

Weekly Update | March 10, 2021

Vol. 3, Issue 2

A Message from Alicia

There have been some significant new developments from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. On Friday, March 5, the Commissioner was granted the authority to determine when hybrid and remote learning models will no longer count toward meeting the required student learning time hours. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted the amendments which will result in some changes to our learning models.

Yesterday the Commissioner sent out a memo outlining additional guidance for inperson learning requirements and included the following phased in approach:

- Elementary school (Grades K-5): Districts and schools will shift their learning model for elementary school grade levels to full-time, in-person instruction five days per week effective Monday, April 5, 2021.
- Middle school (Grades 6-8): Districts and schools will shift their learning model for middle school grade levels to full-time, in-person instruction five days per week, effective Wednesday, April 28, 2021.
- High school (Grades 9-12): DESE will announce the details and timing of the high school phase of the plan in April.

In September the South Shore Charter School implemented full in-person learning for all students in grades K-1. Students in grade 2 were given the opportunity to begin full in-person learning on March 1. We will be implementing full in-person learning options for students in grades 3-5 on Monday, April 5 and full in-person options for students in grades 6-8 on Wednesday, April 28.

In order to accommodate these new mandates, DESE has changed the physical distancing recommendation from 3-6 feet to 3 feet. All other health and safety protocols remain in place, including mask wearing and hand hygiene.

Families will retain the right to choose full remote learning for their child for the remainder of the school year. Should individual students or whole classes need to quarantine for COVID-19 health and safety protocols, remote learning will remain an option.

Included below is a timeline, subject to change, which reflects our school's current state of planning for the upcoming learning transitions.

Learning Model Planning Timeline

- September 2020-June 2021: K-1 Students full in-person
- March 1, 2021: Grade 2 Students full in-person
- March 3, 2021: SSCPS Board of Trustees, Executive Committee Meeting review of DESE intent to return to full in-person learning for students in grades K-5
- March 4 17, 2021: Building and learning spaces capacity review.
- March 5, 2021: Faculty and staff review and planning for DESE intent to return to full in-person learning
- March 8, 2021: Communication to SSCPS families for COVID-19 Pooled Testing
- March 15 19, 2021: Family surveys for additional data collection
- March 15, 2021: Implementation of the COVID-19 Pooled Testing Program
- March 24 30, 2021: Family information sessions for guidance on new learning models
- April 5, 2021: Implement in-person return for students in grades 3-5
- April 7, 2021: SSCPS Board of Trustees Executive Committee Meeting
- April 15, 2021: SSCPS Board of Trustees Meeting
- April 28, 2021: Implement in-person learning return for students in grades
 6-8
- April 2021: DESE issues guidance for high school in-person learning return

We will be scheduling informational Zoom meetings for families beginning March 24, 2021. Additionally, we will be sending out family surveys next week so that we can plan learning spaces the most effective way possible.

Please check your email for further information as it becomes available. We will be keeping families up to date as we receive more information from DESE.

Thank you for your ongoing flexibility and patience as this year progresses.

Alicia Savage Executive Director South Shore Charter Public School

From the SSCPS Health Office

Earlier this week the SSCPS Health Office sent an email to our school community to introduce all families to the new weekly COVID-19 testing program which will begin on March 15. The program is free and voluntary. Pooled testing of students and staff is intended to help us lower the risk of disease in our school by finding positive cases of

COVID-19 quickly. This program will also help identify positive cases in people who do not show any symptoms. Testing will allow us to continue in-person learning while making everyone feel safer when in-person.

If your student is currently fully remote please do not register at this time. If families choose to return to in-person learning and would like to participate, the Health Office will register those students upon return.

We hope that you will participate by signing a consent form for your student. The higher the percentage of participation, the safer school will be. Below please find additional information and the Registration link.

Registration link:

https://app.beacontesting.com/register/with-code?code=WPWCQJ

Please follow the link below for additional information on registering your student through the Project Beacon website. We have also included a link to FAQ's about pool testing.

https://help.beacontesting.com/article/83-registration-guide-for-parents

https://help.beacontesting.com/article/86-faq-for-parents-k-12-pooled-testing What is the COVID-19 pooled testing program?

- Participating students will be tested for COVID-19 once a week by our nurses in the SSCPS Health Office
- The test is performed at school
- COVID-19 pooled testing is quick, easy, and it does not hurt. It is a nasal test that gently swabs the lower inner nostril, and most students will be able to swab themselves.
- We will accommodate all students' needs to help them feel comfortable during
 the test.
- The test is free. You do not need to pay for the test or have insurance to get the test.
- The optional program begins on March 15, 2021

How can my student participate in the program?

To participate in the testing program, please sign a consent form for your students. You only need to sign up once for the weekly testing. This form gives us permission to share student information with the technology platform we use to track testing. Student information will only be shared with the Department of Public Health and other departments if a student tests positive in an individual test. Please sign up electronically by using the registration link above. If you need assistance with the link, please call the SSCPS Health Office.

The program is voluntary. Students are not required to participate in the program. If you do not consent to participate, your student can still come to school. We strongly encourage all students to participate to help us reduce the spread of COVID-19.

How does it work?

The type of testing we are using is called "pooled testing." Pooled testing makes it easier and faster to find individuals who might have COVID-19. Here is how it works:

- Participating students are testing individually once a week with a nasal swab. Most students will be able to swab themselves.
- Immediately following, up to ten swabs will be placed in the same tube, creating a group of swabs called a "pool." The pool is sent to a lab where the whole pool is tested for COVID-19 at one time.
- If the pool test comes back negative, all students in the pool are COVID-negative. No further action is necessary.
- If the pool test comes back positive, it means that at least one person in the pool is COVID-positive. In this case, all students in that pool will return to school the next morning for an individual follow-up test.
- Individual follow-up tests will be done with BinaxNOW which produce results in 15 minutes. If the individual follow-up test comes back negative, the student returns to school as normal. If the individual follow-up test comes back positive, we will work with families to make arrangements to have the student quarantine and get connected to care. The local board of health may also reach out to start the contact tracing process

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of the SSCPS Health Office nurses:

Susan Dupras, RN <u>sdupras@sscps.org</u>

Darcie Edwards, RN <u>dedwards@sscps.org</u>

Barbara Folan, RN <u>bfolan@sscps.org</u>

Jaime Kjelgaard, RN j<u>kjelgaard@sscps.org</u>

Important Notice for SSCPS Families | The Rapid Antigen COVID-19 Diagnostic Test

Thank you for your continued partnership during this unprecedented school year. In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we have been working closely with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) to offer free rapid COVID-19 testing for symptomatic staff and students participating in any type of in-person instruction.

The Health Office requires your permission to test your child should your child develop symptoms at school. While we have asked all students and staff who are sick to stay home, there may be members of our school community who **first present symptoms while in school**. Being able to test your child at school will not only expedite results and therefore help you determine next steps to protect your student and your family, but also provide some peace of mind that a test is available and can be delivered by a nurse if the need arises. The Rapid Antigen COVID-19 Diagnostic Test is FDA approved and delivers results in 15 minutes. Our school nursing staff has been thoroughly trained on how to administer the test using a nasal swab. The decision to administer the test will be made by the school nurse.

If your child develops symptoms at school, you will be called immediately. You will be asked over the phone if you would like to have a Rapid Antigen COVID-19 Diagnostic

Test done. This test will only be administered when you arrive at the school to pick up your student. When you arrive you will call the front desk and let them know you are here. The nurse will then come out in full PPE (mask, gown, gloves, face shield) with your student. You will be directed to pull into a designated spot. At this time the student will sit inside the car, if younger they may sit on your lap. You will be asked to put the car window down. The test will be administered by placing a cotton swab into each nostril about 1 inch and moved in a circular motion. Then the cotton swab will be brought inside where the rapid testing will be completed. At this time you are allowed to start driving home. The test takes 15 minutes to get a result. You will then be notified of the results by telephone and given instructions on further quarantine/isolation guidelines.

If the test results are positive:

- This is a presumed positive test result
- Helps you and us to start contact tracing/notification immediately
- 14 days of quarantine is necessary to return to school

If the test results are negative:

- Your student will remain out of school until a negative PCR test is obtained
- 10 days of quarantine is complete
- Have a doctor note clearing them for school due to another diagnoses

The SSCPS Health Office will report all test results to DPH and positive test results to DESE's Rapid Response Help Unit.

This is a voluntary program and you can enter at any time. To give permission for your student to participate in the Rapid Antigen COVID-19 Diagnostic Test, including permitting the school to share the test result information with the Department of Public Health and Project Beacon (a third party non-profit organization contracted to compile consent for testing and to share test results), please follow the directions you will receive from Project Beacon after creating an account by using the following link:

https://app.beacontesting.com/register/with-code?code=EKMBEX

Instructions for Registering Your Child with Project Beacon

- 1. Enter the site using the above link
- 2. Be sure to use your preferred contact email address
- 3. After entering your email address, you will receive an email confirmation link
- 4. Enter your student's name, date of birth, and address
- 5. Enter your contact email and telephone number
- 6. Organization Code: EKMBEX
- 7. Complete and save the consent agreement

For each additional child:

- 1. Choose "Create a Patient Profile" at the top of the screen
- 2. Select "Secondary Profile"
- 3. Enter your student's name, date of birth, and address
- 4. Enter your contact email and telephone number
- Organization Code: EKMBEX
 Complete and save the consent agreement

All student profiles should list SSCPS under their name (not public test site)

If you have created an account under the parent or guardian name, please create a secondary account for each student using the instructions above.

A paper permission form may be requested if you cannot access the online site.

At South Shore Charter Public School, we are extremely grateful to our committed staff and families that continue to show great flexibility and resilience as we navigate through this school year. It takes all of us working together to contain the spread of this virus.

If you have questions regarding the Rapid Antigen COVID-19 Diagnostic Test, please reach out to one of the nurses in the SSCPS Health Office.

Thank you,

Susan Dupras, RN <u>sdupras@sscps.org</u> Darcie Edwards, RN <u>dedwards@sscps.org</u> Barbara Folan, RN <u>bfolan@sscps.org</u> Jaime Kjelgaard, RN <u>jkjelgaard@sscps.org</u>

From the Health Office

If your child has received an updated physical including updated vaccines, please send a copy to the appropriate health office. Forms can be mailed, faxed or emailed to the appropriate nurse.

High school: <u>sdupras@sscps.org</u> or <u>bfolan@sscps.org</u> K-8 school: <u>dedwards@sscps.org</u> or <u>jkjelgaard@sscps.org</u> Fax # 781-982-4201

SSCPS has an email address to use when your child will be absent. This email address should be used for both In-Person and Remote students. The email is sent to the Health Office as well as both Front Desks.

Email: <u>Attendance@sscps.org</u>

Please include the following information:

Your student's name and grade

- Reason for Absence
- Contact phone number

If the absence is due to illness the nurse will call you back and ask you questions about symptoms.

COVID-19 Check

Please remember to check your child for COVID-19 symptoms including temperature before arriving at school or getting on the bus. Wellness checks should be completed on School Pass. If your child is absent with symptoms or has been tested, even if negative you must **notify the health office** before your child returns to school. Please use the **attendance email** that is found on the SSCPS website to report a student absence even if your child is not ill but will be working remotely that day. If it is not reported you will receive a phone call from the school regarding the your child's absence.

Visit the school's <u>Health Office</u> page for additional information.

COVID-19 FAQ Sheet

The nursing team here at the South Shore Charter Public School Health Office has compiled this COVID-19 FAQ sheet to provide families with information pertaining to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and school-wide procedures.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other know cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache, when in combination with other symptoms
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

What should I do every morning before my child goes to school?

Perform a wellness check every morning before your student arrives at school. Please check temperatures and check to see if your student has any of the above mentioned symptoms. Please fill out the questionnaire on the School Pass app before sending your child to school.

What happens if my student is sent home from school with COVID-like symptoms?

If your child develops COVID-like symptoms at school they will be sent to the CARE room. They will be sent home and will not be able to return to school until they have a negative PCR COVID-19 test, a medical note clearing them to return, or your student will need to remain home for 10 days. Symptoms need to be resolved and students will need to be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before they can return.

What is the CARE room?

The CARE room is a separate room where students with any COVID-like symptoms are brought until they are picked up from school. The CARE room is a separate room from the health office. The students will remain in the CARE room with a nurse until they leave school.

If my child is sent home from school with COVID-like symptoms can their siblings be at school?

No, if a student is sent home with COVID-like symptoms all siblings and household members will also be sent home and cannot return until the symptomatic child is cleared to return to school.

My child has COVID-like symptoms and I am keeping them home, can I send my other children to school?

No, all siblings and household members will need to remain out of school until the child with symptoms is cleared to return to school by a negative PCR COVID-19 test, a medical note clearing them to return, or all household members will need to stay home for 10 days.

My child has COVID-like symptoms and I took them for a rapid antigen COVID-19 test that was negative, can they return to school?

No, a rapid negative antigen COVID test is not accepted as a substitute for the PCR test due to a higher rate of incorrect test results. The student may not return to school until they have a negative PCR test.

A household member has COVID-like symptoms, may my children go to school?

No, the student must remain out of school until the household member has a negative PCR COVID-19 test or is medically cleared by a doctor stating that the symptoms are not due to COVID-19. No student can return to school if a household member has a pending COVID-19 test due to having COVID-like symptoms.

Where can my child or household member get COVID-19 PCR testing?

Massachusetts COVID-19 Testing Sites Mass.gov | Stop the Spread

Mass.gov | stop the sprea

What should I do if my student is positive for COVID-19?

Please keep your student home and contact the school's Health Office immediately. The student will need to isolate for 14 days. The student will need to be cleared by the school Health Office before returning to in-person school and the student will need to have had a negative PCR COVID-19 test, or a doctor's note clearing them to return. They will also need to have resolved/improved symptoms and be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.

Mass.gov | COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Information

Do I report my COVID-19 test results?

Yes, both negative and positive test results should be reported to the appropriate Health Office.

Do I need to report a positive COVID-19 test if my student is fully remote?

Yes, the school is required to report all positive cases to DESE, even fully remote students.

How do I contact the school if my student will be absent from school?

Please use the email: <u>attendence@sscps.org</u> or contact the appropriate school health office. If your student has any COVID-like symptoms, please speak to the nurse directly.

HS: 781-982-4202 X 182 or email: <u>sdupras@sscps.org</u> or <u>bfolan@sscps.org</u>

K-8: 781-982-4202 x104 or email: <u>dedwards@sscps.org</u> or jkjelgaard@sscps.org

Why is it important for me to call my student's school nurse when they are home sick?

Keeping communication with your child's school nurse about your student's illness allows for the nurses to track illnesses in the school community and to maximize the health and safety of all students and staff.

What is a close contact?

Per the CDC, a close contact is someone who has been within 6 feet of a person positive for COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes in the previous 48 hours of the onset of symptoms or from a positive COVID-19 result of an asymptomatic person.

What should I do if my student is a close contact to a person positive for COVID-19?

If your student is a close contact to a positive person they will need to quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure. It is recommended that they have a FCR COVID-19 test on day 5 of being exposed. Regardless of the results they will need to remain in quarantine for a full 14 days from the exposure.

What should we do if a household member is a close contact?

If a household member is a close contact to a person positive with COVID-19 and asymptomatic the student may remain in school. If the household member is symptomatic the student will need to remain home until the close contact has a negative PCR COVID-19 test. If the household member is positive, the student will need to quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure or 48 hours prior from the date of the test if the person is asymptomatic.

Can my student do remote learning if they are not able to be in person due to quarantining or having COVID-like symptoms?

Yes, students are expected to continue remote learning while in quarantine or are unable to be in school due to the student or family members having COVID-like symptoms. Please reach out to your child's administrators and teachers.

We are traveling to a high risk (red) state. Can my student return to in-person school if they have a negative COVID-19 test?

No, our school policy is that all students who have traveled to a state that Massachusetts has deemed as non low risk need to quarantine for 14 days starting the day after they return from traveling.

Mass.gov | COVID-19 Travel Order

What supplies does my child need from home for school?

- Water bottle with straw
- 2 face masks
- Chromebook
- · School bin (can stay at school for the week)
- Change of seasonal clothing (kids go outside for most weather for recess, mask breaks, snack and specialist classes)
- Warm clothing (students go outside for snack, mask breaks, lunch at the high school and specialist classes)

Should my student bring warm clothing (jacket/hat/gloves) in the cold weather?

Yes, students at the high school have lunch outside in all weather conditions. Specialist classes and snack breaks are also held outside. Windows at 100 will be kept open to improve air ventilation. Students should bring warm clothing.

Why does my child have to wear a face mask?

Face masks are an important measure to take to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Face masks help reduce the spread by containing the infected person's respiratory droplets from traveling to other people.

What type of mask should my student wear to school?

All students and staff are required to wear a mask at school. Appropriate masks are two-ply face masks that stay up around the nose. Masks should be washed daily and students should have an extra mask in their bag. There are disposable masks available if one becomes dirty or breaks while at school. Gaiters, and bandanas, and masks with a valve are not acceptable for school.

What if my student is having difficulty wearing a mask at school?

Masks are required at school for all students and staff. Students will be given mask breaks during the day. If a student is not wearing their mask appropriately at the middle and high school students will be given a warning and a phone call home for the first offense. The second offense will result in the student being sent home.

How do I contact the school if I have questions about COVID-19 or need to report a positive case?

Should your child test positive for COVID-19, have symptoms, or if you have any questions, please contact the appropriate school health office and speak to one of our nurses directly.

High School: 781-982-4202 X 182 or email:

Susan Dupras, <u>sdupras@sscps.org</u> or Barbara Folan, <u>bfolan@sscps.org</u>

K-8: 781-982-4202 x104 or email:

Darcie Edwards, <u>dedwards@sscps.org</u> or Jaime Kjelgaard, <u>jkjelgaard@sscps.org</u>

Thank you for your ongoing support and for your assistance keeping our school community safe.

Susan Dupras, RN Darcie Edwards, RN Barbara Folan, RN Jaime Kjelgaard, RN

Travel Advisory

We would like to remind families of the health and safety guidelines put forward by Governor Baker and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in the recently updated <u>COVID-19 Travel Order</u>. The South Shore Charter Public School has enacted a strict travel protocol which requires that all students who return from traveling to high risk states or countries, or students who have been on a plane, must quarantine for fourteen (14) days. Students in grades X-12 are expected to learn remotely during the 14-day quarantine period. Students in grades K-1 are expected to utilize their learning bins.

Our school policy regarding voluntary travel is stricter than the Massachusetts Travel Order. There is no exemption from quarantine if your child tests negative **prior** to returning to Massachusetts. Because of the nature of COVID-19 transmission, and the chance of exposure within the 72-hour period prior to returning to Massachusetts, the school does not consider the described testing measure to be adequately preventative. A I4-day quarantine is required by our school's <u>Health Office</u>.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Housing Help

Paying rent or a mortgage can be especially challenging during a pandemic. The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development has centralized information about resources for families struggling to make rent or mortgage payments due to COVID-19. If you or another family you know needs assistance, please go to www.mass.gov/covidhousinghelp for more information.

WiFi Assistance

Please use the buttons below for information regarding low cost internet services in your area.

Low Cost Internet Services

NDIA Free and Low Cost Internet Plans

Lifeline Cell Phone Service Provider

FROM THE YEARBOOK COMMITTEE

The 2021 yearbook is now in progress and all the memories of the 2021 school year will be published forever in print.

To order online go to <u>www.coffeepond.com</u>, to login use school password: bluejaguar.

Parents may submit a special personalized page that will appear in the back of the book for their senior at these rates: Full page \$150, 1/2 pg. \$75, 1/4 pg. \$50. Due date is March 30, 2021. Please email Christine at <u>cbodnar@sscps.org</u> with any questions.

From the Parents Association



From South Shore Charter Educational Foundation



v 2021 Dear Friends and Families of SSCPS.

We hope this letter finds you well. As we kick off 2021, we want to extend our well wishes to you and your family during these unprecedented times. We thank you for your unwavering support of our faculty and staff as we strive to inspire every student to excel in academics, service, and life in a safe and upportive environment.

As someone who has been at Charter for 13 ye and a part of the fraternity of 13. I have learn to embrace Charter ilfe. There is a huge sense community at the school which is developed fr a young age through our service projects and sports. Charter helps prepare young kids a through the interview.

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Cardy the challenges of COVID- 19 have inguilized particular that is a second particular that the second particular that the second particular that the second particular that we have enserved to the second environment that the second particular that the d times. ning" on



and like everything eike has impacted our fundraining addities as yowl. In anyoor of our community we have prove will condition of \$10 per year for each year your furthy has been revelled with tu, but we apprecise whatever dottation you can make. We hope you will check with your englower to see if they will much your dottable. Weng giving you can write your check to SSEE, or you may go callue at *invariant* standards. Thank's you for you continued tapport and we look forward to better days when we can all gather as one community again.

CLICK HERE to make your gift online. Or please mail a check to SSCEF, P.O. Box 512, Accord, MA 02018.

Warm and healthy wishes, Laurie Dannison and Leslie Alden Development Officer Trustee

e had many positive experiences in my thirteen years at SSCPS I have never felt like I have not been able to reach out to cher for help. I know that when I was straggling last year with my AP Comistry class my teacher would let me stop or during IT time to hely me. In a bigger town school, but type of thing would not be possible and I am able to get th I need in my classes I noter to succeed. my classes in oraer ain, Class of 2021

Friday	03/12	Remote Learning for All Students	8:15a-12:15p
Mon-Thurs	03/15-03/16	Team B In-Person; Team A Remote Learning	
Wednesday	03/17	No Classes – Professional Development Day	
Thursday	03/18	Team B In-Person; Team A Remote Learning	
Friday	03/19	Remote Learning for All Students	8:15a-12:15p

Important Links Weekly Updates are emailed and posted to our	School Documents
website <u>www.sscps.org</u> every Wednesday.	2020-21 School Calendar
<u>Food Service</u>	Student and Family
<u>Health Office</u>	Handbook
 <u>Massachusetts Department of Transitional</u> 	
Assistance	SSCPS By-Laws
Visit the Parents Association Website	
 Visit our new online option to <u>purchase</u> 	
SSCPS apparel	
items of interest. Please contact Pam Algera at <u>palgera@sscps.org</u> to submit SSCPS items for	
Here are links to upcoming events and other items of interest. Please contact Pam Algera at <u>palgera@sscps.org</u> to submit SSCPS items for publication.	
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