

Reopening Plan





Williamsburg County School District

"Empowering Others to Achieve their Dreams"

Reopening Plan for Williamsburg County Schools 2020-2021

In the summer of 2020, Williamsburg County Schools created a plan to reopen schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The plan is needed as a result of Corvid-19.

In order to provide as much clarity as possible for students, families, and staff, the district will work to provide an update and overview of our scheduling and operational plans prior to the opening of schools on September 8, 2020. The superintendent will hold virtual community meetings to share the reopening plan, address concerns and answer questions from our stalk holders.

While there remains uncertainty around the resurgence of Covid-19, our District continues to closely monitor and follow the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and local guidelines. We can assure you that maintaining safety while ensuring students are learning and thriving in our school community remains our priorities.

Introduction

Social distancing and safety measures: Our team of professionals has thoroughly analyzed our spacing and designed appropriate distancing in classrooms and common areas. We have also invested in Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for the safety of students and staff. Please note, temperature checks will be done proactively, and students will be required to wear masks while in school buildings and on the bus. Staff members are also required to wear mask. We ask that parents work in partnership with the district and classroom teachers in ensuring students come prepared daily with masks and that they remain home if sick. Remember, our priority is to keep our school community safe and healthy and it will take us all to do so.

Learning level assessment: We understand that for several months last school year there was a transition in teaching and learning. We will assess students to determine if standards have been met for their current grade level. If not, teachers will devise a plan, and work with parents, to help get students back on grade level. Specifically, PreK-8th grade will be assessed during the week of August 24th - 28th. This is the week to Learn,

Evaluate, Analyze and Plan (LEAP) Grades 9th-10th will be assessed during the first 10 days of school.

Instructional delivery: School buildings will open this fall as the data dictates, however, we have proactively developed learning continuity plans for in-person learning, remote learning and a hybrid of both so the district and teachers are fully prepared if stay-at-home orders were to resume.

Technology: We have updated our technology infrastructure. We have also acquired more equipment such as laptops, chrome books, and hotspots to ensure equity for all students whether they are learning in-person, remote or a hybrid of both.

Please know that we are truly grateful for the school community. We look forward to opening our buildings, welcoming students, and staff back to our “new normal” and seeing our students thrive. As always, if you have questions please do not hesitate to contact your building administrators or the superintendent.

Please note the plans can and likely will change as new information becomes available, but this update will help the community with planning for school in the fall. The district will continue to make the best decisions based on the most current information. Additionally, the plan is based upon requirements and guidelines established by the South Carolina Department of Education.

Section One – Grades PreK-2

How will the district ensure students have access to the online instruction?

Students in need of internet access will be given hotspots and or other internet access cards. In addition, all students will have use of laptops or Chromebooks.

How will the district ensure continued student participation in online learning?

Teachers will be expected to take attendance and hold students accountable for all virtual assignments. In addition, all online learning formats will begin with an initial in-person contact with students.

Parent and Student Responsibilities during virtual learning:

** While parents are not expected to teach their children, they are expected to support the delivery of instruction provided by the teacher.*

** Parents should ensure that their children are engaged in learning regardless of the model.*

** Parents should respond to staff communication.*

** Parents should designate a common place for their children to be able to keep materials organized and remove any items factors that may cause distractions.*

**Parents should set and have their child follow a routine schedule for completing school work.*

**Students should complete assigned lessons on Canvas and/or other provided work assignments.*

**Students and parents should communicate with teachers via email, phone and/or learning platform when assistance is needed with an assignment.*

**Students should participate in tiered support, small group instruction and intervention programs as scheduled.*

Teacher and Staff Responsibilities:

** Set and communicate clear office hours to respond to parents and students' emails/inquiries daily.*

**Provide support to any student or parent who indicates a need for support with virtual learning assignments.*

**Work and plan collaboratively with grade level/department peers on the development of high quality engaging activities for students to ensure consistency among grade level courses and expectations.*

**Refer any social emotional concerns to a counselor or social worker.*

**Communicate updates on student performance to parents on a routine basis.*

**Actively participate in district and school-level professional learning opportunities.*

Section Two – Grades 3-5

How will the district ensure students have access to the online instruction?

Students in need of internet access will be given hotspots and or other internet access cards. In addition, all students will have use of laptops or Chromebooks.

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Teachers will be expected to take attendance and hold students accountable for all virtual assignments. In addition, all online learning formats will begin with an initial in-person contact with students.

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Section Three – Grades 6-8

How will the district ensure students have access to the online instruction?

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**Communicate updates on student performance to parents on a routine basis.*

**Actively participate in district and school-level professional learning opportunities.*

Section Four – High School

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**Work and plan collaboratively with grade level/ department peers on the development of high quality engaging activities for students to ensure consistency among grade level courses and expectations.*

**Refer any social emotional concerns to a counselor or social worker.*

**Communicate updates on student performance to parents on a routine basis.*

**actively participate in district and school-level professional learning opportunities.*

Section Five – District Operations

Describe the district's plan for administering required assessments to students who will be taught virtually?*

During the week of August 24th, students in grades K-8 will report to school for testing. Students in grades K-2 will be given MAP Reading Fluency as well as MAP Growth Reading and grades 3-8 will be given MAP Growth Reading. All grades will be given MAP Growth Math, as well. In addition, high schools will be

able to assess grades 9-12 during the testing window to acquire information on where their students are to better inform instruction to meet the needs of all students.

In addition to MAP, students in grades 1-8 will be given AIMSWEB MCOMP. MCOMP will inform teachers on the basic math skills that students still need to master for success in higher level grade specific mathematics.

Schools will create testing schedules requiring students to be in the building up to four hours, daily. Students can begin by taking an 8 minute timed test from AIMSWEB then begin the MAP Testing Process.

What kinds of internal formative assessments and key instructional practices will the district use to prepare students for accountability assessments should no federal waivers be granted?*

Teachers will be expected to teach identified essential SC College and Career Ready Standards at each grade level aligned to subject area learning progressions and the SC Testing Blueprint.

Schools will create their own semester benchmarks utilizing Mastery Connect CASE items aligned with state standards. Grade level essential standards will be assessed every nine weeks to gauge how students are performing aligned with the state accountability expectations.

The district has already identified essential standards for Elementary ELA and Math and teachers will be given the documents upon return to school. The middle and high schools will be given learning progression documents prepared by SCDE and/or develop their own with the guidance of Instructional Coaches utilizing the state blueprint, previous SC Ready Data and Mastery Connect CASE items charting progress towards meeting growth goals.

Lastly, all schools will be using the gradual release instructional framework as a key instructional practice, meeting students where they are to the zone of proximal development by providing students with success indicators towards meeting classwork expectations.

With seat time likely being waived, what methods will the district use to check proficiency and ensure students have the skills and knowledge needed for subsequent work in the content area and/or grade level?*

To check proficiency and ensure students have the skills and knowledge needed in their content area or grade level, teachers will have to plan for tiered instruction. Schedules can be uploaded into the virtual platform for Tiers 2 and 3 instruction. In addition, students in need of intensive support will be instructed by interventionists and/or designated teachers maintaining data and anecdotal notes on student learning.

All students will be progress monitored during their scheduled tiered times.

Section 6 - Diverse Learners

How will the district address the provision of services to: Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)*

Teachers will be informed of students with IEPs. It is an expectation that instruction is aligned to the student's IEP and students receive all noted accommodations.

In addition, Special Services teachers will use the virtual platforms and upload audio materials, visuals and other virtual resources that will aide their students.

IEPs will be amended, as needed, to reflect the instructional delivery model chosen by the parent so that appropriate special education and related services, supports, accommodations, and modifications are designed to provide meaningful educational benefit (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment.

Students with 504 Plans *

Students with 504 plans will participate in a virtual learning platform. Students' 504 plans will be reviewed to determine appropriateness of accommodations and modifications for the student to receive meaningful instruction. The 504 committee will review and revise 504 plans as appropriate for the student to benefit and adequately progress.

English Learners*

Most of our ELL students are English proficient. However, to continue to support both students and their families our educators can tailor digital tools, such as collaboration suites and online learning platforms, to their ELL students.

Microsoft Translator, can be used to transcribe and translate lessons. This tool can be integrated into communication platforms like Microsoft Teams' instant messaging feature, which makes communicating with multilingual families easier for teachers. There's also the Immersive Reader tool, which ELLs can use to not only translate text, but also have it read out loud to them or explained with a picture dictionary.

In addition, hotspots will be provided to students in need of internet access as well as IPADs and adaptive software programs that will enable students to remain fluent in their language as they increase their understanding of the English language.

Other vulnerable populations including students who are homeless, migrant, in foster care, in specific placements (e.g., RTFs), and/or military connected, as well as students who may experience quarantine as a result of COVID-19?*

Our district works with the aforementioned specific populations by way of obtaining surveys, PowerSchool tracking and School Counselors being informed of vulnerable students in very discrete ways. Our school counselors will continue to provide guidance, supplies, materials and support to all students enabling them to be allowed an equitable education as their peers.

Our students experiencing homelessness may lack access to the technology - including internet, a computer, and/or an appropriate mobile device - that would allow them to participate fully in online learning. In order to eliminate this barrier to full participation in school, our district and community agencies are working together to provide students experiencing homelessness with access to mobile hotspots, laptops/tablets, and any other materials necessary to fully participate in online/virtual learning.

How is the district prepared to provide instruction to all students in the event a full distance learning model needs to be implemented again?*

The district's re-entry plan is based upon several key sources of information including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and the Accelerated task force guidelines. Additionally, stakeholder feedback has been critical in the development

of the plan. A review of operational plans will be conducted in December 2020 to prepare for potential changes to a full face-to-face instructional model in January 2021 or ability to work towards face-to-face as health and safety conditions improve.

The district is prepared to provide virtual learning to all students by way of utilizing the Canvas Learning Management Platform. “The Canvas Learning Management Platform helps to create a custom K-12 learning environment to equitably scale student achievement. Whatever the learning initiative, Canvas is there to support and connect it – from scaled curriculum and formative assessment to showcased learning and teacher development.”

In addition, the district will purchase hot spots for internet access as well as provide laptops and Chromebooks for all students.

Additionally, teachers will engage in continuous technology based professional development to learn all instructional platforms and diverse instructional models to engage students in collaborative work as well as individual learning environments.

Teacher and Staff Expectations

For the duration of the COVID-19 period, all staff members are expected to follow basic infection prevention measures, included but not limited to:

- *Frequent and thorough hand washing for at least 20 seconds.*
- *Follow appropriate respiratory etiquette (e.g., covering sneezes and coughs with crook of arm).*
- *Refrain from using other colleagues’ desks, phones, offices or other work tools when possible.*
- *Refrain from social gatherings and meetings that do not allow for social distancing.*

All staff will wear masks or clear face shields while around students and/or other staff members. All teachers and needed support staff will report to their work site regardless of the instructional model in place, unless school buildings are ordered closed by DHEC, SCDE, or the Governor. The traditional roles and responsibilities of all staff members may look different based on the model of instruction that is in place. All staff members are responsible for related duties as

assigned by the Superintendent and or immediate supervisor. Expectations will be clearly communicated.

Instructional Planning/Models

Williamsburg County Schools has developed three instructional models for the 2020-2021 school year: 1) traditional, 2) hybrid and 3) full distance learning (FDL). The use of each model is dependent upon the level of spread of COVID-19 in our county as determined by the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).

Model 1: “Traditional” Scheduling In this scenario, health guidelines and facility considerations allow for all students and staff to return to a school building to open the school year and during the school calendar due to low or no spread of COVID-19 in the area and low to no positive cases within the school building. From a learning perspective, this should be a district’s ideal scheduling scenario for the fall, but this option can only be selected if it is possible to do so based on guidelines provided by public health authorities (DHEC and CDC) and available facilities and staffing.

Model 1: one most closely resembles school operations prior to the pandemic. This option embraces face to face instruction whenever possible to happen in a safe and effective manner. In this option, if health officials determine that COVID-19 is at a no or low spread level in our school district, students will attend school five days a week for face to face instruction in a traditional manner. Elementary schools will operate in a cohort model meaning that students will remain in their classroom for breakfast, lunch, instruction, and related arts classes. Food services will provide grab-and-go style meals that can be eaten in the classroom.

Model 2: Hybrid In this scenario, only a portion of students can report to a physical school building due to a combination of health requirements and facility/space limitations. As a result, some students will be able to report to school while others will have to engage in distance learning. In a hybrid situation, all teachers and staff will report to the building daily.

As a result, Williamsburg County Schools may implement a hybrid model in which certain groups (example- elementary) report to a school building daily while other groups (middle and high) engage in distance learning and face-to-face learning on

alternating days. “Alternating days” is defined as cohorts of students attending school for the entire day for a portion of the week. For example, half of the students could attend school on Monday and Wednesday while the other half attend on Tuesday and Thursday. On distance-learning days, students engage in distance learning, often completing assignments that allow them to demonstrate their understanding of the instruction that took place during their face-to-face days.

Model 3: Full Distance Learning (FDL) If health officials determine that COVID-19 is at a high spread level in our school district and a school closure declaration is issued, our students would participate in a full-time remote learning model at home. The district may elect to phase into the hybrid model from the FDL model based on the most current data available.

Safety and Cleaning

To maintain safe, clean, and secure spaces, Williamsburg County Schools’ maintenance staff will implement heightened cleaning protocols consistent with the most recent guidance from DHEC and/or the CDC. In addition, face masks for staff, disposable gloves, spray disinfectant/disinfectant wipes will be available at each school. All school buildings and high-traffic touch points (chairs, handrails, door handles, light switches, countertops, etc.) will be disinfected daily. Additionally, touchless water fountains will be installed.

All custodians, maintenance staff, and other selected staff will receive training in appropriate disinfecting/cleaning techniques prior to the return of students.

All staff will be trained in maintaining appropriate social distancing, good hygiene, and school/district COVID-19 protocols.

Exterior and interior signage communicating how to stop the spread and describing symptoms of COVID-19, good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols will be placed throughout our campuses and buildings.

To help control the spread of COVID-19, the district has reviewed its policy on visitors and at this time has determined to limit visitors coming into our schools. While parent conferences are a vital part of the parent-teacher relationship, video conferencing and phone calls should be utilized when at all possible. In the event a visitor does arrive at school, schools and offices should maintain thorough

records, including the individual visiting, temperature, contact information, the time of the visit, and the locations in the building visited. These records can assist local health authorities in the event they need to conduct contact tracing.

To help control the spread of COVID-19, the district will review its policy regarding use of school facilities by outside groups. During times of medium and high spread school facilities use will be suspended for anything beyond school operations in order to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19 in a building.

School Site Recommendations

To limit transitions throughout our schools, several steps will be taken. These include staggering transition between periods in middle and high schools, designating traffic patterns with clearly marked hallways, and limiting contact with as many surfaces as possible. Additionally, we will continue to use the Family Model in our elementary schools and/or have students remain in their class and have teachers rotate to them.

Knowing that physical activity is an important part of a student development, all efforts will be made to allow classes to engage in recess activities without using playground equipment.

The use of staggered arrival and dismissal may be used to help support safe social and physical distancing procedures and reduce bottleneck situations. In addition, we will increase the number of entry/exit points to reduce bottlenecks, when safely possible.

While in the classrooms, physical distancing will be maximized by avoiding face-to-face interactions as much as possible. Desks/tables will be aligned to face the front of the class and if tables must be used, physical distancing will be used to the extent possible.

DHEC and CDC COVID-19 signage communicating how to stop the spread and describing symptoms of COVID-19, good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols will be placed throughout all facilities. Touchless water fountains have been ordered.

Schools will educate students on maintaining appropriate distancing while in class and during transition periods. When appropriate and/or needed social distancing marks should be placed on floors.

The use of playground equipment be stopped due to contact with shared surfaces. The district and schools will review this practice once the spread rate is low. When playground equipment is used procedures will be in place to disinfect all shared equipment after each use.

Full staff meetings should only take place if appropriate space is available to allow for appropriate social distancing.

Parent meetings (IEP, discipline, etc...) will be conducted virtually or by phone when possible. If face-to-face are required, they will be conducted in an appropriate location that must allow for appropriate social distancing. Masks must be worn by all attending the meeting.

To help control the spread of COVID-19, all in-person school assemblies and parent nights are suspended until further notice.

Consideration for the start of extracurricular activities (e.g. band, FBLA, athletics) will be determined at a later date based on the most current DHEC, SDE, SCHSL, and CDC guidelines.

Transportation

The district will follow the most current guidelines from the SCDE and DHEC in reference to school bus capacity. Students will be assigned seats in order to facilitate the spreading out of students as much as possible. In addition, additional routes will be considered to reduce capacity when possible.

Buses will be cleaned and disinfected twice per day with an Electrostatic Fogger or approved disinfectant. (The device will come from the SDE) High touch areas will be cleaned between routes daily. In addition, hand sanitizer dispensers will be available on all buses. Transportation to and from school will be impacted by loading students back-to-front, alternating which sides of the bus students sit when possible, and then unloading front to back. Cleaning all interior surfaces of the buses will take place between each route and extra masks will be available upon entering and exiting the bus.

Bus drivers will be provided masks and/or clear face shields to wear while transporting students. When at all possible no student will sit in the front 2 rows on a bus to limit close contact with the driver. To increase airflow on the bus roof vents and some windows should be opened while transporting students.

All students and drivers will be required to wear a face mask. This decision is based on the most current guidelines from the SCDE and DHEC.

DHEC and CDC COVID-19 signage communicating how to stop the spread and describing symptoms of COVID-19, good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols will be placed on all buses. In addition, educate parents and students on the importance of staying home if they have any symptoms or if anyone in their household tests positive for COVID-19. Parents and students must also be reminded to maintain appropriate social distancing at bus stops.

All drivers will be trained in maintaining appropriate social distancing, good hygiene, appropriate cleaning techniques, and school/district COVID-19 protocols. Procedures to notify bus drivers when NOT to pick a student up will be established.

Symptom Identification and Response

Knowing that early detection is paramount, parents are requested to screen their children daily and are expected to keep their children home if they answer yes to the screening questions that are available through the DHEC website or have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher. In addition, children should not be sent to school if anyone in their household tests positive for COVID-19 or is displaying COVID-19 symptoms.

Teachers will conduct wellness checks each morning and throughout the school day. If a student is displaying COVID-19 symptoms, the teacher will email the school nurse who will come to the classroom to evaluate the student. Touchless thermometers will be available for use by each school nurse to take student temperatures if the student is displaying symptoms. Students who present symptoms while at school will be isolated until a designated adult is able to pick them up from school. To reduce the risk of exposure to staff and other students, parents/guardians will be asked to pick their child up ASAP. Schools will follow

current DHEC reporting guidelines when notifying parents of a suspect COVID-19 exposure.

School Nurses and/or building administrators will report daily to the superintendent and lead nurse the daily health conditions at each school. This report should include daily absentee count of students and staff and identifying reasons, when known.

Food Service Recommendations

Students 4K-5 will have pre-boxed meals delivered to their classrooms daily. Students 6-12 (options-all meals will be pre-boxed and students could come to the cafeteria and grab and go. Or meals will be delivered to the classroom(s). Depending on spacing and timing will determine where they eat-classroom-cafeteria-outside)