



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### INSTRUCTION

***Q. When is the first day of school?***

**A.** The first day of school is Tuesday, September 1.

***Q. How will the district determine when students go to school under the hybrid model?***

**A.** Under the hybrid model, half the students will attend school on Mondays and Tuesdays and the other half will attend on Thursdays and Fridays.

The district's goal is to keep families/siblings on the same schedule. For instance, if the family consists of a sister at Holmes High School and two brothers at John G., the siblings would all be on the same schedule and go to school on the same days.

***Q. Do I have a choice as to whether or not my child participates in in-person learning for the start of the school year?***

**A.** Parents will always have the choice to remain only in the remote learning model. If a parent decides to opt-out of in-person learning for their child for the start of the 2020-21 school year, the parent must submit their intent by **August 7, 2020**. Parents must commit to a semester or 18 weeks of remote learning. Attendance will be taken daily, and full grading practices will be in place for students learning remotely.

***Q. Will the district provide computers for students during remote learning?***

**A.** The district has ordered additional computers and will provide those to students as soon as they are available. Please check the district website and social media sites for updates.

***Q. What if my child does not have access to Wi-Fi at home?***

**A.** The city of Covington and the school district are working to enhance internet connectivity across the city. This will hopefully be completed in December 2020 or January 2021. A limited number of hotspots are available. Contact your child's school for more information.

***Q. Can I change my child's instructional plan after the school year begins? For example: my child begins the school year on the in-person schedule but wishes to change to remote full-time. Is that possible?***

**A.** Yes, on a semester basis. All instructional plans will follow the same curriculum guides, standards and pairings. Parents can move their student from one plan to another after 18 weeks or a semester. To make such a change, parents must contact their school.

Please note: any changes to the instructional plans will be made by the individual school and based upon enrollment and availability. There is no guarantee a student will continue with the same teacher if they switch to a different instructional option.

***Q. What are the district's attendance and grading policies during in-person classes and remote learning?***

**A.** Attendance and grading policies will be in full effect no matter what model of instruction is being used. The school district will track daily attendance, assignments, participation, and grades.

The school district will analyze data on student participation when they are participating in remote learning and look for ways to sustain high levels of student engagement. Each of the district's schools will identify a team of staff to reach out and support those students who are in remote learning.

***Q. How will instruction and support be ensured for students who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or other special learning needs?***

**A.** Whether services are provided in-person, remotely and/or through a hybrid model, the district will address and adhere to the provision of free, appropriate public education consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those providing special education services.

Teachers and support staff will provide the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services and technology to meet the needs of our special needs learners. Students with IEPs will continue to have a special education case manager.

## SAFETY

***Q. How will you keep my child safe at school?***

**A.** National, state, and local health officials all agree on four basic methods of reducing our risk of illness from any communicable disease, including COVID-19 (coronavirus). We built our reopening plans around these four basic practices as this will provide the safest way to resume in-person education. They are:

- Handwashing and using hand sanitizer when washing is not possible
- Regular cleaning of all frequently-touched spaces
- Social distancing of 6 feet
- Cloth face coverings

***Q. What other steps is the district taking to make attending school safe?***

**A.** Frequent handwashing will occur in all buildings. The district will also increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting buildings. Visitors (when and if permitted) will be required to wear face masks and parents will need to schedule appointments to meet with school staff. Large group assemblies and field trips will be eliminated. Every effort will be made to keep schools open. One or more cases will not trigger an automatic closing of schools.

The decision to suspend in-person school attendance and move to remote learning in some or all grade levels will be based on a number of factors and include consultation with our public health department and local medical providers.

***Q. What safety procedures will be in place on the buses?***

**A. Students in kindergarten – grade 12** – All students are required to wear a face covering or mask on the bus, unless they have a medical waiver. If any student does not have a mask, one will be provided. Students will be assigned specific seats and family members will sit together. Temperatures will be taken prior to students entering the school building.

**Students in preschool** – All students are required to wear a face covering or mask on the bus, unless they have a medical waiver. Prior to boarding the bus, students' temperatures will be taken. Children with a temperature of 100.4 will not board the bus and will return home with their parent/guardian. Students will be assigned specific seats and family members will sit together.

School buses will be cleaned daily between school routes.

***Q. How will daily temperature checks be performed?***

**A.** Parents are expected to screen children at home and keep them home if they are ill. If the child has a temperature greater than 100.4°F, the child should remain home. Temperatures of students will be taken upon arrival at school as students get off the bus.

If a student has a temperature greater than 100.4, the student will report to an isolation room, have their temperature re-taken by a nurse, and a parent will be called to come and get the child. Walkers, car riders, and student drivers' temperatures will be taken at the entrance to the buildings.

***Q. Will visitors or volunteers be allowed in schools?***

**A.** Visitors or volunteers to schools or district support sites will be strictly limited until further notice. Parents/guardians will need to make an appointment to meet with teachers or other school staff members. Parents/guardians wearing face coverings will report to the front office and not go beyond, unless directed by the school administrator.

Essential visitors to facilities will be required to wear face coverings and will be restricted in their access to our school buildings. Visitors must follow all safety protocols as listed above. There will be no parent volunteers until further notice.

***Q. How will buses be cleaned?***

**A.** Our Transportation Department is following guidance from the Kentucky Department of Education regarding the proper cleaners and schedule for cleaning all of our school buses.

***Q. How will the students eat breakfast/lunch?***

**A.** For the first several weeks of school, students will be provided with a bagged breakfast and lunch. Students will eat breakfast in the classroom. Schools are deciding individually, based on available space, whether students will eat lunch in classrooms, the cafeteria, or other available space.

# FACE COVERINGS/MASKS

***Q. Will students and staff be required to wear masks?***

**A.** Yes. National, state, and local health officials agree that wearing a cloth face covering is essential to preventing the spread of COVID -19. Kentucky Department of Education issued the following guidance to all schools, based on information from the Kentucky Department for Public Health:

*Safety expectations must be implemented by schools as determined by the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Face masks prohibit spread of the virus even when the infected person is without symptoms. Students and staff should be required to wear a cloth face covering, unless medically waived.*

All students will be required to wear a cloth face covering on the bus, unless they have a medical waiver.

***Q. Will the district provide face coverings to students?***

**A.** Students are encouraged to bring their own face covering to school; however, the district has ordered enough reusable (washable) face coverings to make sure each student has two.

For proper wearing of facing coverings, please click here.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-facecovering.pdf>

***Q. What if my child does not qualify for a medical waiver and I don't want them to wear a mask?***

**A.** Wearing masks is a requirement similar to any other health and safety or dress code rules. The district's goal is to keep all our students, staff members and families safe and healthy. The best way to do this is to follow the guidelines from health professionals.

Wearing a face covering is one of the four main ways to keep everyone safe. Students riding buses and attending school are expected to wear a cloth face covering. A medical waiver form will be required for any student not wearing a cloth face covering. Families may also choose the remote learning option if they do not want their children to wear a mask.

***Q. Will students with special needs or medical conditions be required to wear a mask?***

**A.** Medical conditions and special needs will be addressed individually when it comes to face coverings/masks. Please contact your child's school for more information.

# COVID/NOTIFICATION/PROTOCOLS/TESTING

***Q. What if my child is an English Language Learner?***

A. The district, in collaboration with its ELL coordinator, will make sure that any English Learner being enrolled in the district is screened to receive appropriate ELL services. These services will be provided in-person, remotely, and/or in a hybrid model.

***Q. What will happen if someone around my child tests positive for COVID-19?***

A. Following the guidance of state and local health officials, the district will notify the local health department of any positive COVID-19 tests. The Northern Kentucky Health Department officials will guide us on next steps including: identifying all students and staff members that may have been in close contact with the person who tested positive, informing those who may have been in close contact with the person who tested positive, and any additional steps needed.

***Q. What will happen if someone at school gets the virus?***

A. State and local health departments have outlined a process for schools to follow for contact tracing to determine the most appropriate course of action when a student or school staff member tests positive for COVID-19. Buses and schools will keep daily records of where students sit and who sits close to them, in order for the health department to determine the level of risk and next steps such as who might need to be tested for the virus or who might need to quarantine for 14 days.

***Q. Will the school tell me if there is someone at school who tests positive for the virus?***

A. Due to privacy laws, the school cannot provide specific identifying information. As recommended by the health department, the school will send a general letter to families and staff members who may have been in close contact with the individual who tested positive, along with possible next steps. A sample of this letter is on the district website.

The school will provide information to the health department to support contact tracing. This information includes who may have been in close contact with the person who tested positive for the virus. The health department then contacts those individuals and families regarding next steps.

***Q. Will staff be tested for COVID-19 before school starts or during the school year?***

A. There are currently no recommendations for testing of staff or students on a large scale prior to the start of the school year. At this time, there are not enough test kits and materials to test everyone and most health officials suggest checking with your primary care physician to determine your individual need for a COVID-19 test.

***Q. Will schools close and move to remote learning if one or more cases of COVID-19 is discovered among school students or staff?***

A. Every effort will be made to keep schools open. One or more cases will not trigger an automatic closing of schools. The decision to suspend in-person school attendance and move to remote learning in some or all grade levels will be based on a number of factors and include consultation with the Northern Kentucky Health Department and other local officials.

***Q. What can I do as a parent to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 at school?***

**A.** It is very important that you monitor your child's health and keep them home when they don't feel well, even if illness has not been confirmed by a medical provider. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, muscle aches, breathing difficulty, coughing, loss of senses of smell and taste, and diarrhea in children, though symptoms can vary widely and some children exhibit few, if any, symptoms.

***Q. What if a student or employee has symptoms, but is not a confirmed case of COVID-19?***

**A.** If a student or employee is not feeling well, and exhibiting symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, or believes they may have been exposed to COVID-19 within the last 72 hours, they should stay at home and not enter a school or district building. The employee or parent of a student should call the school, remain at home and call their physician or the Northern Kentucky Health Department.

***Q. What if a student or staff member becomes ill with symptoms of COVID-19?***

**A.** The district requires students or staff with a temperature greater than 100.4 F, signs of illness, and/or a positive response to health screening questions, to be sent directly to a dedicated isolation area, prior to being picked up by a parent/guardian. Students will be supervised in the isolation area while awaiting transport home and will be separated by at least 6 feet. Students will be escorted from the isolation area to their parent/guardian. Students or staff will be directed to contact their physician for next steps.

***Q. What happens if a case of COVID-19 is confirmed at a school?***

**A.** If a school has a confirmed case of COVID-19, the Northern Kentucky Health Department will be contacted. Parents and employees of the school will also be informed, although specific information pertaining to the confirmed case cannot be released due to HIPPA, FERPA and ADA laws. Any students or staff members exposed to a confirmed case will be notified and will be subject to 14-day isolation from date of the last known exposure. Exposure occurs when a positive case was in direct contact with a staff member or student for at least 15 minutes (within teaching and learning environments).

Once a case is confirmed, a portion or portions of the school, or the entire school will be closed for cleaning and disinfecting depending on the exposure and the parts of the school affected. Actions will be taken on an individual basis based on the circumstances at each school. An outbreak of multiple positive cases in a school may close the entire school. The procedures above will be the same for confirmed cases in school support sites. When a school closure occurs, all students will be required to continue their daily instructional schedule and academic lessons through our remote learning platform.

***Q. When can a student or staff member return to school after illness?***

**A.** Covington Independent Public Schools has established protocols and procedures, in consultation with the Northern Kentucky Health Department, regarding the requirements for determining when individuals who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment at school. This protocol includes the following:

If a student or staff tests positive for COVID-19, they should remain isolated and out of school until they have met ALL 3 of the following criteria:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared, and
- Fever free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medications, and
- Symptoms have improved

If a student or staff has COVID-19 symptoms or a fever > 100.4, they can return to school when:

- They received a negative COVID-19 test, and
- They received a definitive alternate diagnosis from a physician (e.g. ear infection, strep throat), and
- They have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications

If a student or staff has COVID-19 symptoms or a fever > 100.4, but they are not tested for COVID-19 or do not have a definitive alternative diagnosis from a physician, then they must isolate in the same manner as a positive COVID-19 case

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared, and
- Fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medications, and
- Symptoms have improved

If a student or staff is identified as a close contact to a positive case, they must be quarantined for 14 days after their last exposure to the case if they are not household members, or for 14 days after the positive case has recovered if they are household members.

- A close contact is any individual who is within 6 feet of a positive COVID-19 case for 15 minutes or longer.
- Close contacts will be identified by the contact tracer from the Northern Kentucky Health Department.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR/MISCELLANEOUS

***Q. Who decides if a school building or the district needs to close as a result of positive COVID-19 cases or a rising infection rate?***

**A.** The district will prepare for a situation where it needs to close due to a significant number of students or staff testing positive for COVID-19 or a considerable regional increase in COVID-19 cases. The district will stay in constant contact with the Northern Kentucky Health Department.

The decision to close the school district will ultimately be made in conjunction with the Northern Kentucky Health Department, state officials, and the Covington Superintendent of Schools, Alvin L. Garrison, and Covington Board of Education.

***Q. Will athletics/intramurals take place this school year?***

**A.** The district follows guidance from the Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky High School Athletic Association regarding all individual and team sports. Check the district and school websites and social media sites regularly for updated information.

***Q. Will the district's after-school programs still be available?***

**A.** The district is awaiting final guidance from KDE about the operation of our after school programs. Programs may be offered in person, or virtually, depending upon those state recommendations. Check the district and school websites and social media sites regularly for updated information.

***Q. Will school meals be available for students who select the remote learning option?***

**A.** Yes, families who choose the remote learning option will be able to pick up meals for their school-aged children. Check the district and school websites and social media sites regularly for updated information.

***Q. If the district goes to a total remote learning model, will meals be available?***

**A.** Yes, families will be able to pick up meals for their school-aged children, if schools are closed to all in-person instruction. Additional information would be available on district and school websites and social media sites.