Smyth READY
Return-to-Learning Plan

Reimagining Education for ALL through the Development of our Youth

Smyth County Schools
VIRGINIA

JULY 13, 2020
Smyth County Public Schools
## Table of Contents

Response to School Closure 4  
Development of the Smyth READY Plan 5  

**Health and Safety**  
Committee and Overview 6  
Employee and Student Safety Summary 7  
Health Protocol 8  
  - Screenings 8  
  - Social Distancing and Use of Face Coverings 8  
  - Containment Areas 9  
  - Notification of Exposure or Outbreak 9  
  - Cleaning Protocol and Infection Control Measures 9  

**Students and Instruction** 10  
Committee and Overview 10  
Curriculum Recovery 11  
  - Recovery of Content, K-5 11  
  - Recovery of Content 6-12 11  
  - Recovery of Content, K-12 Summary 12  
Full Distance Learning 12  
One-to-One Initiative Pk-12 12  
Learning Management System 12  
Schedule 12  
Grading 13  
Breakfast and Lunch 13  
Transportation and Bus Protocol 13  
Participation and Attendance 13  
Professional Development 14  
  - Elementary 14  
  - Middle/High 14  
Family Engagement 14  

**Equity** 16  
Committee and Overview 17  
Special Education 17  
  - Resource and Inclusion Services 18  
  - Self-Contained Services 18  
  - Therapies and Related Services 19  
English Language Learners 19  
Internet Access 20
**Staff**
Committee and Overview

**Nutrition**
Committee and Overview

**Communication**
Training of Staff
Communication with Staff, Parents, and Students
Plan to Communicate an Outbreak or Positive Cases in Schools

Phase III: COVID-19 School Reopening Plan Summary
School Contact Information
Response to the Spring 2020 School Closure…

Smyth County Schools response to the COVID-19 Pandemic was initiated on Friday, March 13, 2020. Governor Northam declared that schools would close for a period of time in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The intent of the closure was for the health and safety of the Commonwealth. As you are aware, the Governor took steps to close schools for the remainder of the academic year.

During the closure, our priorities focused on three areas; 1. Establish a food delivery system to address our families who have food insecurities, 2. Establish a continuity of education model that focused on remediation, re-teaching, and support for all students, and 3. Check on families to see if needs were being met and determine if there may be additional support we could help provide.

Food Delivery System

Our food delivery system was enacted on March 16, 2020, the following Monday after Governor Northam closed schools. Smyth County Schools’ staff organized a thorough system of delivery and food pick-up encompassing the entire Smyth County attendance area. The food service delivery program will continue throughout the summer.

Continuity of Education

Our instructional staff prepared for the possible closing prior to Governor Northam’s action. Our students in PK-5 were provided educational packets of instruction and our middle/high students were provided instruction through Chromebooks using Google Classroom, Google Meet, and Zoom. This method of instruction continued through the end of the academic year.

Family Check-Ins

A key component to our school closure plan was to ensure our students were doing well. While our teaching staff provided instructional opportunities for the remainder of the school year, staff volunteered to make calls regularly to check on students and families. If additional support was needed, we worked to identify ways to provide support.
The Development of the Smyth READY Plan...

Throughout the Spring and summer, after all schools were shut down across the Commonwealth, the Smyth County Team began the daunting task of developing an instructional model that would fit within the restrictions suggested by the Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Smyth READY plan is produced in response to the changing environment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This document utilized the Virginia Department of Education’s, Recovery, Redesign, and Restart, guiding document in conjunction with recommendations from the Forward Virginia Blueprint, existing Executive Orders, Center for Disease Control and Prevention Guidance for Schools, and in partnership with local and state public health officials.

The Smyth READY Plan focuses on five key areas; Health and Safety, Students and Instruction, Equity, Staff, and Nutrition. This document was a collaborative effort of the entire Smyth County School Community. Smyth County Schools included administrators, teachers, parents, business partners, and health care professionals throughout the development of this plan. Through the collaborative effort, a detailed plan encompassing the five key elements has been developed and will be presented throughout this document. Additionally, we have prepared Parent Informational Sheets to help parents have access to vital components to help answer questions. The 1-pagers will be for PK, Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, Middle School, High School, and the Career and Technical Center.

We also garnered input from families and staff through surveys and phone calls. This information helped, and will continue to help, guide our plans as we move forward.

Also, please know this document is applicable based on the most current information available. While information is changing often, we are currently in Phase III, and this plan reflects the restrictions while in Phase III. We will provide updates or changes as the situation dictates throughout the Commonwealth and the Nation.

The following pages will outline the Smyth READY Plan by key areas. We have included a summarized educational plan, the health plan submitted to the Virginia Department of Education, and the Parent Informational Sheets for the identified grade levels mentioned above.
Health and Safety Committee

Committee
Chair Mrs. Kim Sturgill, Pupil Personnel Director
Member Mrs. Susan Hoagland, Director of Nursing
Member Dr. Karen Shelton, Director Mount Rogers Health District
Member Dr. Van Clampitt, Physician, Family Physicians
Member Mrs. Tammy Hahn, Principal, Rich Valley Elementary
Member Mrs. Lori Hutton, Assistant Principal, Marion Senior High School
Member Mrs. K.J. Holbrook, Division Director of Youth and Family Services
Member Captain Tony Powers, Smyth County Sheriff’s Department
Member Mr. Andy Blevins, Teacher, Chilhowie Middle School
Member Mrs. Gina Tuell, Teacher, Saltville Elementary School
Member Mrs. Megan Dyson, Teacher, Marion Senior High School

Overview
Smyth County Schools is committed to providing a safe, healthy learning and work environment for students and employees. A health and safety plan has been adopted and submitted to VDOE. We continue to work with the Virginia Department of Health and follow guidelines to minimize the spread of any type of illness. It is our intention to meet the demands and expectations during this challenging time.

Based on community transmission rates, school reopening may not occur all at one time. The plan is intended to provide recommendations on resources only. It is not a prescriptive document as we recognize the needs of school communities vary within our great state. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updates guidance as needed during this fluid COVID 19 situation. Research on COVID 19 constantly emerges which in turn, changes practice. We will refer to CDC tools to help determine the safety of opening school.
## Employee and Student Safety Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Safety</th>
<th>Daily Procedures</th>
<th>Students &amp; Parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Visitor access to the building will be restricted:  
  - No classroom volunteers  
  - No parent lunch with students  
  - No guest speakers  
  - No use of facilities by any outside group  
| - Meetings with parents/guardians will be arranged through the office.  
- Lockers will not be used  
- Schools will conduct only on-line fundraisers, and students will not be asked to sell anything in person.  
- Each school will have a plan to monitor restrooms so that social distancing is maintained.  
- Floor social distancing decals will be placed in areas that can become congested (nurse’s office, main office, etc.).  
- Nurse visits:  
  - Teachers will assess individual needs before sending students to the nurse’s office.  
  - Teachers will be provided with bandages and other acceptable items for their classrooms.  
  - Teachers will be provided strategies to reduce trips to the nurse’s office.  
| - Students will be socially distanced in the classrooms (6 feet).  
- Students will not share classroom items (scissors, glue, manipulatives, books, etc.).  
- Teachers will not allow students to use rugs, beanbags, and other fabric items.  
- Morning arrival:  
  - All students will be health screened (students who refuse will be sent home).  
  - Students will report directly to their first assigned class.  
  - Breakfast will be served recognizing social distancing.  
  - Teachers will need to be in their rooms to supervise students’ arrival (each school administrator will assign times).  
| - Each school will create a plan to dismiss students in small groups to report to buses, parent pick-up, or their vehicles.  
- Lunch will be eaten in assigned areas.  
- Elementary students will not change classes, teachers will.  
- In middle and high school, class changes, if unavoidable, will be staggered to limit the number of students in the hallways.  
| - Physical Education classes will continue, but teachers will plan activities in which social distancing can be maintained and no equipment will be shared.  
- There will be no school dances, pep rallies, or other gathering until further notice.  
| - There will be no field trips until further notice.  
| - To check-out students during the school day, parents should call the school office upon arrival at the school. Office staff will escort students outside and obtain the parent’s signature.  
| - To drop-off items for students, parents should contact the office, and a staff member will meet them at the main entrance.  
| - Students who do not follow school’s health and safety or procedural guidelines in the building or on buses, will be referred to administration.  
| - Students will not be allowed to ride a bus other than their assigned bus.  
| - If a student misses his assigned in-person school day, he is not allowed to attend on another unassigned day.  
| - Water fountains will not be used.  
| - Classrooms will have no communal areas.  
| - Principals should limit the faculty and staff access to the building after hours.  
|
Health Protocol

- Implementing and encouraging healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing, covering the mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing, avoiding close contact with others and staying at home when feeling sick.
- Preventative measures include signage, education, screening, ensuring physical and social distancing, and limiting sharing.
- Immunizations and school entrance physicals will continue to be required as scheduled.

Screenings

- Daily health screens of students and staff for COVID-19 symptoms are a recommendation of the CDC. Smyth County Schools will assess student temperatures and symptoms (or absence of symptoms) each day.
- **Students and Staff should assess themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 before reporting to school:**
  Fever of 100.4 or greater, 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 (This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.)
- Vision & Hearing screenings will continue to be required as scheduled. Schedules will be arranged to minimize crowding within screening areas.
- Health Mobile Clinics (VDH and Dental) will continue to be offered. These agencies will provide a safe environment for students.

Social Distancing and Use of Face Coverings

- Schedules will provide continuity to the same groups of students.
- Classrooms will be arranged to allow spacing.
- Foot traffic will be minimized and common areas, such as cafeterias, will have staggered times. Markings will be placed throughout buildings to indicate social distancing.
- Transportation - plans have been made for seating arrangements on buses.
- Mechanical barriers may be used in common areas to reduce the spread of germs.
- Cloth face coverings should be worn by all students and staff when social distancing of 6 feet cannot be attained. Each student and staff member will be provided washable, cloth masks by Smyth County Schools. There will be instances where persons are not able to use a face covering due to a pre-existing condition.
- Specialized Healthcare and Early Intervention Services will continue to be provided as needed. Staff will be trained in precautions and provided with personal protective equipment (PPE).
Containment Areas

- Each school building will have designated areas for sick students and staff. Anyone who is displaying symptoms of COVID-19 will be isolated in one of these areas, until they are able to be taken home or for medical care.
- Preparation, Triage and Monitoring Symptomatic and Sick Spaces - Nurses and designated staff will be trained to manage these areas.

Notification of Exposure or Outbreak

- Smyth County Schools will work closely with staff from Mt. Rogers Health District of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to manage any exposure or outbreak. Public communication will be made in partnership with VDH as well.
- Contact tracing may be used to identify anyone an affected person may have been in contact with.
- Plans are made for exposures, positive cases and return to school after illness.

Cleaning Protocol e Infection Control Measures

- Approved cleaning supplies have been purchased and distributed.
- Intensify Cleaning & Disinfection during all phases - all staff will receive training on cleaning and disinfecting. Common areas will be cleaned and disinfected routinely.
- Ventilation - areas may be ventilated when possible and will not cause adverse health effects.
- Visitors will be kept to a minimum. Only essential visitors will be permitted to enter school buildings.
- Interim CPR guidelines may be implemented. This change would include hand compression only CPR if preferred by the caregiver.
- Transfer of Supplies between School & Home and Distribution & Collection of Supplies - these plans may be building specific. Principals and school staff will notify parents/guardians of procedures.
- Required annual training to staff will be provided.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been purchased and will be provided to any school employee who may have a potential exposure to a communicable illness, including COVID-19. Employees will be trained on the proper use of PPE.
Students and Instruction

Committee

Co-Chair  Dr. Chris Ballenger, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction  
Co-Chair  Dr. Kimberly Williams, Principal, Marion Middle School  
Co-Chair  Mr. Mike Sturgill, Supervisor of Instruction  
Member  Mr. Terry Hawthorne, Director of Technology  
Member  Mrs. Edwina Richardson, Assistant Principal, Oak Point Elementary School  
Member  Mrs. Patty Warren, Director of Federal Programs  
Member  Mrs. Mariann Blevins, Principal, Northwood Middle School  
Member  Mr. Jason Kilbourne, Principal, Chilhowie Elementary School  
Member  Mr. Jerad Ward, Principal, Northwood High School  
Member  Mrs. Kelly Russell, Assistant Principal, Chilhowie High School  
Member  Ms. Anne Richardson, Teacher, Oak Point Elementary School  
Member  Mr. Tim Johnson, Teacher, Northwood High School  
Member  Mrs. Tara Galliher, Teacher, Northwood Middle School  
Member  Mrs. Emily Dungan, Teacher, Chilhowie High School  
Member  Mrs. Rebecca Peery, Teacher, Chilhowie High School  
Member  Dr. Michael Robinson, Director, Linwood Holton Governor’s School  
Member  Ms. Trish Kimberlin, Parent  
Member  Mr. Jeff Frye, Parent  
Member  Ms. Jennifer Barnes, Parent  
Member  Ms. Betsy Roberts, Parent  
Member  Ms. Kellie Vernon, Parent  
Member  Ms. Teresa Mabe, Parent  
Member  Ms. Ashley Sanders, Parent  
Member  Ms. Kim Sheets, Parent  

Overview

Starting with the 2020-2021 school year, Smyth County Schools will be providing new instruction regardless of the operational status of the division’s buildings or the reopening phase the state or locality is in. New instruction will consist of both in-person and distance learning opportunities. Both methods of instruction will include opportunities for remediation or acceleration due to student performance. Parents, who are concerned about exposure, will have the option of requesting all distance learning.

While Smyth County Schools will begin 2020-2021 with a hybrid schedule, the likelihood of reverting back to a 100% distance learning situation is likely. We are, however, hopeful that we will be in a more traditional instructional setting with “new norms” during the 2020-2021 academic year.
**Curriculum Recovery**

Smyth County Schools recognizes the importance of a strong command of the essential skills and processes critical to the foundational knowledge necessary to prepare every student for success at the next grade level. In an effort to pinpoint learning gaps in each core subject, all K-12 teachers completed a grade level or content specific survey to identify all standards which were not sufficiently covered before the closure on March 13, 2020. The information was critical in making decisions regarding how learning gaps will be bridged in order to accelerate learning for all students in the upcoming school year.

**Recovery of Content, K-5**

Surveys completed by Grades K-5 teachers required them to use the 2019-2020 Smyth County Balanced Instruction and Assessment Plans for English and Mathematics to determine not only where instruction ended but also the last assessment administered in reading and mathematics. In May 2020, division leaders worked virtually with grade level teams of teachers comprised of one representative from each of the division’s seven elementary schools to determine the curriculum connections in both English and Mathematics. Teams used the Virginia Department of Education English Progression charts, Mathematics Vertical Articulation Tool, and Tracking Logs found in the VDOE Coronavirus (COVID-19) - *Learning in Place* resources to review the progression of content identified for recovery across elementary grade levels.

The Smyth County Literacy/Numeracy Overview outlines the division’s balanced and comprehensive approach to reading, writing, and mathematics instruction. To ensure that both teachers and students are prepared for different models of instructional delivery, a section outlining remote learning expectations and procedures will be added to the literacy/numeracy overview to ensure learner needs are met in the event an alternate schedule is necessary to meet social distancing requirements and implement mitigation strategies.

K-5 teachers also completed surveys to determine standards for recovery in both Science and History. That information will be communicated to division principals so that school-based instructional teams include recovery content in their 2020-2021 instructional plans. Grade 5 teachers will use the Comprehensive Instructional Program (CIP) pacing guide that includes instruction for both Grades 4 and 5 Science as a planning tool for delivery of new and recovered content and review of the Grade 4 standards that were covered before the March 13, 2020, closure.

**Recovery of Content, 6-12**

Surveys completed by grades 6-12 teachers required them to use the 2019-2020 Smyth County English and Mathematics pacing to determine not only where instruction ended but also the last assessment administered in English and Mathematics. In May 2020, division leaders worked virtually with grade level teams of teachers comprised of one representative from each of the division’s three middle and high schools to determine the curriculum connections in both English and Mathematics. Teams used the Virginia Department of Education English Progression charts, Mathematics Vertical Articulation Tool, and Tracking Logs found in the VDOE Coronavirus (COVID-19) - *Learning in Place* resources to review the progression of content identified for recovery across middle and high grades.
Place resources to review the progression of content identified for recovery across the middle and high school grade levels.

Recovery of Content, K-12 Summary

Once connections were established, the teams determined where the recovery content connected with instruction and could be blended in their English, Mathematics, Science, and History pacing for the upcoming school year. Teachers will also be encouraged to be more thoughtful as they unpack standards from all strands in order to plan more explicit instruction to ensure sufficient understanding of the standards from the previous grade or subject area. A combination of existing student data, formal pre-assessments, and formative assessments will be used to determine readiness and identify gaps in prerequisite knowledge so that teachers can make informed decisions about immediate learner needs both before and during instruction.

Full Distance Learning

One-to-One Initiative Pk-12

All students in grades PK-12 will be provided with a device capable of supporting remote learning. Students in grades PK-1 will receive an Apple iPad tablet. We will use a Management Device System to configure the devices and populate them with selected instructional apps. Students in grades 2-12 will receive a Chromebook. We will use Google G Suite for Education Enterprise Edition to configure Chromebooks and populate them with selected instructional apps.

Learning Management System

Smyth County Schools will utilize a grade level specific Learning Management System (LMS) throughout the 20-21 school year and beyond. The LMS was chosen by teacher representatives at various levels to ensure teacher acceptance of the system used. The decision was made to utilize SeeSaw at the prekindergarten through first grade levels. The decision to utilize this program was based on devices selected for the grade level. The second through fifth grade teachers selected Schoology as the LMS. This system will tie into our SIS and is relevant for the grade level and the devices that will be used by students. At grades six through twelve, it was determined that the division will use Virtual Virginia (VVA) and/or Google Classroom. The division has focused training on the use of Google Classroom over the past few years. We also wanted to offer our teachers the opportunity to utilize VVA and the resources that are available through the platform.

Schedule

Smyth County Schools will begin the 2020-2021 school year with a Hybrid Schedule. Schedules will consist of ‘A’ days and ‘B’ days in-person at school. ‘A’ days will be Monday and Thursday while ‘B’ days will be Tuesday and Friday. Students will be participating in distance learning on other days. Wednesdays will be for virtual skill-specific remediation, planning, and deep cleaning. All efforts will be made to ensure children within the same family will be assigned to attend on the same days.

Parents with children who have underlying health conditions OR parents who have concerns sending their child back for in-person learning, may elect to do full distance learning.
While we will begin with a Hybrid Schedule, we may need to transition to full distance learning at some point during the year based on exposure or an outbreak. We fully anticipate transitioning to full traditional in-person instruction as the year continues.

**Grading**

All students will be required to complete work assignments and participate in class activities, regardless of hybrid or distance learning choice.

Teachers must be mindful of the transition back to school and the likely instructional gap/loss students may have. Varied instruction and opportunities for attaining the content must be presented for struggling learning and accelerated learners.

**Breakfast and Lunch**

All in-person students will have the opportunity for lunch and breakfast. The location for students to eat breakfast and lunch will be determined by each school, while recognizing social distancing of 6 feet and specific cleaning measures between each group.

**Transportation and Bus Protocol**

Parents will be encouraged to bring their child to school and pick them up after school each day, until restrictions on social distancing are lifted. Seating on the bus will be limited to one child per seat, with the allowance of children within the same family sitting together in the same seat.

Students will be required to wear a mask on the bus, due to the inability to maintain 6 feet of social distance. Students who refuse to wear a mask will be referred to building administration.

**Participation & Attendance**

Participation in school, no matter the mode of instruction, is required. Participation and attendance will be monitored.

- 100% Distance Learning:
  - After 5 days of no interaction, school administration will attempt to make contact with the parent/guardian and develop a plan to address the issue.
    
    *Interaction is defined as failure to turn in assignments, participate in Google Meets or other online activities, and respond to communication from the teacher(s).*
  - After 10 days of no interaction, school administration will refer the student to the Smyth County Schools Truancy Officer.

- Hybrid Learning:
  - After 5 unexcused absences, school administration will attempt to make contact with the parent/guardian and develop a plan to address the issue.
  - After 10 unexcused absences, school administration will refer the student to the Smyth County Schools Truancy Officer.

If students are unable to interact or attend for any reason, parents/guardians should contact the school and provide any relevant information.
Professional Development

Elementary

The professional development plan for elementary teachers provides live Google Meet sessions focusing on technology training. PreK, Kindergarten and first grade teachers will be trained using SeeSaw on iPads. Second, third, fourth and fifth grade teachers will be trained using touchscreen Chromebooks with Schoology. Using a flipped classroom approach, teachers will explore digital materials such as slideshows, videos and websites. Another training session will focus on using Google Meet with Jamboard whiteboard for video communications with students and parents. ITRTs will provide in-person and/or virtual professional development sessions recorded for teachers unable to attend and/or as a future reference resource. These sessions will be offered by grade level allowing time for practice activities and reflection of learning. All training resources will be posted to the eLearning Elementary Teacher PD page of the SCSB website in order to provide easy access and ease frustration as teachers need support. ITRTs will also support teachers by providing instructions for connecting devices, using iPads, Chromebooks and document cameras and assisting with integrating online textbooks and other software/websites used in elementary classrooms.

Middle/High School

Middle/High School professional development will utilize live and recorded Google Meets, in-person training and independent digital training. Teachers will receive specific/in-depth training on the Virtual Virginia and/or Google Classroom Learning Management System(s). Live classes will take place once a week with recordings posted to the class later. Teachers will be grouped by subject area, thus developing an online accessible Professional Learning Community (PLC) where they will continue to share ideas and resources long after the professional development is over. All training will take place within Google Classroom which will be set up to model the same classroom structure teachers will be using with their classes. All teachers will be trained to organize their classrooms the same regardless of LMS to maintain consistency across platforms.

In addition, teachers will be trained on best practices for teaching virtually, video production, Google Meet, LMS and virtual student engagement. As a student, teachers will develop a deeper understanding of the student view of the platform and will be better able to troubleshoot student issues. They will also have access to a robust PD platform developed by CIP for which they will receive additional PD credit. Teachers will have complete training and practice with devices necessary to conduct a virtual lesson. Additional training will be offered to assist teachers in the development of more in-depth tech enhanced lessons. Before the beginning of school, teachers will meet with their peers to critique their virtual classrooms and practice conducting an online class. Ultimately, the goal is for teachers to feel they have the knowledge and support they need to conduct a meaningful and engaging virtual lesson.

Family Engagement

Family Engagement is a critical piece of the instructional program in Smyth County. As a division, we have included parents and community members from diverse groups to be part of the planning process for the reopening of schools. Their input has been instrumental in the development of this plan.
We know that communication with families is vital to the success of any plan we may implement. Therefore, we have developed a variety of methods to share information with our families. The Smyth County Schools website along with individual school websites will be updated regularly with information regarding the restart of school, online registration for Kindergarten and Pre-K and information about Covid 19. Additionally, resources will be provided for families to support their children educationally and emotionally. Information is easily accessed and is ADA compliant. The school system also uses local media outlets, Bright Arrow, Twitter and Remind as ways to push out information to families. Phone call check-ins and home visits will be made on a regular basis to families who may need additional support. We know these regular check-ins are important and all of these methods of communication will continue throughout the school year.

Our school division is developing a one to one initiative for all students Pre-K through grade 12 to have technology devices for home instruction. As we move to the possibility of virtual instruction for students, support for families will be necessary. Our technology staff is in the process of developing online modules to help families understand the division’s Learning Management Systems as well as the operation of the devices. Schools will also plan “Technology Nights” so parents can meet in small groups to have hands-on training. In addition to learning how to operate the devices, parents will learn how to communicate with school staff using the Learning Management System.

Surveys will be conducted periodically to determine topics of interest to families. We will determine additional resources to make available to parents/guardians from the survey results. Topics may include trauma informed care, social media etiquette and how to be a parent in a virtual world among others. Parent training will be made available through online workshops, videos or in small group meetings when possible. It is vital for our division to support families during this transition to online learning so students will have opportunities for success.
Equity

Committee

Co-Chair Mr. Steve Blevins, Special Education Director
Co-Chair Mrs. Hillary Snodgrass, English Language Coordinator
Co-Chair Dr. Dennis Carter, Superintendent

Member Mrs. Misty Boardwine, Teacher, Chilhowie Elementary School
Member Mrs. Leslie Stickley, Teacher, Marion Senior High School
Member Mrs. Yvette Sauls, Teacher, Chilhowie Middle School
Member Mrs. Corinna Winters, Teacher, Atkins Elementary School
Member Mrs. Leslie Frye, Teacher, Chilhowie Elementary School
Member Mr. Rocky Baker, Principal, Chilhowie High School
Member Ms. Brandy Anderson, Parent, Chilhowie High School
Member Mrs. Rebecca Hayden, Teacher of the Visually Impaired
Member Mrs. Terri Totten, Counselor, Rich Valley/Saltville Elementary
Member Mrs. Stephanie Holmes, Teacher, Northwood High School
Member Mrs. Lynn Morrison, Teacher, Chilhowie Elementary School
Member Mrs. Rebecca Gonzalez, ELL Teacher
Member Mrs. Megan Davis, Teacher, Atkins Elementary School
Member Mrs. Crystal Jennings, Teacher, Atkins Elementary School
Member Mr. Gary Roberts, Principal, Atkins Elementary School
Member Mrs. Patty Warren, Director of Federal Programs
Member Mr. Chad Owens, Teacher, Marion Senior High School
Member Mrs. Mandy Owens, Teacher, Marion Elementary School
Member Ms. Anne Richardson, Teacher, Oak Point Elementary School
Member Mrs. Melissa Robbins, Teacher, Oak Point Elementary School
Member Mrs. Lynn Walker, Teacher, Oak Point Elementary School
Member Mrs. Lesta Harris, Teacher, Oak Point Elementary School
Member Mrs. Libby Heath, Teacher, Oak Point Elementary School
Member Ms. Billie Cress, Parent, Oak Point Elementary School
Member Ms. Mollie Reynolds, Teacher, Marion Middle School
Member Ms. Angela Blizzard, Teacher, Marion Middle School
Member Ms. Lauren Heath, Teacher, Marion Middle School
Member Ms. Paula Null, Parent, Marion Middle School
Member Ms. Kelly Owens, Teacher, Marion Senior High School
Member Mr. Jason Shirey, Teacher, Marion Senior High School
Member Mrs. Tina Frazier, Teacher, Marion Senior High School
Member Dr. Gary Foulke, Principal, Oak Point Elementary School
Member Mrs. Kim Kimberlin, Speech/Language, Chilhowie Elementary School
Member Mrs. Crystal Kinder, Speech/Language, Saltville Elementary School
Member Mrs. Caroline Woodard, Speech/Language, Sugar Grove Elementary School
Member Ms. Kasey Blevins, Speech/Language, Oak Point Elementary School
Member Ms. Beth Bradshaw, Speech/Language, Oak Point Elementary School
Member Ms. Morgan Campbell, Speech/Language, Marion Elementary School
Overview

The Equity Committee is comprised of stakeholders across all areas. The committee is focused on equity through three different lenses. Equity in education through the lens of special education and services related to special education, equity through the lens of those students who are considered English Language Learners, and equity through the lens of access to Internet services.

Special Education

When students return to school in the fall, the effects of COVID-19 restrictions will have an impact on the services for all students. Unfortunately, the impact will possibly be even greater for students with other conditions that affect their ability to access instruction and that require services, accommodations, or modifications set forth in individualized education plans or Section 504 plans. It is the shared goal of Smyth County Schools personnel to strive to eliminate or at least significantly lessen the effects of the changes necessary to meet social distancing guidelines. As a result, IEP teams and Section 504 committees will convene to determine adjustments to plans to provide a continuity of services and to assure student progress while adhering to established guidelines for student safety.

While it is difficult to present exact details about the return to school for students with disabilities, as plans for each will need to be adapted individually, some things are constant. Smyth County Schools is committed to the following for our students with disabilities:

- All accommodations necessary for student success will be implemented.
- Plans will be adjusted to enable students to be successful.
- Individual needs will be considered when determining services, accommodations, and modifications.
- Student safety will be a primary consideration across school settings such as buses, classrooms, cafeterias, etc.
- Appropriate instruction will be provided to students with disabilities as set forth in the IEP or 504 Plan.
- Related services and therapies will be provided with student safety and minimized contact given priority.
- For students with daily living needs, county guidelines for staff and student safety will be followed including:
  - The use of PPE by staff
  - Areas used to provide services will be cleaned after each student
- For classrooms with students with underlying health conditions daily screenings including communication with family members will be required.
Resource and Inclusive Services

For students in inclusive or regular classrooms, whether elementary, middle or high school, services will continue to be provided in that setting. In a mixed classroom of students in attendance physically and virtually, special education teachers will work together with the regular education teachers to provide instruction in much the same way as if the class were being conducted in a traditional manner. During individual work or practice the teachers will split duties with one assisting the students in the classroom and the other helping the students participating virtually. In addition, opportunities for remediation and assistance with special education and regular education teachers will be available for students at other times.

When the IEP service location is the resource setting, careful consideration should be given to the need for changes to plans in order to provide the appropriate level of service to the student. For students served in resource settings at the elementary level, guidance currently discourages pulling mixed groups. As a result, resource services could only be provided if the students were coming from one classroom. In the resource room, social distancing and the wearing of a mask by the teacher would be expected. Additionally, the room would need to be cleaned between different groups. At the middle and high school level, since students are already participating in mixing from class to class, instruction would be conducted by the special education teacher in much the same way as before with possible changes to meet social distancing restrictions. As with elementary resource settings, the room would need to be cleaned between groups.

If classes are fully virtual, schedules at the elementary level will likely be adapted with more instruction occurring in the mornings. These changes may require special education services to be provided at a later time in the day with the special education teacher acting in a remedial or resource type role. However, middle and high schools would be expected to follow much the same schedule as mentioned previously, and special education services will be given in the same manner in support of the student in the virtual classroom.

Self-Contained Services

While self-contained classes may typically be smaller in numbers, they are also often smaller in space or require special transportation, both of which are affected by guidelines on social distancing throughout the day. In addition, students in these classes are often some of the most fragile medically. As was previously stated, screenings and questionnaires will be conducted daily for in-person classes for the safety of the students. For students needing assistance with activities, such as toileting or eating, extra precautions will be implemented to protect students and staff. Instruction for many, but not necessarily all, of these students will likely follow the same format as elementary classes no matter the actual grade level of the student. New instruction will take place on the days the student is in attendance with practice that can be completed at home being done on the virtual days with support from the classroom teacher or paraprofessionals as needed. Teachers will work with the parent or caregiver to determine opportunities in the daily schedule at home to practice skills that are being taught at school for the students with the most significant disabilities. For those students capable of more independent work at the middle and high school level, the special education teacher will provide both in person and virtual instruction in the core areas of reading, writing, math, history, and science. Since many of the goals of high school students may focus on readiness skills to allow for an effective transition to post-secondary goals, the special
education teacher will coordinate with parents and caregivers to provide activities to prepare the students for rewarding opportunities upon graduation in addition to academic lessons provided virtually and in person.

Therapies and Related Services

Smyth County Schools will continue to provide therapies and related services as set forth in IEPs and 504 Plans. However, plans may need to be adjusted since social distancing guidelines and procedures related to student and staff safety will be strictly adhered to in all instances. Depending upon the phase of education established by the governor, therapies will be provided in one of the following formats.

- Virtually – The student is at home and receives therapy through some online format with the therapist. This type of therapy likely would require a level of support from a parent or caregiver.
- In person – The student is at school and receives therapy directly from the therapist. In the school setting all necessary measures for student and staff safety will be implemented including cleaning between each session, the use of personal protective equipment such as masks, gloves, and shields. Some students may be brought into the school for sessions and will need to go through a screening process involving a series of questions for the parent about possible exposure to the virus and, if needed, temperature checks.
- Mixed – The student receives a virtual session as well as an in person session.
- Deferred – In the event the student is unable to participate in virtual sessions and due to medical concerns is unable come into the school, services may be ceased for the duration of the covid-19 outbreak. After the conclusion of the outbreak a new assessment could be conducted with new goals and new levels of services to insure progress.

English Language Learners

Smyth County Schools will provide content based language support services to English Learners throughout the division in grades K-12. These services will be provided in person and virtually through weekly sessions with a certified EL teacher. New students will be screened, identified, and placed into the program in a timely manner. Minutes of services and accommodations will follow the guidelines set forth in each student’s language instruction educational plan (LIEP). The EL teacher will assist homeroom or content teachers with student accommodations and provide classroom support for language learners. EL teachers will be responsible for teaching language objectives and will also facilitate communication between the school and family to ensure that educational goals are being met in both the traditional and distant learning environment. ELs will continue to be evaluated for yearly growth by the WIDA ACCESS for ELs assessment. Those who met the exit requirements will be monitored for two years and can still receive classroom and testing accommodations.
Internet Access

Internet access is a common concern in rural areas across the Commonwealth and Nation. While the solution to this problem is not immediate, Smyth County Schools is working with multiple groups, including the United Way of Southwest Virginia and the Governor’s COVID-19 Education Work Group.

We conducted a survey to identify students who lack Internet access at home or whose access is too limited to support real-time video conferencing. That survey revealed that approximately 7 percent of our student population lacks Internet service. We are working with Internet service providers in Smyth County (CenturyLink, Comcast, SmythNet, and Verizon) to identify those homes that can be served through the county’s existing Internet infrastructure. Both CenturyLink and Comcast offer a basic Internet service with sufficient bandwidth to support video conferencing. SmythNet offers fixed wireless access and Verizon offers mobile 4G LTE service.
Staff

Committee

Chair Dr. Cole Spencer, Director of Human Resources

Member Mr. Mike Davidson, Principal, Marion Senior High School
Member Mr. Rick Blevins, Principal and Director, Smyth Career and Technology Center
Member Mrs. Beth Pratt, Teacher, Atkins Elementary School
Member Ms. Sue Taylor, School Nutrition, Northwood Middle School
Member Ms. Beverly Wymer, Clerical, Marion Senior High School
Member Mr. Caleb Kestner, Teacher, TCAP
Member Mrs. Terri Totten, Counselor, Rich Valley and Saltville Elementary
Member Mrs. Kimberly Robbins, Instructional Assistant and Bus Driver Oak Point Elementary School
Member Mrs. Sharon Williams, Nurse, Chilhowie High and Middle School
Member Mr. Jeff Robinson, Teacher, Chilhowie High School
Member Mrs. Jennifer Surber, Teacher, Northwood Middle School

Overview

The Staffing Committee is composed of representatives from around the county and different roles within the schools. The committee was tasked with developing questions in regards to the concerns staff will have when in-person instruction returns. Throughout the meetings, each staff member was assigned with polling their counterparts to identify the areas of major concern about their return to the fall semester.

In the course of the meetings, each member shared the collected concerns regarding the opening of school, but more specifically, the logistics of in-person versus virtual instruction. While some questions centered on the safety of the stakeholders during in-person instruction, the majority of the questions veered towards the process for delivering quality instruction and providing necessary services to the students in their care, both in-person and through virtual means.
Nutrition

Committee

Chair Mr. Phillip Griffin, Director of Auxiliary Services

Member Mrs. Sue Davidson, Principal, Marion Elementary School
Member Mrs. Tammy Hahn, Principal, Rich Valley Elementary School
Member Mr. Jason Kilbourne, Principal, Chilhowie Elementary School
Member Mrs. Jessica Manns, Administrative Assistant, Chilhowie Elementary School
Member Mrs. Jennifer Street, Administrative Assistant, Marion Elementary School
Member Mrs. Xan Buchanan, Teacher, Rich Valley Elementary School
Member Mrs. Pam Leonard, Teacher, Marion Elementary School

Overview

The Nutrition Committee met to develop our plan for feeding children when we return to school in August, 2020. Our plan will be to feed children breakfast and lunch when they are attending school and to provide meals on the alternate days when they are not in attendance. Breakfast will follow a “Grab and Go” model where students are provided a bagged breakfast upon entering the building and take it to their classroom. The bagged breakfast will include options such as biscuits with sausage, chicken and steak, pastries, cereals, milk, fruit and juice. Lunches served to students at school will resemble lunches served pre-COVID 19. These meals will be hot and include all of the components our students have come to expect (fruit, vegetables, grains, protein and milk). Our Child Nutrition Staff members will work with building level administrators and local health officials to determine how lunches will be served in our buildings.

On the days in which students are not assigned to physically be in the building, we will provide students with a breakfast and a lunch for each weekday until they return. Students whose parents have opted to participate virtually in school will have the opportunity to pick up meals daily at the school in which they are enrolled. Child Nutrition Staff members will work with building level administrators to determine the best times and pickup sites in our buildings. A hot meal will be provided on days where there are students in the building along with breakfast for the next school day. A cold meal will be provided on the day before the remediation/cleaning day.
Communication

Training of Staff

All staff will be trained, prior to the start of school, on mitigation strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as a required professional development program. The professional development will be module based and prepared by Smyth County Schools’ nurses using guidance from the Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Department of Health and the Virginia Association of School Nurses.

Communication with Staff, Parents, and Students

The Smyth County Schools School Health Services Recovery Plan Resource for K-12 will be posted on the division website and links will be provided through Twitter accounts of each school. In addition, students electing to participate in extracurricular activities during Phase III will be required to submit an Extracurricular Waiver prior to participation.

Plans to Communicate an Outbreak or Positive Cases in Schools

Any notification of a positive case will be reported to Mrs. Susan Hoagland, Nursing Director. She will immediately communicate with the Mount Rogers Health Department for guidance. Families of children exposed to COVID-19 will be notified and contact tracing will be conducted by the Health Department. The Health Department will provide suggestions/requirements regarding quarantine protocol.
2020-2021 School Year
Phase III: COVID-19 School Reopening Plan
Summary

This educational plan for Smyth County Schools is designed with commitments to a high-quality educational experience while maintaining a safe learning and work environment for our students and staff. Extensive conversation and committee work has been completed by all stakeholder groups after the release of the Virginia Department of Education “Recovery, Redesign, and Restart” document. This document provides key components and considerations for our reopening plan. Please note that our plan may be altered due to evolving conditions and recommendations.

- The first day of school for Smyth County Schools will be August 12, 2020.
- New instruction will be provided to ALL students. Smyth County Instructional Recovery Teams identified skill deficits that were missed since the mandatory school closure on March 13, 2020. The skill deficits have been built into your child’s curriculum for the upcoming school year.
- Bus capacity and classroom capacity will be dictated by the current physical distancing requirements established by the Virginia Department of Health. This requirement will impact the number of students who may attend school each day. Therefore, Smyth County Schools will provide a hybrid model of in-school and remote learning.
- Families with significant concerns allowing their child(ren) to return to in-person instruction will have the option for full remote learning.
- We have provided a survey, which can be found HERE, to all parents to begin gathering information regarding transportation, instruction, and internet access. Throughout the summer there will be additional surveys on various topics. We encourage all parents to fill out the survey. For those families without Internet access, staff will make contact by phone to ask for the information.

### Phase III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permissible In-Person Instruction and Building Capacity</th>
<th>All Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, High Schools and Smyth Career and Technology Center ~ parents will determine the best option for their child(ren)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Option 1 (Full Remote Instruction)**
Instruction will be provided by Smyth County Schools’ educational staff through an online platform. Internet access continues to be a barrier for some families in Smyth County. While efforts to resolve this issue are strong and moving forward, the likelihood of access for all families by August 12 is extremely unlikely. Therefore, families who do not have internet access, due to location, will receive their instruction through jump drives or packet based instruction.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Option 2</strong> (Hybrid Instruction with 50% of the student enrollment attending school for instruction while the remaining 50% will utilize remote instruction. This Option will be a staggered schedule) Students will be identified as A or B. Students identified as A will attend school for in-person instruction on Monday and Thursday. Students identified as B will attend school for in-person instruction on Tuesday and Friday. Wednesday of each week will be utilized for intense virtual remediation for specific students, planning, professional development, and deep cleaning of each building.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smyth Career and Technology Center</strong> Due to the nature of certifications within the programs offered through the Smyth Career and Technology Center, Smyth County Schools is exploring various options for instruction. More information will become available closer to the start of school. Smyth County Schools will be the school year under Option 2. We are prepared and aware we may be required to revert back to Option 1 if the situation is dictated by the VDH or Governor’s Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students Receiving Special Education Services</strong> Classroom social distancing guidelines and transportation restrictions will have an impact on the service of students with disabilities as well. Special education teachers and other school staff will work with parents and students through the IEP process to ensure accessibility and continuity of services for students with disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gathering Limits</strong> Due to physical distancing restrictions, group sizes in common areas will be limited to 50 people, or less, in areas such as cafeterias, gyms, and auditoriums (due to the requirement of social-distancing of 6-feet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Distancing</strong> The expectation for all students and staff is to maintain the required 6-feet of separation to the greatest extent possible. Due to social distancing, limited class sizes and limited bus capacity will be required. When interactions require closer contact, masks will be required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bus Capacity</strong> Capacity on school buses will be limited to one student per seat. Children from an immediate family will sit together on the same seat. Masks will be required for all riders due to the inability to maintain 6-feet of social distancing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recess/Physical Education</strong> Under the guidance in Phase III, social distancing for physical education and recess must maintain 10-feet. Additionally, mixing of different student groups will be avoided as much as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Screening and Temperature Checks</strong> All students and staff will be screened and temperature checks will be conducted daily. All Smyth County Schools nurses have been trained on established protocol to limit exposure to students and staff who are sick. Additionally, all nurses are being trained as contact tracers. All schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Face Coverings

Smyth County Schools has purchased cloth face coverings for employees and students who will need them. The expectation is for staff and students to wear face coverings when 6-feet of social distancing cannot be maintained, while recognizing developmentally appropriate protocol and extenuating circumstances. If students will be utilizing Smyth County Schools’ bus transportation, face coverings must be worn.

Athletics, Extracurricular Activities, and Field Trips

Athletics are governed by the Virginia High School League. Extracurricular Activities and Clubs for our students will be allowed to meet virtually, with sponsors, through Phase III.

Childcare Options for Families

Solutions for childcare are currently being explored. Data collection to determine the need for childcare is currently being collected through surveys. The United Way of Southwest Virginia is collaborating with Smyth County Schools to determine possible solutions.

Contact information for specific questions in relation to this plan is below.

**Elementary**

Atkins (276)783-3366
Chilhowie (276)646-8220
Marion (276)783-3021
Oak Point (276)783-2609
Rich Valley (276)624-3314
Saltville (276)496-4751

**Middle**

Chilhowie (276)646-3942
Northwood (276)624-3341
Marion (276)783-4466
Sugar Grove (276)677-3311

**High School**

Chilhowie (276)646-3942
Northwood (276)496-7751
Marion Senior (276)783-4731
Smyth Career and Technology Center (276)646-8117