



# Whitfield County Schools

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*tradition • purpose • excellence*

July 14, 2020

Dear Parents & Guardians,

As there continues to be concerns and questions related to the reopening of schools for the 2020-21 school year, we want to assure you our first priority is the safety and health of all students and staff. We will continue working closely with the Whitfield County Health Department to determine the severity of COVID-19 in our community. We understand the challenges the novel Coronavirus brings and have plans in place to continue learning outside the classroom should the severity in our county rise. As of right now, all Whitfield County schools will operate under District Reopening Consideration #1, face-to-face instruction, beginning Friday, August 7.

Under **District Reopening Consideration #1**, traditional instruction will be paired with in-class virtual learning. This way, students may become familiar with working online should face-to-face instruction be replaced entirely by virtual learning at a later date.

All elementary and middle school students will attend school in person five days a week. Limited after-school care will be available for students in Pre-K through fifth grade, depending on available staffing. Due to the large number of students in each high school and the number of transitions required, social distancing is nearly impossible; therefore, each high school will assign students to a cohort in order to allow for smaller class sizes. Each cohort will physically attend school two days a week and will participate in online learning the remainder of the week. Based on specific needs, some special population high school students will physically attend school five days a week. If conditions in our community improve during the first semester, high schools could resume face-to-face instruction five days a week.

Masks will be strongly recommended for all students and staff when in common areas and when social distancing is not possible. At this time, we will not allow visitors in our school buildings and will have no field trips, unless approved by the superintendent. Traditional water fountains will not be available; however, students may bring their own water bottles and can refill them throughout the day. We will strongly encourage students and staff to wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Hand sanitizer will be available, but students are encouraged to bring hand sanitizer from home. Common areas and frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned often. In addition, enhanced cleaning to combat the COVID-19 virus will take place in each building.

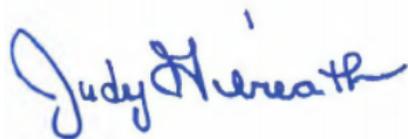
Parents and guardians, please do not send your child(ren) to school sick or with fevers. Each homeroom teacher will conduct a daily visual screening of students. If any students look flushed or feverish, they will have their temperatures taken. If the temperature is 100.4 degrees or above, the student will be provided a mask, isolated, and parents will be asked to pick the student up from school. We ask that all parents and guardians who are notified of a sick child promptly make arrangements to pick their child up in order to protect the safety of all students and staff.

We understand that under the current circumstances many parents do not wish to send their child(ren) to school for face-to-face instruction. For these students, virtual learning will be available for all grades; however, you must apply and get approved for your child to participate. Keep in mind, a requirement to participate in virtual learning is having the proper equipment (i.e. high-speed internet and an internet-ready device). Virtual learning is *not* recommended for students who lack good study habits and are not self motivated. Attendance and participation is mandatory and assignments will be graded for accuracy and completion.

To apply for virtual learning, visit [www.wcsga.net/virtual-learning](http://www.wcsga.net/virtual-learning). The deadline to enroll in virtual learning is Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. The educational delivery model chosen (face-to-face or virtual) will be for the duration of the first nine weeks for elementary school students (August 7 through October 16) and the entire first semester for middle and high school students (August 7 through December 18).

We encourage our families to frequently visit the district webpage at [www.wcsga.net](http://www.wcsga.net) and follow our social media for up-to-date, accurate information. Thank you for your continued support, understanding, and patience as we navigate these unprecedented times together. We are One Whitfield!

Sincerely,



Dr. Judy Gilreath  
Superintendent  
Whitfield County Schools



# WHITFIELD COUNTY SCHOOLS

## District Reopening Considerations

District Reopening Considerations for the 2020-21 school year are dependent on the severity of COVID-19 in the community determined by local and state health officials.

### CONSIDERATION #1

Traditional face-to-face instruction will be paired with in-class virtual learning. This way, students may become familiar with working online should face-to-face instruction be replaced entirely by virtual learning at a later date. Schools will implement standard operating procedures and enhanced preventative measures to ensure optimal cleanliness in all school buildings. Masks will be strongly encouraged for all students and staff when in common areas and when social distancing is not possible. To avoid large crowds, schools will offer flexible lunch schedules, recesses and breaks and transitions between classes will be limited and monitored. There will be no large group assemblies or field trips. Student drop off and pick up times may be adjusted.

#### ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOLS

All elementary and middle school students will attend school in person five days a week. Limited after-school care will be available for Pre-K through fifth grade students, depending on available staffing. Masks will be required for after-school care due to the difficulty of social distancing.

#### HIGH SCHOOLS

In order to follow social distancing guidelines, each high school will assign students to a cohort to allow for smaller class sizes. Each cohort will physically attend school two days a week and participate in online learning the remainder of the week. Based on specific needs, some special population high school students will physically attend school five days a week. If conditions in our community improve during the first semester, high schools could resume face-to-face instruction five days a week.

#### VIRTUAL LEARNING - OPTIONAL FOR ALL GRADES

For students whose parents do not wish for them to participate in face-to-face learning, virtual learning will be available for all grades; however, parents must apply and be approved by the district in order for students to learn from home. Keep in mind, a requirement to participate in virtual learning is having the proper equipment (i.e. high-speed internet and an internet-ready device). Virtual learning is not recommended for students who lack good study habits and are not self motivated or those who wish to participate in extracurricular activities/athletics. Attendance and participation is mandatory and assignments will be graded for accuracy and completion. All courses may not be offered virtually. Parents can apply for virtual learning at [www.wcsga.net/virtual-learning](http://www.wcsga.net/virtual-learning).

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**IMPORTANT:** The educational delivery model chosen (face-to-face or virtual) will be for the duration of the first nine weeks for elementary school students (August 7 through October 16) and the entire first semester for middle and high school students (August 7 through December 18).



# WHITFIELD COUNTY SCHOOLS

## District Reopening Considerations

District Reopening Considerations for the 2020-21 school year are dependent on the severity of COVID-19 in the community determined by local and state health officials.

### CONSIDERATION #2

Before implementing the procedures below, virtual learning may occur to allow our students, families, schools and operation staff time to transition to new protocols.

#### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Elementary students will continue face-to-face instruction. To enhance social distancing measures, middle school and high school buildings will be utilized for fourth and fifth grade students and teachers. Limited after-school care will be available for Pre-K through third grade students, depending on available staffing. Masks will be required for after-school care due to the difficulty of social distancing.

To avoid large crowds, schools will offer flexible lunch schedules, recesses, and breaks. Transitions between classes will be limited and monitored. There will be no large group assemblies or field trips. Student drop off and pick up times may be adjusted.

#### MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLS

Learning for grades six through twelve will be done virtually, with the exception of some special population students, who will continue to receive face-to-face instruction. Attendance and participation in virtual learning is mandatory and assignments will be graded for accuracy and completion. All courses may not be offered virtually.

Extracurricular activities will be postponed and/or canceled. Middle and high school staff will continue working in school buildings.

#### VIRTUAL LEARNING - OPTIONAL FOR ELEMENTARY & SPECIAL POPULATION STUDENTS

For students whose parents do not wish for them to participate in face-to-face learning, virtual learning will be available for all grades; however, parents must apply and be approved by the district in order for students to learn from home. Keep in mind, a requirement to participate in virtual learning is having the proper equipment (i.e. high-speed internet and an internet-ready device). Virtual learning is not recommended for students who lack good study habits and are not self motivated or those who wish to participate in extracurricular activities/athletics. Attendance and participation is mandatory and assignments will be graded for accuracy and completion. All courses may not be offered virtually. Parents can apply for virtual learning at [www.wcsga.net/virtual-learning](http://www.wcsga.net/virtual-learning).

### CONSIDERATION #3

No face-to-face instruction. All learning will take place virtually. Attendance and participation in virtual learning is mandatory and assignments will be graded for accuracy and completion. All courses may not be offered virtually. Extracurricular activities will be postponed and/or canceled. Staff will continue working in school buildings.