



Sharon Springs CSD

The Health & Safety of Our



SSCS Family is Our #1 Priority

A Small School With a BIG Heart

Updated: August 25, 2021

COVID-19 Layered Mitigation Protocols: 2021 - 2022

Sharon Springs Central School is prepared for a **full return to in-person schooling in September**. We are preparing to provide engaging academic opportunities as well as all of our traditional extracurricular and athletic offerings. To ensure the health and safety of our students, staff and community we will implement the following tiered mitigation approach, including facemasks and social distancing to facilities cleaning and hygiene, to contact tracing and quarantining, to ventilation and other strategies as recommended by health experts. **Based on [data](#) collected by regional health officials and reported to the NYS DOH and CDC as of August 23rd we (in Schoharie County) are in the "Substantial Transmission" category; therefore, at this time, all students and staff will be required to wear a mask indoors (with periodic mask breaks for students at the discretion of teachers, when students are socially distanced).** When we transition to a different category within this mitigation plan, we will announce it via the district website banner and send out a text alert.

This plan was developed and reviewed by health experts as well as school officials in choosing the appropriate measures to take in responding to the various stages and implications of COVID-19. An incremental approach will be taken in making adjustments to mitigate efforts based on the **transmission or rate of infections** (as provided by the [NYSEDOH COVID Data Tracker](#)) ranging from Low Community Transmission>>Moderate Community Transmission>>Substantial Community Transmission>>High Community Transmission.

The intent of the tiered approach is to find a balance between **prioritizing** health and safety of students and staff while also **supporting** the social, emotional, mental health of students and staff. This tiered mitigation strategy is fluid, reviewed regularly to ensure the stated objectives are being met. We recognize the very different and often passionate views on masking and vaccination. The intent of this plan is not to isolate our students, staff and school-community based on the various perspectives; instead, SSCS will continue to work hard to be responsible in terms of working to mitigate the spread of COVID, while balancing the provision of educational and extracurricular activities with the preservation of health and safety. These are challenging times, but as we have proven in the past - **when we work together, we can overcome any challenge**, we just need to stay focused on the best interest of our students, our children!

CDC Levels of Community Transmission

Indicator - If the two indicators suggest different transmission levels, the higher level is selected	Low Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days	0-9.99	10-49.99	50-99.99	≥100
Percentage of NAATs ₁ that are positive during the past 7 days	0-4.99%	5-7.99%	8-9.99%	≥10.0%

All Mitigation Protocols are based on information curated from:

- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [Schoharie County DOH](#)

Resources for Monitoring Community Transmission

- Reference the COVID-19 Regional Metric Dashboard for information on new cases reported per 100,000 persons in the last 7 days at this link: <https://forward.ny.gov/covid-19-regional-metrics-dashboard>
- Reference the NYS COVID-19 Tracker at this link: <https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov> for updated information about % positive COVID-19 case results.

	Mitigation Protocol	Low Community Transmission	Moderate Community Transmission	Substantial Community Transmission	High Community Transmission
1	COVID-19 Vaccines	<p>Encouraged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide information about vaccinations to all stakeholders. - Support policies that make getting vaccinated as easy & convenient as possible. - Maintain documentation of students' and workers' COVID-19 vaccination status to use this information, consistent with applicable laws and regulations, including those related to privacy, to inform prevention strategies, school-based testing, contact tracing efforts, and quarantine and isolation practices. 			
2	COVID-19 Screening Testing	No Surveillance Testing	No Surveillance Testing	<p>Offer rapid testing to students with parent authorization</p> <p>Surveillance (rapid or pool) testing of 20% of the school-community per week</p>	<p>Offer rapid testing to students with parent authorization</p> <p>Surveillance (rapid or pool) testing of 20% of the school-community per week</p>
3	Facemasks for Students / Faculty & Staff (indoors)	<p>Universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.</p> <p>Masks breaks are encouraged when students are physically distant. These breaks should not exceed 10 minutes in duration.</p> <p>"...The CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status and community transmission levels." NYSED</p>			

	Mitigation Protocol	Low Community Transmission	Moderate Community Transmission	Substantial Community Transmission	High Community Transmission
4a	Facemasks for Students (outdoors)	No Restrictions			
4b	Facemasks for Faculty & Staff (outdoors)	All Faculty and Staff will wear a mask when in the presence of students.			
5	Social Distancing (indoors)	<p>Student to Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce transmission risk. <p>Adult to Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When practical, keep at 6 feet between students and teachers/staff. 			
6	Transportation	Masks Required (except when temperatures exceed 84 degrees)	Masks Required (except when temperatures exceed 84 degrees)	Masks & Seating Charts	Mask & Seating Charts
7	School Visitors	Limited to specific reasons, must sign-in & provide attestation	Limited to specific reasons, must sign-in & provide attestation	Limited to emergencies, must sign-in & provide attestation	Limited to emergencies, must sign-in & provide attestation
8	Monitoring Community and School-Based Transmission	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor community transmission, vaccination coverage, screening testing (if available through DOH), and occurrence of outbreaks to guide decisions on the level of layered prevention strategies. Consult with local health official 			

	Mitigation Protocol	Low Community Transmission	Moderate Community Transmission	Substantial Community Transmission	High Community Transmission
9	Handwashing, Hand Sanitizer, and Respiratory Etiquette	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged
10	Staying Home When Sick (Staff and Students)	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged
11	Cleaning and Disinfection	Daily Routine Cleaning and Daily Disinfection of High-Touch Surfaces			
12	Cafeteria	<p>Maximize physical distance as much as possible when moving through the food service line and while eating.</p> <p>Regular cleaning routine with increased disinfectant spray of high-touch surfaces.</p>			
13	Recess/Physical Education (Outdoors)	<p>No restrictions for students</p> <p>All staff and teachers will wear a mask when in the presence of students.</p>			
14	Recess/Physical Education (Indoors)	<p>Universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.</p> <p>Masks breaks are encouraged when students are physically distant. These breaks should not exceed 10 minutes in duration.</p> <p>“...The CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status and community transmission levels.” NYSED</p>			
15	Performing Arts (e.g. singing, playing wind instruments)	<p>Masks required for all singers and actors unless outside.</p> <p>At least 3ft of distancing</p>	<p>Masks required for all singers and actors unless outside.</p> <p>At least 3ft of distancing</p>	<p>Bell covers required for wind instruments. Masks required for all musicians.</p> <p>At least 3ft of distancing</p>	<p>Bell covers required for wind instruments. Masks required for all musicians.</p> <p>At least 3ft of distancing</p>

	Mitigation Protocol	Low Community Transmission	Moderate Community Transmission	Substantial Community Transmission	High Community Transmission
16	Ventilation and Air Quality	<p>School Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase ventilation, bring additional fresh outdoor air into buildings to keep virus particles from concentrating inside. - Open windows and doors, using child-safe fans to increase the effectiveness of open windows. - Fans should be used to exhaust air from the room and so as not to blow on any one individual. - Regularly inspect (and improve if necessary) HVAC or air filtration systems. <p>Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open or crack windows in buses and other forms of transportation, if doing so does not pose a safety risk. - Keeping windows open a few inches improves air circulation. - Open roof hatches if they are available. 			
17	Outdoor Athletics (Subject to League & Section Guidelines) *All mitigation plans are subject to change according to league and section protocols.	No restrictions	Masks optional for athletes and spectators. Three feet of distance encouraged for spectators.	Masks optional for athletes and spectators. Three feet of distance encouraged for spectators.	Masks optional for athletes. All coaches and spectators are required to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status. Three feet of distance encouraged for spectators. Weekly testing for all athletes.
18	Indoor Athletics (Subject to League & Section Guidelines) *All mitigation plans are subject to change according to league and section protocols.	Masks required for spectators. Three feet of distance encouraged for spectators. No restrictions for athletes.	Masks required for spectators. Three feet of distance encouraged for spectators. Weekly testing for all athletes.	Masks required for athletes (with appropriate mask breaks built into practices and games). Spectators are required to wear a mask. Three feet of distance required for spectators. Limited spectators. Weekly testing for all athletes.	Masks required for athletes (with appropriate mask breaks built into practices and games). Spectators are required to wear a mask. Three feet of distance required for spectators. Limited spectators. Weekly testing for all athletes.

19	Contact Tracing	<p>The Department of Health assigns guarantees.</p> <p>Notifications and Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate with state and local health officials to confidentially provide information about people diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19, to the extent allowable by privacy laws and other applicable laws. - Report new diagnoses of COVID-19, to the extent allowable by applicable privacy laws, to state or local health officials as soon as they are informed. - Notify teachers, staff, and families of students who were close contacts as soon as possible (within the same day if possible), to the extent allowable by applicable privacy laws, after the school is notified that someone in the school has tested positive.
20	Quarantines	<p>The Department of Health assigns guarantees.</p> <p>For Fully Vaccinated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vaccinated, asymptomatic individuals in *close-contact with a confirmed COVID-19 positive do not need to quarantine. They can continue to attend school in-person and participate in other activities. - Fully vaccinated people who have a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should wear a mask for 14 days or receipt of a negative test. If symptomatic, vaccinated people should be tested 3-5 days after exposure (and follow recommendations from their health care provider). <p>For Unvaccinated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unvaccinated individuals in *close-contact with a confirmed COVID-19 positive should be isolated/quarantined. - Consult with local health officials for additional guidance <p>*NOTE: Close-contact is defined as someone who was within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative 15 minutes of time, over a 24 hour period. HOWEVER, this excludes students who were within 3-6 feet of an infected student, if both students were correctly and consistently wearing masks. This does not apply to adults in the school.</p>
21	Return to School/work Protocols (following illness)	<p>Infected individuals(s) can return to school and end isolation once the following are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 days out from the start of the symptoms, AND - Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication, AND - Symptoms have improved. <p>Return to school according to local health officials guidance</p>