

# South Windsor Public Schools

# 2022-2023

## Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan



**Created 6/23/2021**

**Rev. 12/21/2021**

**Updated September 20, 2022**



## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

In July 2020, South Windsor Public Schools published a comprehensive reopening plan in advance of its reopening of schools. The Reopening Plan was filed with Connecticut's State Department of Education (CSDE), distributed to families and staff, and published on the district's website.

*As part of a requirement associated with *The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER)*, a federal grant which directs funds to schools across the nation, we are required to publish a new reopening plan entitled *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*. Because ARP ESSER is a federal grant, it applies to a wide variety of states, including states that did not reopen their school buildings during the 2020-2021 academic year. The grant requirements were not differentiated for those districts that were already open versus those planning for reopening fully for the first time since the pandemic. While it may seem confusing to parents and caregivers that the district published a reopening plan after our schools reopened in Fall 2020, we were required to post a "safe return" plan no later than June 23, 2021 in order to receive this federal funding.*

This plan was built on the foundational reopening documents originally written in the summer of 2020, and will continue to be a living document as federal, state and local health department guidance changes. It is a requirement of the federal grant that this document describe (1) how South Windsor Public Schools will maintain the health and safety of students, educators and other staff; and (2) how we will ensure continuity of services to address students' academic needs, as well as student and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs.

In addition to the aforementioned guidance coming from the local, state and national levels, this document is also informed by feedback collected through the parent and caregiver survey originally sent out on May 26, 2021.

This Plan is required to be reviewed and updated every six months. The plan was updated on December 23, 2021, to include information relating to "Screen and Stay" protocols prescribed by the Department of Public Health and CSDE, for use through the end of the 2021-2022 school year. ***This current update, for the start of the 2022-2023 school year, includes information related to Test-Mask-Go protocols, prescribed by the CSDE and DPH, as well as updated quarantine and isolation guidance from the CDC. Any stakeholder wishing to provide feedback on this latest update may do so by clicking [here](#) to share comments regarding this plan.***

# Section I: Health and Safety Strategies

## Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

The CDC continues to emphasize the importance of handwashing and sanitization as a mitigation strategy. To prevent the spread of germs, including COVID-19, the CDC recommends washing hands with soap and water, whenever possible. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer will also minimize the spread of germs. Hand sanitizing stations are installed in all school buildings. Additionally, “no touch” paper towel dispensers are installed in most rest rooms. Families can continue to help keep our schools a safe place by talking about the important role handwashing plays in keeping us healthy, and demonstrating the proper way to wash your hands and for the proper amount of time.

## Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities

South Windsor Public Schools is proud of its facilities team and the protocols that were put in place to comply with enhanced health and safety guidelines, during the COVID-19 pandemic. These protocols will continue to be monitored and adapted as needed, in order to promote safe learning environments for our students and staff. All cleaning and sanitizing products meet Green Cleaning state standards, and enhanced cleaning strategies are expected to continue, for the foreseeable future.

Hand sanitizing stations are installed in all school buildings. In addition to custodial cleaning, each classroom is provided with a cleaning product for use by trained staff as needed. Trash receptacles are also “no touch,” and no touch faucets are available in each school. HVAC systems throughout the district will continue to be maintained as required by the State of Connecticut.

All district drinking fountains are available for student and staff use. New bottle refilling stations have been installed throughout school buildings and central office locations. Additional refilling stations will continue to be added. Students and staff are encouraged to bring personal refillable water bottles from home.

## COVID-19 Vaccinations

### Student and Staff Vaccinations

The district was fortunate to partner with the South Windsor and Windsor departments of public health to successfully administer approximately 700 vaccine doses (including teachers, bus drivers, food service workers, IT staff, secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians, coaches, substitute teachers, central office personnel, safety officers, and all other employee groups) in March and April 2021. This major task was accomplished on three separate days. Vaccines were administered by our own school nurses. We could not have achieved this important health and safety measure without the flexibility of our parents and caregivers. In December 2021, the district worked with local health department officials to hold a Booster Clinic for district staff.

South Windsor also partnered with neighboring towns to provide an opportunity for high school students age 16 and older to be vaccinated in May 2021. With the vaccine approved for everyone age 6 months and older, the CDC recommends that everyone receive a COVID-19 primary series vaccine and stay [up-to-date](#) by receiving all eligible booster doses to help protect against COVID-19.

## Test-Mask-Go Protocols

**TEST-MASK-GO** is a strategy designed to increase the number of days of in-person learning and care available to children, both to improve the social/emotional/physical wellbeing of students, staff, and their families and to enhance learning recovery. The fall and spring allergy seasons combined with New England winters present a challenge for schools, child care, and youth camp facilities that were advised in previous years to exclude individuals from in-person attendance if they had any of a long list of symptoms associated with COVID-19. The Test-Mask-Go strategy gives children and staff with mild respiratory disease symptoms (e.g., infrequent cough, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, etc.) the ability to continue participating in-person provided:

- ◆ they are fever-free (< 100°F) and feel well enough to participate,
- ◆ they do not live with anyone who has had COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks,
- ◆ they can wear a mask consistently and correctly, and
- ◆ they test negative for COVID-19 prior to reporting in-person on every day they have symptoms, as well as one final test on the morning their symptoms have completely resolved.

Individuals who have **any** respiratory disease symptoms **should not** use the Test-Mask-Go strategy if:

- ◆ they have a fever ( $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) or feel feverish (they should not report in-person until their fever has resolved for at least 24 hours without the use of medication), and
- ◆ they live with a person who recently tested positive for COVID-19 (within the past 2 weeks).

Instead, these individuals should stay home until their symptoms resolve and test for COVID-19. Anyone testing positive for COVID-19 should complete isolation according to the [CDC Q/I Calculator](#).

## Section II: Continuity of Services

### Special Education

The district will continue to ensure that special services are addressed based on individual student needs. Planning and Placement Team (PPT) and 504 meetings will primarily be conducted in person and virtually for those who elect this meeting method. Special education case managers and school teams will continue to work in partnership with parents and guardians.

### Free Breakfast and Lunch Meals Available for All Students

During the 2022-2023 school year, in the State of Connecticut, the School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) fund has been enacted, allowing all students to temporarily receive free breakfast and lunch, regardless of family income. South Windsor will be allocated a limited amount of funds, and once these funds are expended, the district will revert to charging for meals. Our current calculation identifies that grant monies should fund free meals at least through the end of October. As we near October, further communication will be provided, with a more specific forecast for the conclusion of this program.



## Section II: Continuity of Services *continued*

### Social/Emotional Well-Being of Students

Based on the experiences of the past two academic years, as well as feedback received from parents, students and staff, South Windsor Public Schools continues to focus on specific initiatives to address the social, emotional and mental health needs of students.



#### Family Engagement/School Climate Specialists

The Family Engagement/School Climate Specialist positions were created to provide an additional school-based point of contact for parents and caregivers to better support the needs of students and families. Specifically, they will facilitate communication regarding student needs associated with attendance, academic progress, or social, emotional, and behavioral concerns. They will also identify important milestones in a student's progress and celebrate these achievements with families. Specialists will serve as key members of student support teams which includes teachers, counselors, social workers, school psychologists, nurses and administrators. In addition to assisting with individual student needs, the specialists will also work with school leadership to support an overall positive school climate.

#### Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

In the 2021-2022 school year, South Windsor Public Schools began implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for students K-12. MTSS screens all students and aims to address not only academic needs, but behavior, social and emotional needs, and absenteeism. The MTSS framework is used by schools to provide targeted support to students, and to identify students early and intervene quickly.

#### RULER\*

South Windsor Public Schools is implementing the foundational elements of RULER. RULER is an evidence-based approach to social and emotional learning that supports the entire school community in understanding the value of emotions, building the skills of emotional intelligence, and creating and maintaining a positive school climate. The training covers the skills of emotional intelligence and the tools developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence to support individual growth and to improve school climate. \*RULER is an acronym for the five skills of emotional intelligence.



## Section III: Additional Resources

State of CT Department of Education and Department of Health

- ◆ [Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together](#)
- ◆ [State of CT - Department of Public Health: COVID-19 Response](#)
- ◆ [CT Learning Hub! Resources for CT Families, Students and Educators to Support Online/Offline Learning](#)

## Section III: Additional Resources *continued*

### Centers for Disease Control

- ◆ [CDC Q/I Calculator](#)
- ◆ [Coronavirus Self Checker](#)
- ◆ [Toolkit for K-12 Schools](#)
- ◆ [Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)
- ◆ [Get the Facts about Coronavirus](#) (How to Protect Yourself; What to Do if You're Sick)
- ◆ [Young Adult Toolkit](#)
- ◆ [When and How to Wash Your Hands](#)
- ◆ [Use of Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)



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*Orchard Hill Elementary*  
*Philip R. Smith Elementary*  
*Pleasant Valley Elementary*  
*Timothy Edwards Middle School*  
*South Windsor High School*

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