

Stevenson Middle School Community FAQ

When will school start and what will that look like? Our number one priority is to keep students, teachers, and staff safe when we open the building for instruction. As you know, we will start the new school year on August 24 and the first two weeks will be on-line and will be a combination of synchronous and asynchronous. Many of your questions were about what that would look like. The District has purchased a Learning Management System, Schoology, that will help teachers provide robust, structured instruction. The system is accessible to teachers, students, and parents alike and will facilitate smoother, seamless instruction and consistent communication avenues. Teachers will be trained with intense professional development and they will instruct students how to navigate the system. There will be a parent training component available, but we are not sure what that piece will look like. You can learn about Schoology right now! [You can visit the Schoology YouTube channel](#) to see all the functionality of the platform and watch short videos that show how the platform works from both the teacher and student perspective. There will be a parent “training” component and we will share that information as we receive it. [For additional information about Schoology, click here.](#)

Unlike the Spring, teachers and students will be expected to engage on a daily basis. There will be a District instructional playbook that is required by TEA and will be then specifically tailored at each campus. As we garner more details, we will share them with you.

Will we be given the option to have our students participate in Distance Learning or In-Person Learning and if so, when will we be able to choose?

While everyone will be starting the year on-line, when we are given the green light to get students back in the building, parents will have a choice of remaining in distance learning or they can choose face-to-face learning. If a student starts face-to-face learning and you decide you want to go back to distance learning, you will be able to make that request. However, if you go back to distance learning, you must stay in distance learning until the end of the grading cycle. If you choose distance learning, you may not choose to go to face-to-face until the end of the grading cycle. Distance learning will be an option throughout the school year.

Will there be a hybrid choice? Some of you asked about a hybrid choice--going in and out of distance and face-to-face learning on alternating days--an A day/B day scenario. At this time, that isn't an option at the middle school level.

If Distance Learning is chosen, can students still participate in athletics/band practice? Yes.

Will there be fewer electives offered? No. All electives will be offered.

Will there be devices/Internet access available to those who do not have it?

The District has committed to provide devices for every student; however, those devices will not be available for the August 24 start date. However, we will still provide devices and hot spots for students/families who need them. The distribution process will be similar to what we did in the spring. For those students who didn't turn in the device they borrowed in the Spring, they are asked to keep them for use. We will let you know when that distribution process will start. **UPDATE (August 13, 2020):** You can request a device by going on the Stevenson website, scrolling down to the bottom, and filling out the request form. You will get a phone call to schedule a pick-up time.

Will students get schedules and if so, when will they get them? Even though everyone is starting on-line, each student will get a class schedule. More information will be shared as we get that information. We will not be doing our traditional Meet the Teacher nights, but we are planning creative virtual ways to do this. More information to come as we are waiting on guidance from the District. Also, teachers will be available for tutoring whether students participate in distance learning or face-to-face instruction. There is a possibility that teachers will be teaching on-line and face-to-face depending on the class. **UPDATE (August 13, 2020):** Schedules will be available to students/parents on HAC starting August 17.

Will there be athletics, extra-curricular activities, and clubs? The Fall athletics has been postponed until September 24. We will continue to get guidance from UIL, the State, and the District. We will have extracurricular activities as well as clubs; however, as of right now, they will be virtual.

How will you keep students and staff safe? The District has put together a 32-page Smart Start Playbook that contains operational guidelines for safety and security. Major areas of the operational part of the Playbook include communication, prevention, mitigation, and response. On July 27, a group of 25 teachers, the nurse, and head custodian will meet to customize it for our campus. That playbook will be shared with the community as it will contain all of the protocols including student drop-off, how we will serve meals and where students will eat, passing period information, hallway procedures, electives/athletics/PE procedures, cleaning procedures, etc. We will be following CDC and city guidance as we set up classrooms and get students in the

building. The District has already started installing plexiglass throughout the building and they will provide PPE to the campus which includes masks (as of right now, students and teachers will be required to wear masks), and face shields, gloves. The District is also providing every campus with hand sanitizer for every room and space on campus (stations have already been installed) and cleaning supplies for the campus AND each teacher. The campus will be supplied with whatever is needed to conduct screenings as students enter the building, and there will be isolation rooms in case anybody on campus starts exhibiting symptoms. There will be a specific and stringent protocol if someone is identified with COVID symptoms. Parents will be notified immediately. And, the situation will determine the level of “shut-down” of the campus, and we will communicate this to the community in a timely manner. We guarantee that we will make every effort to ensure the safety of our students and staff. We are asking you to do your part by keeping your child at home if they are running a fever or exhibiting any signs.

The school building will be cleaned on a regular basis throughout the day. Our custodial department will have a schedule that is delineated by custodian and duty and will include the number of times they are required to clean and what they are required to clean. UPDATE (August 13, 2020): We will be posting the Stevenson Smart Start Playbook to our website Friday, August 21.

How many students in each grade are scheduled to return in-person or remain remote? About one-third of our students have opted to return in-person when the District allows it.

Are we still within the range for CDC/city guidance or will some students be asked to delay their return? District will begin providing some in-person instruction beginning on September 8 after Labor Day using a methodical and tiered approach to bringing students safely back into schools. The plan will allow for students who are most academically in-need to return first and in small, controlled numbers. The District will continue to monitor and assess health conditions and assuming those metrics continue to trend in a positive manner, more students will be invited back to schools using the tiered approach.

Is there a campus-wide school supply list available? We do have a campus-wide school supply list available here. [Stevenson MS 20-21 School Supply List.pdf](#) When students are on campus, they will be expected to have their own supplies as there will be no classroom sets. Also, we will not be distributing lockers, so each student will need a backpack in order to carry his/her materials around. We will post the list of supplies as

we finalize what will be required for the first two weeks of school. And, remember, we will be very flexible on this. With that said, students will not be allowed to use their phones during the school day. They can use them before school starts and after the dismissal bell.

How big will classes be once students are back in the building? Many of you asked about how big classes will be once students are allowed back in the building. Unfortunately, we cannot answer that question until we know how many will be coming back and how many students will decide to continue with distance learning. We will, however, adhere to all of the CDC and city guidelines.

What will transportation/bus services look like? How will social distancing happen there? The transportation department is hard at working coming up with a plan. It will be shared once finalized.

How will you ensure a smooth transition for students to come back to campus? We know that there will be a transition period when students come back to campus. While we will have a new normal, we will do everything to ensure student safety and their emotional well-being. Also, when students come back to campus, Learning Tree will be available and there will be specific protocols that will be required as well. For those of you who utilize Learning Tree, you will get further information from them.

How will meal distribution work during distance learning? Also, some of you asked about meal distribution during distance learning. Just like the Spring, there will be specific campuses that will offer meals. That information will be shared by the District and we will share it as well.

What will be triggers for closing schools again in the Fall after re-opening? We do not have a set criteria, it will depend on the situation and methods requirement for individual containment. **UPDATE (August 13, 2020):** The District will provide a set of criteria for campuses to follow.

How will our school nurse provide care for students who may potentially be carrying the virus? There will be an isolation area for students with symptoms. Details will be provided in the Start Smart Playbook. **UPDATE (August 13, 2020):** Please read the District Start Smart Playbook for the details.

Are we going to 9 week grading periods? Yes.

Can students have backpacks? Yes. Students will not be issued lockers, so they will be allowed to have backpacks. There will be no restrictions on the type of backpack.

How will STAAR testing work? We will need to get direction from the State.

Will there be an on-line library and/or textbooks? Yes.

Are there materials that can be purchased for Distance Learning? You will not need to purchase any additional materials as all resources will be available on Schoology, the new Learning Management System (LMS).

Are there requirements for masks? They just need to be appropriate like t-shirts have to be appropriate.

Will there be flexibility with mask wearing? As of right now, wearing masks is required at all times. As District, city, and/or State requirements are revised, we will revisit as well. **UPDATE (August 13, 2020):** We realize that wearing masks all day long is a difficult task. We will try to incorporate “breaks” as we see fit and that works with the number of students we have in a classroom.

Will there there be Wildcat masks for purchase? Yes!

Will students move from class to class or will they stay in one room: Students will move from class to class, and we will adhere to all of the CDC safety guidelines to ensure student (and staff) safety.

How will parent pick-up work this year? We will hold students in the cafeteria, as they will not be allowed to congregate on the front patio. We will ask parents to put a sign with their child’s name in the window. We will call for your child via radio.

How will lunch work? All cafeteria lines have been outfitted with plexiglass and meals will be “grab n go” to eliminate contact. They will sit in the cafeteria six feet apart. We are also looking at allowing students to go outside and eat if they choose.

How will dance, art, theater, choir, and athletics work? Just like the core classes, these classes will have structured lessons and activities.

How will an IEP be managed on-line? Teachers will be provided with their IEPs and 504 plans and will follow them per the law.

When will we be able to buy Stevenson planners? As with all things that are happening with COVID, we are waiting for them to arrive. We will keep you posted.

Will students have the same teacher when they start school as they had in Distance Learning? That is the goal and we will work hard to ensure that happens. However, depending on the number of students who come back on campus, a teacher change may occur.

In virtual, the kids have daily computer work to count towards attendance. For in-person students, will they be logged in to computers to do that same work, be expected to do it later at home, or will their in-person attendance and class discussions replace this extra computer work? In-person students will also be working in the Schoology LMS, but they will not get “extra” work. Their work will be commensurate with the virtual learners.

Will there be hand sanitizer available throughout the school? Yes! We have installed hand sanitizer throughout the building.

Will water bottles be available for students, and if so, at what cost? We are looking at purchasing Stevenson water bottles and hope to sell them at a nominal fee.

Where will kids wait before school? This will depend on how many students are coming back to the building. We will not allow students to wait on the front patio in the morning as they have in the past. Students will not be able to enter the building or come on campus before 7:30 a.m.

How long will students be able to stay in the cafeteria after dismissal? As of right now, 4:30 because custodians need to clean the entire building.

If a student doesn't pass the STAAR test, will they fail to pass to the next grade? TEA has waived this requirement for the 2020-21 school year.

Will a teacher have a group of in-person students and a group of virtual students joining the same class live? Yes.

Will all kids be changing clothes for PE and/or dance? We are still deciding on that.

Will students be getting lockers? No. Will they be allowed to have full-sized backpacks? Yes.

Will teachers use one method of video conferencing? Yes. We will use Zoom.

Will we have another Town Hall before Labor Day? Yes! We will also schedule the afternoon one at 5:00 p.m. instead of 4:00 p.m. so those who work can attend.

For students returning back to school, how long will be allotted for passing periods? Four minutes. However, if we find we need to make some adjustments, we will do that. We think that will be plenty of time especially since students will not be using lockers.

Will students be able to login to Schoology the first day of school? Yes! Students will have access through their portal.

Will students need to sign in to Schoology at a specific time? We are asking students to sign in the first 15 minutes of each class. We will be doing asynchronous teaching/learning with synchronous opportunities.

What will you be using the portable buildings for? We are getting new gyms. Construction will start in May and those buildings will be used for dressing rooms and coaches offices.

How many students chose virtual learning and how many chose in-person? We have $\frac{2}{3}$ choose virtual and $\frac{1}{3}$ choose in-person.

My child doesn't connect to on-line learning well. How will they be encouraged to show their face and participate? Teachers will spend time involving students in getting-to-know-you activities which will help them get to know the teacher and each other. Teachers understand that some students may be more shy and will be okay with cameras off. However, after trust is established, the teacher will encourage those students to turn on their camera.

When our child is invited back to campus, how will we be notified? Phone call and email.

What is Stevenson’s grading policy this year? Our grading policy is basically the same as it has been in the past with a few changes regarding electives. You can see our policy on our website. **Also, how do we see if our child is getting attendance credit to every class?** You should be able to see this in HAC.

For science or STEM lab projects, will it be possible to pick up supply kits from school? This is something that we will determine as the year progresses and the Health Metrics improved. We agree that hand-ons and crafting offers a lot for students.

When will we get credentials for a parent account in Schoology? September 18. You will receive an email via your students email.

How will you guys determine what group of kids will attend school the week of September 14? We are using the tiered approach presented by the District. Our students with the most academic needs will be invited back to in-person instruction first.

We were counting on our son going to school on Monday. We learned on Thursday that it wasn’t going to happen. What timeline is there for students who aren’t academically at-risk, EL, or special ed? We still don’t have a timeline on this.

When students return to school, will there always be soap and sanitizer available in the restrooms? Not cleaning hands after restroom use has been a common way to spread the virus. YES! We have sanitizer not only in the restrooms but in classrooms and stations throughout each hallway.

Dr. Woo in the San Antonio on-line meeting about opening schools said that in order to contract the virus, we now know that we must be within six feet of an infected person without wearing masks for 15 minutes. More is known now. Is it then possible for students not to be required to wear masks while sitting at their desks? As of now, students will be required to wear masks at all times. We will, however, establish “mask breaks.”

HAC used to allow for parents to receive alerts for grades. Is that currently down because of the portal being down? I have not received one update about grades our kids could be receiving. Grading category set-up was delayed, so now that Schoology syncs with HAC, you should receive alerts you establish.

What should communication from teachers look like? We get process and systemic updates, but what about other types of updates? You should be getting emails, Reminds, and phone calls from teachers.

The 11:59 homework deadline is causing a lot of anguish. The kids see this as homework and it's an assignment to check in. If they are in the Zoom, the 11:59 homework doesn't apply for attendance, but it does apply for grades. Teachers aren't delineating the two elements. There should be an attendance assignment for those who miss the Zoom, but the assignment should not be due at 11:59 if they attend the Zoom. This is totally dependent on the teacher's asynchronous lesson. Many times, that graded assignment, can count as attendance as well. We will ensure that teachers begin delineating because grades and attendance are two different things.

Many lessons relying upon YouTube for content and instruction. I hear there is a help line for the District but our children haven't heard about it. It is posted on our website and we have asked teachers to post the information on their Schoology classes as well as "advertise" it to students. It is a great resource.

Can teachers rework Zoom sessions so students get the opportunity to work together? Teachers are learning Zoom features and will be incorporating times when students can be in breakout rooms with their peers.