



# Whitfield County Schools

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August 23, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Earlier this summer, we had planned for a more “normal” start to school. The COVID-19 resurgence in our area has quickly changed some of those plans. In light of dramatically increasing numbers of student and staff COVID-19 cases and the large numbers of resulting quarantines throughout our district, we are stepping up our prevention efforts. Our objective is to keep schools open and keep the learning environment safe for all.

For this reason, beginning Tuesday August 24, students and staff members will be required to wear a mask when social distancing is not possible. Parents who do not wish for their children to wear masks (for medical or personal reasons) may opt out by submitting an opt-out form or by contacting their school directly. You can find the opt-out forms on the district website at [www.wcsga.net/COVID-guidelines](http://www.wcsga.net/COVID-guidelines).

Public health officials have provided us with guidance that we did not have with last year’s COVID surge. If one person wearing a mask tests positive and has been in close proximity to other people who were also wearing masks, the exposed people will not have to quarantine unless they also become symptomatic or test positive. This could mean the difference of dozens or potentially hundreds of students being able to stay in school instead of in quarantine.

It is my sincere hope that our COVID rates improve and that we can get back to “normal” sooner rather than later. In the meantime, we will do our best to keep schools open and to keep students and staff members safe. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mike Ewton  
Superintendent  
Whitfield County Schools