



**Saint Paul**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**Battle Creek Elementary  
School**  
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Saint Paul, MN 55119

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## Welcome to the 2020-21 school year!

Greetings Battle Creek Elementary School Family!

It is with great honor and pleasure that I welcome you to the 2020-2021 school year. I am delighted that you have selected Battle Creek Elementary as your school. Our district has decided to start with distance learning this fall, then gradually transition to hybrid learning. As parents, I can imagine how uncertain everything seems for you, having your child start the school year online. During these unprecedented times, there are so many things that are new to everyone, including us. However, we can get through this together. All of us at Battle Creek Elementary look forward to seeing grades 1-5 on **Tuesday, Sept. 8** and Pre-K and kindergarten students on **Thursday, Sept. 10**.

Saint Paul Public Schools has been developing plans for most of the summer in anticipation of your return. Typically, this message is one that discusses schedule pick-up dates, school supply lists, immunizations, etc. This year I realize that right now instead of those items, you need as much information as possible about what school will look like as we will start in distance learning.

You can find more detailed information and updates about the new school year at the following websites:

- [spps.org/battlecreekel](https://spps.org/battlecreekel)
- [spps.org/reopen2020](https://spps.org/reopen2020)
- [spps.org/distancelearning](https://spps.org/distancelearning)
- [spps.org/virtuallearning](https://spps.org/virtuallearning)
- [spps.org/backtoschool](https://spps.org/backtoschool)

I will be sending more details about our plans in the coming weeks. I will also be posting updates on our school website. Our staff is ready to work with your family and look forward to seeing you virtually to start the school year, and hopefully in person later this year if the pandemic is in better control.

The first day of school can be overwhelming for students, and there is no doubt this year will bring some new and additional challenges. Here are a few things to know so you and your child can prepare.

### Student and Family Distance Learning Checklist

Please view and use this technology checklist as a guide to make sure you are ready for the first day of school. This checklist is available at [spps.org/fallchecklist](https://spps.org/fallchecklist).

## iPad Help

If your iPad is damaged or needs to be replaced please report the issue by emailing or calling Saint Paul Public Schools Technology Services:

- Email: [familysupport@spps.org](mailto:familysupport@spps.org)
- Call: 651-603-4348 from 7 a.m. – 4 p.m.. Please leave a detailed voicemail and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

If you are having problems with your iPad, you may also contact your student's teacher or our school. After a report is made, a member of the SPPS technology support team will contact you about replacement options to continue distance learning in Saint Paul.

If you are having issues logging into Seesaw, Schoology or other district-approved apps, please see the information on [spps.org/ipadhelp](https://spps.org/ipadhelp).

## School Contact Information

Relationships and timely communication is more important than ever in a distance learning environment. If you have questions, or need to contact someone at school, please call our Main Office at 651-744-4130. If no one picks up, please leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Please check our school website regularly, [spps.org/battlecreekel](https://spps.org/battlecreekel), for information and updates.

SPPS uses Blackboard Connect to alert families about important school news and information, events, weather cancellations, emergencies and more through email, phone and text. **Update your phone number, email and other contact information with Ms. Sue Hessler or through Campus Portal.**

- For more details, and to update your information, visit [spps.org/onestop](https://spps.org/onestop).

You may also download the MySPPS app from Google Play Store or the Apple App Store. Once you "Follow" **Battle Creek Elementary** you'll have instant access to school news and updates. Just search "MySPPS" in the app stores. Learn more at [spps.org/MySPPS](https://spps.org/MySPPS).

## Open House

Battle Creek Elementary will host a virtual open house to welcome students and families to a new year on **Thursday September 3**. We are still finalizing the plans for our open house. More details will be available on our school's website soon.

## School Hours

We are following our school's regular start and end times from 7:30 AM to 2:00 PM, regardless of whether students are distance learning or in hybrid or in-person learning scenarios. Instructional availability for learning occurs during this time.

## Childcare

SPPS Community Education will offer two childcare options for families this fall while students are in distance learning. Both programs are open to enrolled elementary age students.

- Essential Kids Care will operate at three sites this fall for children of Tier 1 essential workers. Care is free during normal school hours, and transportation is available. For more information: [spps.org/ekidscare](https://spps.org/ekidscare)
- Discovery Club will be available at four sites this fall for PreK-5th graders. The fee-based program does not include transportation. For more information: [spps.org/discoveryclub](https://spps.org/discoveryclub)

Both options will be staffed by non-licensed childcare staff. Children will remain with the same small group each day. Masks will be required for all students and staff, and Minnesota Department of Health guidelines for childcare programs will be strictly enforced.

A portion of the day will be set aside for students to work on their independent learning, and the remainder of the time will include enrichment and physical activity. Breakfast and lunch are also provided. For questions, please contact Discovery Club at [discovery.club@spps.org](mailto:discovery.club@spps.org) or call 651-632-3793.

## Meals

Nutrition Services will continue to provide weekly meal boxes through home meal delivery and curbside pickup while SPPS is in distance learning. All students eligible for free or reduced-price meals will receive meals at no cost.

Every SPPS family should complete an application for Education Benefits/Free or Reduced Price Meals -- regardless of family income. Not only does this help us identify families in need of assistance, it also allows SPPS to receive federal dollars for classroom programming. Applications are available online on [SchoolCafe \(www.schoolcafe.com/spps\)](https://www.schoolcafe.com/spps), and paper applications were mailed to homes in August.

## Class Schedule

I am working with teachers to finalize plans for the daily schedules. Please know that we will do our best to ensure there is consistency and clarity with the schedule. More information will be shared with you before the start of school.

## Distance Learning 2.0

- All PreK-12 students will be issued an iPad
- Distance Learning 2.0 will be a balance between any time (asynchronous) and same-time (synchronous) learning
- Students will receive daily same-time (synchronous) instruction from their teachers
- There will be daily student-to-student interaction
- Students will have access to enhanced WiFi options

More details about Distance Learning 2.0 will be shared and updated on [spps.org](https://spps.org) as it is made available. To view information about Distance Learning 2.0, visit [spps.org/distancelearning](https://spps.org/distancelearning).

If you have questions that you cannot find answers to on our website, please call our Main Office. You may also call the Parent Help Line at 651-767-8347 or email [family.engagement@spps.org](mailto:family.engagement@spps.org) for assistance.

## Virtual Learning School

The [SPPS Virtual Learning School](https://spps.org/virtuallearning) is an option for PreK-12 students who prefer to remain in 100% distance learning for the entire 2020-21 school year. **Students who enroll in the Virtual Learning School will begin the school year with their currently assigned class at Battle Creek Elementary.**

Virtual Learning School students will stay in their currently enrolled home schools and classrooms until a transition is made to a hybrid model. As the district moves through the various levels of hybrid learning, students enrolled in the Virtual Learning School will transition to their Virtual Learning School classrooms.

- Learn more at [spps.org/virtuallearning](https://spps.org/virtuallearning)
- [Register for the Virtual Learning School](https://spps.org/virtuallearning) ([spps.org/virtuallearning](https://spps.org/virtuallearning))

## School Calendar

A copy of our calendar is posted online at [spps.org/battlecreekel](https://spps.org/battlecreekel). Please note that dates may change as the year progresses, and updates may be posted from time to time. For the full district calendar, visit [spps.org/calendar](https://spps.org/calendar).

## Health And Wellness

### Immunizations

Even though SPPS students will start the year in distance learning, it's important to make sure your child's immunizations are current and provide records to your child's school. Learn more at [spps.org/studentwellness](https://spps.org/studentwellness).

### COVID-19 Student and Family Guidelines

Saint Paul Public Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our students, staff and their families. To ensure this commitment is met, we have developed and will continue to revise the [COVID-19 Guidance for Students and Families](https://spps.org/covid19guidance) in response to the everchanging Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

### COVID Testing Resources

Visit the [Minnesota Department of Health website](https://www.health.state.mn.us/) to find a location providing free COVID-19 testing. Reminder: Check with your insurance provider before making an appointment to make sure the office visit fee will be covered.

### **Student Mental Health**

We recognize that school closure, distance learning, and COVID-19 may cause extra stress to many in our school community, including families, students and staff. Reach out to our school counselor Emily Colton (651-744-5353) or social worker Julianne Summers (651-7442398 and Marisa Priess (651-744-1731) for support for your child's mental health and to be connected with [community resources](#), where appropriate.

### **Face Coverings in SPPS**

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz has directed that masks or face coverings must be worn throughout Minnesota in all indoor public spaces - including school buildings. This new executive order applies to all visitors, staff and students (kindergarten and older). SPPS staff and visitors have been expected to wear face coverings since April. Pre-K students are not required to wear face coverings under this order.

- Read more about Face Coverings at [spps.org](https://spps.org).

Attached to this letter you'll find the following important documents and links:

- Battle Creek Elementary supply list
- District calendar
- Parent drop off & pick up

I am looking forward to welcoming you and your child to a new school year **Tuesday, September 8, for grades 1-5, and Thursday, Sept. 10, for Pre-K and kindergarten**. I'm so proud to be part of this wonderful school community.

Sincerely,

Lee Thao, Principal  
Battle Creek Elementary School