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# **Whitharral ISD's Back to School Guidance**



## **“Commitment to Excellence”**

**Whitharral ISD  
[www.whitharralisd.org](http://www.whitharralisd.org)**

**Reviewed July 2023**

## TEA Requirement: Providing Notice

Whitharral ISD is providing notice to parents, families, and the community regarding back-to-school plans and instruction through this initial document.

PLEASE NOTE: The details in this document are subject to change as directives are provided by governing authorities and/or health officials or as environmental conditions change.

**COVID-19 Response Information Providers** – Whitharral ISD administrators are available for concerns and communicating district decisions. Email addresses are noted below:

Ben Prowell      Superintendent  
Nick McCollister    Principal

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## TEA Requirement: Prevent and Mitigate

Whitharral ISD must identify and implement practices to prevent the virus from entering the school and mitigate or reduce the likely spread inside the school; therefore, district practices and guidelines have been established for various areas noted below:

### Health and Safety Guidance

- **Social and Emotional Well-Being** – Students’ social and emotional well-being are a top priority. Together, schools and families can support your child during this challenging time. With the endless COVID coverage, it is natural for your child to experience some changes in behavior and mood. Whitharral’s staff members will continue to work closely with families and students to ease the stress. Keeping routines predictable, sharing COVID facts that are age-appropriate, making time to listen and share feelings, and reaching out to us for support are all important. We are here for you and your child(ren).
- **Masks** –At this time, masks are not required and will be left up to the individual to determine whether to wear a mask. Per GA-38, school systems cannot require students or staff to wear a mask.
- **Social Distancing** – Staff and students will social distance in indoor and outdoor settings, to the extent possible.
- **Handwashing/Sanitizing** – Frequent disinfection and hand sanitization will ensure the health and wellness of students and staff. surfaces and shared objects. This would include objects such as door handles, common tables/desks, and high-touch devices.

- **Daily Campus Cleaning** – Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will promote a healthy learning and work environment for students and staff.
  - The cafeteria will be disinfected between lunch periods.
  - Staff will have access to disinfectant to sanitize working surfaces and shared objects after each use and during breaks in instruction.
- **Temperature Checks/Screening** – Per Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines, initial monitoring of symptoms begins at home. Parents/guardians are expected to screen their students for COVID-19 symptoms each day prior to sending their students to school.

In evaluating whether an individual has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, consider the following questions:

- Have they recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for them?
  - Feeling feverish, or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Cough
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Shortness of breath
  - Headache
  - Chills
  - Sore throat
  - Shaking or exaggerated shivering
  - Significant muscle pain or ache
  - Diarrhea

If a student's temperature is at or above 100°, the student will not be allowed to stay at school; a medical/safety informational form with guidelines that must be followed before he/she is allowed to return to school. **Parents should make sure contact information is up to date at all times during the year.**

Teachers and staff are required to self-monitor. The self-screening should include teachers and staff taking their own temperature. Teachers and staff must report to the school system if they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted below.

- **Student or Staff Displaying COVID-19 Symptoms**
  - When a student has displayed symptoms of COVID-19, the school will provide an assessment to determine if and when a student needs to be sent home.

- o In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:
  - at least three days (24 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
  - the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and

## Campuses and Classrooms

- **Drop-off, and Pick-up**
  - o **Elementary-Arrival**
    - Cafeteria entrance will be utilized for student and staff.
    - Prek-5 will be in the cafeteria in the morning and will eat breakfast then go to first period.
  - o **Secondary-Arrival**
    - Early bird arrivals are discouraged but will be accommodated. Drop of times are as early as 7:10 but the first bell is at 7:55. Students will go directly to first period or designated location upon arrival. If students want to eat they will be allowed to eat in the cafeteria
- **Restrooms and Water Fountains** – Students’ physical needs are extremely important.
  - o Encourage hand washing throughout the day.

Because water dispensers have shared surfaces Whitharral has installed bottle filling stations for students’ personal water bottles.

## Instructional Models

- o **Face-to-Face Instruction** – Students attend school daily, as with the regular school year.
- o **Remote/Virtual Learning** – **This model will only be used if students are absent for extended amount of time. Teachers/Principal will track absences and will initiate this process.** Students participate in classroom instruction via remote/virtual learning and are expected to complete and submit assignments as communicated by the remote/virtual learning teacher(s). This home-learning model is an extension of the classroom and includes the same high-level expectations for participation and assignments as face-to-face. Check-in times will be outlined in the teacher’s syllabus. Student must participate daily. 90% attendance is mandatory in order to earn credit and/or be promoted to the next grade level.

ARD/IEP Committees will determine the unique needs of students who are IEP-entitled in making support and service recommendations for students attending school virtually.

- **Role of Stakeholders within Virtual School Model (This model will only be used at the Principals direction)**

| Student                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Parent                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Follows principles of Whitharal ISD's learner profile</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Follow the designated schedule communicated by their campus to attend class and complete asynchronous activities assigned</li> <li>● Students should take responsibility for advocating for themselves</li> <li>● Turn in schoolwork at the direction of the assigned teacher</li> <li>● Responsible for participation in the lesson</li> <li>● Daily participating in classes at designated times</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monitor and ask for evidence that your child is on track with assignments and coursework.</li> <li>● Provide your child with assistance on their day-to-day activities with the exception of designated independent work</li> <li>● Assist in supporting your child's needs by establishing and managing the daily schedule communicated by the teacher and the campus</li> <li>● Consider creating a designated learning space for your child at home to learn comfortably</li> <li>● Maintain communication with your child's teacher by phone, email messages, and/or online meetings to create a learning partnership</li> <li>● Struggling is allowed and encouraged! <b><i>Don't help too much.</i></b> Becoming independent takes lots of practice.</li> </ul> |

- **Attendance** – District funding and resources are linked to attendance. Attendance will be taken each day for both face-to-face **and** remote/virtual learning to ensure that students are actively engaged. During remote/virtual instruction, students are expected to participate and fully engage as communicated by the teacher to receive attendance credit. The *Whitharal ISD Remote/Virtual Learning Agreement* further details expectations for attendance and academic credit.

In addition, per Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.092, students must attend 90% of the days a course is offered in order to be awarded credit for the course and/or to be promoted to the next grade. This requirement remains in force during the 2020-21 school year. This requirement applies to both face-to-face and remote/virtual instruction.

- **Technology** – During school technology is provided. If online is needed devices will be provided for those that need a device.
- **Grading** – State law requires each district to adopt its own grading policies. This policy must require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects the student's relative mastery of an assignment.

Whitharral ISD grading policies are published annually in the Student Handbook. Progress reports and report cards, along with parent conferences, will be used to communicate each student's progress and performance.

- **Schedule** – While participating in At-Home Learning, time management is critical to success. Students and teachers must remain in communication regarding daily schedules and assignments. As with any traditional course, there is a risk of receiving a lower grade if a student falls behind. If your student is struggling with time management, then he or she should contact his or her teacher for additional assistance. Classes within the Virtual settings will follow the schedule of classes at the student's campus, minus any hands-on electives and/or CTE that cannot be offered. Times will be set by the teachers that are conducive to learning.

Within each course, teachers will plan for students to participate in asynchronous learning. Teachers will structure small group time to differentiate instruction within the instructional block. This will require teachers to set up small group instruction schedules for students. It will be vital for teachers and parents to openly communicate the schedules for the students.

- **Intervention and Enrichment** – Intervention and enrichment time will be scheduled regularly for students to best meet their academic needs. During this time, students may engage in assigned group activities, project learning activities, small group instruction, and digital platforms. Teachers will communicate with students their plan for the designated time.

For students who are IEP-entitled, progress will be carefully monitored and ARD/IEP Committees will convene and make appropriate recommendations to meet individual student needs to ensure continued growth in the general education curriculum and on IEP goals and objectives.

- **State and Local Testing** – All students are expected to follow state and local testing requirements, whether participating in face-to-face or remote/virtual instruction.

## Meals and Transportation

- **Meals** – Whitharral ISD must comply with child nutrition guidelines.
  - o Cafeteria staff will comply with State requirements and will follow all health and safety protocols.
  - o Self-serve counters will be minimal service until further notice.
  - o Students will be encouraged not to share food and drink.
  - o Cafeteria capacity will be based on current guidelines.
  - o Microwaves will be a day to day monitored situation.
  - o Students will be encouraged to wash hands before lunch.
- **Transportation** for UIL Events
  - o Parents/guardians are expected to screen their students for COVID-19 symptoms each day prior to sending their student to school.

- A student should not attend school if they have a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit and guidelines must be followed before he/she is allowed to return to school.

## **Cheer, Athletics, etc.**

- **Cheer** – Practices and performances will be conducted following safety protocols provided by guidance from UIL and TEA.
- **Athletics** – Practices and performances will be conducted following safety protocols provided by guidance from UIL and TEA.

## **Extracurricular Programs**

- **Extracurricular Programs** – Each program will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine implementation guidelines. Program sponsors will provide information to students and parents/families as information is available.

## **Parent Communication**

Providing families with clear and concise communication through the following outbound channels. If one of these communications is not used the information is not official and should be checked with a school official. Sometimes getting accurate information takes time, but will be communicated to parents and stakeholders as soon as possible:

- Email/Shout Out (Smores Newsletter)
- Whitharral ISD's school Facebook page, Whitharral ISD Facebook
- School's Website

## **TEA Requirement: Respond**

Whitharral ISD must identify and implement responsive actions to address the situation if there are lab-confirmed cases in a school.

### *Required Actions if Individuals with Lab-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School*

- 1. If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school must notify its local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). 5*

*2. Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, schools must notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participate on any on campus activities.*

## Whitharral ISD COVID-19 Screening

Have you recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for you?

|                                                                                              |                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Name:                                                                                        | Circle Yes or No to the following questions: |
| Date:                                                                                        |                                              |
| Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit | Yes or No                                    |
| Loss of taste or smell                                                                       | Yes or No                                    |
| Cough                                                                                        | Yes or No                                    |
| Difficulty breathing                                                                         | Yes or No                                    |
| Shortness of breath                                                                          | Yes or No                                    |
| Headache                                                                                     | Yes or No                                    |
| Chills                                                                                       | Yes or No                                    |
| Sore throat                                                                                  | Yes or No                                    |
| Shaking or exaggerated shivering                                                             | Yes or No                                    |
| Significant muscle pain or ache                                                              | Yes or No                                    |
| Diarrhea                                                                                     | Yes or No                                    |

Have you had “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. Close contact is determined by an appropriate public health agency. For clarity, close contact is defined as: a. being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield); or b. being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes, while not wearing a mask or face shield; if either occurred at any time in the last 5 days at the same time the infected individual was infectious.

Individuals are presumed infectious at least two days prior to symptom onset or, in the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, two days prior to the confirming lab test.

Please answer: Yes or No

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