



Back to School Questions and Answers July 30, 2020

Q: When does school start?

A: All students will begin the school year with Remote Learning on August 6th, 2020.

Q: When is Meet the Teacher?

A: At elementary and middle schools, the Meet the Teacher event will be held on August 4th, 2020. Welcome videos will be shared and teachers will be calling their students' parents. Each school will be sharing details of its plans for the event, which will be much different this year due to the pandemic.

Q: When will In-Person Learning start?

A: In-Person Learning will start when state and county health officials determine it is safe to do so. State officials are supposed to develop metrics by August 7th, 2020. When we know it is safe to do so, we will announce the In-Person start date.

Q: When In-Person Learning starts, can I continue with Remote Learning if I am not comfortable sending my children to school?

A: Yes, during the pandemic Remote Learning will continue concurrent with In-Person Learning.

Q: What is Remote Learning?

A: Remote Learning is our classroom teachers providing lessons, resources, assignments and support through Google Classroom, using our curriculum. Middle and high school students attend their classes following their schedule and do independent classwork outside of class meeting hours. K-5 students do that as well, but since the young students need adult support at home, the lessons will be recorded so parents can help their children outside of normal class hours.

Q: Is Remote Learning the same thing we did last spring?

A: No. Last spring, on very short notice, we provided resources to help students review and maintain skills through packets. Remote Learning includes teaching and instruction, with interact with our teachers, regular grading, and academic rigor.

Q: Will Remote Learning change when In-Person Learning starts?

A: When In-Person learning resumes, the Remote Learning will include what classes are doing In-Person so students can be "in class" with their peers without coming to school buildings.



Q: How is Remote Learning different from Online Learning?

A: While Remote Learning is done online, it is quite different from “Online Learning,” where students commit for a year of instruction with an online program external to SMUSD. With Online Learning, there is no support from SMUSD teachers and our resources are not available to students. We have found even our top students struggle with Online Learning, so we highly recommend using our Remote Learning.

Q: What if I don’t have a computer at home?

A: The District is providing Chromebooks for students to use for Remote Learning. Fill out the request online at <https://smusd.me/2020choice> as soon as possible if you need one.

Q: What if I don’t have Internet at home?

A: There are some rural areas where high-speed Internet is not available. We have partnered with Triad Wireless to provide a discounted home internet service for students at a low cost (\$10/month). Contact Triad Wireless for more information (<https://www.triadwireless.net/education-internet/>). The Saddle Mountain Education Foundation is providing some scholarships for families in need. The District is also providing limited, on-site support services, starting August 18, 2020, during normal school hours on school days. To request on-site support services, please submit a request online at: <https://smusd.me/onsitesupport>.

Q: Are schools and offices open?

A: Yes, school offices are open Tuesdays through Fridays, but we may be able to help you over the phone to avoid physical contact. During the pandemic, campuses remain closed to visitors, even after In-Person Learning resumes.

Q: What can I expect if there is a positive case of COVID19 in my child’s classroom or school?

A: We are awaiting guidance from the AZ Department of Health Services and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health for reporting protocols and metrics to determine when classroom closure, grade level closure, or school closure would be necessary. All personal information would be held in strict confidence. A summary of isolation and safe returns after exposures is posted on our website: <https://www.smusd90.org/School-Reopening-Plans>.

Q: Will you offer preschool?

A: Yes, the developmental preschool will open August 18th and our early childhood development program (fee based) will open on August 6th.

Q: Will extended day services be available?

A: The City of Buckeye is planning to resume operations of its BASE program at Tartesso Elementary School beginning August 18th. You can register and get more information at their website: <https://www.buckeyeaz.gov/residents/parks-recreation/before-after-school-program>.



Q: Will masks/face coverings be required at schools?

A: Yes, we are following the Maricopa County requirements for face coverings when social distancing is not maintained. Please see our website for details:

<https://www.smusd90.org/School-Reopening-Plans>.

Q: Will breakfasts and lunches be available?

A: Yes, we will operate our food services program, starting August 18th (our summer food distribution program ends July 31st). Please complete a new application for free/reduced price meals. More information is available on our website: https://www.smusd90.org/Food_Services.

Q: How do I register my child for school?

A: If you are new to the area, welcome to Saddle Mountain USD! You can get the registration packet and information on our website (<https://www.smusd90.org/Registration>) and go to the school office to complete the registration process.

Q: How do I get communication from the school?

A: Schools regularly send out phone call messages and email messages, using the contact information on file. If you are not receiving them, please contact your son/daughter's school to update contact information. You will also be receiving information about using the Remind app that we have adopted for full implementation this school year as a great communication tool. We also use Twitter and Facebook to post information for parents, so please follow us on social media as well.