

WOLCOTT

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The mission of the Wolcott Public Schools is to promote the academic, social, and emotional development of all students to become contributing members of the global community.

Return-to-School Plan Fall 2020

State of Connecticut's Guiding Principles

(As of July)



Safeguarding the health and safety of students and staff

Allowing **all** students the opportunity to return to school buildings **full** time

Monitoring the school, students, and staff for potential school cancelation in the event of COVID-19 spread

Emphasizing equity, access, and support to the students and communities emerging from this historic disruption



WOLCOTT

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The mission of the Wolcott Public Schools is to promote the academic, social, and emotional development of all students to become contributing members of the global community.

Do you have questions about this plan?

Please contact us at:
reopen@wolcottps.org

Introduction

As you view this presentation, it is important to understand that the decision to open school for all students was not left up to local Boards of Education or Superintendents. The Governor and Commissioner of Education have directed that all school districts must open for all students every day. With this understanding, the work of our 30 volunteers named below was to study, understand, and then plan for how to accomplish this very difficult and important task within the guidelines issued.

Likewise, the possibility of a switch to a hybrid schedule (where students would attend school two days per week) would also not be a local decision. This decision will be made at the state or regional level in accordance with changes in data about the spread of COVID-19.

Additionally, the requirement that all students and staff will use face coverings is not a local decision. We must require this as directed in the guidance documents. We know that this will be difficult for many. We are sensitive to this and will do everything we can to keep students and staff members comfortable while always being mindful of safety.

The greatest challenge in creating and implementing this plan is the wide spectrum of opinions and fears about COVID-19. Neither this plan nor any other will be able to allay all possible concerns and fears held by some members of the community. This is normal and natural. We will give our fullest effort to create a productive and safe atmosphere given the constraints in the guidance.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation,
Tony Gasper, Superintendent of Schools

Wolcott START (Schools Transition and Reopening Team)

- Cindy Mancini, Board of Ed. Chair
- Dr. Anthony Gasper, Superintendent
- Shawn Simpson, Asst. Superintendent
- Todd Bendtsen, Business Manager
- Wayne Natzel, Facilities Director
- Kevin Hollis, Student Services
- Matthew Toller, Teachers Union President
- Alexander Pagán, Director of I.T.
- Nicole Maxellon, Food Service Director
- Tracey Fitzmorris, Latchkey Director
- Brenda Johnson, All-Star Transportation
- Sue Lister, Parent
- Matthew Calabrese, Alcott Administrator
- Kimberly Murtaugh, Frisbie Administrator
- Deborah Osvald, Wakelee Administrator
- Daniel Caetano, Tyrrell Administrator
- Walter Drewry, Wolcott HS Administrator
- Debbie Golden, Paraprofessionals Union
- Darcie Rahuba, Food Services Union
- Tammy Cameron, Nurses Union
- Russell Tardiff, Custodians Union
- Kate Murphy, School Secretaries Union
- Jodi Capaldo, Central Office Secretaries Union
- Jessica Kenny, Superintendent's Office

Additional contributors served on the Distance Learning 2.0 advisory team: Cristy Bredice (teacher), Karen LeBlanc (teacher), Tarah Ziogas (parent), Michael Lynch (teacher), Joseph Norcross (school principal), Joseph Morgan (school assistant principal). Also, Maura Esposito, Director of Chesprocott Health District, played an integral role in the composition of this plan.

START Committee's Primary Resources (July 2020)

- [Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together](#)
(CSDE)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
(CDC)
- [Connecticut Department of Health](#)
(CDPH)
- [COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#)

We All Can Do Our Part

If you, your child or anyone in your home are showing any symptoms of illness, please stay home.

Parents are encouraged to check their child's temperature each morning before they leave the house.

Students who show symptoms at school will be placed in an isolation room and supervised until they can be taken home.

COVID
CORONAVIRUS
DISEASE 19

SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness.

Symptoms* can include

FEVER



COUGH



*Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

SHORTNESS OF BREATH



Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.



For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms

CT's 3 Tiered System Based on Risk

Low - Tier 1

Schools operating up to 100% capacity, students/staff with underlying medical conditions should consider restrictions and blended/remote learning

Buses up to full capacity with bus monitors recommended, facial coverings in place during transit, controlled loading/unloading of riders

Face coverings for students and staff while inside school buildings

Identification/isolation of sick students/staff

Cohorting of students encouraged, particularly in younger grades, restrictions on congregating

Maximize spacing of seating up to six feet when feasible

Increased cleaning and sanitization protocols

Moderate - Tier 2

Schools operating at reduced capacity, with more reliance on hybrid model, blended/remote learning, prioritize access to school building for students who need the more learning support, including but not limited to those receiving special education, ELs or limited access due to devices or connectivity issues

Buses at reduced capacity with bus monitors strongly recommended, facial coverings in place during transit, controlled loading/unloading of riders, spaced seating between unrelated riders

Face coverings for students and staff while inside school buildings

Maximize spacing of seating up to six feet or more when feasible with reduced class sizes

Identification/isolation of sick students/staff

Cohorting of students, restrictions on congregating, staggered start/stop times and hallway transit

Indoor extracurricular activities should be suspended, sports and other outdoor activities should consider restrictions on activities

Increased cleaning and sanitization protocols

High - Tier 3

Schools closed, 100% remote learning, bus transportation suspended, extracurricular activities, including sports, should be suspended

All Connecticut Schools are Mandated to Open in **Tier 1:** *Open for All Students Each Day.*

In-person Learning

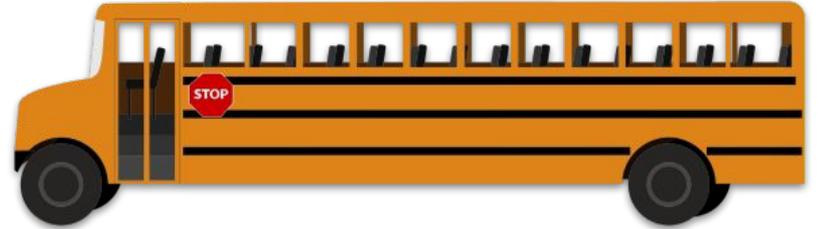
- All classrooms will have distancing maximized to the greatest extent possible
- Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing
- Frequent reminders and signage about “Stop the Spread”
- Masks/Face Coverings over mouth and nose **required**. “Mask breaks” will be given to students when six feet of distancing is possible and safe. Parents may present a note from a licensed medical provider if wearing a mask is hazardous for a child.
- Enhanced, frequent cleaning and disinfection of surfaces
- Specials in elementary and middle schools will be modified (Band, Chorus, PE, etc.)
- Cohorting of Groups (ES/MS)
- Extracurriculars offered as possible by executive order and guidance
- Backpacks encouraged and locker use restricted
- Grading of work done as usual

For parents who choose not to send their child to school:

- Distance learning will be available
- We ask that you make this decision for at least the length of a marking period to provide predictability to your child, other students, and teachers
- Synchronous and asynchronous: We are still testing a plan by which students will be able to log into the classroom from home.

Tier 1: Transportation

- Buses will be thoroughly sanitized each day
- Touch points on buses will be cleaned between each bus run
- Adult(s) and students must all wear a face covering at all times
- Buses will operate at typical capacity
- Bus arrival and dismissal times may be altered slightly to ensure safe drop-off and pick-up at school to reduce congestion in hallways
- Bus considered one “cohort” and the classroom another
- Typical bus routes and stops will be used
- Parents may still choose to transport their children.
- High School students with permission to drive to school may still do so.



Tier 1: Arrival and Dismissal

- Each school will designate additional drop-off and dismissal doors (where possible) to spread out congestion.
- Arrival and dismissal will take longer in order to spread this out over time.
- Parents who choose to transport their child are asked to cooperate with instructions sent home by your school's principal.



Tier 1: What will the classroom look like?

- All unnecessary furniture, rugs, accessories will either be removed or put out of use to the side of the classroom.
- All student desks will face forward. If two students share a table, they will be at opposite ends of the table.
- Desks will be spaced as far apart as possible within the available square footage of the classroom.
- We are working to provide teachers with plexiglass partitions at the front of the room.
- Teachers may remove their masks when distanced more than six feet from a student for direct instruction.
- Small-group instruction will not take place or will be greatly reduced with necessary safety measures. (Awaiting further CSDE guidance on this)



Tier 1: What will the classroom look like? (contd.)

- Reduced/restricted sharing of resources: art, music, Chromebooks, etc.
- Most specials in ES and MS will be delivered in the regular classroom
- Special Education “pull-out” and “push-in” services will continue wherever safe and appropriate
- “Mask breaks” will be allowed and encouraged whenever social distancing can be safely accomplished.
- Teaching practices will need to change, most especially at the elementary level. Strategies such as gathering kids on the rug for whole-class instruction, reading/math groups, partner work, will all be difficult/impossible under these guidelines.



Tier 1: School Meals

Each school has its own possibilities and challenges in using the cafeteria. Each school will implement more than one of the following practices as permitted by the conditions at each building:

- Use extra, nearby spaces (gymnasium, etc.) to spread out students
- Use classroom desks in cafeterias to increase spacing
- Increase the number of lunch waves to reduce the total number of students in a single lunch wave
- Use plastic partitions on cafeteria tables where distancing is more difficult
- All school kitchens and serving lines will have additional plastic partitions for safety.
- Less choice will be available at each meal.



Tier 2: Hybrid Learning

If public health data trends toward a higher infection rate, State officials may deem it necessary for schools to enter “Tier 2”. Tier 2 reduces the total number of students in a school on a given day by implementing an alternating schedule. Students would be assigned to either Cohort A or Cohort B.

- Siblings would be placed into the same cohort
- We have offered parents an opportunity to pair students with non-siblings to aid in childcare needs (*this cannot be guaranteed but we will make every effort to accommodate*)
- Number of students on buses and in classrooms will be reduced by approximately 50%
- All other protocols of Tier 1 continue to apply

The word "HYBRID" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font with a 3D effect, set against a light gray rectangular background with a subtle gradient and shadow.

Tier 2: Hybrid Learning (contd.)

Consultation with parents, teachers, and others on the START committee, resulted in a recommendation of the following hybrid schedule.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A	Cohort B	Off: Flex day	Cohort A	Cohort B

Distance learning activities would be provided on students' off-days. We are currently testing streaming from the classroom along with other methods.



Tier 3: Distance Learning

If public health data on COVID-19 shows continued spread, State officials may order that schools close and enter distance learning. Based on our experiences in the Spring of 2020 and input from many parents, teachers and administrators, we will make substantial improvements in our distance learning format.

Students will experience approximately 90 minutes per day four days per week of synchronous learning with their teacher(s). During this time, all students and teachers will log onto a Google Meet together for instruction. Remainder of the day will be asynchronous (scheduled flexibly). On Wednesday (flex day) students may meet with the teacher for extra help or in small virtual groups for support.



Additional Actions:

- Custodians will constantly circulate all schools, continually cleaning touch points and lavatories
- Lavatory visits will be structured to minimize grouping and allow for cleaning
- Filters on HVAC systems will be upgraded to better particulate capture
- HVAC ventilation of fresh air will be greatly increased
- Visitors will only be allowed to enter schools if absolutely necessary
- Doors will be propped open to the degree allowed by fire code
- Secretaries, counselors, and other support staff will be provided clear plastic partitions where possible and appropriate
- Student passing in the corridor will be coordinated to the degree possible to reduce congestion



Further Detail

Face Coverings



Face Covering

A cloth, paper, or disposable face covering that covers the nose and mouth; may or may not be medical grade



Face Shield

A clear plastic shield that covers the forehead, extends below the chin, and wraps around the sides of the face



Clear Plastic Barrier

A clear plastic or solid surface that can be cleaned and sanitized often

- All people in the building will be required to wear a cloth mask which covers the nose and mouth at all times that they are not eating or drinking. Face coverings with exhaust vents are not acceptable. Face coverings with more than one layer are recommended.
- Frequent mask breaks as developmentally appropriate will be provided (when possible) outside or where social distancing of at least 6 feet can be provided
- School community members with legitimate health concerns that would make the wearing of PPE dangerous or harmful may present the Superintendent with written proof of such from a licensed medical provider
- If the Superintendent deems it prudent (following the advice of medical professionals) school days may be shortened during the warm weather when indoor air quality may be poor and respiratory symptoms may be especially exacerbated by the wearing of masks

Maximized Social Distancing

- Students and staff members will exercise social distancing to the greatest extent feasible
- Hallway traffic will be organized to the greatest extent feasible
- To the greatest extent feasible, student cohorting will be practiced within the classroom, in common areas, and while on playgrounds
- Age appropriate signage reminding school community members to social distance posted throughout the schools and offices

Self-Protective Measures

- Many hand sanitizer stations are available throughout all school buildings
- Scheduled hand washing/sanitizing times
- Age appropriate signage will be posted for Stop the Spread, hand washing, face coverings, social distancing throughout all school buildings
- Each teacher, head custodian, and principal/admin meet in each classroom to design layout and distancing. Mark floor for exclusion zone and social distancing reminders

Enhanced Cleaning Protocols

- Cleaning methods, cleaners, and frequency per CDC guidelines
- Custodians will constantly circulate, sanitizing touchpoints, lavatories, and high-traffic areas
- Custodial work shifts will be adjusted and increased as deemed necessary
- Bathrooms will be cleaned at least twice a day. Where possible, we will consider designating separate bathrooms for different classes or setting shifts for classes to use the bathroom
- Implement use of cleaning log to track cleaning frequency
- Age appropriate signage will be posted for Stop the Spread, hand washing, face coverings, social distancing throughout all school buildings
- Each teacher, head custodian, and principal/admin meet in each classroom to design layout and distancing. Mark floor for exclusion zone and social distancing reminders

Lunch Protocols

Examining the safest practice at each school - options available to each school:

- Food Services will be operational
- Possible alternative options include:
 - Additional lunch waves
 - Plastic partitions where needed
 - Expanded spaces
 - Grab & Go bagged lunches
- *Free and reduced-price lunch will continue to be provided*

Cohorting

Cohorting is the strategy of limiting interactions between individuals to mitigate the spread of the virus and aid in contact tracing if indeed there is a positive individual. State of Connecticut guidance recognizes the balance between cohorting and providing an educational experience that more closely resembles typical education at each developmental level.

- Cohorting of students will occur in Elementary and Middle School and where possible at High School
- Restrictions on congregating
- Maximize spacing of seating in classrooms to the greatest extent possible

Transportation

Low Transmission Risk - Tier 1

- Re-work route times to lessen large groups of buses arriving at school at once
- Buses at or near capacity
- Face coverings required to be worn for all students and adults
- Cleaning protocols in place between bus runs
- Stagger release of each bus of students to avoid congestion in hallways during both the start of the school day and at dismissal

Moderate Transmission Risk - Tier 2

- Buses operate at a significantly reduced capacity
- Bus passengers will be spaced with family members sitting together.
- Social distancing of non family members to the greatest degree possible with fewer riders per bus
- Face coverings required to be worn for all students and adults
- Cleaning protocols in place between bus runs
- Stagger release of each bus of students to avoid congestion in hallways during both the start of the school day and at dismissal



Safe Status

Bus transportation can operate with no restrictions.



Low Status

Bus transportation can operate up to full status with mask requirements and loading and unloading restrictions.



Moderate Status

Bus transportation can operate with seating and spacing restrictions, mask requirements, and loading and unloading restrictions.

Health Practices and Protocols

- Students will be trained on social distancing, cleaning protocols, and hygiene practices. This training will be repeated during the first months of school opening, and available to school community members on the Wolcott district distance learning website (<https://sites.google.com/wolcottps.org/wps-distance-learning/home-click-on-pages-below/wps-boe-meetings>)
- Instruction on social distancing, respiratory and cough etiquette
- Frequent handwashing and use of sanitizer
- Mandatory use of face coverings
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces
- Age appropriate signage of standard public health practices used to prevent the spread of diseases will be posted throughout school buildings and offices
- Age appropriate signage to encourage social distancing
- Cleaning methods, cleaners, and frequency per CDC guidelines
- Hand sanitizer stations are available throughout all school buildings
- Adequate soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues

Health Practices and Protocols (Contd.)

- The number one rule is if you are feeling sick, STAY HOME!
- Individuals who report symptoms during the day will be quarantined within the building and sent home for monitoring
- If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, we will engage the health department in contact tracing and quarantine individuals as necessary
- If a child or staff member who has been present in school is diagnosed with COVID-19, the school will notify families and staff about the exposure (protocols are in place around information sharing while respecting privacy expectations). The district will inform impacted families that a potential contact has occurred but the name of the potentially COVID-positive person will not be shared

Latchkey Programming

- Latchkey programs will follow the requirements of our reopening plan including school policies such as facial coverings and maximizing social distancing
- Additionally, all guidance from the Office of Early Childhood will be adhered to

Synchronous Learning - Tier 3

Our goal is to provide the classroom experience at home to the greatest extent possible. Synchronous learning means that students will be able to see and engage with their class all together online at the same time. In order to support this effort, Wolcott Public Schools has developed a 1:1 Chromebook policy for students in grade 3-12. Wolcott Public School has also purchased technology to maximize the at home experience and most deeply engage the remote learner.

Asynchronous Learning - Tier 3

- Teachers may produce recorded videos through Screencastify or Youtube for distribution among students
- Teachers may post assignments through Google Classroom
- Students may collaborate on projects remotely
- Teachers may meet with students via Google Meet

Special Education Services

We aspire to provide the same level of special education services to students who are unable to attend school, as those in school are receiving. These students' needs will be addressed on an individualized basis through our Student Services Department.

Elementary Schools

Low (Tier I)

Increased Focus on:

- social distancing
- frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer,
 - use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth,
- respiratory and cough etiquette,
- enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces

Social Distancing:

- Remove rugs, small tables, non essential items to maximize social distancing
- Separate desks to the greatest extent possible (face forward)

Sanitizing

- Frequent handwashing in the classrooms. Install soap/sanitizer dispensers

- Face coverings required
- Respiratory/Cough Etiquette lessons

Instruction

- In person with supplementally instruction delivered digitally for those not in school.
- Kids log into Google Classroom for day/lessons.

Materials

Personal Supply, bins, BYO headphones, materials.
Use of online books where possible. Extra supplies for students on hand.

Cohort: Classroom remains static

Moderate (Tier II)

Increased Focus on:

- social distancing
- frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer,
 - use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth,
- respiratory and cough etiquette,
- enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces

Instruction:

- A/B Rotating Schedule (½ student population (A) in school while ½ student population (B) is home learning remotely then switch)
- Mon. Tue. Thur. Fri. Daily rotation
- Wed. Flex day with teacher office hours. Deep cleansing of buildings.
- Kids log into Google Classroom for day/lessons.
- Supplementary instruction delivered digitally (webcam)
- Virtual and in Person attendance

High (Tier 3)

Schools closed, 100% remote learning,

Instruction:

90 Minutes of synchronous learning 4x's per week.
(M, T, TH, F)
Flex Day (W)

Tyrrell Middle School

Low (Tier I)

Increased Focus on:

- social distancing
- frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer,
- use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth,
- respiratory and cough etiquette,
- enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces

Social Distancing:

- Rooms to adhere to guidelines (20 desks per room).
- Separate desks to the greatest extent possible (face forward)
- Arrival/Dismissal Staggered

Cohort: Classroom remains static

Sanitizing

- Frequent handwashing in the classrooms. Install soap/sanitizer dispensers
- Face coverings required
- Respiratory/Cough Etiquette lessons per nurse

Instruction

- In person with supplementally instruction delivered digitally for those not in school.
- Kids log into Google Classroom for day/lessons
- Specialists provide virtual instruction for students to access while they stay in cohort
- Modify Schedule for lunch waves

Materials

No shared materials.

Use of online books where possible. Extra supplies for students on hand.

Moderate (Tier II)

increased Focus on:

- social distancing
- frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer,
- use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth,
- respiratory and cough etiquette,
- enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces

Social Distancing:

- Rooms to adhere to guidelines (20 desks per room).
- Separate desks to the greatest extent possible (face forward)
- Arrival/Dismissal Staggered

Cohort: Classroom remains static

Sanitizing

- Frequent handwashing in the classrooms. Install soap/sanitizer dispensers
- Face coverings required
- Respiratory/Cough Etiquette lessons per nurse

Instruction:

- A/B Rotating Schedule (½ student population (A) in school while ½ student population (B) is home learning remotely then switch)
- Mon. Tue. Thur. Fri. Daily rotation
- Wed. Flex day with teacher office hours. Deep cleansing of buildings.
- U/A Virtual
- Kids log into Google Classroom for day/lessons.
- Supplementary instruction delivered digitally (webcam)
- Virtual and in Person attendance

High (Tier III)

Schools closed, 100% remote learning,

Instruction:

90 Minutes of synchronous learning 4x's per week.
(M, T, TH, F)
Flex Day (W) (Off. Hours, Feedback, SGI,
Communication)

Wolcott High School

Low (Tier I)

Increased Focus on:

- social distancing
- frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer,
- use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth,
- respiratory and cough etiquette,
- enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces

Social Distancing:

- 3 entrances
- Start in period 1
- 7am teacher start time
- Separate desks to the greatest extent possible (face forward)
- Assess individual classrooms and space
- Relocate large classes

Sanitizing

- Frequent handwashing. Install soap/sanitizer dispensers
- Face coverings required
- Respiratory/Cough Etiquette signage
- Enhanced Cleaning

Instruction

- In person with supplementally instruction delivered digitally for those not in school
- Google Classroom for day/lessons
- Modify Schedule for lunch waves
- Work to meet needs of IEP's, 504's

Materials

- No shared materials.
- Use of online books where possible.
- Extra supplies for students on hand.

Moderate (Tier II)

Increased Focus on:

- social distancing
- frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer,
- use of face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth,
- respiratory and cough etiquette,
- enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces

Social Distancing:

- 3 entrances
- Start in period 1
- 7am teach her start time
- Separate desks to the greatest extent possible (face forward)
- Assess individual classrooms and space
- Relocate large classes

Sanitizing

- Frequent handwashing. Install soap/sanitizer dispensers
- Face coverings required
- Respiratory/Cough Etiquette signage
- Enhanced Cleaning

Instruction:

- A/B Rotating Schedule (½ student population (A) in school while ½ student population (B) is home learning remotely then switch)
- Mon. Tue. Thur. Fri. Daily rotation
- Wed. Flex day with teacher office hours. Deep cleansing of buildings.
- Kids log into Google Classroom for day/lessons.
- Supplementary instruction delivered digitally
- Virtual and in Person attendance

High (Tier III)

Schools closed, 100% remote learning,

Instruction:

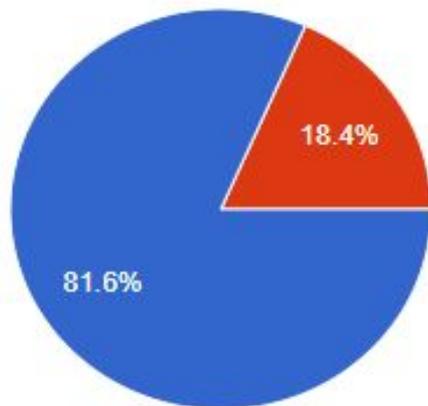
- 90 Minutes of synchronous learning 4x's per week. (M, T, TH, F)
- 90 mins per class per week.
- Flex Day (W) (Off. Hours, Feedback, Communication)
- Equity-intervention

Parent Perspective on Students Attending School This Fall

Wolcott Public Schools parents were surveyed on July 13, 2020 about their intentions of sending their child back to school this fall. The vast majority of parents who responded intend on sending their child/children back to school: (as of July 21, 2020)

I/we plan to:

1,487 responses



- Send my child to school for in person learning
- Keep my child home for remote learning

Transportation

In the same survey sent on July 13, 2020 The results below indicate we can expect less students on the bus this fall. If possible, parents are encouraged to drive their children to and from school. (as of July 21, 2020)

Will your child be using district provided transportation? (busses will run at, or near, capacity- masks required)

1,487 responses



Do you have questions about this plan?

Please contact us at:

reopen@wolcottps.org



WOLCOTT
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The mission of the Wolcott Public Schools is to promote the academic, social, and emotional development of all students to become contributing members of the global community.