

## **Frequently Asked Questions Simsbury Public Schools Reopening 2022-23**

**Q: What is the schedule for the start of the school year?**

A: Wednesday, August 31st through Friday, September 2nd will be early release days for students.

**Q: Will remote learning be an option for students during the 2022-23 school year?**

A: Simsbury will not have an option for students to participate in full distance learning this year. At this time the CT State Department of Education (CSDE) prohibits remote learning in grades K-8.

**Q: Will there be regular COVID testing at school?**

A: At-home testing kits continue to be readily available through our school health offices. These kits are to be administered under parents/guardians supervision. If you would like an at-home test kit, please contact your school nurse.

**Q: Why do I need to provide a copy of my child's vaccination card?**

A: The CDC and DPH continue to promote vaccines as the most effective mitigation strategy to address COVID and to ensure continuity of in-person learning. The Farmington Valley Health District (FVHD) has asked school nurses to collect vaccination information as one way to assess local conditions.

**Q: Will face masks be required?**

A: Mask wearing in school buildings is a family choice.

**Q: What will happen if a student in the school building becomes ill during the course of the day?**

A: Students who become symptomatic during the course of school day will be separated from others immediately and assessed by the school nurse. Students exhibiting symptoms will be required to continue to wait in a supervised, designated isolation area until the student has left for home. If more than one student is in the isolation area, physical distancing will be maintained. The school nurse will have a plan for treating other students in the health office, recognizing that not all symptoms are COVID-19 related. If needed, an at-home test kit will be provided to the parent of the ill student.

**Q: When can a COVID-19 positive student or staff member return to school?**

A: Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should isolate at home for at least 5 days from symptom onset, or longer if symptoms develop and persist. The CDC recommends that a mask should continue to be worn for an additional 5 days at all times when around others.

**Q: What should I do if my child has been exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID?**

Please see the [CDC guidance](#) on the Coronavirus page of our website.

**Q: How long does my child need to stay home if they are not feeling well?**

A: The DPH/CSDE Test-Mask-Go strategy allows children and staff with mild respiratory disease symptoms (e.g., infrequent cough, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, etc.) the option to continue participating in-person provided: they are fever-free (< 100°F) and feel well enough to participate, they do not live with anyone who has had COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks, they can wear a mask consistently and correctly, and they test negative for COVID-19 prior to reporting in person on every day they have symptoms, as well as one final test on the morning their symptoms have completely resolved.

**Q: Will parents be informed of COVID cases in their child's school?**

A: Parents will be informed of cluster outbreaks (3 or more students in one classroom) in their student's cohort from the building principal. Our school nursing staff and administrators are well-versed in the practices and procedures of this process. They will continue to collaborate with the FVHD and follow guidelines related to any requirements.

**Q: What is the policy for visitors to the school buildings?**

A: Visitors will be permitted in school buildings through the main office.

**Q: What is the process if I choose to homeschool my child(ren)?**

A: A [Notice of Intent](#) form must be completed and sent to the Office of the Superintendent. The form will serve as your formal notification of intent to homeschool, and will be reviewed and signed by the Superintendent. In addition, you must fill out a [withdrawal form](#) and submit it to your child's school principal.

**Q: Will students be socially distanced in classrooms and/or cafeterias?**

A: The CDC no longer recommends social distancing as a means of reducing exposure to COVID-19. High levels of population immunity due to vaccination and previous infection allows the shift in guidance from the early days of the pandemic.

**Q: Will school breakfast and lunch be offered at no charge again this year?**

A: The CSDE announced a new source of funding to allow the program to continue on a temporary basis. Therefore the SPS will continue to serve free lunch and breakfast to students through at least December 23, 2022 and as long as funding permits. It is still important that families who are eligible for free and reduced lunch fill out the annual application for this process. Free and reduced applications are available from the [Nutrition Services Department](#) for the 2022-23 school year.

**Q: How will seating on school buses be handled?**

A: Students will be permitted to only ride on their assigned bus to and from school.

**Q: Will cleaning protocols be the same as last year?**

A: The DPH has advised that routine daily cleaning of schools (consistent with standard school cleaning practices) and disinfection of bathrooms, locker rooms, cafeterias and health offices, is sufficient to prevent the transmission of COVID.

**Q: Will the district continue to address ventilation in schools?**

A: The district will continue to contract with an engineering firm to review the operations and functionality of all HVAC system components in our school facilities and make adjustments as needed.

**Q: Will students participate in field trips this school year?**

A: Field trips will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ascertain the extent to which mitigation strategies can be readily implemented and replicated.

**Q: Will community groups be allowed to use school facilities?**

A: School facilities will be open for public use on a case-by-case basis as approved by the Business Office. School protocols will need to be followed by members of the public when in school buildings.

For the full Simsbury Public Schools Reopening Plan, refer to the [District's reopening plan](#) or visit the [Coronavirus Update page of our website](#).