

Back to School



August 19, 2020

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



Important Information

Please be sure to check your email for an important message sent earlier today regarding athletics and extracurricular activities for the 2020-2021 school year.



Academics



Technology Support

By now, students and families should have received communication directly from their school regarding expectations and participation over these first few days of class. One thing we'd like to reinforce is how to access technology support while the district is operating under a Remote or Blended Instructional Model.

Your Student Success Coach will serve as a point of contact for students experiencing basic technical issues. Teachers can also help with basic tech questions, but if either your success coach or teacher are unable to help, you can also find additional support below:

- Reach out for tech support by completing our [Student Tech Support Form](#);
- Call our tech support hotline (**Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**) at 614-797-5860, or send an email to techhelp@wcohs.org during those same days/times;
- Review the many resources available on the [WCS Educational Technology Website](#); and
- Access answers to common home login issues.



Material and resource pickups at school

Thank you for making the first few days of Chromebook and material pickup at school go as smoothly as possible! Please know that your schools will continue to schedule future pickups of materials/resources, including technology devices. Unfortunately, the expected delivery of mobile hotspots has been delayed by the provider. Families who requested one of those devices will be able to pick it up at school in the near future. **Additionally, the next two K-12 material and resource pickup dates are September 9 and September 30, so please mark your calendars and watch for details from your schools.**



Operations



A final reminder about meal signup and pickup during remote instruction

If you want your student to receive a school breakfast and lunch while the district operates under a remote or blended learning environment, you must complete this [opt-in form](#). In addition, families who wish to apply for free or reduced-price meals must complete this [application for meal benefits](#). These links and other important information are also available at www.wcsoh.org/meals.

Pickup sites will be open from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Fridays. Families that may have difficulty making one of these times should inform the Food Service staff at 614-797-5993 to discuss alternate arrangements. Families that sign up to receive breakfasts and/or lunches during remote learning will be assigned to one of the following sites designated as a location for meal pick-up:

- Annehurst ES, 925 W. Main St.
- Hawthorne ES, 5001 Far-View Dr.
- Huber Ridge ES, 5757 Buenos Aires Blvd.
- Walnut Springs MS, 888 E. Walnut St.
- Westerville Central HS, 7118 Mount Royal Ave.
- Westerville North HS, 950 County Line Rd.
- Westerville South HS, 303 S. Otterbein Ave.
- Wilder ES, 6375 Goldfinch Dr.

Families who sign up for meals will receive an email confirmation of their meal pick-up time and location, as well as additional resources for questions and/or cancellations.



Communication Reminders

One thing we heard this past spring from parents is that you wanted streamlined communications and online learning platforms for your students. Everyone has been working hard to honor that request and establish support mechanisms to create a more positive remote learning experience for everyone.

This is the final Back-to-School e-newsletter from the district as your schools will be taking things from here. However, we will continue to email you district news and announcements every Friday, as well as other important information as necessary. Here are a few final things to remember about future district communications:

- **Make us a “safe sender”**

Much of the information you will receive from the district will be sent through our SchoolMessenger notification system, which uses an email address of info@westerville.k12.oh.us. Even though you've received and are reading this message, it's never a bad idea to identify that email address as a “safe sender” in your email system. Every system is different, but please take a few minutes to find out how to complete this process. It's a simple step to help ensure that district emails make it to you

regularly.

- **Know your folders**

Some email systems automatically generate folders when they are set up (such as a “spam” folder) and route emails into these folders according to their content. We spoke with one parent who indicated they weren’t receiving our emails, only to find all of them in a Gmail “Promotions” folder he didn’t even know existed. Get to know your folder structure and check those folders periodically to make sure our messages aren’t being filed somewhere else in your system.

- **Don’t “opt out” of the system**

At the bottom of every email sent through SchoolMessenger is the ability to “opt out” of future messages. Our district and our schools use SchoolMessenger to send many types of messages to families, including urgent safety communications. If you receive an email about the next fundraiser at your school and click “unsubscribe,” thinking you’ll no longer receive those fundraiser notices, you’ve also removed yourself from any and all future communications. The same goes for phone calls and text messages sent through the system.

- **Keep your PowerSchool records updated**

SchoolMessenger updates nightly by pulling custodial parent/guardian contact information directly from our PowerSchool student information system. If you want to ensure your information is correct in our SchoolMessenger notification system, the only thing you need to do is keep your contact information updated in PowerSchool. It will also be much easier to troubleshoot any other issues that may occur beyond that. Use the PowerSchool portal or contact your school’s main office to keep your contact information up to date.

- **Sign up for text messages**

The district periodically will use SchoolMessenger to send text messages to parents and guardians. This is especially true during emergency situations. According to federal telecommunications rules, you must “opt in” to receive text messages from us. Using the cell phone(s) you have registered in PowerSchool, simply text the letter Y to 67587 and that will complete the process. To stop receiving text messages on a particular number, text STOP to 67587 at any time.

- **Follow us on social media**

We have three primary social media accounts and are about to become more active on a fourth. Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WCSOH>; follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/wcsoh>; and view Board meetings, along with other various video resources, on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/user/WCSDOhio>. Also, be sure to keep an eye out for future Instagram postings at <https://www.instagram.com/mywcsd/>. Please know that we simply don’t have the capacity to be on social media frequently or monitor comments/messages regularly. If you need to communicate with us or ask questions about anything posted or communicated through other means, you likely will receive a faster response by sending an email to our general e-mail address, which is wcs@wcsoh.org. Please continue to contact your school’s main office for any building-specific needs.