

Springfield Public Schools

Search. Learn. Serve

August 5, 2020

Dear Springfield Students, Families, Staff, and Community Members,

I hope this letter finds you and your families making it through – making it through the weather, making it through the pandemic, making it through a year unlike any other. I'm writing this letter to provide you with information about the recommendations I am making to the Board of Education for the reopening of schools.

First, I would like to acknowledge that many challenges lie ahead. We are challenged everyday with shifting guidelines and expectations. There haven't been many days this summer that a family member, friend, parent, teacher, or even my own children ask me if I think schools will open as planned. The truth is that I do not know. However, a critical part of my work is to prepare the district to open to welcome our students and support learning, whether we do it in person, or whether we do it via an improved virtual learning experience.

Second, I acknowledge that this plan will not be perfect for everybody. As a community, we represent a wide range of needs, expectations, concerns, and schedules. For some of you, this plan will be sufficient, and for others it will not be enough. While we will not be opening schools in the way that we hoped, we remain committed to providing our students with a meaningful education in year ahead.

Third, this plan references, values, and relies on the Springfield Public Schools team members: teachers, district and school leaders, child study team members, nurses, guidance counselors, technology staff, secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians, food service workers, and maintenance workers. It is critical that we recognize each individual is valued. We will work to maintain our high expectations, and approach the needs of team members with empathy.

Fourth, this plan represents hundreds of hours of volunteer work by our teachers, parents, and staff members. Our school leaders shifted their summer schedules to support this work, our community members spent weeknights on committee meetings, and our teachers volunteered their time to add their experiences and perspectives. It has been an honor to be a part of these teams. I look forward to continuing our work to build and revise the plan as more information becomes available.

Finally, all of the information about reopening will be shared on a new [webpage](#) we've created to support communication. The [Springfield 2020: Reopening Our Schools Plan](#) is available online, along with a recorded slide presentation on the website. Please

Rachel Goldberg, Superintendent of Schools

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know that we value your feedback, and we have created a [survey tool](#) to collect your feedback.

Proposed Plan Elements

Preschool:

- Students enrolled in the self-contained students with disabilities class will attend 4 days a week.
- Students enrolled in early intervention programs may attend based on the general education program and in consideration of student needs.
- Based on total staff availability, we hope to offer preschool for general education students at least once per week. We will share more information as soon as possible.

Grades K-3:

Please note, for our youngest learners, we have two models that we are proposing. It is our hope that we will be able to accomplish the goals of Model 1, but if we are unable to provide the appropriate number of staff, the district will utilize Model 2. Parents will be notified as soon as we have confirmed our staff status.

- Grades K-2 students will attend in person at Walton.
 - Model 1:
 - Registered students will attend Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays
 - Wednesdays will be all virtual instruction
 - Model 2:
 - Students will be assigned to an “A” group meeting on Mondays and Tuesdays, or a “B” group meeting Thursdays and Fridays
 - Wednesdays will be all virtual instruction
 - Whenever possible, students will be scheduled on A or B days with other family members.
 - All school times are subject to slight adjustments to accommodate transportation and drop off.
 - Hours of Instruction 8:50 am- 3:10 pm
 - In-person instruction: 8:50 am – 12:50 pm
 - Approximate Travel and Transition: 12:50 pm- 2:00 pm
 - Approximate Afternoon Virtual School: 2:00 pm - 3:10 pm
- Grade 3 students will attend in person at Thelma L. Sandmeier Elementary School
 - Model 1:

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- Registered students will attend Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays
- Wednesdays will be all virtual instruction
- Model 2:
 - Students will be assigned to an “A” group meeting on Mondays and Tuesdays, or a “B” group meeting Thursdays and Fridays.
 - Wednesdays will be all virtual instruction
 - Whenever possible, students will be scheduled on A or B days with other family members.
- All times are subject to slight adjustments to accommodate transportation and drop off. We recognize that there is a conflict with fourth and fifth grade, and we will finalize details based on transportation availability and scheduling.
- Hours of Instruction 8:40 am- 3:00 pm
 - In-person instruction: 8:40 am – 12:50 pm
 - Approximate Travel and Transition: 12:40 pm- 1:50 pm
 - Approximate Afternoon Virtual School: 1:50 pm - 3:00 pm

Grades 4-5:

- Grade 4-5 students will attend in person at James Caldwell School
 - Students will be assigned to an “A” group meeting on Mondays and Tuesdays, or a “B” group meeting Thursdays and Fridays.
 - Wednesdays will be all virtual instruction
 - Whenever possible, students will be scheduled on A or B days with other family members.
 - All times are subject to slight adjustments to accommodate transportation and drop off. We recognize that there is a conflict with third grade, and we will finalize details based on transportation availability and scheduling.
 - Hours of Instruction 8:40 am- 3:00 pm
 - In-person instruction: 8:40 am – 12:50 pm
 - Approximate Travel and Transition: 12:40 pm- 1:50 pm
 - Approximate Afternoon Virtual School: 1:50 pm - 3:00 pm

Grades 6-8:

- Grade 6-8 students will attend in person at Florence M. Gaudineer Middle School
 - Students will be assigned to an “A” group meeting on Mondays and Tuesdays, or a “B” group meeting Thursdays and Fridays.
 - Wednesdays will be all virtual instruction
 - Whenever possible, students will be scheduled on A or B days with other family members.
 - All times are subject to slight adjustments to accommodate transportation and drop off.

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- Hours of Instruction 7:45 am- 2:30 pm
 - In-person instruction: 7:45 am – 11:45 am
 - Approximate Travel and Transition: 11:45 am- 12:55 pm
 - Approximate Afternoon Virtual School: 12:55 pm – 2:30pm

Grades 9-12:

- Students will attend in person at Jonathan Dayton High School
 - Students will attend in-person instruction two days each week based on an assigned schedule that includes:
 - One day of English Language Arts and Social Studies coursework in a block. There will be limited student movement between courses for this block.
 - One day that includes primary Math and Science courses. Additional Math and Science courses may be offered virtually.
 - Courses will be assigned based on staff availability. In some cases, a different teacher may be assigned to teach a course.
 - Wednesdays will be all virtual instruction
- All times are subject to slight adjustments to accommodate transportation and drop off.
 - Hours of Instruction 7:40 am- 2:10pm
 - In-person instruction: 7:40 am – 11:40 pm
 - Approximate Travel and Transition: 11:40 pm- 12:50 pm
 - Approximate Afternoon Virtual School: 12:50 pm - 2:10 pm

Next Steps

The full plan document that will be submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education is still being finalized, with changes happening daily based on shifting guidance. At the Board of Education meeting being scheduled for Monday, August 10, the plan will be presented to the board prior to submission. Once again, your feedback is valued, so please share your questions, thoughts, and ideas.

In the coming week, families will be asked to complete the annual re-registration process using OnCourse. In this process, we will ask families to choose whether their child will be attending school in-person or virtually. If families choose virtual instruction, we will follow up to confirm their registration.

Final Notes

If you are planning on registering your child for in-person instruction, please practice mask-wearing with your child. If possible, find a few different masks to find out what

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they like best. The district will have additional disposable masks on hand, but families are encouraged to send their kids in with the mask that is best for them.

We are also encouraging families to get acquainted with OnCourse. For our K-6 parents and those new to the district, please keep an eye out for information about your child's login information. For our returning middle and high school students, if you or your student are missing your login, please visit the online help desk for assistance, <http://webhelpdesk.springfieldschools.com> or send an email to tech_contact@springfieldschools.com.

This plan represents the best information we have as of today. There is no doubt that guidance will change, and our plan will change as well. Moving forward, it is my goal to continue to listen to our community, use the guidance provided, and lead the district forward. Please do not hesitate to share your thoughts on our [survey document](#).

I truly appreciate your patience and your support for our schools as we work to fulfill our values to Search, Learn, and Serve.

Warmest Regards,

Rachel Goldberg



Rachel Goldberg
Superintendent of Schools

