

When is the first day of classes?

The first day of classes for the 2020-21 school year will be Monday, Sept. 14. There will be superintendent's conference days for Tuesday, Sept. 8, Wednesday, Sept. 9, Thursday, Sept. 10 and Friday, Sept. 11.

Will my child be required to wear a mask and if so, will the district be providing masks?

Yes. Masks will be required for all students and staff. The district will provide one Schoharie-branded cloth mask for every student and staff member. Disposable masks will be available on each bus and in each school building for staff, students, or individuals who may need them.

Are neck gaiters and handkerchiefs considered to be acceptable face coverings?

No. Based on the guidance from the Schoharie County Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and New York State, neck gaiters and handkerchiefs are not considered to be acceptable face covering and will not allowed to be used by Schoharie students, staff or visitors.

What is the district doing to keep my child safe while they are riding the bus?

The district is not filling school buses to capacity to ensure students are maintaining social distance while traveling to and from school. Students will sit one to a seat unless sitting with an immediate family member. Masks will be required for all staff and students riding Schoharie CSD transportation. An aide will be assigned to each bus to help support proper mask wear and social distancing.

If I will be dropping off my child at school, where will I drop them off? What do I need to know?

For students in grades K-5, the school day will start at 9 a.m and end at 2:55 p.m. Parents will be informed of their child's designated entry area prior to the start of school. Students are to be dropped off in loading and unloading zones by vehicle, only. For the safety of everyone, parents will not be permitted to park and walk their child to an entry area of the school. Staff will greet students at their entry area to bring them to class.

For students in grades 6-12, the school day will start at 7:50 a.m and end at 1:38 p.m. Upon arrival, students will proceed directly to their period one class.

Elementary Students (K-5): Start Time: 9:00 a.m. End Time: 2:55 p.m.

Secondary Students (6-8), (9&11), (10&12): Start Time: 7:50 a.m. End Time: 1:38 p.m.

How will the district know that my child is well enough to attend school?

Families will need to complete a daily health screening via the Capital Region BOCES screening form (or paper forms available in both offices) for daily health checks. If this information has not been received when your child arrives at school, the child will be screened by a school staff member.

I know we need to complete a health form each day for my child, how will that work?

We are required to have families complete a brief health screening form on their child each morning. This electronic form (via website, text message) will help the district determine who may need to be screened upon arrival on campus. For those families who are unable to complete the screening by the times listed below, district personnel will contact them to determine their health status. ***More information on the health screening process will be sent out by the district in the coming weeks.***

Health Screening for Secondary Students must be completed by 7:00 a.m.

Health Screening for Elementary Students must be completed by 8:00 a.m.

I am the parent of a Pre-K aged student, what will be provided for them?

The district is required to provide education for school aged students and creating a model that maximizes their safety was our first priority. We recognize the importance of our Pre-K program and are working with our Community Based Organizations who run our program to determine a model that will keep students safe while helping to prepare them for kindergarten. We are offering a hybrid model for Pre-K this year. The Pre-K program is expected to start Sept. 14, the same day as the elementary. **For more information on that plan [please see this Pre-K announcement.](#)**

Please note: Because Pre-K is a grant funded program we would not be able to hold it this year unless we are assured that it will be funded. At this time, New York State is holding the funding for the program, and it is entirely possible the program may not be funded. We continue to move forward with planning as if it will be funded in order to avoid delays when the funding situation is resolved.

Why is the Pre-K program operated as a hybrid with shorter hours?

The district and the Pre-K Community Based Organizations are concerned that the adjustment to existing regulations (social distancing and wearing face masks across the school day) could be a significant challenge for our youngest learners. Operating as a hybrid allows for a period of

adjustment to the new expectations while still delivering programming. The Pre-K hours will be re-examined after a month to see if students are able to participate in a 5 hour-a-day program.

My child struggled with remote learning last year, how will this year be different?

We are planning for the majority of instruction this year to be in-person and socially distanced. Grades K-8 will be on campus every day. Students in grades 9 and 11 will be in person for two days in a row and then virtual (off campus) for two days in a row. Students in grades 10 and 12 will be virtual for two days in a row (off campus) and then in-person for two days in a row (opposite grades 9 and 11). The pattern repeats over the course of the five-day school week. This schedule ensures that we can practice social distancing while also allowing for in-person instruction for two, three, or five days per week (depending on grade level). While remote learning, students will follow their schedule virtually (so regular school schedule even at home). They'll have to join in on Google Meets each period.

What can I do if I do not want my child to return to in-person schooling?

Schoharie families can opt out of in-person instruction for the first trimester (elementary) or quarter (jr./sr. high school) of the school year by August 14, 2020. An opt out letter was sent out to all district families in early August with instructions on how to opt out for the first trimester or quarter. Please note that students who are opted out of in-person instruction will still be required to follow their school schedule but can do so virtually. The opt-out selection will need to be renewed in writing on a trimester or quarterly basis. While remote learning, students will follow their schedule virtually (so regular school schedule even at home). They'll have to join in on Google Meets each period.

What are the requirements for virtual learning if I opt my children into it?

Families who elect to have their child engage in fully virtual learning need to ensure children are engaged in learning while classes are occurring. Students must adhere to attendance policies, follow their schedule, and be attentive to the lessons each day. If students turn off their cameras, disengage, or are not participating fully and submitting assignments, they will be required to transition to in-person learning.

Families who choose virtual learning experiences will be provided a district Chromebook/MiFi as requested to ensure connectivity. Additionally, the public library and district parking lot have wifi access. Further connectivity issues may preclude families from selecting the virtual option.

How will my child be graded?

The district will return to the grading policies used prior to remote learning in 2020.

If students are partially virtual in their instruction, will there be a break in my school taxes?

Although our proposed instructional models differ slightly from pre-COVID-19 instruction, the district is providing an educational model that is aligned with NYS requirements for instructional hours. The district will continue to operate within the parameters of the community-approved budget for the 2020-21 school year

How will the district be able to assist my child with any anxiety issues or other mental health concerns?

The district understands that we are in a period unlike any other in our lives and in the educational process. Our mental health professionals (school counselors, psychologist, social worker) are available and will be working hard to help staff, students, and families cope with the changes that have occurred and may need to continue due to the COVID19 pandemic. In addition to our Schoharie CSD staff, our partnership with Schoharie County Mental Health is continuing for 2020-2021 and a counselor will be on site to work with students and their families as the need arises.

We do not have a reliable internet connection at home, how is my child going to participate in remote learning?

At this time, only students in grades 9-12 and those families requesting it will participate in remote learning. If you have a device or connectivity issue, please make the District aware of these challenges prior to the August 14 notification deadline.

Will students be taking art and music and be able to use the library in Elementary School?

Not at this time. We have developed a reopening plan that limits student movement in our building and that will allow us to have small class sizes. Because of this, elementary students will not be leaving classrooms to take art and music or to use the library. Art and music activities will be included in regular classroom activities and students will have plenty of opportunities to read and research as they would do in the library. However, sharing of library materials is not allowed at this time.

Will Elementary School students be receiving Academic Intervention Services outside of their classrooms?

No. To limit student movement within the building, AIS services will be provided by classroom teachers. This is possible because we have greatly reduced classroom sizes, which allows for more opportunities for individualized attention and differentiated instruction to meet student needs.

Will there be any extracurricular activities and/or athletics?

We recognize that athletics and extracurricular activities are an important part of our students lives. The district will follow the guidance put forth by Schoharie County, NYS, and the CDC when determining if extracurriculars can be held on campus. For athletics in addition to the guidance from the organizations listed above, we will also need to follow the guidance put forth by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) with regards to athletics and athletic competition for the 2020-21 school year. At this time, the earliest that interscholastic athletics may start is Sept. 21. For now, extracurricular activities are on hold and the building and grounds are closed for use by outside groups.

Will the district be allowing outside groups to use school facilities and/or athletic fields?

Not at this time.

What will the district do if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 involving a student or staff member?

If COVID-19 cases are discovered in the school, the District will do the following:

- Follow all County, State, and CDC guidance regarding the closing of classroom(s)
- Utilize maintenance staff and our Clorox 360 machine to ensure impacted rooms are sanitized
- Follow all County, State, and CDC guidance regarding contact tracing and impacted individuals
- The district will not release any identifying information regarding a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 to staff, students or families.

How are visitors to the Schoharie CSD campus being handled?

No outside visitors or volunteers will be allowed on school campuses, except for the safety and well-being of students. Parents/guardians will report to the front office and not go beyond unless it is for the safety or well-being of their child. Essential visitors to facilities will be required to wear face coverings and will be restricted in their access to our school buildings. Vendors who arrive in the district will be required to complete a health questionnaire prior to entry.