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# SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## **RE-OPENING OF SCHOOLS PLAN 2020-2021**

(UPDATED OCTOBER 13, 2020)



# INTRODUCTION

The Smithtown Central School District remains committed to conducting our schools in a manner that provides for the safety, health, and security of both students and staff. When the 2020-2021 school year began, on-campus school looked much different than previous years due to COVID-19, and health and safety measures continue to evolve. This School Reopening Plan reflects cooperation with the guidance for the reopening of our twelve schools in alignment with the regulations developed in collaboration with NYSDOH and the NYS Education Department.

The areas outlined in this plan represent the myriad considerations the Smithtown Central School District addresses in an ongoing way to keep schools open safely and to sustain their safe operation. It is important to note that our plan retains a strong focus on academic instruction to enhance student performance and address learning loss. An emphasis on the social-emotional needs of our students is a priority and therefore is addressed within our plan.

This plan includes procedures that will be followed in the following schools:

[Accompsett Elementary School](#)

[Dogwood Elementary School](#)

[Mills Pond Elementary School](#)

[Mt. Pleasant Elementary School](#)

[Smithtown Elementary School](#)

[St. James Elementary School](#)

[Tackan Elementary School](#)

[Accompsett Middle School](#)

[Great Hollow Middle School](#)

[Nesaquake Middle School](#)

[Smithtown High School East](#)

[Smithtown High School West](#)

To be clear, the health and safety of our students, our staff, and their families is our top priority. We have developed a plan that intends to ensure that students and employees feel comfortable and safe returning to school campuses. Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#) and the [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\)](#).

It is possible that we may need to alternate between in-person and remote learning throughout the year due to recommendations and guidance from our partnering agencies, and stay-at-home orders from the Governor. The level of infection, the spread of the virus, and response to the disease in our community will be at the forefront of decision making as we move to open our schools.

Mr. Neil Katz, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel, serves as the district's COVID-19 Coordinator. He serves as a central contact for schools and stakeholders, families, staff and other school community members and will ensure the district is in compliance and following the best practices per state and federal guidelines.

Of course, as with every plan being developed throughout New York State, this document is fluid and will change as necessary based on guidance from the state, CDC, NYSDOH, and NYSED and in consideration of our families and our staff. We strongly believe the services described throughout this plan are in the best interests of our students, families, staff, and community.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The development of this plan was guided by and grounded in the following guiding principles:

- Safeguarding the health and safety of students and staff;
- Providing the opportunity for all students to access education in the fall;
- Monitoring schools, students, and staff. When necessary, modifying schedules to appropriately contain COVID-19 spread;
- Emphasizing equity, access, and support to the students and communities that are emerging from this historic disruption;
- Fostering strong two-way communication with partners, such as families, educators, and staff;
- Factoring into decision making the challenges to the physical safety, social emotional well-being, and the mental health needs of our students caused by school closure; and
- Considering and supporting diversity in our schools and school district as we provide education is essential.

# COMMUNICATION: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This plan was developed with the input of over 150 district stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, administrators, nurses, local health care providers, staff members, and union representatives. Stakeholders represented all levels of students (elementary, middle and high school), vulnerable populations (ELLs, students with disabilities, students in poverty), every curriculum department, and every school building in the district.

Training was provided to staff working during the summer months. Training was also conducted again when staff returned in September. All staff has received email communication regarding the requirement to conduct a health screening prior to entering any building, and signage is posted in every building with a reminder as well as a QR code and website link, in English and Spanish, notifying all employees and visitors of the requirement to conduct a health screening prior to entry. Signage regarding the 6-foot distancing and mask requirement is posted in every building, and additional bold, in-color signage was purchased and placed prominently when schools reopened to further reinforce health and safety practices for staff, students, and visitors.

Students were trained on hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, social distancing, face covering requirements, and all related COVID-19 school safety protocols prior to their return to school. Training included written protocols as well as video demonstration. Additionally, all staff, students, and visitors see visual reminders to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding PPE use, particularly when social distance cannot be maintained, posted at school entrances and throughout the school building.

This district Reopening Plan was posted on the district website and produced as a video presentation, which was made available on the district website. The district website accommodates visually impaired users, and the video presentation includes both audio and visual text. The original reopening plan has been translated into the languages spoken at home in our school populations.

Throughout the summer and fall, the district has communicated with staff and families with important updates related to school reopening and safe operations. All communication related to school reopening is posted on the main page of the district website, including a Frequently Asked Questions document that is updated on an ongoing basis.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## FACE COVERING/SOCIAL DISTANCING

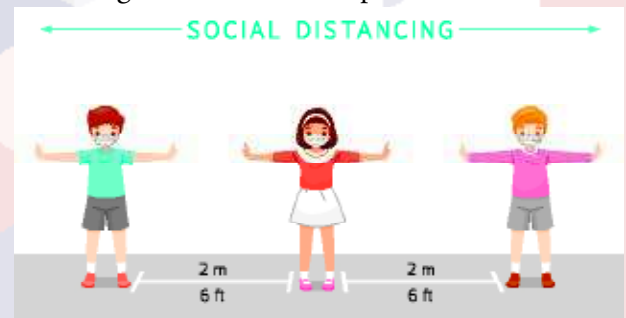
As required and as noted in the Communication section, members of the district met with numerous stakeholders to obtain input on the development of the plan. Said stakeholder groups included students, teachers, parents, administrators, nurses, local health care providers, staff members, and union representatives. The district has placed the final plan on the district website in order to communicate with staff and families about all aspects of school reopening.

The Smithtown Central School District developed protocols and procedures consistent with public health guidance for students, staff, faculty and other individuals to ensure appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is used to protect against the transmission of the COVID-19 virus when on school grounds and in school facilities. The district requires that all members of the school community (students, staff, visitors, etc.) make use of proper face coverings and practice social distancing. Proper face covering includes, but is not limited to: a surgical mask or cloth mask that completely covers the individual's mouth and nose. A plastic face shield alone is not an acceptable face covering. Exceptions to the facial covering requirement will be possible with appropriate documentation. Furthermore, the district will consult with the Suffolk County Department of Health for information on the capacity of the local hospitals and will follow the guidelines that are provided related to transportation.

Face coverings are required at all times upon entry & exiting of district facilities, while walking in hallways, when working within 6 feet of others and in shared spaces such as common areas, break room, restrooms, etc. Tightly confined spaces will be occupied by only one individual at a time, unless all occupants are wearing face coverings. Classrooms and other instructional areas will be reconfigured to allow for optimal social distancing. Although it is suggested that members of the school community make use of their own face coverings, masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) will be available if necessary.

Members of the school community are expected to practice social distancing (of at least 6 feet or a physical barrier) while in school facilities and on school grounds including in the cafeteria. Exceptions to the need for social distancing may be made when safety or the core activity requires a shorter distance or individuals are of the same household. The stringent use of masks coupled with the usage of plastic partitions in every classroom will provide additional protection for our students and staff.

Signage has been placed on the exterior of each facility and throughout all district facilities as a visual reminder for members of the school community to wear face coverings, practice social distancing and to practice proper hand washing and respiratory hygiene. Floor markers are also being used to mark spacing requirements and assist with traffic flow within each building. In-person gatherings will be limited as much as possible, and we will use tele- or video-conferencing whenever possible. Essential in-person gatherings will be held in open, well-ventilated spaces with appropriate social distancing among participants.





# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## GENERAL OFFICE AREA

- In a multiple-occupant office, individuals will maintain at least 6 ft. of separation or protective barriers such as polycarbonate screens or strip curtains will be utilized to create a physical separation without hindrance to egress or airflow.
- Workstations will be reconfigured so that employees do not face each other, or establish partitions if facing each other cannot be avoided.
- Face coverings should be worn in these multiple use office settings.
- Where possible additional shifts will be utilized to reduce the number of employees in the worksite at one time.
- Stagger shift start and end times when possible (while still ensuring safe operations), to eliminate employees from congregating during the shift change-over, and from overcrowding at entrances and exits.
- Employees will be encouraged to use virtual meeting tools, including phone and virtual teleconference, in lieu of in-person meetings, whenever possible.

## BREAK ROOMS AND LUNCH ROOMS

- Breakroom use is discontinued if a minimum of 6 ft. separation cannot be maintained when consuming food or drink.
- Staff are advised to take their lunch and breaks in their private offices or classrooms, in their vehicles or outside at the picnic tables throughout the campus.

## COPIER ROOMS/AREAS

- Congregating in copier rooms/areas is discouraged.
- Cleaning supplies will be provided at copier stations.
- Staff are encouraged to wipe down touch surfaces post and prior to use.

## ELEVATORS

- One person in an elevator at a time where practicable.
- Personnel must wear acceptable face coverings when in common use areas.
- Elevators will be frequently disinfected.

## HALLWAYS/STAIRWELLS

- Where feasible hallway traffic may be limited to single flow direction.
- Directional flow will be identified by signage.
- Signage will be placed throughout to promote social distancing.

## AEROSOL GENERATING PROCEDURES

All district personnel that are involved with the handling of respiratory treatments will follow the CDC guidelines related to the use of PPE when:

- Suctioning
- Administering nebulizer treatments
- Using peak flow meters with students who have respiratory conditions

These procedures will be conducted in a separate location when necessary.

The appropriate PPE for the procedures mentioned above will consist of:

- Gloves
- N95 or surgical facemask
- Eye protection; and
- Gown (if necessary)

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## SCREENING

The Smithtown Central School District will follow the guidance issued through the New York State Education Department ([NYSED](#)) and the Department of Health ([DOH](#)) related to the required health screenings. As such, mandatory health screenings, including temperature checks, of students, faculty, staff, and, where applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors will be required prior to entry into any district facility. District employees that are responsible for conducting health screenings will be provided with the necessary barriers and personal protective equipment to safely perform these duties.



Prior to entering all Smithtown Central School District locations, individuals must complete a medical screening questionnaire. A list of building specific QR codes linked to the questionnaire is accessible through the District website at (<https://bit.ly/2Pmb9vn>) and a QR code sign is posted at all main entrances that provides a direct link to the building-specific survey using a mobile device. In an effort to minimize exposure, members of the school community are asked to conduct temperature checks at home, prior to departing to school and required before entering any school facility. Parents should act as partners in this effort and are expected to certify that their child does not have a temperature and is not displaying any other symptoms of COVID-19. Parents are expected to complete the daily health screening questionnaire through the Parent Portal prior to sending their child to school each day. With signage posted on all entry doors, visitors will be notified of the requirement to complete the health screening prior to admittance. Students that are feeling ill and/or present symptoms should stay home and contact their health care provider for further guidance.

All district employees are required to complete the daily health screening prior to entering any district facility. Staff will be required to monitor their own temperatures prior to arrival on campus and throughout the day. Anyone whose symptoms response changes from a NO to YES during the day, must contact their supervisor immediately and await further instruction. Staff members that are feeling ill and/or present symptoms should stay home and contact their health care provider for further guidance.

Staff members are trained on symptom and illness identification and instructed to observe all members of the school community for signs of illness. Anyone identified with possible symptoms or illness will be directed to the Health Office (school nurse) for further evaluation. Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, or who presents with a temperature greater than 100.0°F, will be sent to the Health Office for further evaluation. In the event a school nurse is not available, building administrators will ensure that the child or staff member is sent home and directed to contact their healthcare provider for additional evaluation. Those that have not yet entered the building will not enter the school if screened outside, and will immediately be sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.

- Students sent home because of a positive screen will be immediately separated from other students and supervised until picked up.
- The district will immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if diagnostic test results are positive for COVID-19.

Each district facility will have trained staff available and will be equipped with thermometers and the other personal protective equipment to provide a health screening if necessary.

## CONTACT TRACING

The Smithtown Central School District will notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual within school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Furthermore, the district will cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including assisting with notification of potential contacts.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

In the event of an individual testing positive, the district will work with and follow the guidance of the local health department in tracing all contacts of the individual, in accordance with the protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations. Furthermore, the district will cooperate with all state and local health department contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine efforts.



## RETURN TO SCHOOL OR WORK

The district will follow NYSED and NYSDOH guidance and speak with the Suffolk County Department of Health for additional guidance on advising individuals exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 about their ability to return to school or work. Unless under an isolation or quarantine order, students and staff that have not been diagnosed by a healthcare provider with COVID-19 can return:

- After feeling well for 24 hours and no fever is present without the use of fever reducing medications.
- If the student or staff member has been diagnosed with a known chronic condition with unchanged symptoms or a confirmed acute illness, the healthcare provider must provide written notification of the clearance with the diagnosis to return.

Any student or staff that has been diagnosed with COVID-19 based on a test or their symptoms (was not tested), must remain out of school or work until:

- It has been at least 10 days since the first symptoms;
- It has been at least three days without a fever (without using fever reducing medication); and
- It has been at least three days since the student or staff members symptoms have improved.

## PERSONAL HYGIENE

Hand washing - Students and staff must practice good hand hygiene to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Schools will plan time in the school day schedule to allow for hand hygiene.

☐ Hand hygiene includes:

- Signage encouraging hand washing and correct techniques;
- Traditional hand washing (with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds), which is the preferred method. This can be accomplished by singing or humming the happy birthday song twice;
- Adequate facilities and supplies for hand washing including soap and water;
- Use of paper towels or touch-free paper towel dispensers where feasible (hand dryers are not recommended as they can aerosolize germs);
- Use of no-touch/foot pedal trash can where feasible;
- Extra time in the schedule to encourage frequent hand washing.

☐ Students and staff should wash hands as follows:

- Upon entering the building and classrooms;
- After sharing objects or surfaces;
- Before and after snacks and lunch;
- After using the bathroom;
- After helping a student with toileting;
- After sneezing, wiping, or blowing nose or coughing into hands;
- Anytime hands are visibly soiled;
- When handwashing is not available use a hand sanitizer;



# HEALTH AND SAFETY

- ❑ Hand Sanitizer - At times when hand washing is not available students and staff may use a hand sanitizer. In order for the sanitizer to be effective it must contain a minimum of 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol. It should be noted the sanitizers are flammable and students must be monitored and supervised when using these. Using hand sanitizers should include:
  - Signage should be placed near sanitizer dispensers indicating soiled hands should be washed with soap and water;
  - Placement of sanitizer dispensers should be located near entrances and throughout common areas.

## VISITOR AND VENDOR PRACTICES

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 and parent/guardian visitors will be required to wear face coverings and will have restricted access to our school buildings.

### VISITORS

- All visitors must be wearing proper face covering prior to entering any building and it must be worn at all times when a six (6) foot social distance cannot be maintained.
- All visitors will check in and will be required to complete the COVID-19 health screening questionnaire which can be found by scanning the QR Code posted on all doors. The visitors must sign in with their identification through the Raptor system for a visitor badge. This will indicate to all other Security locations that the visitor has been screened.
- No visitor should enter a building unless necessary. All meetings should be held outside or via virtual meetings when possible.
- All visitors must sign in and out at the main entrance of each building stating their destination at that building for contact tracing. All visitors should be accompanied by a staff member.
- Should a visitor become ill while on campus, they must alert the staff member they are visiting to report the issue and then immediately seek medical attention.

### VENDORS

- All vendors must be wearing proper face covering prior to entering any building and it must be worn at all times when six (6) foot social distance cannot be maintained.
- All vendors will check in and will be required to complete the COVID-19 health screening questionnaire which can be found by scanning the QR Code posted on all doors. The vendors must sign in with their identification through the Raptor system for a visitor badge. This will indicate to all other Security locations that the vendor has been screened.
- No vendor should enter a building unless necessary for completion of their job. All meetings should be held outside or via (Google Meet) when possible.
- All vendors must sign in and out at the main entrance of each building stating their destination at that building for contact tracing. All vendors should be accompanied by a staff member.
- Should a vendor become ill while on campus, they must alert the staff member they're visiting to report the issue and then immediately seek medical attention.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

The Smithtown Central School District has developed protocols for students, faculty and staff who are at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness, and individuals who may not feel comfortable returning to an in-person educational environment, to allow them to safely participate in educational activities and, where appropriate, accommodate their specific circumstances.

Various options will be discussed with families and/or employees on an individual basis. However, accommodations may include: remote learning or telework, modified educational or work settings, or additional PPE for individuals with underlying health conditions.

The following groups are at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 and may need added or alternative provisions for social distancing. The district will work with employees on an individual basis related to accommodations in the workplace. Persons in these groups should consult with their healthcare provider regarding prevention:

- Individuals age 65 or older;
- Pregnant individuals;
- Individuals with underlying health conditions including, but not limited to:
  - o chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - o serious heart conditions
  - o Immunocompromised
  - o severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
  - o Diabetes
  - o chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
  - o liver disease
  - o sickle cell anemia
  - o children who are medically complex, who have neurologic, genetic, metabolic conditions, or have congenital heart disease

Students with special needs or students who are medically fragile may not be able to maintain social distancing, hand or respiratory hygiene, or wear a face covering or mask. It is important for parents/ guardians to work with their child's healthcare providers so that an informed decision can be made on how best to meet the child's needs at school while protecting their health and safety. Transitioning these students back to school requires:

- Planning and coordination of:
  - o school health services personnel
  - o special education personnel
  - o pupil personnel services and
  - o Administration
- Being aware that such families are already under significant stress and COVID-19 has made their situations more critical.
- Alternate plans created in consultation with school health personnel on how to meet the needs of the child while keeping social distancing may include:
  - o Additional PPE for staff caring for such students;
  - o Assigning only one staff member to care for the student; and/or
  - o Decreased students in a classroom, alternating schedules, and provision of how related services are to be delivered.

Our students that are considered a vulnerable population will have their program reviewed as it pertains to requiring additional modifications through a building level team which will include pertinent school personnel. Parents will be made aware of the additional modifications or social distancing protocols that may need to be implemented. These students may require a different instructional delivery model or modifications as to how they access the school building and/or programs.

# FACILITIES

## HYGIENE, CLEANING, DISINFECTION, AND VENTILATION

The Smithtown Central School District will continue to adhere to all existing regulations related to school facilities. If any changes or additions to facilities are necessary, those changes or additions will comply with the requirements of the 2020 New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (BC) and the State Energy Conservation Code and all changes will be submitted to the Office of Facilities Planning (OFP). The district will continue to comply with the 2020 Building Condition Survey and Visual Inspection, where applicable. The district will continue to conduct the Lead-In-Water Testing as required by New York State Department of Health (DOH) regulation 67-4. All existing and new Alcohol-based Hand-Rub Dispensers will be installed in accordance with Fire Code of New York State (FCNYS) 2020 Section 5705.5. Any installation of dividers in classrooms, libraries, cafeterias, auditoriums, gymnasiums, doors, and other points of congregation will be submitted to OFP with detailed floor plans and any new building construction and/or temporary quarter project will be submitted to OFP for a full code review.

If the need should arise for leasing new facilities, the district will consult with OFP for a preliminary evaluation. Similarly, if the plan includes the temporary or permanent use of tents, such plans will adhere to the Building Code of New York State (BCNYS). The district will ensure that the existing or altered number of toilet and sink fixtures meet the minimum standards of the BCNYS. Each building will provide a minimum of one potable water source for drinking per one hundred occupants.

The district will maintain adequate, code required ventilation (natural or mechanical) as designed. Schools will increase ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining health and safety protocols. Ongoing preventative maintenance will be conducted on all ventilation units.

Should the district require any project submissions only dedicated to “COVID-19 Reopening,” they will be labeled as such. Should the use of plastic separators be required, they will comply with the 2020 BCNYS Section 2606.

In addition to the standard normal procedures and protocols that the District adheres to ensure the health and safety of all students and staff, supplementary measures will be implemented as a result of the reopening guidelines issued by New York State and the DOH. All schools will adhere to and promote hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection guidance set forth by DOH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). All students, faculty, and staff will be trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene. “High touch/high risk” areas will be disinfected multiple times throughout the day and classrooms and other areas will be disinfected nightly. Restrooms will be regularly cleaned and disinfected and individuals utilizing restrooms must adhere to social distancing rules.

Products identified by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID-19 will be utilized. Hand hygiene stations, including handwashing with soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels, as well as an alcohol based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not feasible, will be provided and maintained. Facilities will maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfecting, as well as identify cleaning and disinfection frequency for each facility and area type and assign responsibility to appropriate staff.

In the event that an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, exposed areas will be cleaned and disinfected, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high touch surfaces as per CDC guidelines.

## SPACE UTILIZATION

School areas, including classrooms, libraries and labs will be configured for proper social distancing to the extent practicable. Dedicated isolation areas will be available in each building for screenings and to accommodate other health and safety concerns. Schools will continue to conduct required safety drills with modifications ensuring social distancing between persons.

# CHILD NUTRITION

The School Lunch Program will follow School Food Authority (SFA) policies when communicating about school meal services, eligibility, options and changes in operations. All communications will be provided through a variety of communication methods including website, social media, emails, phone calls, newsletters and regular mail and translated into languages spoken by families. Families will be reminded in food service communications during the summer and periodically that they can submit a new application for free and reduced-price meals any time during the school year. Applications are available in each school building, on our website and through email or regular mail as needed.

Students will be provided with access to meals each day, including those in attendance at school and students learning remotely. For students onsite, meals will be provided while maintaining appropriate social distancing between students unless a physical barrier is provided. In consideration of social distance requirements, modifications to school lunch services may be necessary, including providing meals in a combination of classrooms, cafeterias and alternate areas, and staggering meal periods.

The program will address all applicable health and safety guidelines and have measures to protect students with food allergies, including for meals provided in spaces outside the cafeteria. Specific protocols and procedures will be in place to ensure that hand hygiene will be promoted (signage, training, etc.) and that students will perform hand hygiene before and after eating. In addition, sharing of food and beverages (e.g. buffet style meals, snacks) will be prohibited, unless individuals are members of the same household. Cleaning and disinfection will occur prior to the next group of students arriving for meals, if served in the same common area (e.g., cafeteria).

The School Lunch Program is instituting a no cash mandate in all school buildings to further mitigate safety concerns. Cash deposits will only be permitted at the Child Nutrition office for those without checking or MySchoolBucks accounts. Child Nutrition is located at 150A Southern Blvd., Nesconset, NY 11767





# TRANSPORTATION

All students are entitled to transportation by the district to the extent required by law. Students who are able must wear acceptable face coverings at all times on school buses and social distance where practicable. Students will be expected to have appropriate face coverings. Students who do not have a mask will be provided where necessary and will not be denied transportation. Exceptions to the face covering requirement may be possible with appropriate documentation which will then require social distancing. Students with a disability which

would prevent them from wearing a mask will not be forced to do so or denied transportation, however that student must be appropriately socially distanced while on the bus. All parents/guardians will be required to ensure that their child/children are not experiencing any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and do not have a fever of 100 degrees or more prior to them boarding their method of transportation to school. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to drop off or walk students to school to reduce density on buses.



Transportation providers will develop protocols and procedures which will include, but not be limited to:

- Establish cleaning and disinfecting procedures ensuring that buses in use are cleaned/disinfected at least once a day, and ensure that high contact spots must be wiped down after each a.m. and p.m. run depending upon the disinfection/cleaning schedule.
- Ensure that school buses shall only be equipped with hand sanitizers authorized under the inspection jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Transportation. Students and personnel on the bus will also be authorized to carry personal-size bottles of sanitizer, whose contents should not exceed 8 ounces in volume.
- Ensure that all school bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics are provided and wear face coverings along with optional face shields.
- Require transportation staff (drivers, monitors, attendants, mechanics, and cleaners), be trained prior to school opening and provide periodic refreshers on the proper use of personal protective equipment, social distancing, and the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Ensure that all school bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics are provided Personal Protective Equipment such as masks and gloves for drivers, monitors and attendants in buses.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided for all staff in their transportation locations such as dispatch offices, employee lunch/break rooms and/or bus garages
- Monitors and attendants having direct physical contact with a child must also wear gloves.
- Require their employees perform a self-health assessment for symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving to work.
- Require students to be trained, prior to school opening and provide periodic reminders on the proper use of social distancing. Such training will, at minimum, occur during safety drills performed throughout the year
- For a reported case of COVID-19 on a school bus, notifications will be made to District Administration and the bus will be taken out of service for at least 24 hours for cleaning and disinfecting
- If the district is in session remotely or otherwise, pupil transportation will be provided to nonpublic, parochial, private, charter schools and for students whose Individualized Education Plans have placed them out-of-district whose schools are meeting in-person when/if the district is not.

# SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

The school district has implemented district-wide and building-level comprehensive developmental school counseling program plans, developed under the direction of certified school counselors and reviewed and updated to meet current needs.

The school district will establish an advisory group comprised of families, students, school leaders, teachers, certified school counselors, and other pupil personnel service providers including school social workers and/or school psychologists to inform the comprehensive developmental school counseling program plan.

Below, we address how the district will provide resources and referrals to address mental health, behavioral, and emotional support services and programs.

The school district will address professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on how to talk with and support students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, as well as provide support for developing coping and resilience skills for students, faculty, and staff. This is also detailed below.

In planning for our re-entry in September, the District has formed task force teams to examine the guidance provided by the Department of Health and NYSED for our re-entry in the fall. Our work is grounded in our beliefs that the most equitable opportunities for educational success relies upon the comprehensive support for students and families provided in our schools with our professionals and the systems of support we have built. These supports include academics as well as the social and emotional well-being of our students. We are committed to prioritizing social emotional well-being - not at the expense of academics, but in order to create the mental, social, and emotional space to access rigorous academic content with confidence. In support of this belief, a Social-Emotional Well-Being Committee was created consisting of certified teachers, certified school counselors, certified school psychologists, Board of Education members, community members and school administrators. This task force team was created to develop a cohesive and strategic plan, regardless of the re-entry phase, to support students and staff for the 2020-2021 school year; this includes a means to identify and actively support student and staff well-being and mental health concerns through a range of pre-determined tactics to be employed by those dealing with difficult situations. This plan will focus specifically on how to best support students and staff in a blended learning model scenario, which includes a mix of both in-person and virtual classroom instruction. This plan includes considerations for teams to rapidly transition between face-to-face and continuous remote learning, which may be required based on the pandemic.

Research shows the importance of mental and emotional well-being for students and staff, which has both psychological and ultimately academic outcomes. We know, after this prolonged closure, many of our students and staff will require social-emotional support to help them re-engage and re-enter work and school. As a district, our commitment is to create emotionally and physically safe, supportive and engaging learning environments promoting all students' social and emotional well-being and development. The pandemic has elevated the role of leaders in creating conditions helping students practice empathy, create social bonds across distance, and adapt to new learning experiences. Counselors, school based health programs, and wrap around supports will play an extremely important role in the adjustment period when buildings reopen and access to school counselors and school-based health programs will be invaluable supports to our students. School administrators, teachers and mental

# SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

health practitioners (school counselors, school psychologists and/or school social workers) will create an asset map of already existing foundational assets within the school district and community-based organizations, and build upon them. In addition, it will be critical to determine students who might be at risk for needing mental health support. School counselors and administrators will be equipped with tools and information needed to see each child through a social and emotional lens. We remain committed to supporting all students and maintain our whole child commitment as well as equipping all staff to connect, heal, and build capacity to support our students.

Supports will continue to include identifying and delivering responsive SEL supports, including mental health check-ins, planning and goal setting, opportunities for self-reflection, and social interactions as applicable.) Additionally, all Smithtown Central School District employees have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which offers many free services including face-to-face and virtual counseling. Information about all social-emotional supports will be made widely available on our website. We are committed to developing and making accessible family appropriate social and emotional learning (SEL) content to be used during all phases of our re-entry.

Transitions are important every year, and they will be even more important this fall returning from continuous remote learning to in-person instruction in buildings or a phased in approach to in-person instruction. Districts should support transitions in a culturally responsive manner and engage students, families, and communities in the process of identifying needs and supports. Transitions take many forms and include returning to school in the fall, moving from one grade band to another, or dealing with the varying emotional needs as a result of the health pandemic.

Schools will provide professional development and training for faculty and staff on how to talk with, and support, students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. This will include information on recognizing the emotional needs of our students upon return to school with a sensitivity towards helping their students to express their feelings and developing coping and resilience skills for students, faculty, and staff.

- All staff members will be provided training on recognizing warning signs of student emotional distress.
- Back to School After COVID-19: Supporting Student and Staff Mental Health Toolkit will be provided to all teachers. This toolkit is designed to help guide conversations to include a trauma-informed, equitable, and compassionate lens to providing mental health support to every member of the school community.
- School Based mental health staff will turnkey appropriate material as it becomes available to reinforce towards helping students express their feelings.
- SEL (school based mental health professionals and staff) members have been identified in each building to work collaboratively with teachers to infuse SEL practices in their instruction.
- Staff has been provided with professional development on recognizing trauma in schools.

## **The following considerations guided our building level planning:**

*Emotional reactions to coming out of quarantine may include:*

- Mixed emotions, including relief after quarantine
- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Stress from the experience of monitoring yourself or being monitored by others for signs and symptoms of COVID-19

# SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

- Sadness, anger, or frustration because friends or loved ones have unfounded fears of contracting the disease from contact with you, even though you have been determined not to be contagious
- Guilt about not being able to perform normal work or parenting duties during quarantine
- Other emotional or mental health changes

## *Addressing Social-Emotional Health:*

- Establish/sustain a culture that supports and emphasizes mental health services available for faculty, staff, students and families
- Explore the use of Restorative Practices (use of healing/restorative circles for both staff and students)
- Assist in adequate training for staff/faculty as requested to assist them in understanding:
  - o Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies; self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making
  - o The warning signs for quarantine related mental health needs
  - o How to access crisis support and other mental health services

## *What Mental Health Professionals can do in schools:*

- Educate staff, parents, and students on symptoms of mental health needs and how to obtain assistance
- Promote social emotional learning competency and build resilience
- Help ensure a positive and safe school environment
- Teach and reinforce positive behaviors and decision-making
- Encourage good physical health
- Help ensure access to school-based mental health supports; facilitate the expansion of school-based mental health support

## *Smithtown Central School District Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)*

The Smithtown Central School District Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) will include providing students with the opportunity to share their stories, explore their emotions, and strengthen their self-care, resilience, and coping strategies. For faculty, students, and staff who require additional support; a higher level intervention will be provided by our mental health staff to support individuals having difficulty with transitioning back into the school setting, especially given the changed school environment.

### **Tier 1 :**

- Smithtown Central School District has developed a [Mental Health Resources](#) document available to all stakeholders on the district website which has been updated to reflect any changes due to COVID-19. This document provides a comprehensive list of outside providers
- Smithtown Central School District “Parent University” offers sessions, where strategies are provided for parents to identify and support their children struggling with mental wellness. The coping strategies covered are appropriate pre and post COVID-19.
- Mental Health Curriculum continues to be covered in Health Class
- Continued implementation and yearly updated Smithtown Central School District Guidance Plan. Students are helped to interpret and integrate into the world in which they live. The plan is aligned to the American School Counseling Association. This year the plan will be updated to address concerns due to COVID-19



# SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

- Schoolwide Suicide awareness and prevention protocols
- Smithtown Central School District has subscribed to Tri-State REACH's Telephone-based Employee Assistance Program. They will provide: Unlimited, anonymous, confidential telephone counseling, problem assessment, information and referral services. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via a toll-free number. This is staffed by licensed, master's level counselors.
- Collegial Circles will be set up so that staff members can connect and discuss common concerns surrounding mental health.
- Professional development for staff on self-care will be provided
- District-Wide Bereavement Response Committee

## **Tier 2:**

- Resilience Summer C.A.M.P. (virtually for summer of 2020) for identified middle school students: Weekly focus is on a specific skill with the overall focus on self-awareness, self-regulation, and developing a sense of community. The tools being reviewed surround for self-regulation, staying grounded, collaborating toward individual and shared visions. The monitoring of these students will continue through high school through weekly updates.
- Each Smithtown Central School District building will utilize Instructional Services Team (IST) meetings where discussion of students can occur who have been identified as struggling academically, emotionally, or behaviorally. Targeted supports and interventions are put in place and monitored.
- Formal risk assessments will be conducted by a team of trained professionals (i.e School Psychologist, Social Worker, and/or School Counselor) and referred for appropriate services.
- Smithtown Central School District has subscribed to Tri-State REACH's Telephone-based Employee Assistance Program. They will provide: Unlimited, anonymous, confidential telephone counseling, problem assessment, information and referral services. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via a toll-free number. This is staffed by licensed, master's level counselors.

## **Tier 3:**

- Student Support Team (High School): Students who have been identified as high risk will be assigned to this team for intensive intervention and monitoring. The team consists of a Psychologist, Social Worker, School Counselor.
- Individual Counseling and Group Counseling will be provided as necessary by our Psychologist and Social Workers K-12.
- Referral for CSE or 504 Accommodations as necessary
- Smithtown Central School District has subscribed to Tri-State REACH's Telephone-based Employee Assistance Program. They will provide: Unlimited, anonymous, confidential telephone counseling, problem assessment, information and referral services. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via a toll-free number. This is staffed by licensed, master's level counselors.

# SCHOOL SCHEDULES

The reopening school schedule will be dependent upon the most current guidance from the NYS Governor's office and Education Department. A detailed student schedule will be provided to each family.

Because schools were approved to open in-person with social distancing requirements in place in September 2020, Smithtown CSD implemented a hybrid (in-person and remote instruction) model.

In the case that in-person is no longer allowed, the district will implement its fully remote model, detailed in the Teaching and Learning section of this plan.

## HYBRID MODEL GROUPINGS

### **Elementary**

Elementary students have the option of attending full-time in person (RISE and special class students since Sept. 8, all kindergarten and K-5 ICT students beginning Sept. 30; grades 1 and 2 beginning Oct. 5, and grades 3-5 beginning Oct. 13) or fully remotely. Student cohorts include their home classroom classmates for all instructional activities. Students remain with their cohorts for other activities, including lunch and recess.

Fully-remote students learn exclusively from home using the Google Meet platform.

### **Secondary**

Secondary students have the option of attending part-time or fully remotely. In-person students are grouped in cohorts as follows:

**Group 1:** All students with last names that begin with A-K

**Group 2:** All students with last names that begin with L-Z

Group 1 attends school in-person every Monday and Tuesday as well as on alternating Wednesdays. Group 1 receives synchronous remote instruction via live-streaming on the days they are not attending school in-person.

Group 2 attends school in-person every Thursday and Friday as well as on alternating Wednesdays. Group 2 will receive synchronous remote instruction via live-streaming on the days they are not attending school in-person.

Additionally, all students in the FAMP and FAST programs (effective Sept. 8) as well as special class students (effective Sept. 29) have the opportunity to attend full-time in person, part-time, or fully remotely.

Additional details can be found below in the Teaching and Learning section of this plan.

## REMOTE LEARNING OPTION

If parents/guardians choose not to send their child(ren) back to school, even if in-person instruction is available, remote instruction will be provided. Details related to the schedule and/or format of remote instruction for these students are dependent upon staffing availability.

Currently, elementary and secondary fully-remote instruction is provided both synchronously and asynchronously by certified teachers in all subject areas.

# ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

All schools in the Smithtown Central School District collect and report daily teacher/student engagement or attendance regardless of the instructional setting. This will occur whether school operates in-person, hybrid, or remote. Attendance policies and procedures were communicated with families and students prior to the start of the school year and will be reiterated if the instructional model changes during the year. Communication may take the form of building level parent letters/newsletter, robocalls, emails, text messaging, and social media. Teachers will record daily attendance in our student management system based on the required daily scheduled student contact and engagement. Reports will be generated to identify students who are absent and/or chronically absent. Contact with the families will be made to determine reasons for absence and needs or barriers the student may have to participate in daily lessons.

Attendance of any school-age student of compulsory age, who resides in the district or is placed by a parent/guardian in another public school district, a charter school, or is placed by a district administrator or the CSE of the school district in educational programs outside the district (such as, another school district, BOCES, approved private in-State or out-of-State school, and State supported school) must be reported in SIRS.

Parents will be contacted by the district if their child has chronic absenteeism or disengagement in order to develop a plan to re-engage their child.

# TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY

In the 2020-2021 school year, the Smithtown Central School District implemented a one-to-one computer initiative where all students and staff were provided with access to a personal, dedicated computing device on a full-time basis. This will ensure equity of access to a device at all times regardless of the instructional model in use.

The District administered a parent/guardian and staff survey to determine the level of internet access available in their place of residence in advance of the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Following the administration of the survey, the District worked to provide internet access to families and staff who indicated they did not have it.

In an effort for students to participate in learning and demonstrate mastery of Learning Standards in remote or blended models, the district streamlined the number of different tools that students and parents/guardians need to utilize, the District will continue to utilize Google Classroom as the learning management system for all students in grades K-12.

The District will continue to provide professional development for administrators and faculty/staff on designing effective remote learning experiences and the best practices in delivering online instruction. Additionally, the District will also provide access to support for parents/guardians on the digital tools used for remote instruction (see district website: [Instructional Technology Support](#)).





# TEACHING AND LEARNING

## INSTRUCTION

The Smithtown Central School District instructional plan for the 2020-21 school year provides continuity of learning for all students. The plan includes in-person, remote, and hybrid models of instruction.

The Smithtown educational plan is aligned with the outcomes in the New York State Learning Standards across all grade levels regardless of whether instruction is delivered in-person, remotely, or in a hybrid model.

Equity is a running theme and is at the heart of all school instructional decisions. All instruction has been developed so that whether delivered in-person, remotely, or through a hybrid model due to a local or state school closure, there are clear opportunities for instruction that are accessible to all students. Students will have opportunities that are aligned with State standards and include routine scheduled times for the students to interact and seek feedback and support from their teachers.

The instruction is aligned to the academic program and includes regular and substantive interaction with appropriately certified teachers regardless of the delivery method (in person, remote or hybrid).

Smithtown has created a clear communication plan (i.e. phone and email contact information) for how the students and their families or caregivers can contact the school and their teachers with questions about their instruction and/or technology. This information has been widely disseminated and includes clear and multiple ways for students and families to contact the school and their child's teachers. This will be made available in multiple languages and distributed to all families.

Should the district contract with eligible agencies, including Community Based Organizations, to provide Prekindergarten programs, these programs will follow the health, safety, and instructional guidelines outlined by NYSED and the NYSDOH.

## IN-PERSON

Upon reopening, the number of students in each of our classrooms was reduced to adhere to CDC guidance regarding proper social distancing. Class size reflected the stated need to ensure that students' desks/seats are positioned no less than six feet apart. Over time, state and DOH guidance evolved and the District has taken additional steps to allow for greater safety than was provided in our original plan. The state and DOH guidance now allows for a distance less than six feet if the students are participating in a core activity and wearing masks.

All instruction will continue to be aligned to the New York State Learning Standards.

Our schools will minimize the movement of students, where practicable. This potentially may mean having students eat lunch in their classroom instead of the cafeteria and eliminating assemblies, field trips and other large-group activities. Special-area subjects (e.g., art, music, physical education) may need to be reimagined. We will adhere to 12 feet between students when engaging in physical activity, singing, or playing wind instruments. When 12 feet cannot be maintained, masks will be required.

To the extent possible, students will remain in small cohorts if/when leaving the classroom, such as for recess or any necessary transition, so as to reduce their exposure to additional students.

The district model of in-person instruction that will be used for elementary and secondary students will have a priority focus on the student experience. This will include regular, substantive interactions will occur between students and teachers; clear opportunities for instruction that are accessible to all students (i.e., aligned with state standards, include routine scheduled times for students to interact and seek

# TEACHING AND LEARNING

feedback and support from teachers). Additional specific information about how in-person instruction will be scheduled and conducted will be directly communicated to families prior to the start of school via phone, email, and the district website.

## REMOTE

In the event that instruction is provided in a full-time remote model, the Smithtown Central School District will ensure that students have regular opportunities for both synchronous (face-to-face, in real time) and asynchronous instruction.

At the elementary level, students will be provided with both synchronous and asynchronous instruction. As usual, instruction will be provided in each of the core (ELA, mathematics, science, social studies) and special area (art, music, library, physical education) subjects.

At the secondary level, students will follow the regular bell schedule within the existing regularly scheduled school day to participate in live-streamed instruction.

Secondary students will follow a modified A/B-day schedule: Every Monday and Thursday will be an “A” Day, every Tuesday and Friday will be a “B” Day, and Wednesdays will alternate (A, A, B, B) every two weeks.

# TEACHING AND LEARNING

## HYBRID & COHORTS

In compliance with NYSED and DOH guidance and mandates, our updated plan includes the following:

### **Elementary:**

Elementary students have the option of attending full-time in person or fully remotely. Student cohorts include their home classroom classmates for all instructional activities. Students remain with their cohorts for other activities, including lunch and recess.

### **Secondary:**

Secondary students have the option of attending part-time in-person and part-time from home or fully remotely. Certain student groups have the option to attend full-time, in-person, including students enrolled in the FAMP and FAST programs, and students enrolled in special classes. Prior to October 13, students learning from home receive asynchronous lessons and weekly synchronous support. Effective October 13, students learning from home will participate in classes via live-streamed classes and weekly extra help.

Students are grouped into two cohorts, “Group 1” (last names beginning with A-K) and “Group 2” (last names beginning with L-Z). Students are grouped with family members to the extent practicable.

Group 1 attends school in-person every Monday and Tuesday as well as on alternating Wednesdays. Group 1 participates in live streaming on the days they are not attending school in-person.

Group 2 attends school in-person every Thursday and Friday as well as on alternating Wednesdays. Group 2 participates in live streaming on the days they are not attending school in-person.

In-person instruction and live streaming follows the regular bell schedule. Secondary students will follow a modified A/B-day schedule: Every Monday and Thursday will be an “A” Day, every Tuesday and Friday will be a “B” Day, and Wednesdays will alternate (A,A,B,B).

The District constructed a monthly hybrid instruction schedule for all students and families to detail, by school day, which days are in-person and which are remote, as well as which secondary days are A and B days.

### **Sample Student Schedules:**

Week 1										
Group 1						Group 2				
M	T	W	TH	F		M	T	W	TH	F
In Person	In Person	In Person	Remote	Remote		Remote	Remote	Remote	In Person	In Person

Week 2										
Group 1						Group 2				
M	T	W	TH	F		M	T	W	TH	F
In Person	In Person	Remote	Remote	Remote		Remote	Remote	In Person	In Person	In Person

# ATHLETICS AND EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

## ATHLETICS

Per New York Department of Health guidance, interscholastic sports are not permitted at this time.

Smithtown Central School District will follow NYSED and other State guidelines for resuming athletics as they become available, including all applicable health and safety protocols.

## SCHOOL BASED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

School based clubs and activities began fully remotely in the fall and will continue that way until further notice. Live activities, such as competitions, will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and approved if they comply with current safety guidelines for social distancing and student and staff health and safety. This practice will be revisited regularly and will adhere to the most current health and safety guidance.

## BEFORE/AFTERCARE PROGRAMS

Town of Smithtown School Age Child Care will be permitted to run child care programs in district buildings and must follow State and local health and safety protocols, including complying with applicable social distancing requirements and hygiene protocol.



# SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Smithtown Central School District reopening plan provides a framework to ensure that all students with disabilities continue to have available to them a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The Smithtown reopening plan, whether services are provided in person, remote, and/or through a hybrid model, addresses the provision of FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those providing special education services.

Special education programs and services of the Smithtown Central School District will ensure access for students with disabilities to be involved in and to participate and progress in the general education curriculum with access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique disability related needs of students.

While not all formats allow for maximum benefit to students, these programs and services can be provided in all formats (live-person, hybrid, or remote).

The Smithtown Central School District is committed to providing meaningful parent engagement in the parent's preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of services to his/her child to meet the requirements of the IDEA. Further, we will maintain regular communication with the parents/guardians and other family members to ensure that they are engaged in their children's education during the reopening process.

The Smithtown Central School District will plan and support collaboration between the committees on preschool special education (CPSE) and committees on special education (CSE) and program providers representing the variety of settings where students are served to ensure there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on individualized education programs (IEPs), plans for monitoring and communicating student progress, and commitment to sharing resources.

The Smithtown Central School District will document the programs and services offered and provided to students with disabilities as well as the communications with parents in their preferred language and mode of communication.

The documentation may include, but will not be limited to: narrative records of how the student is adjusting to live, hybrid, and remote instruction during 2020-21, a record of what instruction and services were provided, a record of formative, summative, and standardized assessments and their results as well as progress monitoring documentation, and a record of school-family collaboration.

# BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND WORLD LANGUAGES

The Smithtown Central School District will complete the English Language Learner (ELL) identification process within 30 school days of the start of the school year for those students who enrolled during the COVID-19 school closure in 2019-2020. Screening will also take place within that timeframe for students who enrolled during summer 2020 and the first 20 school days of the 2020-2021 school year. Following the 20-day flexibility period, the ELL identification process will take place within 10 school days of initial enrollment, as required by Commissioner's Regulations Part 154.

All ELLs will be provided the required instructional units of study in their ENL program based on their most recently measured English language proficiency level during an in-person or hybrid instructional format.

The District will continue to maintain regular communication with the parents/guardians and/or other family members of ELLs and provide written communication for parents/guardians in their preferred language and mode of communication.



# STAFFING

## TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION SYSTEM

All teachers and principals will continue to be evaluated pursuant to the district's approved Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plan. The Smithtown Central School District will consider whether the currently approved APPR plans may need to be revised in order to be consistent with the plans for re-opening under an in-person, remote or hybrid instructional model. School leaders will continue to attend annually required Lead Evaluator training.

## CERTIFICATION, INCIDENTAL TEACHING AND SUBSTITUTE TEACHING

All teachers will hold valid and appropriate certificates for teaching assignment, except where otherwise allowable under the Commissioner's regulations (e.g., incidental teaching) or education law.

## STUDENT TEACHERS

Student teachers from NYSED registered college or university programs can serve under the supervision of fully certified teachers in the Smithtown Central School District. Student teachers will follow all of the social distancing, mask wearing, health status reporting, and other COVID-19 procedures that the teachers follow. Student teachers will serve under the supervision of our full time certified teachers only. At no time will a student teacher be used as a teacher of record.