



7/10/2020

Dear Parents,

*The Calhoun County School District understands that we are living in trying and uncertain times. We also understand that the COVID-19 pandemic is polarizing and a deep source of frustration for everyone. It is also obvious that opinions vary widely about where we are, what we should be doing, and where we are headed. We are definitely in uncharted territory.*

*Planning for the re-opening of our schools has been and continues to be a very complex task. Based upon the limited and ever evolving information that is available, we know **there is no perfect plan**. However, as educators, we are charged with developing a plan to educate our students while minimizing the risks to those students and our staff.*

*The superintendent originally recommended a Modified Traditional Plan (Hybrid) to the school board to restart school. This plan included a 5-day school schedule for grades K4-10<sup>th</sup> and virtual learning for all juniors and seniors. In the end, the board voted to restart school as outlined in this document. Regardless of the actual plan, the intent of everyone in any school leadership position is to offer the highest quality education to the greatest number of students in the safest way. We are also focused on remaining in school in this traditional setting for as long as possible while allowing parents to have some choices in their child's educational programming. We are dedicated and determined.*

*This correspondence is designed to answer some frequently asked questions about the 2020-2021 school year in our district. Below is an overview of what you can expect for the upcoming year. **This document is intended to give you the information needed for you to make an educated and informed decision regarding your child/children's educational program for the upcoming school year.***

Sincerely,

Jeff Patton  
Assistant Superintendent

Lisa Langford  
Superintendent

*In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, countless procedural documents have been created to address the challenges we currently face. CCSD recognizes that this is a very fluid situation that will require flexibility as we respond to a rapidly changing environment. In the event that any written procedures associated with COVID-19 conflict with the existing board-approved district policies, the guidelines set forth in the pandemic document will supersede all district regulations.*



# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. Are students going to return to school this year?

Yes, students will return to school on August 5<sup>th</sup>.

## 2. What type of school opening will the Calhoun County School District have?

Parents will choose between the two options below:

Option #1: The CCSD will have a “Traditional” opening on the campuses with multiple safety steps taken to attempt to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19.

Option #2: The CCSD will also offer 100% “Virtual” classes for students. Parents who have safety concerns regarding the virus or are opposed to the mask safety procedures that are in place may choose this option. Applications will only be accepted prior to the start of each semester.

## 3. What will be involved if a parent chooses the Virtual learning model?

This is what we know right now:

All instruction will be done online. Students who use this option will not meet for any face-to-face instruction. Students will be taught the same curriculum through distance learning methods. Google Classroom and Google Meet will primarily be used to bring instruction through video, assignments, feedback, questions and answers, projects and other online resources. All teachers will receive training on the Google Suite and Best Practices for Virtual Learning prior to school starting. We are still developing the video portion. It could be live streaming, recorded, or a combination of both. Attendance will be taken and assessments will be given to ensure understanding and mastery. The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) plans to release guidance on virtual attendance and procedures for taking the required assessments throughout the year. More information will be released as it becomes available.

The district is working towards a 1:1 device initiative with MDE. The CCSD will work to provide a device to any virtual student who does not have access to a compatible device.

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#### **4. Will there be an Open House this year?**

Yes, there will be an Open House. To help reduce the risk of COVID-19, the District will have a drive-through Open House at each school from 4:00-6:00 p.m. on August 3, 2020. Your school will be sending you specific procedures for this event.

#### **5. Is there any chance that schools could be placed on a more restrictive model (hybrid or full virtual)?**

Absolutely. Please remember that conditions surrounding the transmission of the virus are very fluid. It will be highly likely that conditions will require schools to transition in and out of more restrictive models throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Although we hope to avoid closure, it is possible that circumstances will dictate that we quarantine some classes, locations, or schools if we have virus outbreaks. Districtwide closure will likely only occur if such an order is given by Governor Reeves.

#### **6. Will the school hours remain the same?**

Yes. However, there may be slight changes to the schedule. Any changes will be announced at a later time.

#### **7. Will the district provide bus transportation?**

Yes, bus schedules will operate as normal as possible. However, if at all possible, the CCSD does ask that you provide transportation to and from school for your child/children to help us reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 while on the bus. The following safety measures will be in place for those who choose to ride a bus:

##### **COVID-19 Bus Safety Guidelines:**

1. Parents are asked to take their child/children's temperature and inspect their overall health before sending them to the bus pickup. Students with temperatures of 100.4 or higher or showing any COVID-19 symptoms (fever, chills, coughing, difficulty breathing, etc.) will need to stay at home. (Temperature screenings will occur at the entrance of the school building and parents will be called to pick up their child/children if they have a fever of 100.4 or higher.)
2. Students living in the same household will be seated together on the bus when needed.
3. **Masks will be worn to and from school by each student and driver. NO EXCEPTIONS.**
4. All bus riders will be required to use hand sanitizer upon entry to the bus.
5. Students will be spaced throughout the bus to maximize social distancing as much as possible.
6. Depending upon availability, students could be seated 2 per seat.

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7. Students will be required to remain seated and are prohibited from raising their voice, singing, yelling, or performing any activity that would put unnecessary water droplets in the air.
8. Buses will be cleaned and disinfected after each route.
9. Drivers and school administrators will work together to quickly and permanently remove any student from the bus who fails to follow the safety guidelines. School transportation is a privilege. Students who place the health and safety of the other riders or the driver in jeopardy **will not** be allowed to ride the bus.

**8. If my child is enrolled as a traditional student, what measures will the school take to provide a safe and healthy learning environment?**

The CCSD Safety Plan includes the following procedures:

- Increased nursing staff on each campus
- Temperature screenings upon arrival to school
- COVID-19 safety training for teachers
- Teaching of safety practices to all students
- Handwashing will be encouraged with sanitizing stations throughout the buildings.
- Closely monitoring students
- Students/staff with temperatures of 100.4 or higher will be asked to leave campus.
- Educational posters and social distancing notifications will be in place.
- Mask will be utilized in compliance to school board requirements.
- Students will be isolated in their individual “cohort group” as much as possible.
- Movements/transitions will be staggered across all campuses when possible.
- When possible, teachers will move from class to class instead of students.
- New cleaning and sanitizing measures have been implemented.
- Quarantining infected student(s), staff, cohort groups, or campuses as needed to attempt to slow the spread of the virus
- Social distancing practices will be used to the greatest extent possible.

**9. Will I be allowed to walk my student to his/her class?**

To reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19, no visitors will be allowed to walk students to class or to enter any “non-public” area of a school.

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**10. Will students continue to have special classes such as computer, library, or PE?**

Our overall safety strategy is for students to remain as stationary as possible. As a result, special classes will be brought into the classroom. Computer specials will be done in the classroom. Librarians will cart books into the classroom. Indoor PE will not occur, but when weather permits, PE can occur outdoors.

**11. Will students be allowed on the playground?**

Yes, classes will rotate to the playground on a staggered basis to prevent the cross-contamination of “cohort groups.” Masks will not be required outdoors if proper social distancing can occur in these small groups.

**12. Will students be able to eat in the cafeteria?**

No. On a staggered schedule, students will pick up their food in the cafeteria and eat inside their classroom.

**13. Will my child be required to wear a mask at school?**

During the regular school board meeting in June 2020, the Board unanimously voted to implement the following procedure:

Masks will be required for all students during all transitions. Students in K4-4<sup>th</sup> grade will not be required to wear masks in the classroom or while on the playground. Students in grades 5<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> will be required to wear masks in the classrooms, but masks can be removed outside during breaks. Parents may take advantage of the Virtual option if you are unwilling to comply with the stated mask requirements.

**14. Will the school district provide masks to the students?**

Each student will receive 2 cloth masks (in school colors with logo).

**15. Will staff members have to wear a mask at school?**

Yes, all school staff will be required to wear a mask.

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**16. What types of masks will be allowable in school?**

Store-bought and homemade masks will be acceptable as long as the nose and mouth are both fully covered. Gaiters will be allowed. Bandanas will NOT be allowed. Masks with graphics and words will not be allowed. (Exceptions- monogrammed names and initials or school sponsored/administrator approved school logos)

**17. Will students be transported to the Calhoun County Career and Technical Center (CTC)?**

No, the CTC teachers will travel to the schools to serve the students on their campus.

**18. Will athletics and extra-curricular activities resume as normal?**

Recommendations from the MHSAA will determine the extent of these activities.

**19. What will happen if a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19?**

Following CDC guidelines, the infected person will be quarantined for at least 14 days. He/she must also have been fever free (without fever reducers) for at least 72 hours before returning to school. Additionally, appropriate notifications will be sent to parents and staff. Depending upon the situation, other students, staff, cohort groups, or the campus could be placed on quarantine. The entire school could be temporarily closed if certain trigger points are reached.

**20. What will happen if a “Traditional” student’s parent or sibling from the same household tests positive for COVID-19?**

The traditional student will be required to quarantine for at least 14 days.

**21. If a traditional student tests positive for COVID or is asked to quarantine at home, can the student receive Virtual services during the required quarantine period.**

Yes, the student could receive educational services virtually during that required absence from school.

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**22. What should you do if you want to choose the Virtual option?**

There will be an application process that must be completed and approved for the Virtual option. This application will be released soon.

**23. Can a Virtual student participate in extracurricular activities such as sports and band?**

Yes, he/she may participate.

**NOTE: The answers to these questions may change as conditions change.**

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