.
- SWCCCASE staff members will have daily contact with students and/or families.
- Email alerts and phone calls will be made to families with any new or important information. The Swift K12 system may also be used to alert all registered individuals.
- Dr. O’Neil will develop a “Q and A” document for staff members.
- Dr. O’Neil will host Zoom meetings with staff members to explain the Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan and to respond to the “Q and A” document.
- Letters will be sent to families explaining the Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan, the “Procedures Related to Mandatory Health and Safety Protocols,” student attendance and identifying COVID-19 symptoms. All information will be simple and concise.
- SWCCCASE will provide information for parents to get assistance with technology on the homepage.

- Workshops and/or videos on using technology, instruction, teaching tips, helping your child increase their time wearing a mask, social distancing, hand hygiene, etc.
- Dr. O'Neil will hold Zoom meetings to help parents understand the Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan.

## **Professional Development**

Professional development will be available to all staff members. For the 2020-2021 school year only, certified staff members will be required to complete two (2) learning links hours and classified staff will be required to complete one (1) hour of learning links. This modification to the Collective Bargaining Agreement will only be in effect for the 2020-21 school year and is non-precedence setting. Topics for professional development have been identified using the “needs assessment” completed by parents, staff, district members and the community in spring 2020. Additional topics for professional development may include:

- Using Technology for Instruction
- Introduction to Chromebooks
- Diversity
- Mental Health
- Bullying Prevention
- Assessment
- Modifying Curriculum
- Trauma Informed Instruction

## **Transition from Remote Learning to In-Person Learning**

When “remote learning” is no longer necessary for a student, SWCCCASE staff will:

- Contact the student and family prior to the return date to appraise them of when the student will return to school.
- Identify any concerns the student may have in returning to school.
- Develop a re-entry plan with the student when appropriate, and the family.
- Provide a warm and inviting school atmosphere upon the students return to school.
- Address and social-emotional issues students may be experiencing.
- Re-introduce classwork at a pace appropriate for each child.
- Monitor and adjust the re-entry plan as necessary.

## **Other**

- SWCCCASE staff members will meet with students to conduct evaluations, as necessary.
- SWCCCASE will continue to provide breakfast and lunch for students.

- SWCCCASE will hold all meetings, including Individual Educational Plan (IEP) meetings, using a virtual format.
- SWCCCASE will not provide opportunities for job experiences in the community at this time.
- SWCCCASE will not allow non-essential visitors into schools or classrooms.
- All water fountains have been inactivated.
- SWCCCASE will not host student teachers or interns that have not already been placed.
- SWCCCASE will not allow any staff member to enter a student's house.

Any additional questions regarding the SWCCCASE Remote and Blended Learning Day Plan may be directed to Dr. Gineen O'Neil, Executive Director at [goneil@swcccase.org](mailto:goneil@swcccase.org) or (708) 687-0900.

This plan was finalized by the Transition Planning Team on July 20, 2020 and is subject to change.

Many thanks to the Transition Planning Team!

### **Transition Planning Team Members**

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**\*\*Please note that portions of this document were copied verbatim from ISBE, IDPH, DCFS and CDC guidance documents and memos.**