



Welcome to the 2022-23 School Year

School Starts Thursday, September 8 for PreK - 12

Welcome Back!

SOMSD Community, we will soon begin our 2022-2023 school year with staff returning to school buildings and students walking our halls and studying in our classrooms. Thanks to the work of many over the course of the last two and a half years, we are finally moving toward a sense of full normalcy. In this 2022-23 SY Return to School Guidebook what we hope you will notice is that we are transitioning, like most other school districts, with far fewer restrictions connected to COVID-19. We are hopeful that this transition will ultimately be to an 'endemic'.

2022-23 SY Return to School: Key Highlights

1. **All SOMSD school buildings PreK - 12, buses and facilities**, regardless of vaccination status, are now **mask optional/friendly**. District exceptions, where mask will be required, include:
 - a. *During large indoor gatherings;*
 - b. *For individuals returning to school after COVID positive isolation on days 6-10 - indoors and outdoors;*
 - c. *As recommended by the DOH (i.e., significant increase in transmission, outbreak).*
2. **Isolation is required** for individuals who **test positive for COVID-19** and students/staff must stay home when experiencing symptoms of COVID-19;
3. **Quarantine is no longer recommended** for people who are exposed to COVID-19 in schools and Early Childhood Education (CDC, August 2022);
4. **The District will no longer provide remote access to our classrooms due to Covid-related absences.** We are moving back to pre pandemic absence protocols, therefore, absences for Covid-19 will be handled like any other absences for illness, and school work will be provided as it would be in the case for any other illness or absence from school;
5. **We will no longer maintain the weekly Covid dashboard of cases nor will we send school notifications for positive cases.** If there is an outbreak in a SOMSD classroom or school or program, only the affected groups will be notified with public health guidance;
6. **Weekly testing for unvaccinated personnel in school districts is no longer required** (August 15, 2022, Governor Murphy signed executive order 302);
7. In addition to above requirements, parents may make masking and testing decisions for themselves and their children - in school and out in the community - understanding that they and their children could be exposed to COVID-19 at any time;
8. **We are encouraging vaccinations.**

Please read below for more detailed information on return to school health/safety guidelines, Chromebook distribution and technology reminders.

South Orange & Maplewood School District

The District's plan has been developed and tailored based on guidance and recommendations available as of this date from the CDC, NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health, and our local Departments of Health (DOH). As conditions change this guidance may be updated to reflect current state, agency and local health department's recommendations.

Health & Safety Guidelines

As students and staff return to schools in Fall of 2022, safety remains SOMSD's first priority. The District will continue to collaborate with the NJ Department of Health and our partners on matters related to the pandemic. Please read through key points of our COVID-19 health and safety protocols below.

VACCINATION - Fully Vaccinated* AND Up-To-Date**

Vaccination is the leading public health health prevention strategy. SOMSD supports the CDC recommendation that everyone who is eligible should get the primary vaccine series (*fully vaccinated) and a booster shot if eligible (up-to-date)**

- 12-years-old and older have been eligible for vaccination and a booster five months after the primary series
- 5 to 11 years old: On November 2, 2021, the CDC endorsed and recommended that children 5 to 11 years old be vaccinated against COVID-19 with the pediatric vaccine series and a booster five months after the primary series.
- 6 months to 5 years old: As of June 18, 2022 Moderna and Pfizer vaccines for children ages 6 months to 5 years are CDC endorsed and recommended.

As of August 15, 2022, Governor Murphy signed executive order 302: **weekly testing for unvaccinated personnel in school districts is no longer required.**



FACE MASKS

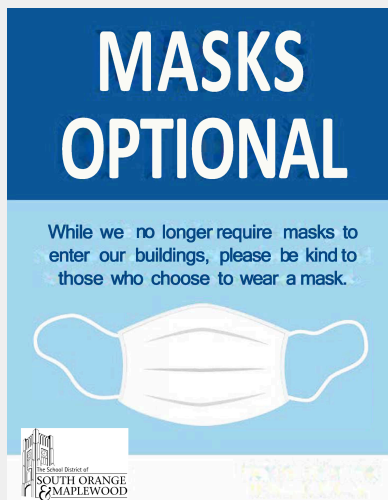
Masks are optional indoors and outdoors for Pre-K to 12 schools, buses, and District office buildings. **As of March 10, 2023**, masking will be required:

1. For individuals returning to school - indoors and outdoors - after COVID positive isolation on days 6-10
2. As recommended by the DOH (i.e., significant increase in transmission, outbreak)

ONLY when masking is required (see 1,2 above), if an individual is seeking a medical exemption from the masking requirement, documentation from a medical professional supporting this exception is required. For a medical exemption, two things are required: 1) a note from the individual's health care provider submitted to the school nurse; and 2) approval from the District Physician.

Apart from the District's masking requirements, **it is the responsibility** of parents to make testing and masking decisions for themselves and their children - in school and out in the community - understanding that they and their children could be exposed to COVID at any time

p. 1



SOMSD 2022-23 SY BACK TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES

MEALS & FOOD SERVICES / RECESS

Each school building has a different capacity and space available for meals and recess, especially those schools that are currently undergoing construction. Building administrators have guidelines to make the best decision for their students and staff.

In addition, the following continues:

- No sharing of food is allowed. Students may eat food that their families send from home or food from Food Services.
- Proper hand hygiene before and after eating will be encouraged.
- **Food celebrations, including birthdays, holidays, or achievements are discontinued.**

2022-23 SY Free & Reduced Lunch: Please note that the USDA meal waiver extension (which provided free meals to all SOMSD students for the 2021-22 SY) will not apply for the 2022-23 SY. For 2022-23 SY SOMSD will offer students healthy meals daily at a reasonable price:

- **Elementary:** \$3.25
- **Middle:** \$3.50
- **High School:** \$3.75



Families may prepay for student meals through the [Meal Pay Plus online payment system](#). To Receive Free & Reduced Meal Benefits or the 2022-23 SY eligible families must complete a new free and reduced lunch application online: [Free & Reduced Lunch Application](#)

CLEANING

SOMSD building custodial staff will electrostatic disinfect all rooms three days a week. Adequate ventilation shall be ensured in indoor facilities, including operational heating and ventilation systems where appropriate. When weather allows, teachers are strongly encouraged to open windows to the most reasonable extent possible to allow for greater air circulation, unless doing so poses a safety or health risk.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distance continues to be a component of how to protect ourselves and others (CDC, August 2022). SOMSD will encourage space between individuals to the reasonable extent practicable.

VISITORS

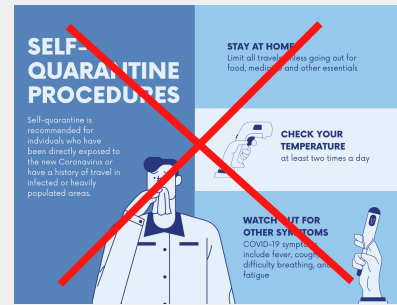
The number of visitors admitted into a school building at any given time may be limited by the administration. Visitors may be asked to wait outside when picking up their children, or to drop off forgotten items at the front door. Please call the school's main office to make an appointment to visit. **Visitors may be asked to wear a mask.**

SOMSD 2022-23 SY BACK TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES

QUARANTINE

Quarantine is no longer recommended for people who are exposed to COVID-19 in schools and Early Childhood Education (CDC, August 2022).

Instead of quarantining if you were exposed to COVID-19, it is recommended that you wear a high-quality mask for 10 days and get tested on day 5 (CDC, August 2022). The District will not be monitoring this.



ISOLATION GUIDANCE

Isolation After an Individual Tests Positive by Laboratory or Home Result: **School Procedure:** When an individual in SOMSD tests positive for COVID-19 **via rapid home based test or laboratory rapid or PCR:**

- **Parents must:**
 - a. Notify their child's principal and school nurse with date of symptoms and date of test (indicate lab or home)
 - i. [Copy of SchoolNursesEmailTable22-23.docx.pdf](#)
 - b. Call the absence line at your child's school
 - c. Follow isolation guidance below
 - d. **IMPORTANT REMINDER: Students who are unable to attend school in-person due to testing COVID-positive will no longer receive remote instruction.** Their absences for Covid-19 will be handled like any other absences for illness, and school work will be provided as it would be in the case for any other illness or absence from school.
- **Staff must:**
 - a. Notify the principal and/or their supervisor
 - b. Follow isolation guidance below
 - c. **Staff will no longer be given the option to teach virtually when absent due to testing positive for COVID-19.** COVID 19 absences will be treated as other illnesses that prevent staff from coming to work i.e. flu, cold etc.

Isolation Guidance: The COVID positive individual isolates. Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from those who are not sick - to decrease the transmission of the virus. Isolation time is:

- FIVE full days from DAY ZERO which is the date of symptoms or date of laboratory test (if no symptoms),
- To return to school on DAY SIX only if fever free without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms have improved for 24 hours.
- We do not require a negative test to return to school.
- When the individual returns, they continue to wear a mask at school (outdoors and indoors) on days 6 to 10 after home isolation.

The DOH recommends that a home test be followed up by a laboratory test.

- **Home test positive?** The DOH recommends that you contact them with your home test result via this google form via this google form, which is private and monitored by the local DOH:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/14socQvPyJPVL5cJx1-VOH7cuafglx7RJpAHgllhVOWY/edit?ts=627017e0>
- **Lab test positive (Rapid or PCR).** The local DOH will receive the result from the lab – so no need to report lab tests to the local DOH.

SOMSD 2022-23 SY BACK TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES



TRANSPORTATION

Normal, pre-pandemic transportation routes and capacity will continue. Families have been notified of the bus routes for their assigned school. A transportation aide will be assigned to each bus and will be responsible to ensure students are following safety protocols.

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS, TESTING & WHEN TO TEST:

COVID-19 testing site information is posted on the [District website](#), and available at COVID19.nj.gov and Essex County COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Locations. Health Care Providers, Federally Qualified Health Care Centers and several local pharmacies also offer testing.

- For NJDOH testing resources: covid.gov/tests
- **At-home COVID-19 tests:** If you do not have health insurance and need help obtaining **at-home COVID-19 tests**, contact the Maplewood Health Department at 973-762-8120 x2006 or HealthDepartment@maplewoodnj.org

Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19 based on CDC and NJDOH Guidance:

Fever (100.0 F or greater); chills; new or worsening cough; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; fatigue; muscle or body aches; headache; new loss of taste or smell; sore throat; congestion or runny nose; nausea or vomiting; diarrhea.

Individuals with COVID-compatible symptoms are encouraged to get a home (Rapid) or laboratory test (Rapid or PCR) and consult their Health Care Providers.

Individuals who were exposed to COVID-19 are recommended to get tested on day 5 and wear a high-quality mask for 10 days (CDC, August 2022). The District will not be monitoring this.

No one should come to school sick.

Parents may make testing and masking decisions for themselves and their children - in school and out in the community - understanding that they and their children could be exposed to COVID at any time.



p.4

Technology

Canvas Learning Management System

SOMSD 2022-23 SY BACK TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES

Canvas will continue to be used as the primary Learning Management System for the 2022 - 2023 academic year, while Seesaw will be used for grades K - 2 and Tools of the Mind for PreK students.

Canvas is a learning management system (LMS) the District implemented in September 2020 that allows teachers to provide instructional support, class calendars, assignments, and resources for students in a safe online environment. Canvas serves as an aggregation point for teachers to post all of the online instructional tools and resources that may be used in the District. Canvas bundles assessments, grading, state standards, messaging, learning data, and more—while keeping everything in one place.

For access to Canvas and other important information for students, staff and parents visit:

www.somsd.k12.nj.us/canvas

Powerschool

The South Orange Maplewood School District utilizes PowerSchool as the primary system of record for student data across the District. PowerSchool is the District's student information system and will continue to serve as the primary student database going forward. Having access to the parent portal allows you to view important information regarding your child including:

- View daily attendance records.
- View marking period grades.
- View printable report cards and progress reports.
- View school welcome letters (elementary schools).
- View schedules (secondary schools).
- View student Google account information (new students).
- View locker information (High School)
- Make changes to contact information.

PowerSchool Information:

<https://www.somsd.k12.nj.us/district/information-technology/parentportalhelp/>

Chromebook Distribution Details

During the 2021-22 school year the District launched its Chromebook 1:1 initiative. For the 2022 - 23 school year, all students in grades K - 12 will be provided with a district issued Chromebook. Students in grades 3 - 12 must use district issued Chromebooks for state testing.

The Technology Department will begin distribution of Chromebooks for students in Grades 3 - 12 during the week of August 29, 2022. Families can sign up for appointments to pick up their child's Chromebook using the link found on the district's [Chromebook 1:1 website](#). Distribution of Chromebooks for students in Grades K - 2 will occur during the month of October, depending upon device availability.

Chromebooks will be distributed at the district's Technology Office. You must have an appointment to pick up a Chromebook. The district Technology office is located in the back of the building. The address is 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ 07040.

SOMSD 2022-23 SY BACK TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES



Students who attended the district during the 2021 - 2022 school year and were assigned a Chromebook should continue to use that Chromebook during the 2022 - 2023 school year.

Chromebook Repairs

- Students in Grades K - 5 should contact their teacher regarding their damaged Chromebook. Teachers will submit Technology Work Orders to have the broken devices repaired. Please have your child leave their Chromebook in the classroom so that the technician can locate the device.
- Students in Grades 6 - 12 should use the forms below to submit a request to have their Chromebook repaired. Students can drop off their broken Chromebook at their school's Library. Please note that you must use your district Google account to complete the forms below.
 - [Columbia High School Student Chromebook Repair Form](#)
 - [Maplewood Middle School Student Chromebook Repair Form](#)
 - [South Orange Middle School Student Chromebook Repair Form](#)

Chromebook repairs typically will take 1 - 3 school days but can be longer depending upon the extent of the repair. Loaner Chromebooks may be available at the schools for the student to use while the device is being repaired. For more information regarding Chromebook for students visit the links below:

- [SOMSD Chromebook 1:1 Initiative/Distribution](#)
- [SOMSD Student Chromebook Agreement](#)
- [District Policy 2361 - Acceptable Use of Computer Networks / Computers and Resources](#)
- [District Policy 5513 - Care of School Property](#)

SOMSD Resources & Supports

Reopening Updates & Resources	https://bit.ly/SOMSD21-22Reopening
Supports for Students, Staff and Families	https://bit.ly/SOMSDMHC
School Bell Times	https://www.somsd.k12.nj.us/about/hours/
SOMSD Covid-19 Dashboard	https://www.somsd.k12.nj.us/coviddata/
Covid-19 Testing & Vaccination	https://bit.ly/C19Test_Vaccine
Student Virtual Code of Conduct	https://bit.ly/SOMSDVirtualCOC
Nursing Services:	https://www.somsd.k12.nj.us/district/nursingservices/
Chromebooks 1:1 Initiative	Student Devices – 1 to 1 Device Initiative
Canvas Information	https://www.somsd.k12.nj.us/canvas/
2022-23 SY Calendar (Revised)	District Calendar & Handbook