

Back to School



July 1, 2020

Our weekly “Back to School E-newsletter” for families!



“Back to School” website now online!

Our “Back to School” website is now available at www.wcsoh.org/backtoschool. You can also access the site via “Back to School” buttons on the [district home page](#) and all school websites.



Academics

As we continue to think about the next school year, it’s understandable that people tend to focus on changes to how instruction will occur and what our classrooms will look like. However, assuming we are able to provide in-person instruction next year, there are many seemingly “simple” things that actually become significant matters that we have to work through. Here are just a few of the items we’re examining and will detail for families once our plans are finalized:

- **Arrival and dismissal** -- Students’ exiting/entering of busses, and entering the school itself, will likely need to be staggered to meet health guidelines. Students who walk or are dropped off likely will enter schools in a different area from busses.
- **Hallway travel** -- Floors and hallways will need to be clearly marked with directional arrows and spacing designated for social distancing.
- **Locker use** -- Protocols and expectations would be developed and shared with students.
- **Breakfast and lunch** -- Students who buy lunch or receive breakfast likely will have “Grab and Go” options to move quickly through socially-distanced lines. To continue appropriate social distancing, students likely will be able to eat in other areas of the school, including their classrooms. Handwashing protocols would be established.

- **Recess** -- We likely would need to schedule small group recess and consider what equipment use looks like. Handwashing protocols would be established.
- **Restroom use** -- Protocols and expectations would be developed and shared with students.

We mentioned in the last issue of this publication that we're making our way through about 300 such items. The recent survey that families completed has us with a much better understanding of expectations and we continue to build our plans around this and earlier feedback from families, staff and students.

Two more terms that you may see or hear used during Back-to-School discussions are "Synchronous Learning" and "Asynchronous Learning." Here's what they mean:

- **Synchronous Learning** is when students learn at the same time and in the same location. This can be through activities such as in-person classroom instruction from a teacher, attending a lecture, or participating in a laboratory experiment.
- **Asynchronous Learning** happens when students learn the same material, but at different times and locations. This can be through activities such as watching a video, finishing an on-line activity, or completing a reading assignment.

Basically, these are the technical terms for when students learn things together and at the same time, versus when students learn on their own time and in different locations. Both come into play during a traditional school year and remain important regardless of what a return to school looks like for the 2020-21 academic year.



Operations

This just as well could have appeared under "Academics" because it applies there, too. As we make our way through everything required for opening and operating next year, we are also identifying anything that may require changes to policy or the drafting of memorandums of understanding between the Board and our various employee associations. Compliance with legal and contractual obligations remains a priority as we determine what next year looks like for our staff, students and families.

We continue working with the Education Service Center of Central Ohio (ESCCO) to make sure we have a strong pool of substitute teachers next year. ESCCO manages our onboarding of substitutes, so one of our priorities is to ensure they receive appropriate training on any new health and school operations guidelines. We continue to participate in webinars with ESCCO to solidify plans and determine additional training that will be provided to substitutes to prepare them for the school year.

Historically, our district did not issue its weekly press releases over summer break. Given the circumstances that we're operating under, the Communications Department intends to continue issuing weekly news items each Friday, along with this e-newsletter for families each Wednesday.

Other



Did you know that if you hold a post-secondary degree, you can become a substitute teacher in Ohio? The Educational Service Center of Central Ohio Substitute Consortium provides central Ohio schools with substitutes in both teaching and non-teaching positions. It's a rewarding and flexible job! Becoming qualified is simple and the need for substitutes is greater than ever before. Learn more about becoming a Substitute Teacher in Westerville City Schools at <https://www.escco.org/Stepstobecomeasubstitute.aspx>. Additional information is available on the Ohio Department of Education website.

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SchoolMessenger is a notification service used by the nation's leading school systems to connect with parents, students and staff through voice, SMS text, email, and social media.

Parents/Guardians: The District is sometimes able to provide free language assistance in other languages. If you need such assistance, please contact the building secretary or building administrator at your child's school and let them know the language you speak.

Spanish: Padres / Guardianes: A veces el Distrito puede proporcionar asistencia gratis en otros idiomas. Si necesita esta ayuda, comuníquese con la secretaria del edificio o con el administrador del edificio en la escuela de su hijo y hágales saber el idioma que usted habla.

Somali: Waalidiinta/Mas'uuliyiinta: Degmada Waxbarashadu waxay mararka qaarkood idinka caawin kartaa luqooyinka kale. Haddii aad u baahan tahay caawintaas, fadlan la xariir xoghaynta ama qofka maamula iskuulka ilmahaagu dhigto una sheeg luqadda aad ku hadashid.