

It is our desire to provide in-person instruction in the safest manner, utilizing the guidelines provided by the Department of Public Health and the Georgia Department of Education. We will utilize a tiered approach with actionable steps to maintain a safe learning environment throughout the 2020-2021 school year. As this situation is fluid and likely to change, we encourage everyone to plan for reduced instructional days and long-term closures and remain “pivot ready” when changes must be made based on current criteria. **It is imperative that we have parents’ current phone number and email address.**

**If there is a surge of COVID-19 cases.....**

- **Before School begins:** Recommend later start Date: **August 17**
- **Once School has started:** transition to more limited delivery model

**Possible Delivery Models that can be used based on level of spread:**

**Traditional/Blended:**

**Monday – Thursday:** All students attend classes face-to-face instruction

**Friday:** Students complete assigned work from home

Teacher training on Fridays to prepare for online learning

Buildings are cleaned and free of students for over 72 hours

**\*\*Learn From Home Option** [Click HERE](#) (You must sign up with your student’s school by Friday July 31.

**\*\*Virtual Instruction: 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade can choose Georgia Virtual School** (You must sign up with your student’s school by Friday July 31. \*These students are still Wilkes County students and can participate in extracurricular activities and sports.) More information <https://www.gavirtualschool.org/>

**Hybrid Model:**

Limited/Staggered Use of School buildings to allow for increased social distancing

Combination of face-to-face instruction and distance/online learning

**Mon/Tues** group & **Thurs/Fri** group

\*Groupings designed to have siblings/home groups attend together

**Wednesday:** Buildings are cleaned and free of students between groups and over weekend  
Teacher training and preparation for online learning

**Distance/Online Learning/Learn from Home:**

**If the school has to close for all students:** All students learn from home with a model directed by the student’s teachers. This will be more rigorous than the Spring and will require completion of work, grading, and daily attendance.

**Homeschool Instruction:** Parents can choose to homeschool their student. These students will NOT be part of Wilkes County Schools and cannot participate in extracurricular activities or sports. The only requirement of this option is to register with the Department of Education before September 30, 2020. For more information <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Pages/Home-Schools.aspx>

### **PRACTICING PREVENTION:**

- Recommend and encourage wearing face masks when social distancing is not possible
- Teach and reinforce good hygiene measures
- Provide hand soap, no touch hand dryers, and no-touch trash cans in all bathrooms
- Provide hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, and no-touch trash cans in classrooms and frequently trafficked areas
- Post Signage on COVID-19 prevention & symptoms, good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols
- Clean/disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily
- Clean/disinfect desks throughout the day and at class changes
- Turn off water fountains and provide access to bottled water or allow students and staff to bring water from home.
- Conduct deep cleaning before school reopens and as needed

### **TRANSPORTING STUDENTS:**

\*Because social distancing is difficult to achieve on buses, parents are encouraged to transport their students to/from school whenever possible

- Provide masks/facial coverings for bus drivers
- Allow and encourage students to wear masks/facial coverings
- Utilized spaced seating where possible
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on the bus after morning and afternoon routes
- Establish protocols for bus stops, loading/unloading students to minimize the congregation of children from different households.
- Eliminate field trips

### **ENTERING SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

- Post signage on COVID-19 prevention and symptoms, good hygiene, and school/system specific protocols
- Require parents to check their children's temperature before sending them to school
  - Require parents to keep sick children home if fever is present (current CDC guidelines)
  - Follow established guidelines for remaining at home with symptoms of illness
- Require school system employees to check their temperature before coming to work and assess themselves for symptoms related to COVID-19. Employees should not come to work if symptoms are present.
- Establish touchless temperature checks at student entrances
- Establish a protocol for visitors (e.g. requesting use of face coverings and restricting non-essential visitors/volunteers)
- Establish a protocol for student pick-up/drop off

## **SERVING MEALS**

- Allow and encourage student hand washing before and after meal service
- Provide hand sanitizers for students and staff
- Use disposable utensils, trays and other similar items
- Encourage social distancing in serving lines
- Conduct cleaning of cafeterias and high-touch surfaces throughout the day
- Other options:
  - Serving meals in classrooms
  - Pre-packaged, “grab and go” meals

## **STUDENT TRANSITIONS**

- Limit congregating between groups/grade levels
- Provide additional time for transitions
- Designate hallway flow paths to minimize/eliminate congregating
- Stagger class changes
- Spacing/Timing of locker access to accommodate social distancing

## **CONDUCTING LARGE GROUP GATHERINGS**

- Abide by the maximum number of people allowed to congregate as defined by the Governor’s current statewide Executive Order
- Discourage the congregation of students in parking lots and common areas
- Stagger the schedule, when possible, for large group gatherings such as recess and school meals
- Identify and utilize large spaces for social distancing
- Follow GHSA guidelines for athletic events and practices

## **SUPPORTING TEACHING & LEARNING**

- Use master schedule to balance class sizes
- Place furniture in classrooms to maximize social distancing
- Limit physical interaction through partner or group work
- Establish distance between teacher and student desks/work spaces
- Identify and utilize large spaces for social distancing, as appropriate
- If online learning is employed, provide student devices according to availability
- If schools are closed for students, allow student/teacher tutor/support meetings *if it is safe to do so*

## **PROTECTING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

- Provide Hospital/Homebound Services for those who qualify
- Adhere to state and federal employment law and extended leave allowances, as well as FERPA and HIPPA requirements

## **WHEN A CHILD, STAFF MEMBER, OR VISITOR BECOMES SICK AT SCHOOL**

- Identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms
- Establish protocols for the safe transport of anyone who is sick to their home or a healthcare facility
- Advise sick staff members and students not to return to school until they have met DPH criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality
- Close off and clean/disinfect areas used by sick person
- Advise students/staff who came into contact with the individual to stay at home and follow appropriate DPH guidance.