

Northwood Academy Charter School

Fall 2020 Reopening Plan Community FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Why was the decision to return to school this Fall 100% remote made?

The integrity of our academic program and the well-being of our students, their families, and staff are at the forefront of our decision. Practical knowledge, COVID-19 information, and sector input have been thoroughly examined and considered with both an operational and instructional lens. All areas of consideration were compared between the models and the decision of starting in full virtual model is the best plan at this time. We are in a position to enhance our existing virtual program. In addition, we will learn from those attempting in person programming and will be prepared to go hybrid when conditions improve. In line with communications from the Secretary of Education and Superintendent Hite, we believe that the sector will be moving from one model to another throughout the year.

Should parents purchase uniforms?

Students will be required to wear their Northwood polo shirt during the school day starting Monday, August 31. No other part of the uniform will be required at this time. However, in the event that the school building reopens after January, students will be required to be in full uniform.

What supplies will my child need?

- 1 supply case
- 20 pencils (minimum)
- 4 dry erase markers
- 1 Sharpie marker
- 2 packs crayons / colored pencils
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 2 erasers
- 1 pair of scissors
- 5 notebooks
- 1 pack of markers
- 4 glue sticks
- 1 white glue
- 1 set of headphones
- 2 packs of loose leaf paper
- 2 packs of Index cards
- 4 packs of Post-It notes
- 1 pack of blank paper

- 1 pack of construction paper
- 1 watercolor paint pack / palette

Will my child in the elementary school have the same teacher all day?

Students in grades K-3 will work with their homeroom teacher throughout the school day, and specialist teachers in the afternoon. Students in grades 4 will cycle between two teachers, and students in grades 5-8 will cycle between four teachers for each content area.

What platform will students use for instruction?

All synchronous instruction will take place using the videoconferencing platform Zoom. All students will use Google Classroom to access lesson resources and links, and to submit daily assignments.

How can I help my student, who is used to being home, successfully return to “attending” school?

We recommend creating routines and expectations that mimic when students attended school in-person. The remote learning schedule closely mirrors an in school schedule. In order to help students get back into the routine, we suggest the following:

- Create your normal bedtime routines in order to ensure students are getting the proper rest.
- Set an alarm or alarms in order to build the habit of getting up and ready for school. Students should be logged on and ready at the start of the instructional day.
- Morning routines should include getting dressed in their Northwood shirt for school each day and other routines such as eating a balanced breakfast.
- Create a “schoolroom” space in your home - a desk or table dedicated to your student and their learning. Good lighting, access to chargers, supplies (pen/pencil, paper, school provided books) and a comfortable chair will help make sure students are ready and attentive.
- For students all students, post their weekly schedule in their work space.
- Set an alarm to signal 5 minutes prior to the start of each class.
- Encourage your student to take advantage of the breaks scheduled throughout the day. Encourage them to step away from the computer (and their phones) during these breaks, stand, take a walk around the house or room in order to get some physical activity as well as brain break.
- Create a routine for completing assignments that mirrors how they completed their homework and assignments when in-school.
- Post reminders of the time when assignments are due.
- Regularly check your student’s grades with them to build awareness of their progress.

Will my older student be able to support online learning for my younger child?

While older students will be responsible for attending daily live lessons, we expect that they will be able to offer some assistance to younger siblings - setting up the computer at the beginning of the day, reminding them of their schedule, assisting with practice and assignments. We recommend that students be given a common area in which to work, with access to their devices, power cords, earphones and space to work.

I have to work all day and cannot help my child until I return home in the evening. What should I do?

It will be important for students to complete their work independently and attend synchronous instruction sessions as much as possible. However, we have made adjustments to due dates to accommodate working families. Assignments for the week will be due by 11:59 PM each Thursday.

Do I still have to report being COVID-19 positive (student or family member) and/or any sickness to the school?

Yes, all student "sick days" should be reported to the teacher. Please send an email to your child's homeroom teacher upon your child's return to school listing the reason for his or her absence. This will be considered an excused absence. Failure to submit an absence note within 3 school days will result in the absence being marked unexcused. Please contact our School Nurse, to report any positive COVID-19 cases in your home, even throughout remote learning. Accommodations for students with documented, extended illnesses will be considered on a case by case basis.

Academics

What support will my child need for live lessons?

Your child will need a consistent place in your home to complete school work and participate in synchronous instruction. Classroom teachers will be available both during synchronous lessons and office hours throughout the week between the hours of 7:40 AM and 3:15 PM. They will need school supplies that are listed on the attached list and provided with some supplies from the school (Chromebook, etc.). These supplies will be needed to complete school work each day. Some children may need help with maintaining their instructional schedule and staying on top of independent work that may be assigned to them.

What if my child misses a live lesson?

If a child is not present for a live lesson, he or she will be marked absent. If your child is sick and unable to attend school that day, please email your child's homeroom teacher prior to the start of the school day. (see above)

What is the structure of a live lesson?

Generally, the structure of a lesson will include the teacher delivering direct instruction on a concept. This will be followed by guided practice, in which the teacher will lead students through the ideas, field questions, and show examples for students to practice. Next, there will be time for students to work on concepts independently during the synchronous lesson, so that the teacher is still available for questions and additional support.

Will attendance be taken?

Attendance will be taken and recorded daily. Students will need to report to the link provided by their homeroom teacher at 8:30 am each day. Teachers will also take attendance for each of their classes daily.

What will the grading system be?

Students will be assessed in each subject a minimum of once per week. Students will also receive credit for attending their daily synchronous instruction and attending any additional small groups or optional office hours. Our traditional grading scale will remain in effect:

90-100 A
80-89 B
70-79 C
65- 70 D
Below 65 F

All students will receive an interim report halfway through the trimester and receive a full report card at the end of the trimester.

How will remote learning this year differ from remote learning this past spring?

In spring 2020, we transitioned to remote learning with very little notice, leaving a short timeline for planning and training. Since we are making the decision to learn remotely in advance this time, we have more time to get feedback from community members and improve our online model.

These improvements include the incorporation of LIVE instruction, the addition of class meetings and other opportunities for community building and decreasing the number of subjects students are responsible for each day so we could increase the amount of time spent on each subject. K-5 will return to virtual self contained classrooms and 6-8 will follow a departmentalized schedule. Making the decision

now to implement remote learning allows for more time for teacher training and planning so they can continue to sharpen their virtual teaching skills.

What support will be available for students with IEPs/504 plans?

Students with IEPs and 504 will have multiple layers of support starting with their case manager, guidance counselor, related service providers (as applicable) and the Director of Special Education. These supports will be in addition to the support of their regular classroom teacher(s). We intend to do everything possible in the distance learning setting to meet the needs of students with IEPs and 504 plans both as required by law and consistent with our own commitment to being a safe, inclusive and caring, learning-focused school community.

Accommodations, modifications, and specially designed instruction--as described in the student's IEP or 504 Plan--will be implemented to the best of our ability by the student's teacher(s) in their distance learning lessons and assignments. These supports and services may include, but are not limited to, small group instruction, additional time for assignments/assessments, additional attempts at assessments, access to the special education teacher for support in completing an assignment, frequent repetition/practice, and modified assignments.

In order to provide space for open communication regarding the implementation of plans, each student's IEP team will convene shortly after school resuming to discuss the flexible implementation of the student's plan in the distance learning setting.

The school nurse will be available for virtual consultation over video chat, phone, or email for students with 504s. Students with 504s that have academic accommodations will receive those through their classroom teacher as applicable for the assignment/lesson. Students with 504s related to mental health supports will be assigned to a counselor. All members of the Northwood Academy Charter School team will work together to make sure the appropriate supports are available to all 504 students.

Is there a possibility for students with IEPs to come into the building for small group instruction or intervention?

Currently there will not be the possibility for students with IEPs to come into the building for small group instruction or intervention in the consideration of the safety and health of our entire school community. However, students will receive small group instruction and intervention over the distance learning platforms to the greatest extent possible in alignment with their IEP and academic needs.

Will there be a plan for students with ADHD or other mental health concerns?

Accommodations will be provided for students as per their 504 plan or IEP. This may include, but is not limited to additional time for assignments or assessments, small group counseling sessions, individual counseling sessions, and consultation with counseling staff regarding individual student concerns. The Multi-Tiered System of Support model for academics and behavior accommodations will also be implemented on a regular schedule utilizing various tools for progress monitoring and data analysis/collection. This process will help ensure that all students' needs are being met and that students do not fall behind academically.

How will you ensure students do not fall behind academically?

Accommodations will be provided for students as per their 504 plan or IEP. This may include, but is not limited to additional time provided for online assessments, small group testing or instruction, etc. The Multi-Tiered System of Support model for academics and behavior accommodations will also be implemented on a regular schedule utilizing various tools for progress monitoring and data analysis/collection. This process will help ensure that all students' needs are being met and that students do not fall behind academically.

How is this feasible for a kindergarten student?

All kindergarten students will begin the school year in small groups with their classroom teacher and classroom assistant. This will assist in building relationships and familiarizing kindergarten students with virtual schooling expectations. Kindergarten students also have breaks scheduled throughout their morning, a full-time classroom aide to assist in pulling small groups of students, and shortened direct instruction periods aimed at increasing focus and attention.

How will students take assessments?

Students will take assessments during their synchronous instruction. It will be essential for students to leave their cameras on and positioned in a manner that shows the students working on their individual assessment. Teachers will be monitoring student completion of assessments to ensure that the results are valid.

What if students have technical difficulties or wifi issues?

If there is a connectivity issue, students will have opportunities to retrieve the day's recorded lessons in all subject areas once connection resumes. Our IT Support Team will be available for assistance throughout the school year for major technology concerns. Email tech@northwoodcs.org or call the front office at 215-289-5606. Available hours for questions via phone are 7:45 am - 3:15 pm, Monday through Friday.

Community

What kind of food options will be available to families?

Food pickup will be available every Monday and Thursday from 1:00pm - 4:00pm. Food will be distributed from the cafeteria which is located behind the school.

How will the social and emotional needs of students be met?

All students, K-8, will participate in daily morning meeting activities with their teachers and homeroom class. Students will also have opportunities to engage with the school counselors. Students who have counseling services outlined in 504 plans, IEPs, or Behavior Intervention Plans will continue to receive regular counseling services each week. In the event that a parent or guardian is concerned about their child's social-emotional well-being, they are encouraged to contact a school counselor, Ms. Lozandieu (K-4) or Mr. Whitlatch (5-8).

Will there be after-school clubs/extracurricular activities?

Yes. Clubs, electives and extracurricular activities will be offered to students in a virtual format. We will also host virtual family events throughout the school year.

Are there any changes to the school calendar?

No. The first day of school will remain the same - Monday, August 31. However, there will be a staggered reopening schedule for kindergarten students during the first week of school (August 31 - September 4) to accommodate them starting the year in smaller groups with their teacher.

Is there a plan for Back to School Night or report card conferences?

Back to School Night will be fully virtual and will take place on Thursday, September 24 at 6:00 pm. Report card conferences in December will also be virtual, with a plan and schedule to be determined.

Technology and Resources

If I have more than one child at Northwood Academy, can I have access to more than one device?

We recognize that due to the live instruction included in this schedule, it will be more crucial for EACH student to have access to their OWN device. While last year

some students might have been able to manage sharing a device or using a cell phone or tablet, this year each student will need a computer to access all materials and engage fully in all lessons. To accommodate this, we will be supplying additional devices as needed for families with multiple children enrolled at NACS. As soon as they arrive, parents will be notified.

What is the process for getting technology and materials for my child?

Chromebooks have been ordered but have not arrived at Northwood yet. As soon as they arrive, parents will receive a call regarding pick up dates.

What technical support will be available?

Our IT Support Team will be available for assistance throughout the school year between the hours of 8: 00 AM - 3:00 PM each day. If your child is having connectivity issues or issues with their school-issued device, please [CLICK HERE](#) for tech support. If a child is unable to attend live classes due to an issue that has been reported to tech support, they may be excused from live instruction for that day.