



Sahuarita Middle School

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Mrs. Stephanie Silman, Principal

Mr. Robert Beachy, Assistant Principal



Home of the Jaguars

September 2, 2020

Dear SMS Families,

I hope this letter finds you and your family healthy and well as we complete the third week of the new school year in the remote learning format. I am grateful for everyone's efforts as our teachers, support staff, parents, and administrators work together to support our students' success in this nontraditional teaching and learning environment. We are all eager for the day when the health metrics for Pima County improve in order to allow us to transition to hybrid instruction. Dr. Valenzuela, SUSD Superintendent, will announce when this can begin and provide one to two weeks of notice in advance. The SUSD hybrid instruction format will consist of two days of in-person learning on campus and three days of remote learning at home per week. By having approximately half the student body attend campus at a time, we will be able to socially distance students to the greatest extent possible in order to limit the spread of COVID-19 infections. The SMS hybrid schedule and supporting details regarding reopening with enhanced safety and cleaning procedures are below.

Hybrid Schedule:

- Students whose last name begins with A-L will attend SMS in person on Mondays and Tuesdays. They will engage in independent remote learning at home on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.
- Students whose last name begins with M-Z will engage in independent remote learning at home on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. They will attend SMS in person on Thursdays and Fridays.
- Families with last names in both the A-L and M-Z sections of the alphabet will be kept together on the same schedule. Please email Mrs. Nikki DeSouza, SMS Counselor, at nicole.desouza@sahuarita.net if this applies to you and please let her know which schedule all of your children will attend. Please also email the other SUSD schools that your children attend in order for us to keep families together.
- Students in the SMS Extended Resources program are asked to attend SMS on Thursdays and Fridays. They will engage in remote learning from home Monday through Wednesday.
- Since all students are engaged in remote learning at home on Wednesdays, on this day our professional custodial and facilities team will be deep cleaning throughout the campus, which will be in addition to the daily cleaning and disinfecting that will take place.
- The SMS bell schedule will run as normal, with the tardy bell ringing at 8:05 AM and dismissal at 2:50 PM, except for Wednesdays when the dismissal is at 1:50 PM. The gates will open at 7:30 AM daily.

Health Office and Conference Room:

- The health office will be utilized as an isolation area for any student or staff member that exhibits COVID-19 symptoms and needs to be assessed and possibly sent home.
- The student cot area in the health office has been built out with drywall for isolation.
- The conference room will be the secondary location that the health assistant will utilize for other student health-related needs, such as tending to injuries.
- Minor student health issues, such as band-aids for minor cuts and scrapes, will be handled by the classroom teacher using supplies provided by the health assistant.

- If a student requests to be seen by the health assistant, the teacher will call the health office. The health assistant will provide direction or assess the student outside the classroom for privacy.
- If a student receives medication at school, the health assistant will either go to the classroom to administer the medication outside the classroom for privacy or call the student to the conference room.

Classrooms and Indoor Common Areas:

- Desks/tables will be separated to the greatest extent possible and faced forward for social distancing.
- Student desks and workspaces will be sprayed with disinfectant at the end of each period.
- Fabric furniture will be removed due to its inability to be deep-cleaned daily.
- Buses will run on their regular schedule, and your child's bus route and bus stop information can be found online at: <https://susd30.us/families/school-related/transportation/>
- Bus seating will be spaced out when possible, and windows can be partially opened to provide for air circulation. Parents are welcome to provide their own transportation as well.
- Students will be requested to enter bathrooms in groups no larger than the number of stalls/urinals.
- The library will allow a limited number of students to attend at breakfast and lunch to provide for social distancing. Teachers may schedule times with the library tech to bring in their classes to the library.
- Library books will sit on a cart for three days before being checked in and re-shelved.
- Students will wipe down their computer lab keyboard or Chromebook after use.
- The P.E. teachers will set up a schedule for use of the gym areas (weight room/wrestling room/basketball court) and outside in order to social distance. Equipment and locker room benches will be disinfected after each use. Students will not share lockers. Dressing out for P.E. will be optional this year. Students who wish to dress out will be socially distanced at assigned lockers to the greatest extent possible and staggered in locker room access. If students opt to not dress out, they are asked to wear to school appropriate attire for physical activity and athletic shoes.

Arrival, Dismissal, and Mealtimes:

- The cafeteria will be open at breakfast for students who wish to purchase breakfast, and they may eat in the cafeteria, on the cafeteria patio, or on the campus commons. Students who are not purchasing breakfast will remain on the campus commons until the first bell rings to report to class. We ask that students observe social distancing norms while on campus before the first bell.
- The cafeteria will be open at lunch for students who wish to purchase lunch, and they may eat in the cafeteria, on the cafeteria patio, or on the campus commons. Students who are not purchasing lunch will remain on the campus commons to eat lunch. We ask that students observe social distancing norms while in the cafeteria and at the tables in the cafeteria, on the cafeteria patio, and on the commons. Half the campus will be released to lunch three minutes early each week to allow for students to get to the cafeteria before the other half is released. This will be on an alternating schedule each week for equity.
- Tables in the cafeteria and on the commons will be separated for social distancing. In the cafeteria, students will sit facing one direction and will be spaced out at the tables.
- Student dismissal will be staggered as follows: At the bell, students who are parent pick-up will be released. Students will social distance outside at the parent pick-up loop while waiting for their ride. Bus riders will then be released by building half the campus at a time a few minutes apart. Announcements will be made over the P.A. when each building is to be dismissed. This will be on an alternating schedule each week for equity.

- Students are asked to go directly to the parent pick-up loop or to their bus and to follow social distancing norms while leaving school. Parents are asked to stay in their vehicles during drop-off and pick-up.

Systems:

- There will be no Open House, assemblies, pep rallies, dances, concerts, or programs where large groups would gather.
 - Students' class schedules are available on PowerSchool.
 - Dates and times will be provided for students and parents to visit campus in a self-guided manner to find their classrooms prior to the start of hybrid instruction. The specific dates and times will be announced when Dr. Valenzuela determines the beginning date for hybrid instruction, and a campus map will be emailed to parents.
 - All awards assembly recognition will be digitally created and watched in the classroom as well as sent out via social media. There will not be attendance awards.
 - Virtual field trips may be planned in lieu of in-person field trips.
 - Parent-teacher conferences, 504 meetings, IEP meetings, PTO meetings, Site Council meetings, and other parent meetings will take place over the phone or via video conferencing.
- Some classes, such as science labs, Choir, Band, P.E., Art, and others, may require adjustments or alternative lesson plans to socially distance and limit the sharing of supplies and the spread of respiratory droplets.
- Masks will be required for all staff, students, and essential visitors while on campus. Masks may be removed while seated when eating breakfast and lunch. Exceptions for mask-wearing will be granted based on Pima County exceptions criteria. Students are responsible for bringing their own masks.
- Staff will have their temperature checked using touchless thermometers upon arriving to campus and will be sent home if their temperature is greater than 100.0 degrees after a rest/cooling off period and having it taken again or if they have symptoms of illness.
- Each morning parents are asked to take their child's temperature and assess their child for signs of illness. Parents are asked to keep their child home if they have any of the following: a temperature of 100.0 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, or two or more moderate symptoms or one severe symptom of illness (chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headache, fatigue/tiredness, or new loss of taste or smell). Students should also be kept home if anyone in their household is experiencing COVID-like illness with the above-mentioned symptoms.
- Staff members at the gates will monitor students for visible or reported signs of illness upon arrival to school. Staff members may request to have the student's temperature checked as needed. If a student presents as ill, the student will be taken to the health office for assessment by the health assistant, and parents will be notified.
- Parents are asked to please use the Attendance Office window on the southwest corner of the F building for as much routine office business as possible, such as turning in office paperwork, dropping off items to students, etc., to limit office visits to emergencies only.
- Parents are asked to please utilize online services whenever possible (uploading all documents for new student registration, emailing forms, online absence reporting, paying class and athletic fees online, putting lunch money on your child's student ID card online, etc.). Absences can be reported online at the following link: <https://susd30.us/schools/sahuarita-middle-school/resources/sms-report-an-absence/>

- All essential visitors to the office will be asked to make an appointment, which is the current norm, and to wear a mask upon entering campus. Only one family will be served in the office at a time due to limited reception space.
- There will be no volunteers on campus until further notice.
- Students are asked to leave items that are not necessary for school at home.
- Staff will maintain six feet of social distancing between individuals unless this is not physically possible or if less space is required for a student's safety.
- Classroom supplies will not be shared. If a school supply or piece of equipment must be shared by students (for instance, a pencil sharpener or textbook), a staff member or a student will wipe down the item with disinfectant after each use.
- Posters are visible throughout the campus on how to properly wash hands and use hygiene practices that limit the spread of germs.
- All students and staff are asked to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at the following times:
 - Upon arrival at school (use hand sanitizer if there is no sink in the classroom),
 - After being outside for physical activity,
 - Before and after eating,
 - Prior to leaving school for home, and
 - After sneezing, coughing, or blowing one's nose.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be set up in high-traffic areas, and hand sanitizer bottles will be used in classrooms and offices.
- Students are asked to bring their own water bottle, and drinking fountains will be for filling bottles.
- Sports will await approval and guidance from Dr. Valenzuela, SUSD Superintendent, on practices, games, travel, spectators, shared equipment, etc.
- All parents will need to complete a COVID-19 Parental Acknowledgment and Disclosure form for each child that attends in-person learning. The form will be collected within the first two days of your child's return to school.

As we transition back to into the classroom, our goal is to continue working as a cohesive team to meet the needs of all of our students. Please reach out to me via phone or email if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



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