



## **Worthington Schools Responsible Reopening Frequently Asked Questions & Answers**

### **When will school start in 2020?**

We are currently planning to open schools to student on Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, but will continue to evaluate our school calendar as new information becomes available. Staff will report as scheduled on Monday, August 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **How will my child's IEP and/or 504 services and accommodations be met?**

Your child's Intervention Specialist/Counselor will communicate with you in reference to adjustments to schedules, services or delivery model that may be necessary to individually meet the needs of your child. You can read more in this [Special Education Department August update](#).

### **Will instruction be in school buildings or online?**

School and local health officials will meet weekly to review community and school trends and provide recommendations on school-based options.

- Local health officials will use a variety of data points when making recommendations for transitioning between hybrid and enhanced distance learning.
- Local health officials recommend nothing less than 6 feet of physical distancing for any in-person learning option during the pandemic.

All plans are subject to change based on evolving conditions, data about the status of the pandemic, and recommendations or guidance from public health authorities and the scientific community.

### **Will social distancing be required?**

We will practice social distancing as much as possible. Due to the size of our student body and our facilities it will not be possible at all times. In classrooms, student seating may be arranged to all face in the same direction, when possible, and will be spaced as

far apart as possible. On buses, we will attempt to place one student per seat (siblings may sit together). At lunch, we will maximize available spaces for distancing and use alternate spaces beyond cafeterias.

### **Will masks be required?**

Students and staff will need to wear masks following our face-covering protocols.

- **Students K-12:** Masks are required on the bus, in the hall, and in classrooms. When students are appropriately spaced in a classroom, the teacher may allow mask breaks
- **Staff:** Masks are required in the hall and in classrooms with students. When students are appropriately spaced, the teacher may remove the mask while wearing a face shield.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Families shall provide face coverings as the schools will have a limited supply. Medical exemptions applications must be submitted by August 1st.  
Students should plan to have two cloth masks (and face shield as desired) as part of their back-to-school supplies.
- **I Don't Want My Child Wearing a Mask.**  
We know that there are strong opinions about the use of masks. The State of Ohio strongly recommends masks for the increased safety of both students and the adults in the school.

This is especially important since some carriers of COVID-19 may not have any symptoms. Children, despite being generally less affected by COVID-19, expose school staff and adults at home who may be more at risk. Students who cannot or will not wear a mask during the required times at school will need to utilize online learning at home.

### **What will be different on school buses?**

There will be one student per seat (siblings may sit together) and masks will be required on buses. Also, parents must reserve a spot for their child to ride the bus and students will be assigned seats. Students will not be able to ride a friend's bus home. A school bus reservation email will be provided to all families in early August.

### **I drop my child off at school. Will anything change?**

We anticipate an increase in parents dropping students off at school. Some schools may need to assign staggered drop off times and/or change drop off locations to accommodate this increase. Your school will provide more details.

**What changes will students see in the cafeteria and at water fountains?**

At elementary schools, students may pick up their meals in the cafeteria, or have them delivered to their classrooms. In either case, students will eat in their classrooms to assist with distancing and limit co-mingling with other students.

All Parents should expect some changes to current food policies in order to protect students who have food allergies. *For example, no lunch, packed or purchased, can contain anything made with peanuts or other tree nuts. Since students are likely to be eating in their classrooms, no allergens can be present.*

All water fountains will be turned off, and we will be using classroom sinks and water bottle fillers to fill water bottles throughout the day.

**What changes will be implemented in school health clinics?**

There will be separate areas created in our health clinics—one for regular care and an isolated area for anyone who presents signs or symptoms of illness.

Parents will no longer be allowed to bring medications into clinics. If you need to provide medication for your child, a nurse will meet you in a designated area to handle this.

You can also expect to see changes in how we administer stocked medicines, the suspension of nebulizer treatments, and new criteria for staying home from school/returning to school, based on CDC guidelines.

Please reach out to your school nurse if you have specific concerns regarding your child's medical care.

**Are middle school and high school kids going to be switching classrooms?**

If we are in the Hybrid or All-In School-Based Option, our students in middle school and high school would follow their schedule to the different classrooms. It would not be logistically feasible to have students stay in one classroom and rotate the teachers given their diverse classes (orchestra, band, choir, math, science).

**What changes will be implemented on playgrounds and in PE classes?**

Schools will make every effort to maintain consistency while following safety procedures. This may mean that schools will limit student access to certain pieces of playground equipment and restrict activities that are “high touch” and difficult to clean or maintain social distancing.

We will work toward “structured” recess activities such as nature walks that limit students’ physical contact with others.

Students must sanitize their hands after recess.

PE classes are still being evaluated and more information will be coming at a later date.

### How will the all Online Learning Option work?

We recognize for a myriad of reasons it may be possible that a family decides for their child(ren) not to be present in the school building at any point in the school year, regardless of whether we return in a hybrid or all-in schedule. Students staying home to receive full-time instruction will be set up with online courses through an online service partner, paid for by the District. Students will be afforded the opportunity to take grade-level appropriate courses provided through the Ohio Online Learning Program (OOLP).

### OOLP QUICK LINKS

[Ohio Online Learning Program Flyer](#)  
[Presentation Slides](#)  
[Parent Night Webinar Video](#)  
[Middle School \ High School Course List](#)

[Enrollment Form](#)

[Remove my Student from the OOLP List Form](#)

### Please Read: Useful Information to Consider

- The deadline for registration for the OOLP Option has been extended to **Wednesday, August 19 at 5:00 p.m.**
- There is no comparison between the Worthington Options and OOLP. Answer for yourself the following question:  
*“Am I a parent who CANNOT or WILL NOT send my student(s) to school without a vaccine?”*
  - *If the answer is “Yes” -- enroll for OOLP. It is your only option for certainty that your child will not be expected to attend at school.*
  - *If the answer is “No” -- do nothing further! Your child will participate in the flexible options for attending school in Worthington (All In, Hybrid, or Remote)*
- Choosing OOLP is a commitment for the semester.
- Due to staffing and planning, we will no longer allow students to enter in the OOLP after the August 19 deadline. In November, we will be providing information to families with a registration process for second semester classes.
- Students who participate in OOLP may take advantage of Band and/or Orchestra programming in whatever form they are being offered.

- Special Education Services outlined on a student's IEP will continue to be offered to students by qualified teachers.
- Understand that while the courses offered in the OOLP are aligned with Ohio Learning Standards, the pacing, sequencing, and materials used by Worthington Schools may differ. If a student returns to Worthington Schools for the second semester, minor gaps or repetitions in learning may be present, and will be addressed by teachers at that time.
- Moving to the OOLP, there is no planned/ongoing connection (live teaching, classroom interaction, etc.) with the Worthington class working in hybrid, remote, or All In.

### **Elementary Student Considerations**

- Your choice of OOLP will be at the district's expense unless the student drops or does not complete the semester. Doing so will transfer the charges to the parent. (Cost is \$1,570.00 for grades K-2; \$2,000.00 for grades 3-6)
- Families enrolled in OOLP will still pay their student's school consumable fee, which will cover the workbooks necessary for OOLP content.
- The elementary programming offered includes core content: English Language Arts, Math, and Science/Social Studies. No electives are offered.
- If you have questions related to Elementary School OOLP, email Patrick Callaghan at [pcallaghan@wscloud.org](mailto:pcallaghan@wscloud.org)

### **Middle and High School Student Considerations**

- Similar to our previous communication, we will not charge families for this option, unless they do not complete any courses or start in the program and then stop at any point. The cost of the semester program for grades 7-12 is \$250 per semester course, or \$1,250 per semester (5 semester classes).
- Not all classes that we offer in our Worthington Schools have a comparable online class in the Worthington Online Learning Academy (i.e., Family and Consumer Science courses, Art courses, AP Chemistry, IB classes, etc.).
- Please review the [OOLP Course List](#) to view the courses available.
- If you sign up your child for the OOLP (link above), please also fill out the [OOLP Middle School \ High School Course Request Form](#) by August 19 at 5 PM.
- Students will not be able to participate in AP classes, IB classes, or other classes at our schools.
- Students will be able to participate in district athletics, extra-curricular activities, and after-school functions.
- If you have any questions related the Middle School or High School OOLP, please contact Neil Gupta at [ngupta@wscloud.org](mailto:ngupta@wscloud.org)

### **Will students be screened for COVID-19 symptoms?**

Parents need to be attentive to the daily health of their children and will be required to sign an expectation agreement indicating their commitment to ensure their child is symptom free and safe to attend school each day. This includes being fever-free for 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. School staff will also be receiving

professional development on how to recognize potential COVID-19 symptoms. No one should be in our buildings if they are experiencing any symptoms of illness.

**What will happen if someone tests positive for COVID-19?**

If we have a confirmed case of COVID-19, we will follow direction from the Columbus Public Health Department and the Franklin County Public Health Department . This may include closing a classroom, school, or schools for a period of time and shifting quickly to remote learning at home for students who are impacted. Many of our new procedures are designed to support contact tracing should a confirmed case occur. This will assist the Health Department with quickly identifying and contacting individuals who may have been exposed.

**Will schools be open all year? Will these procedures be in place all year?**

The pandemic shifts rapidly, and we don't know what the rest of the school year may bring. If cases surge, schools may be ordered to close again, requiring all students to shift to remote learning. If the situation improves, we may be able to abandon some elements of this plan and return to more normal operating conditions.

**What cleaning enhancements are being implemented in buildings?**

We've stocked up on personal protective equipment, hand washing materials and cleaning supplies.

In addition to our regular cleaning, we'll be disinfecting more often in common areas like hallways, cafeterias, bathrooms, playgrounds and buses, as well as high-touch surfaces like door handles and desks. We'll also be using electrostatic disinfectants as needed in buildings and buses for intense after-hours cleaning.

We're already meeting the State Department of Health's recommended environmental steps to reduce indoor COVID transmission through humidity, air-conditioning, air filters, etc.

**What social and emotional resources will be in place as students return?**

We recognize the importance of providing students and staff with extra social and emotional support as they return to school this year. Expect to see special welcome activities, extra time for building relationships and establishing new routines, and focus on coping strategies.

Our counselors, social workers and psychologists will be ready to assist students and staff in need of support. Additionally, school-based mental health professionals will be available. We'll be sharing additional resources throughout the year.

**What happens if our family needs technology?**

No worries! Just ask your principal, and we'll get you a Chromebook and internet "hotspot" if you need it.

**Will Back-To-School events still be happening?**

Most back-to-school events will be virtual to limit large group gatherings. Individual schools will communicate how they will handle schedule pick-ups, meet the teacher events, etc...

**Will the After School Enrichment Programs (Elementary Buildings) be offered?**

6 Crickets is partnering with Worthington Schools to coordinate [virtual enrichment programs](#) this summer. We will continue that practice for the fall session and re-evaluate for winter/spring sessions.

**Will elementary students receive EPP class in hybrid model?**

Yes, they will. For those days students are in-person, all safety protocols, including limiting the number of homerooms students are placed into, and the sanitization of surfaces between each EPP class. For those days students are not in school, they will have assignments and activities from their EPP teacher to be completed.

**How will that work for accelerated EPP students or students in different alphabet sections?**

Students will attend EPP on their assigned days (M-W or T-Th). There will just be smaller class sizes just as in the general classroom. For those accelerated, they will attend their accelerated EPP class on their assigned in-person days. This may mean that not all accelerated students will be on the same days, some may be there M-W while others attend on T-Th.

**How do the plans affect partially accelerated students who take a single advanced subject or classes at a higher level school?**

Students will still attend their accelerated course(s) at a higher level school on their scheduled in-person days. Students will be transported to and from using all safety protocols with transportation. Principals are currently coordinating schedules with their colleagues and Transportation.

### **Does the company providing online only learning facilitate gifted needs?**

Under current Ohio legal guidelines, students participating in online education (like the Ohio Online Learning Program) do not get gifted services from their home school district. The Ohio Department of Education has informed Worthington Schools that they are reviewing that policy due to the unusual circumstances surrounding the pandemic & student safety. At this time, the ODE has not provided any new guidance focusing on gifted services from a students' home district in conjunction with online learning. Once the ODE provides this guidance, we will update our Reopening Plan to reflect their decisions and any changes that will need to be made for the 2020-2021 school year.

### **What can parents do now to ensure a smooth start to school?**

We encourage parents to talk with, reassure, and support their children about these changes, and the importance of social distancing and wearing masks.

- Allow your child to ask questions and answer them to the best of your ability. [Find guidance here.](#)
- Explain the [why behind wearing a mask](#) and have your child practice wearing their mask.
- Read a story about returning to school such as [Going Back to School](#) or [Welcome Back to School](#).
- Follow recommended guidelines regarding masks and social distancing this summer to help prevent a future surge in cases that might impact the start of school.
- Help students get back into a normal schedule at least a week before school begins, such as reinstating bedtime and wake up routines.
- Be sure that all your child's immunizations are up to date, including newly required immunizations for students entering kindergarten, 6th and 12th grades.
- Stay in close communication with your school should your health situation or return plans change.

### **What other changes can I expect?**

Unfortunately, we must restrict visitors to promote health, safety and social distancing. Students and staff should not be in buildings if they are experiencing *any* symptoms of illness.

We'll be reviewing our overall attendance policies for staff and students, as well as eliminating any attendance recognitions that could encourage attending school when not feeling well. More information on the specific attendance policy changes will be coming at a later date.

The pandemic shifts rapidly and we don't know what the rest of the school year may bring. Other changes could certainly be implemented, and we will be in close communication with staff and families as future decisions are made.

- [State Guidance from the Ohio Department of Education](#)
- [COVID-19 Health & Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools](#)
- [Guidance for School Re-entry from the American Academy of Pediatrics](#)