



HOT SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT

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COVID-19 Guidelines School Year 2020-2021

Do you have questions about HSSD learning options for the fall semester? The HSSD will follow the Arkansas Department of Health guidelines and the Arkansas Ready for Learning report issued by the Arkansas Department of Education Division of Elementary and Secondary Education in planning for re-opening in the fall. Three Learning Options will be provided to families for the fall semester. A full Trojans Ready to Learn District Support Plan will be available in July, with comprehensive details about how all protocols and procedures will be implemented. To help our families begin to make decisions, an FAQ document is provided here with information to be included in the support plan following input from the Trojans Ready to Learn Committee.

The HSSD has created a Trojans Ready to Learn Committee of HSSD educators and administrators from across schools to provide input on the Support Plan. Our goal for the Trojans Ready to Learn District Support Plan is to provide a safe and robust educational experience with social interaction and extracurricular activities, while adhering to guidelines provided by the ADH.

The Trojans Ready to Learn District Support Plan will not be completed until July, as it requires input from the Trojans Ready to Learn Committee, continued updates and guidance from the ADH, and feedback from phone calls taking place between district representatives and parents from all schools regarding learning options for the 2020-2021 school year.

1. What is the first day for students?

- a. School will begin on August 13, 2020 as originally planned. This date will only change if ADH sends updated guidance for this requirement but this is not anticipated.

2. Who will be required to wear face coverings?

- a. Currently, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is recommending all individuals **10 years old** and over wear a face covering. We are strongly *recommending* that adults and students age 10 and up wear face coverings when physical distancing cannot be achieved particularly on school buses.
- b. The ADH has *not* issued a *directive* to require face covering; however, this does not downplay the importance of this additional safety measure.

- c. Students under 10 years of age and those with health issues and special needs will not be asked to wear face coverings. Students will be highly encouraged to wear face coverings in areas with a high concentration of students where social distancing cannot be maintained.
 - d. In the event we have an increase in the number of positive cases, face coverings could be required.
- 3. Do we need to provide masks for our students or will one be provided?**
 - a. HSSD has purchased 3 washable face masks for each student. In addition, 2 washable face masks and 1 face shield has been purchased for all staff.
- 4. Will bus transportation be provided?**
 - a. Yes, HSSD will provide bus transportation for all students. Based on current ADH guidance, students aged 10 and over will be required to wear face coverings when riding the bus.
- 5. How normal will the day be for a student?**
 - a. Our goal is for your student(s) to have as normal of a day as possible while we also provide as much safety as possible.
 - b. Students will not remain in the same classroom all day but will be able to transition from one class to another.
 - c. HSSD will work with our sanitation employees to ensure cleaning practices guided by the CDC and ADH take place before a new group of students enter a space.
- 6. Will students at the elementary still have extra classes like PE, art, music, guidance and library?**
 - a. Yes, students will continue to participate in activity classes, check out library books, and receive guidance from counselors and gifted instruction.
 - b. To limit transitions and reduce cleaning in between classes, the teacher may present their lesson in the student's classroom.
 - c. In other situations, such as PE, students may have an assigned area in the gym with specific materials assigned to their classroom.
- 7. Will my elementary student have recess?**
 - a. Yes. Elementary students will have recess with restrictions that limit the number of students they come in contact with.
 - b. Playground equipment will be sanitized between groups of students.
- 8. Will social distancing guidelines be observed?**
 - a. Social distancing will be observed as much as feasibly possible but at times students will be closer than the recommended 6 ft. apart.

- b. When social distancing requirements cannot be maintained such as class exchange time, etc., students will be expected to wear face coverings.
- c. Our schools are working to create classrooms and cafeteria spaces that reflect an increase in the space between students but can not always guarantee it will be 6 ft.

9. Will classrooms be arranged differently to protect students?

- a. Yes, classrooms will be arranged to provide more space between students. That might mean all desks are arranged in rows facing in a single direction. It might result in reading areas with bean bags, couches or comfy chairs being removed. We will make every effort to provide distance but not to limit our students' ability to interact and communicate with others in their classroom.
- b. Additionally, supplies and materials will not be shared by students.

10. If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, what will happen?

- a. In the event an individual tests positive, we will follow the latest guidance from the ADH which can be found [here](#).
- b. We will be in direct contact with ADH. This *could* result in a brief closure of a single school within the district to provide time for additional cleaning and sanitation.

11. Will students and adults be screened daily?

- a. Both students and adults will complete a daily screening tool.
- b. You will be provided a link to the tool prior to the start of school.
- c. Individuals will be asked the following questions:
 - i. Have you had a fever of 100.4°F or greater in the last 2 days?
 - ii. Have you had a cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell?
 - iii. Have you been in contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days?

12. If I don't want my student to return to a traditional classroom, what are my options?

- a. HSSD developed 3 options for families for the fall.
 - i. **Traditional In-Classroom Learning**
 - 1. Full-time face-to-face learning in classrooms on school campuses. For students who choose to return to school classrooms, all state-required safety protocols will be in place - including the use of social distancing, provision of masks, etc.; all strategies for protocols will be published to the public in July..
 - ii. **Blended In-Classroom & Virtual Learning**
 - 1. Face-to-face learning in classrooms on school campuses two days per week and virtual learning remotely three days per week.

2. For students who choose any form of a virtual learning option, the school will create a contract that explains in detail what the requirements and grading procedures will be; students and parents/guardians will be required to sign and follow the contract.
- iii. **Virtual Learning**
 1. Full-time remote learning from a technology device at home; students who choose this option will not be in a classroom setting at all, but will follow assignments and lessons provided from an HSSD educator online.
 2. For students who choose any form of a virtual learning option, the school will create a contract that explains in detail what the requirements and grading procedures will be; students and parents/guardians will be required to sign and follow the contract.
 - iv. The HSSD will continue to provide free meal access, as well as free technology devices and Wifi for families who did not have prior access, for all that choose this option.

13. If students choose to do full-time virtual, will they be able to participate in extracurricular activities?

- a. Virtual students may participate in AAA activities in person at the school starting in 7th grade. Transportation must be provided by the parent.
- b. This includes orchestra, band, choir, and athletics. Per AAA rules, students must participate in at least one class per day on campus to qualify. The one class per day onsite can be “athletics”.

14. Will we have an open house?

- a. We are currently designing a modified version of our open house events scheduled for August 11th, 2020. We will be sending more information in July.

15. Will students be able to participate in extracurricular activities and sports in the fall?

- a. Yes, senior high athletes returned to campus June 2 to begin practice. We will bring Jr. High athletes back in July.
- b. We anticipate sports activities in the fall with possible modifications as required by the ADH.

16. Will my student eat lunch in their classroom?

- a. Based on current guidance, the ADH is recommending cafeterias limit the capacity of students in one setting.
- b. We anticipate this may either mean we will be required to adjust lunch schedules or use alternative areas, such as large gathering spaces or potentially have lunch in their classroom on a very limited basis. Proper sanitation of all areas will be completed after each meal. Procedures will not allow students to pick up utensils, self-serve, or share food.

- c. Parents are encouraged to send a water bottle with their students since water fountains will not be available. Outside drinks will not be allowed on any campuses.
- d. We will modify class parent lunches at our elementary schools.

17. What special precautions will be implemented in regard to cleaning and sanitizing?

- a. HSSD uses SSC Service for Education to ensure sanitation and cleanliness as a high priority for our district. We will be adding additional staff to clean high touch surfaces (door knobs, light switches, etc.) and restrooms on a continuous basis throughout the day.
- b. We have also purchased disinfectant sprays and foggers to quickly sanitize rooms between usage. We will also provide time for handwashing and hand sanitizer throughout our campuses.
- c. Students will be asked to sanitize their hands each time they leave and enter a new space.
- d. Signage about frequent handwashing, cough etiquette, and nose blowing should be widely posted, disseminated, and encouraged through various methods of communication.

18. If a student comes to school sick, what will happen?

- a. If a student comes to school sick, the school nurse will screen the student and check their temperature. If temperature is over the ADH guidance, the student will be sent home and will need to be fever free for 48 hours without medication before returning to school. When the child returns to school they will check in with the school nurse.

19. How will you help fill any gaps my student has from the previous year?

- a. Curriculum teams have worked to develop curriculum documents that aid teachers in determining the missed essential standards from March-May 2020 during the AMI period.
- b. Missed essential standards will be addressed when students return through intervention blocks and through targeted lessons that combine missed standards with new content to ensure students are provided with grade level content.
- c. At the elementary level, students will be assessed using Initial Screeners (DIBELS Next), Kindergarten Initial Screener and NWEA to determine individual strengths and deficits.
 - i. These assessments will determine if students need additional support.
- d. At the secondary level, students will be assessed using NWEA and pre-assessments for missed skills from a previous course will be embedded in the next course in the sequence. For example, a student enrolled in English 10 will have skills from English 9 embedded into their course.

20. What happens if we have school closures again?

- a. HSSD will provide training to all staff, students and families before school starts and during school. We will have sessions recorded for viewing on our YouTube channel.

- b. All students will be trained on the LMS (learning management system) to allow seamless pivoting from traditional school to virtual school.
 - i. K-2 students will use SeeSaw as their LMS. Students will complete assignments at the start of the school year to ensure they are familiar with using the LMS.
 - ii. 3-12 students will use Schoology and a combination of the Google suite as their LMS. Students will complete assignments at the start of the school year to ensure they are familiar with using the LMS.
- c. Parents will be informed and will be able to use the accountability information found in our Trojans Ready to Learn plan (*to be published in July following input from the Trojans Ready to Learn Committee) to find contact information for schools, teachers, and LMS.

21. Will our students have the same arrival and dismissal times?

- a. At this time, we have not received guidance from ADH. The arrival and dismissal times may be varied, in order to increase social distancing and to decrease the number of students in the cafeteria and gym before school starts.

22. What advice do you have for students with special needs (autism, asthma, panic attacks, anxiety, etc.) or students with weakened immune systems and pre-existing conditions?

- a. The district will be prepared to accommodate students through both onsite and offsite instruction with special needs.
- b. Our Special Education instructors will be taking extra precautions when working with students. If parents have concerns about their students who may be at high-risk because of COVID-19, they may explore the virtual learning option, which allows the student to continue their education from the safety of their own home.

23. In the event of a temporary school closure, how will the district serve students who have special needs (Special Education, 504, Dyslexia, etc).

- a. In the event of a school closure, students will participate in live instruction with scheduled Zoom sessions.

24. If my family travels in August, can my child return to school immediately or must he/she quarantine for 14 days?

- a. The Arkansas Department of Health does not require self-quarantine after traveling to any location at this time. If that changes, we will follow all guidelines from ADH.

25. Can you guarantee the safety of your students and staff?

- a. Generally speaking, No. Every risk of infection or disease cannot be mitigated. We are doing everything we can to ensure the safety of our staff and students. This is our top priority.

26. Will extended daycare be offered?

- a. Yes, we plan on offering extended daycare for students K-6. All ADH and DESE guidelines will be practiced.

27. I changed my mind about the virtual option, what do I need to do?

- a. Once school has started, students will have to continue in the virtual option until the end of the semester.

28. What does virtual learning look like? Blended learning? Traditional learning?

- a. **Virtual learning** is for families who are able to provide support at home to foster a strong intrinsic motivation to complete school work and be actively engaged in the virtual classroom environment. Characteristics that may lead to a successful virtual student are self-motivated, computer literate, academic readiness and ability to spend 3-5 hours working from home on the content provided by the learning management system. Families will sign a contract agreeing to the terms of virtual learning for accountability purposes.
- b. **Blended learning** is for the family that would like a little more flexibility on when they send their children to school. Elementary students may choose from a Monday/Wednesday option OR a Tuesday/Thursday option to have in-person classes at their magnet school. The remaining three days, they will use the SAME learning management system that our virtual and traditional students will use for content management and assignments. Secondary 7-12 students will attend two days per week on Monday and Tuesday to see all 8 of their teachers/classes. The remaining three days, they will spend at home using the learning management system for required content. Families will sign a contract agreeing to the terms of virtual learning for accountability purposes.
- c. **Traditional learning** allows students to report to campus each day to experience in-person learning from their classroom teacher. Depending on the numbers of students who choose virtual/blended learning, the class sizes *may* be smaller to accommodate each teacher and their new responsibilities to manage in-person and off-site learners. Our goal is to provide a safe learning environment. All ADH and DESE guidelines will be followed.

29. What assessments will my child have to take?

- a. K-10 students will use the NWEA Map Growth assessment to track student progress in Math, Reading and Literacy. This assessment will be taken 3 times throughout the school year.

- b. K-2 will be assessed with an initial screener, DIBELS Next, to monitor progress in the 6 areas outlined in the Dyslexia Resource guide. Kindergarten students will be assessed with the Trojans KIS screener to assess early learning and placement prior to school starting.
- c. 3-10 students will be assessed with the ACT Aspire Interim assessment to monitor progress towards readiness on the ACT.
- d. Students in virtual, blended or traditional learning will be required to take assessments.

30. What curriculum will my child follow for the 2020-2021 school year?

- a. The HSSD team has worked diligently to create curriculum that is seamlessly integrated from each grade level. All students will work on grade level content with essential standards lost from COVID-19 AMI period embedded in the current standards.
- b. The curriculum for all learners will be a blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning to accommodate families but there will be times that students will need to log on via Zoom with their teacher for direct teachers, small group reading, oral presentation, etc.

31. Will the district provide chromebooks and internet?

- a. HSSD will provide chromebooks, school supplies and internet to families who desire them for the success of their children. You can contact your child's school to request needed materials.

32. How will my child be graded with the virtual/blended option?

- a. Students will be expected to adhere to the contract signed for virtual/blended options. The AMI period during the last quarter of the 2019-2020 school year was atypical. Families can expect a much more in depth and rigorous curriculum program for students enrolled in the virtual/blended option. Families should plan for 3-5 hours of learning per day that students are at home. Daily as well and cumulative assignments will be given each week.
- b. Students grades K-4 will be graded using a standards based reporting system.
- c. Students grade 5-12 will be graded using the grading scale found in the school handbook.

33. Will Pre-K be offered online?

- a. No, Pre-K will be onsite daily.

34. How will my child complete the IB Diploma program if they are virtual or blended?

- a. The rigor of the IB Diploma program will continue through the virtual or blended platform. Students and families can anticipate to spend ample time working through content, watching recorded lessons and turning in assignments as they would during the traditional setting.