



November 18, 2020

Hello, Scottsdale Unified Families.

Please find below information in the form of Question and Answer to provide more details on the Spring Learning Model.

1. Q: I am concerned about the 7:45 AM start time for EDL Elementary at Echo Canyon. A majority of elementary schools begin at 8:45 AM and dismiss at 3:15 PM.

A: After careful consideration, along with parent and staff feedback related to the challenge of navigating a schedule change, the start time of EDL Elementary at Echo Canyon will change to 8:45 AM with dismissal at 3:15 PM. This will align EDL Elementary with the scheduled school day for the majority of our elementary sites. This does not change the start time or dismissal time of Echo Canyon School in-person learning (7:45 AM - 2:20 PM).

- EDL K-5 at Echo Canyon (Virtual Learning) 8:45 AM - 3:15 PM
- Echo Canyon K-8 School (in-person learning) 7:45 AM - 2:20 PM

2. Q: Who do I contact if I did not receive a commitment form?

A: Families of students currently in-person learning **will not** receive a commitment form. Instead, an email was shared from the principal at each school requesting for any family wishing to go from in-person to another model to email the principal directly. These families will receive additional guidance. If you are a current SOL or EDL student that did not receive a commitment form, please check your SPAM or trash for a reminder link sent Monday afternoon. The email had the words, “Commitment Form” in the subject line. If you do not locate a link, please please direct your communication through the District’s “Let’s Talk” application at www.susd.org/LetsTalk by selecting “Teaching and Learning.”

3. Q: I am worried about my child’s teacher changing.

A: We will work to minimize this to the greatest extent possible, understanding how important continuity is to students and families. All models and grade spans have the potential of navigating a teacher change in the spring learning model.

4. Q: What happens if I do not choose a learning model for Spring?

A: Families that do not select a model by the due date of November 12, 2020 will continue to participate in the model selected for the first semester. For example, a student currently in EDL at Hohokam/Yavapai will become part of the districtwide EDL program at Echo Canyon. EDL students in middle and high school will continue EDL at their current school, following a full day schedule that will be implemented in the spring.

5. Q: What is the contingency model (Plan B) for secondary schools if five days a week in-person learning cannot be maintained due to changing conditions of the pandemic in SUSD.

A: Students will continue to have 5 full days of learning; attending school on campus 50% of the time and online 50% of the time (alternating groups on campus and online). Students would attend in-person Monday and Thursday and every other Wednesday or Tuesday and Friday and every other Wednesday. All students would receive a full day of instruction, attending all classes either in person or virtually each day. Wednesday would continue to be a scheduled early release day.

6. Q: What is the contingency model (Plan B) for elementary schools if five days a week in-person learning cannot be maintained due to changing conditions of the pandemic in SUSD.

A: Plan B for elementary in-person students is full remote learning.

7. Q: What will happen if conditions greatly improve and I want to return to in-person learning for the fourth quarter?

A: Please follow the formal process for returning to in-person learning. Details will follow on this process but it will involve a request to your building principal.

8. Q: Why do I need to choose a model in November when I have no idea what conditions will be like in January?

A: In order to staff and schedule, a process which typically takes eight months, will be completed in about five weeks after receiving the commitment forms. Logistics and operations also need time to plan safety and mitigation plans for the new models. A formal process to request a model change will be available, but will be limited due to our need to ensure the appropriate staff are allocated for each learning model.

9. Q: Can visitors and volunteers resume in January? Can I drop off items for my child at the office?

A: Not at this time. We will continue to follow the recommendations set forth by the Operations & Logistics team (approved by the Governing Board) until further announcement is given based on the current metrics announced by SUSD to limit continued exposure and keep all of our staff & students safe.

10. Q: How will quarantine procedures be implemented in each model.

A: SUSD will continue to collaborate with the Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) on requirements for quarantine. Currently, students in “close contact” with a person positive with COVID will be quarantined for 14 days from the last day of exposure. See [COVID Response Plan](#).

Students who are at-home due to quarantine will be engaged in learning through live streaming of their current classes *to the best extent possible*. **Extenuating circumstances may require content to be provided by a teacher, at the home school, teaching the same content.*

11. Q: How will EDL students access their teacher for help?

A: All students needing support, EDL or otherwise, can access their teacher during their office hours. The schedules for teacher availability will be provided by the school and/or will come directly from the teacher.

12. Q: Why is there early release every Wednesday?

A: A weekly early release provides teachers the opportunity to engage in professional development, collaboration and planning to support students’ unique needs and navigate multiple learning platforms including supporting students in quarantine.

13. Q: What will students be doing during early release time?

A: This is an asynchronous learning time to ensure instructional minutes are met. The focus of the content will be social emotional learning support and academic intervention support for students. Families have flexibility on how and when to engage with this content.

14. Q: “What will happen if we sign up for in-person return in November, but by January we determine we do not want our kids to return to in-person?”

A: There will be a formal process to request a model change for all learning models. There may be an opportunity to do this at the end of the current quarter. In secondary, changing from in-person to at-home will likely be honored, as all the classes will be streaming. Changing from at-home to in-person will be extremely limited, as it will impact class size and the ability to physically distance students. At the elementary level, a model change will be extremely difficult, due to the need to manage class sizes in both the in-person and EDL models.

15. Q: When was the early release shared? Why do we need to have an early release?

A: Early release was presented at the SUSD Governing Board meeting on 11/4/20 when the Board approved the spring semester learning model, including the early release days every Wednesday. A weekly early release provides teachers the opportunity to engage in professional development, collaboration and planning to support students’ unique needs and to navigate the multiple learning platforms that support students in quarantine who are temporarily learning from home.

16. Q: Why are we considering a full day of in-person when the metrics are getting worse?

A: At individual schools, we are not observing an excess of COVID positive cases. We continue to monitor each building closely and are working with MCDPH on the cases that surface. The Governing Board has approved a full-day model for middle and high schools students to begin as early as January 4, 2020. We will continue to monitor the data and are preparing contingency plans, should we be unable to start second semester with full days.

17. Q: What are the mitigation measures being considered during lunch?

A: James Dorer, Chief Security Officer, is working with secondary administrators on mitigation measures during lunch. The mitigation measures, thus far, include, without limitation:

- Grab and go lunches
- Additional lunch carts and/or use of ticket windows to decrease the number of students in line, and designated eating areas
- Use of *outdoor* space by adding lunch tables and chairs
- Limit *indoor* eating space
- Limit number of students per table (indoor and outdoor)
- Enforce mask use when not eating; mask on when walking, standing, etc.

Questions, Concerns, Feedback

If you have questions about this information or want to share your thoughts, please direct your communication through the District’s “Let’s Talk” application at www.susd.org/LetsTalk by selecting “Teaching and Learning” so your communication is routed directly to the correct members of the District staff.

Please know that we will continue to prioritize and reinforce mitigation measures in our schools.

Respectfully,

Spring Planning Committee
Teaching and Learning Department, Scottsdale Unified School District