

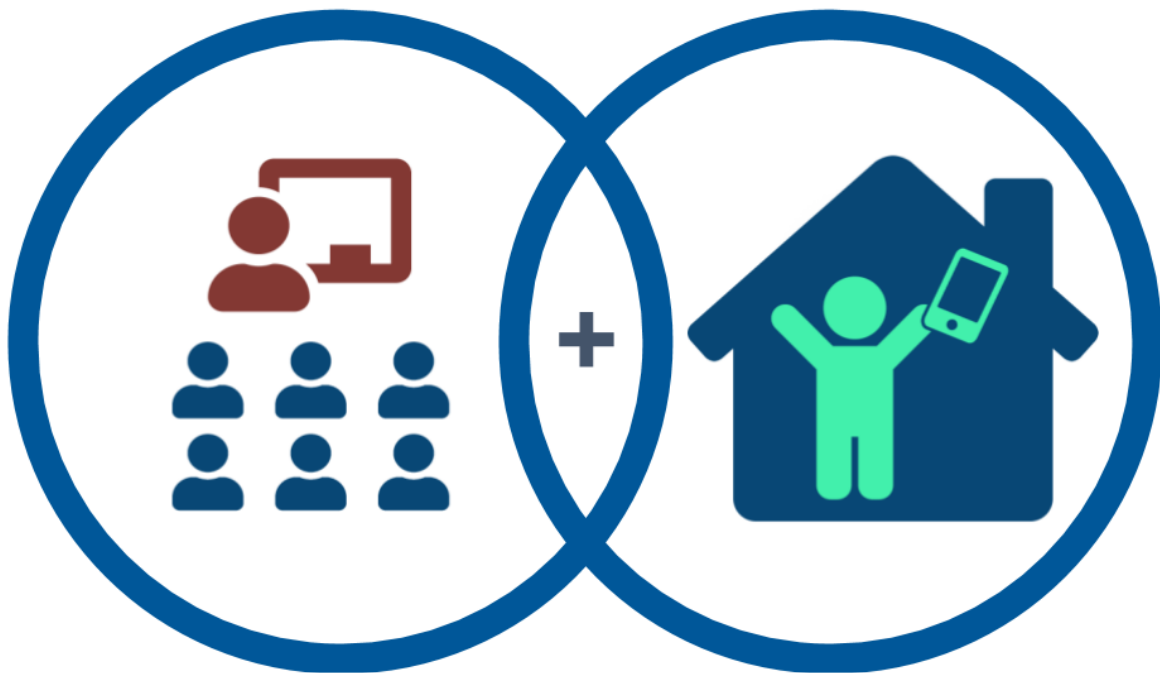


GATES COUNTY SCHOOLS

2020-2021

Approval Date: April 12, 2021
Implementation Date: April 20, 2021

Plan A with Virtual/Remote Learning Option: Central Middle School Gates County High School



Dr. Barry Williams
Superintendent of Schools

A MESSAGE FROM DR. BARRY WILLIAMS, SUPERINTENDENT GATES COUNTY SCHOOLS

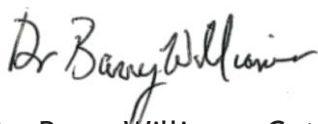
The Gates County Board of Education and the Gates County Public Health Department are fully committed to working together to prepare for the reopening of schools. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to take unimaginable steps to ensure that students are able to continue to learn despite the inability to be physically present in classrooms. My administrative team has been in ongoing contact with the Governor's Office, the North Carolina State Board of Education, and North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in their development of the StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12) for families, students, and local education leaders.

As COVID-19 continues to change our collective landscape, our district will work together to leverage resources, share best practices, and advocate for regulatory flexibility, including state and federal waivers to enable us to provide the best possible programs for all our students. The Board of Education understands the need for schools to have a clear, detailed, and well-organized plan in place before re-opening their doors to teachers, staff, and students. This document is a guide for the school district, parents, students and the community for the 2020-2021 school year under the hybrid Plan A.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to the operation of schools across our 115 school districts in North Carolina. Gates County Schools has created contingency plans for the schools based on the guiding principles, current planning considerations, and assumptions set forth in this document. These plans are subject to change as public health guidelines are updated and as we continually evaluate the plan.

Please continue to reach out to our office with your questions, feedback, challenges, and success stories. We will continue to provide you with as much clear and timely support and guidance as possible. Together, we will get through this and make sure all our students and their families have what they need to succeed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Barry Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and "W".

Dr. Barry Williams, Gates County Superintendent of Schools

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Gates County 2020-2021 School Year Planning Guide was created with guidance and input from the Gates County Schools Administrative Team.

We would like to thank the following leaders for their valuable input:

Sallie Ryan, School Board Member
Dr. Barry Williams, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Tammy Boone, Assistant Superintendent
Jeremy Wright, Director of Student Services
Chante Jordan, Director of Personnel/Exceptional Children
Lola Rountree, Director of Accountability/Testing
John Smith, Director of Technology
Ron Ward, Director of Transportation
Johnny Greene, Director of Maintenance
Sandy Pittman, Finance Officer
Dr. Paula Simpson, Director of Child Nutrition
Cathy Riddick, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent
Jonathan Hayes, Principal Gates County High School
Kelly Eure, Principal Central Middle School
Kathryn Eure, Teacher/Instructional Coach
Barbara Toti, Teacher/Instructional Coach
Scott Corrente, Assistant Principal
Crystal Owens, Teacher
Joshua Childers, Teacher
Kristen Ward, Data/Testing
Gary Arline, Teacher
Kathryn Eure, Teacher
Barbara Austin, Guidance Counselor
Deirdre House, Teacher
Kristal Brooks, Teacher
Jennifer Dail, Teacher
Rhae Allyn, Teacher
Susan Brown, Teacher
Susan Casper, Assistant Principal
Buffy Edwards, Social Worker
Ann Harrell, CTE Director
Katie Hudgins, Teacher
Renee Kittrell, Teacher
Tamara Simons, Librarian
School Improvement Teams (SIT)
Surveyed Parents and Families

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Overview

On March 14, 2020, Governor Roy Cooper closed all schools in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At that time, Gates County Schools changed to virtual/remote instruction for all students. With the pandemic increasing in cases throughout the second semester, schools remained closed and virtual/remote instruction became the new normal.

On July 14, 2020, Governor Cooper directed that all North Carolina Public Schools would reopen for the 2020-2021 school year under Plan B. Gates County Schools' administration and staff have worked diligently to establish our instructional, health, and safety plan for the reopening of school in August. The enclosed plan meets the requirements for reopening schools as directed by Governor Cooper with the collaboration of the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), the NC State Board of Education (NCSBE) and the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).

On July 22, 2020, Dr. Williams, Superintendent of Schools, presented a Plan B, a blended learning plan of face-to-face and virtual/remote instruction with a virtual/remote only option. The board was also given the option of a Plan C, virtual/remote learning for all students. The decision was made by the board in the interest of student and staff well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic, to open schools under Plan C- Virtual/Remote Learning Only for the first nine weeks of schools. During the nine weeks, the status of the pandemic will be evaluated to determine the status of schools beyond the first nine weeks.

On September 14, 2020 and on October 9, 2020, the Gates County Board of Education considered Plan B: Blended Learning with a Virtual/Remote Only Option and Plan A: All Students in School (Face-to-Face). Details of Gates County Schools Plan B is on the following pages. Additionally, Governor Cooper announced on September 17, 2020 that schools have the option to return students in grades K-5 under Plan A beginning October 5, 2020. The status of the pandemic will continue to be monitored and options for teaching and learning will continue to be evaluated.

On October 9, 2020, the Gates County Board of Education voted to remain on Plan C for the 2nd Nine Weeks with a commitment to prepare for Plan A.

On November 2, 2020, the Gates County Board of Education held a work session where Plan A for elementary schools and Plan B for the middle school and high school were presented by district and school administration.

On December 7, 2020, the Gates County Board of Education held a special called meeting and made the decision for our learning plan for student instruction for the 3rd nine weeks. All elementary schools will transition to Plan A for the 3rd nine weeks which begins January 6, 2021. The middle school and the high school will transition to Plan B for the 3rd nine weeks. For the middle school and high school, January 6-8, 2021 will be orientation days for students and instruction will begin on January 12, 2021.

On March 11, 2021, Governor Cooper signed Senate Bill 220: The Reopen Our Schools Act of 2021 into law which requires that all NC schools must offer in-person instruction. Gates County School already meets the requirements of SB220. Central Middle School and Gates County High School will be adjusting Plan B to offer face-to-face instruction 4 days per week while maintaining 6 feet of social distancing effective March 23, 2021.

On April 12, 2021, the Gates County Board of Education voted to transition the middle school and high school to Plan A to accommodate any increase in students who may request face-to-face instruction. While Plan A only requires minimal social distancing, the school district will continue to maintain 6 feet of social distancing when possible.

North Carolina - Plan A

Originally, the State Board of Education and DPI developed three plans in which public schools may reopen for the 2020-2021 school year. On July 14, 2020, Governor Cooper announced that schools will reopen under Plan B. School districts do have the flexibility to change to Plan C if virtual/remote learning for all students is determined to be in the best interest of students and staff and/or if COVID-19 metrics significantly worsen in Gates County and surrounding areas. On March 11, 2021, Governor Cooper enacted SB 220: The Reopen Our Schools Act of 2021 which encouraged all grades, K-12 to move to Plan A. All parents have the option for their students to participate in virtual/remote learning only.

COVID-19 REOPENING PLANS

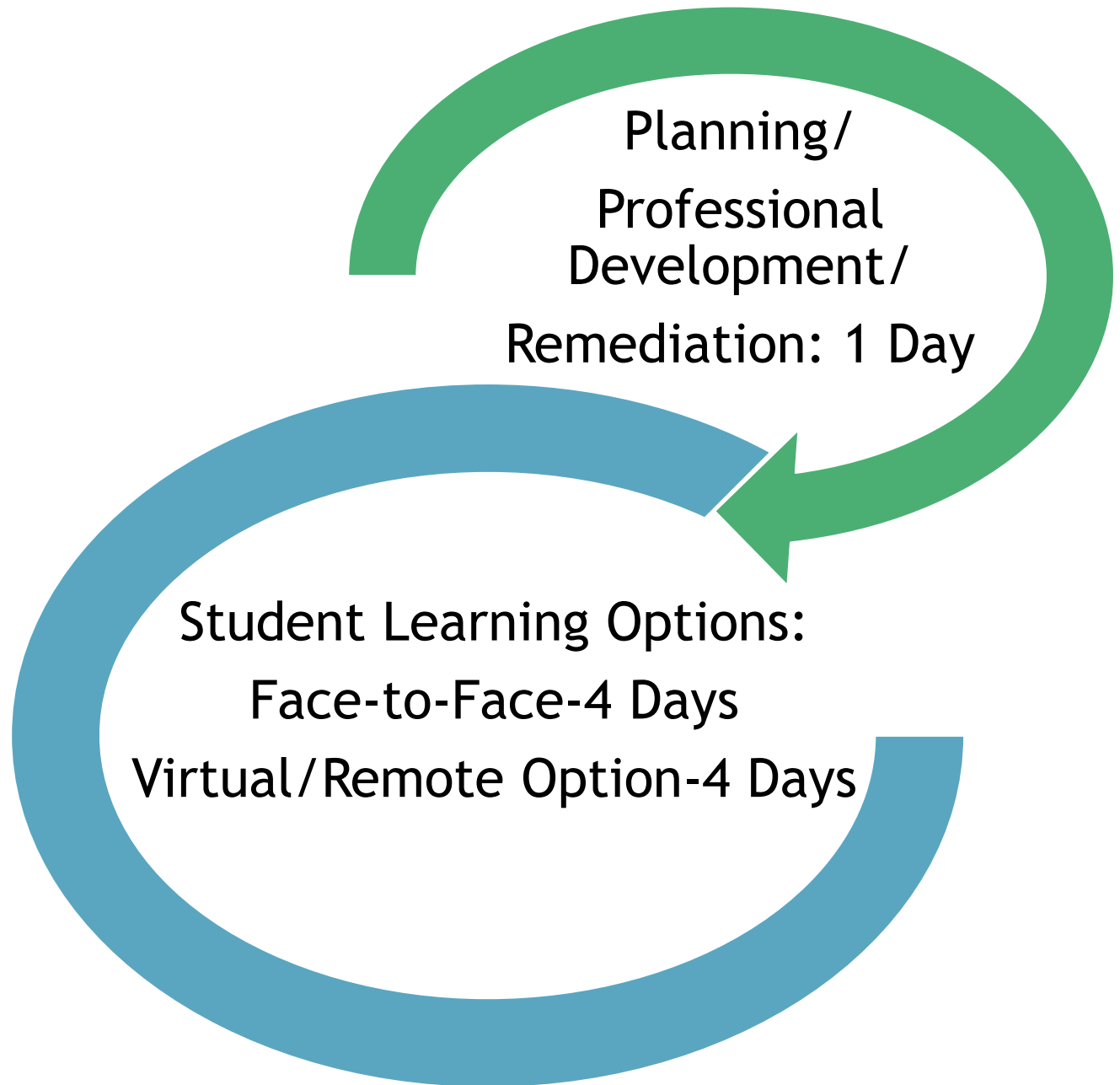
COVID-19: Reopening Plans	School Facilities and Students	Health Precautions *
PLAN A Minimal Social Distancing	Open All students in school at same time.	Enhanced health protocols <i>See DHHS requirements and recommendations.</i> While Plan A only requires minimal social distancing, the school district will continue to maintain 6 feet of social distancing when possible.
PLAN B Moderate Social Distancing	Open Limit student density in facilities to meet 6 feet social distancing requirements.	Enhanced health protocols <i>See DHHS requirements and recommendations</i> Under Plan B only, schools are required to adhere to all requirements outlined above AND: • Ensure sufficient social distancing with at least 6 feet between people at all times in school facilities.
PLAN C Remote Learning	Closed No students in school facilities	N/A All at home

GCS Plan A:

Face-to-Face Instruction 4 Days

Virtual/Remote Only 4 Days

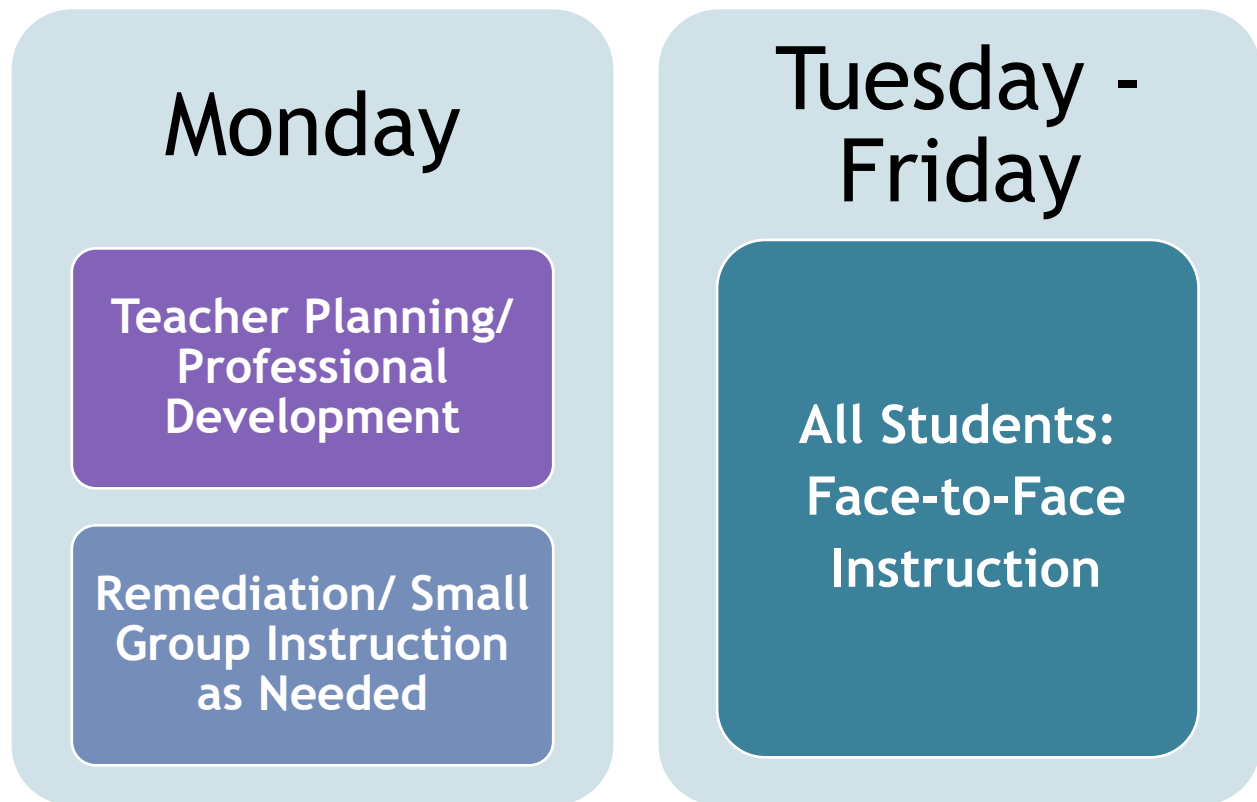
All Virtual/Remote (Mondays)



School Week Schedule

***Please note that a continued emphasis on mitigation strategies from the CDC, wear face coverings, social distancing, and symptom monitoring are essential to keeping all students and staff safe and healthy during the pandemic.**

Students in grades 6 through 12 will attend school 4 days a week.



Parents do have the option for their children to participate in Virtual/Remote Instruction Only. Virtual/Remote Instruction will be provided four (4) days per week, Tuesday through Friday. Mondays will be for students to work on assignments and teachers may meet with small groups of students virtually for remediation.

Based on the status of COVID-19 and the number of students participating in Face-to-Face Instruction, the above schedule will be reviewed on a regular basis and may be adjusted.

Details of Plan A for each level, middle and high, are provided on the following pages.

Middle School - Plan A

Central Middle School



Plan A: Central Middle School

Timeline

January 6-8, 2021 Small Group Student Orientation Sessions.

January 12, 2021 Students in Group A begin Face-to-Face instruction.

March 23, 2021 Groups A and B combined for 4 days of Face-to-Face instruction.

April 20, 2021 Plan A - 4 days of Face-to-Face instruction.

Instructional Design

The following table indicates the type of instruction, Face-to-Face, Virtual/Remote or other designation for each group per day. Virtual/Remote instruction will be provided daily for V/R Only students.

Plan A	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote Only
Monday	Virtual/Remote	Virtual/Remote
Tuesday	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote
Wednesday	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote
Thursday	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote
Friday	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote

Instructional Plan Details

Mondays-Virtual/Remote (school-wide). Teachers will be engaged with the following activities; lesson planning, professional development, remedial instruction, small group instruction, tutoring, parent contacts, and paper/pencil packet preparation. Tuesday-Friday students will attend school Face-to-Face or Virtual/Remote.

Student Learning Option

Under Plan A, students may participate in Face-to-Face instruction or continue participation in Virtual/Remote Learning Only if parents/guardians have health and/or safety concerns for their child. Each parent was asked to complete the Learning Options Form (see Appendix A) and return to the school by November 20, 2020. Students whose parents did not submit a Learning Options Form were assigned to Virtual/Remote Learning Only. Beginning April 1, 2021, a request to participate in Face-to-Face instruction, if the Learning Options Form was not submitted, should be directed to the school principal for student entrance into Face-to-Face instruction.

State Assessments

Students participating in Virtual/Remote Learning Only will be required to come on campus at the end of the school year to take state assessments.

Monitoring Symptoms in the Morning and Midday

Beginning of the Day: Students will have a signed attestation ticket to enter the building. Students who are car riders will have their temperature taken before getting out of parents' vehicle. If the student does not have a temperature they will enter the building. Students who are school bus riders will have a signed attestation ticket to board the bus. Temperatures will be checked as students enter the building from the bus parking lot. All students will be temperature scanned again at lunch by staff before removing masks to eat lunch.

Lunch and Social Distancing

Students will be brought to the cafeteria by class at 3-5 minute intervals for a grab and go lunch. Students will be socially distanced by standing on markers on the floor 6 feet apart when possible while waiting in the lunch lines. Students will return to classrooms where they will eat lunch at their assigned desk spaced 6 feet apart from one another when possible.

Class Transition and Social Distancing

Two-way travel down hallways, staggered transitions by class and specific places to stand outside classrooms they are entering 6 feet apart when possible from one another.

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting during the School Day

Teachers and students will sanitize areas in classrooms in between class changes and custodians will sanitize at the end of each day. More specifically, students will be assigned a seat/desk in each classroom and wipe down area before and after class.

Loading Buses and Social Distancing

Students will dismiss by grade level into the gym at staggered times (3 minutes apart), in the gym they will find their bus line and stand on floor markers 6 feet apart from one another when possible until their bus is called to be loaded. One bus will be loaded and dismissed at a time.

Committee Members:

Kelly Eure-Principal
Kathryn Eure-Teacher
Barbara Austin-Guidance Counselor
Deirdre House-Teacher
Scott Corrente-Assistant Principal
Kristal Brooks-Teacher
Jennifer Dail-Teacher

Joshua Childers-Teacher
Kristen Ward-Data/Testing
Gary Arline-Teacher
Crystal Owens-Teacher

**Central Middle School
2020-2021
Tentative Daily Bell Schedule (Plan A)**

8:20am-8:55am Bell rings for buses to unload and students report to class. Tardy bell rings @ 9:00am	Homebase/ Grab-N-Go Breakfast
9:00am-9:52am	First Period
9:57am-10:46am	Second Period
10:51am-11:39am	Third Period
11:44am-12:44pm	Fourth Period (Includes all lunches for each grade level)
12:49pm-1:37pm	Fifth Period
1:42pm-2:30pm	Sixth Period
Dismissal	6 th Grade-2:30pm 7 th Grade-2:33pm 8 th Grade-2:36pm

Learning Option Details

On the following page are specific details regarding student option numbers. The information includes the number of students opting for Face-to-Face Instruction, the number of students opting to remain Virtual/Remote only, student nutrition information and transportation information.

CMS - Learning Option Details

TIMELINE:

January 6-8, 2021 Small Group Student Orientation Sessions.

January 12, 2021 Students in Group A begin Face-to-Face instruction.

March 23, 2021 Groups A and B combined for 4 days of Face-to-Face instruction.

April 20, 2021 Plan A - 4 days of Face-to-Face instruction.

INSTRUCTION:

GRADE	Number of Students Opting for FACE-TO-FACE Instruction	Number of Students Opting for VIRTUAL/REMOTE ONLY Instruction
6 th	58	61
7 th	65	50
8 th	67	50
Total	190	161

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN:

Effective April 20, 2021: Based on the number of students choosing Face-to-Face Instruction and maintaining 6 feet of social distancing when possible, students will attend school four (4) days per week. Students participating in Virtual/Remote Only will continue V/R only.

SCHOOL NUTRITION:

Participation: As of December 1, 2020, 141 students will be participating in the student nutrition program. Of the 141 students, 75 are Face-to-Face students and will receive breakfast and lunch at the school on school days. 66 Virtual/Remote Only students have indicated they will participate in the student nutrition program.

Meal Access: Under Plan A, meals will be provided to all students according to the plan outlined in the tables below:

Learning Option	Delivered	Parent Pick-Up	Provided In School
Face-to-Face	Monday	-	Tuesday thru Friday
Virtual/Remote	Monday, Wednesday and Friday	Tuesday & Thursday <i>(see info below)</i>	

Meal	Pick-Up Time	Pick-Up Location
Breakfast & Lunch	9:30am - 11:30am	CMS-Outside Cafeteria Door

High School - Plan A

Gates County High School



Plan A: Gates County High School

Timeline

January 6-8, 2021 Small Group Student Orientation Sessions.

January 12, 2021 Students in Group A begin Face-to-Face instruction.

March 23, 2021 Groups A and B combined for 4 days of Face-to-Face instruction.

April 20, 2021 Plan A - 4 days of Face-to-Face instruction.

Instructional Design

The following table indicates the type of instruction, Face-to-Face, Virtual/Remote or other designation for each group per day. Virtual/Remote instruction will be provided daily for V/R Only students.

Plan A	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote Only
Monday	Virtual/Remote	Virtual/Remote
Tuesday	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote
Wednesday	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote
Thursday	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote
Friday	Face-to-Face	Virtual/Remote

Instructional Plan Details

Mondays, all students will be remote. Mondays will be utilized for planning, professional development, remediation and/or tutoring in small groups or 1-1 settings. Teachers will teach students Face-to-Face Tuesday through Friday. Teachers may opt to have V/R students participate with the F2F groups via Google Meet or Zoom. Mask breaks will be provided at the discretion of the teacher. Students should stay 6 feet apart when possible and the mask break should be no longer than 5 minutes. Students will sit in assigned seats in each class.

Student Learning Option

Under Plan A, students may participate in Face-to-Face instruction or continue participation in Virtual/Remote Learning Only if parents/guardians have health and/or safety concerns for their child. Each parent was asked to complete the Learning Options Form (see Appendix A) and return to the school by November 20, 2020. Students whose parents did not submit a Learning Options Form were assigned to Virtual/Remote Learning Only. Beginning April 1, 2021, a request to participate in Face-to-Face instruction, if the Learning Options Form was not submitted, should be directed to the school principal for student entrance into Face-to-Face instruction.

State Assessments

Students participating in Virtual/Remote Learning Only will be required to come on campus at the end of the school year to take state assessments.

Monitoring Symptoms in the Morning and Midday

Beginning of the Day: Students will have a signed attestation ticket to board the school bus and/or enter the building. Temperatures will be checked as students enter the building from the bus parking lot. Temperatures will be checked at checkpoints in the parking lot for car riders and student drivers. Individuals will be set up where students are dropped off by parents at the sidewalk between the main building and the data center, at the sidewalk that goes between the PAC & Art Building, and between the PAC and Football Field to ensure all entrances are covered. There will be an individual in the front lobby checking temperatures of staff, students and other visitors as they enter the building's main entrance.

Lunch and Social Distancing

Students eat lunch in their 2nd block class. Those students who will eat a cafeteria meal would go to the cafeteria to pick up their lunch and return to their classroom. Arrows will be placed in the cafeteria spaced 6 feet apart so that students know where to stand.

Class Transition and Social Distancing

One-way hallways will be used to minimize students crossing paths. Directional signs will direct students which way to go down the hallway. Arrows will be placed 6 feet apart throughout the building. Teachers will be in the hallways to remind students to stay 6 feet apart when possible. We will make the class exchange time 10-minutes to accommodate the one-way hallways. Signage on the walls will remind students to practice social distancing and stay 6 feet apart when possible.

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting during the School Day

Teachers will be provided cleaners and hand sanitizer in order to have students clean and sanitize as needed. An announcement will be made with 5 minutes left in class to have everyone sanitize. Teachers will provide students with paper towels, then spray the desk with the solution. Custodians will wipe down touch points between classes. Classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized each day following Face-to-Face instruction.

Loading Buses and Social Distancing

Drivers will seat students beginning at the back of the bus. Drivers will unload their bus starting with the front seat and working to the back of the bus. Drivers will unload their bus as they enter the bus parking lot. Only the front bus will unload their bus. (If this method doesn't work, we can have the buses park and unload starting with the bus closest to the building.) Once the bus has unloaded they will park and sanitize their bus. The next bus will drive forward to unload their students.

Bus riders, car riders and drivers will be released at 3:10 p.m. and will follow the one-way hallways to exit the building and go to their appropriate location. Car Riders will go to the cafeteria in order to maintain social distancing. A staff member in the parking lot will radio a staff member in the cafeteria to send out the students for the next car rider.

**Gates County High School
2020-2021
Tentative Daily Schedule-COVID Plan A**

9:50 a.m.	Buses Unload beginning at 9:50
10:00 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.	First Period
11:20 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. 11:50 a.m. to 12:50 p.m.	Lunch: Classes in the Main Building Second Period: Classes in the Main Building
11:20 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. 12:20 p.m. to 12:50 p.m.	Second Period: Classes Outside the Main Building Lunch: Classes Outside the Main Building
1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Third Period
2:10 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.	Fourth Period

Learning Option Details

On the following page are specific details regarding student option numbers. The information includes the number of students opting for Face-to-Face Instruction, the number of students opting to remain Virtual/Remote only, student nutrition information and transportation information.

GCHS - Learning Option Details

TIMELINE:

January 6-8, 2021 Small Group Student Orientation Sessions.

January 12, 2021 Students in Group A begin Face-to-Face instruction.

March 23, 2021 Groups A and B combined for 4 days of Face-to-Face instruction.

April 20, 2021 Plan A - 4 days of Face-to-Face instruction.

INSTRUCTION:

GRADE	Number of Students Opting for FACE-TO-FACE Instruction	Number of Students Opting for VIRTUAL/REMOTE ONLY Instruction	Number of Students Who HAVE NOT RESPONDED
9 th	65	52	14
10 th	76	36	12
11 th	49	34	14
12 th	28	35	11
Total	218	157	51

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN:

Effective April 20, 2021: Based on the number of students choosing Face-to-Face Instruction and maintaining 6 feet of social distancing when possible, students will attend school four (4) days per week. Students participating in Virtual/Remote Only will continue V/R only.

SCHOOL NUTRITION:

Participation: As of December 1, 2020, 111 students will be participating in the student nutrition program. Of the 111 students, 102 are Face-to-Face students and will receive breakfast and lunch at the school on school days. 9 Virtual/Remote Only students have indicated they will participate in the student nutrition program.

Meal Access: Under Plan A, meals will be provided to all students according to the plan outlined in the tables below:

Learning Option	Delivered	Parent Pick-Up	Provided In School
Face-to-Face	Monday	-	Tuesday thru Friday
Virtual/Remote	Monday, Wednesday and Friday	Tuesday & Thursday <i>(see info below)</i>	

Meals	Pick-Up Time	Pick-Up Location
Breakfast & Lunch	8:00am - 11:00am	GCHS Outside Cafeteria Door

Exceptional Children

The Exceptional Children's Department will follow these procedures to provide continuity of instruction for students with special needs.



Parent Contact

Case Managers will:

- Identify if a meeting is required to determine eligibility for compensatory education as appropriate for children who qualify for services due to impact of COVID-19.
- Develop contingency plan or addendum as needed.
- Schedule individualized evaluations and assessments required for service delivery and program planning.

Tiered Service Delivery Options

The following options will be considered for each child:

- A combination of virtual/remote and face-to-face options for access to related services.
- Virtual social-emotional support for all students in the Exceptional Children's program.
- Students participating in the inclusion and resource settings will follow the schedule or guidelines for Plan A.

The final service delivery option will be based on the individual need of the student.

Instructional Support

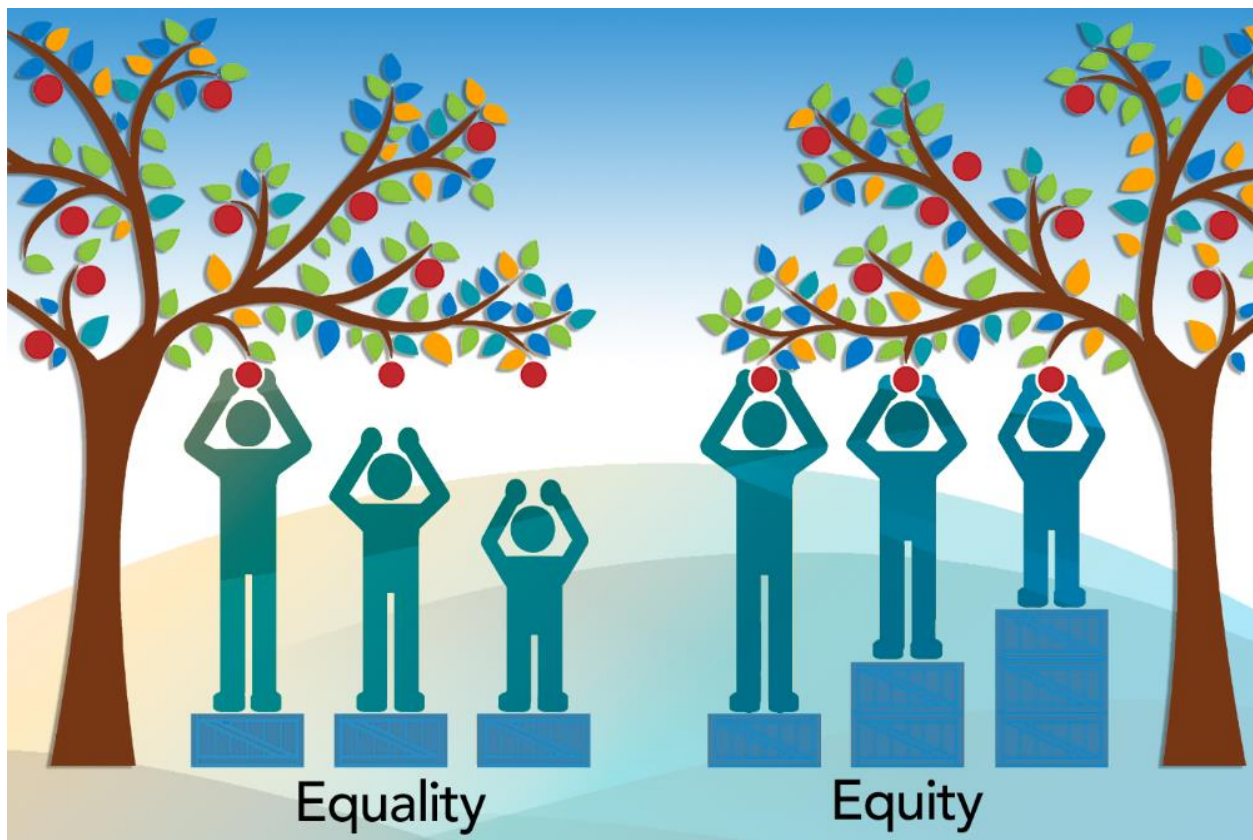
- 1:1 personnel will continue to support students.
- Teacher assistants will be available to aid instruction as required.

Ensuring Equity

Gates County Schools is committed to providing equitable educational opportunities to all students. We will continue to provide guidance and support to our schools to diminish the effects of COVID-19 on our students and staff to the greatest extent possible.

To ensure equity during reopening we will:

- Prioritize the physical and social-emotional needs of particularly vulnerable students. Ensure safety, belonging, and mental health as a foundation for learning.
- Continue to identify and supply internet access through hotspots to families and communities in need.
- Identify students experiencing learning gaps now and develop strategies to mitigate the longer-term impact of school closures on these students.

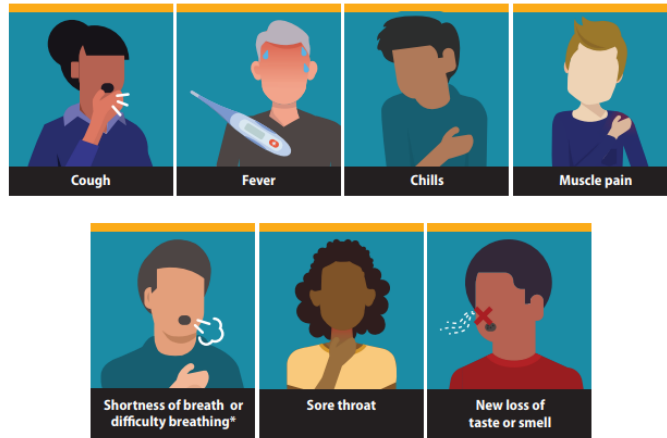


Monitoring for Symptoms

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. The virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection.

Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

***Seek medical care immediately if someone has emergency warning signs of COVID-19.**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.



cdc.gov/coronavirus

Students and staff should stay home if they are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19, or have tested positive for COVID-19.

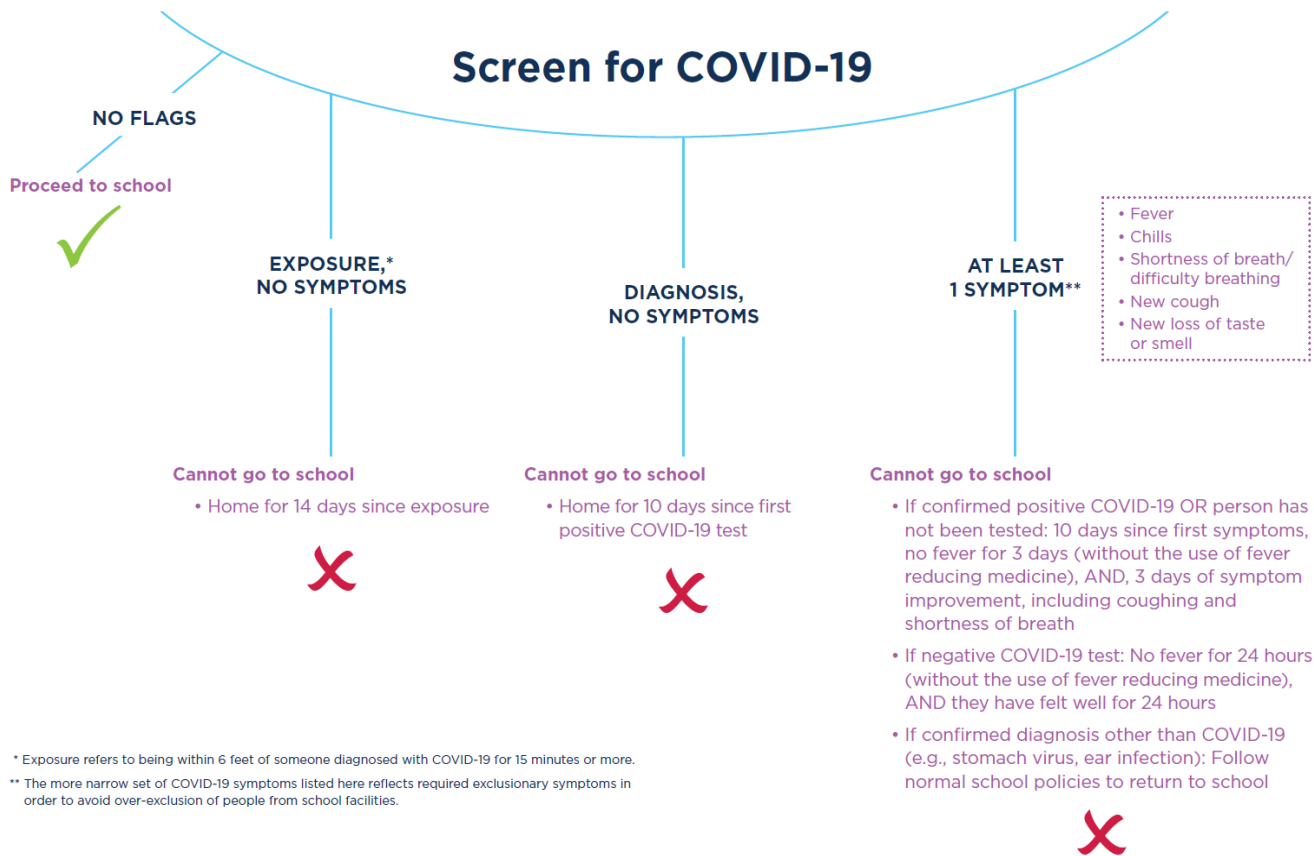
Symptom Screening will be conducted for any person entering the school building, including students, teachers, staff, and visitors. Screening will be provided at the school entrance or prior to boarding a school bus. Temperature screenings are a required component of symptom screening and will be performed with a touchless thermometer. Individuals with a temperature of 100°F or higher is considered a positive screening.

In the event that a student or staff member has a positive screening, the school district personnel will follow the Positive Screening Protocol Checklists in the Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 (K-12) published by the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

The screening flow chart is illustrated below:

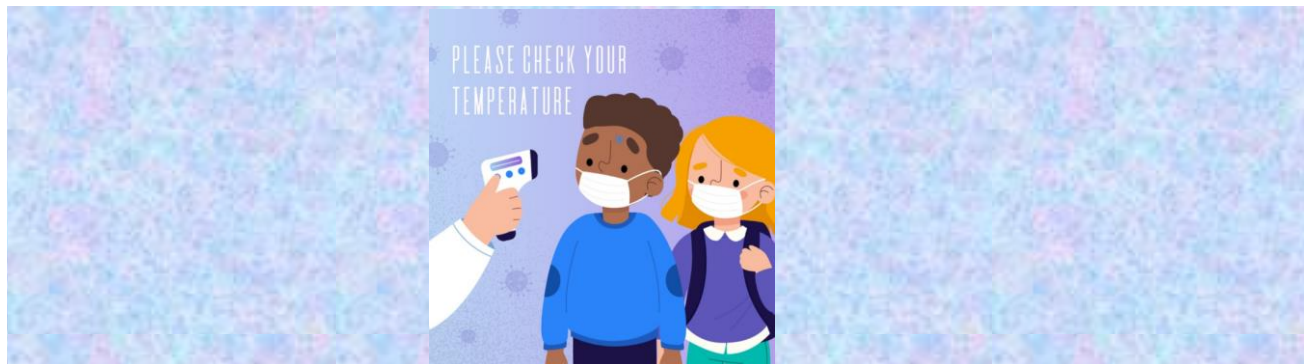


Screening Flow Chart



* Exposure refers to being within 6 feet of someone diagnosed with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more.

** The more narrow set of COVID-19 symptoms listed here reflects required exclusionary symptoms in order to avoid over-exclusion of people from school facilities.



Cloth Face Coverings (Facemasks)

There is growing evidence that wearing face coverings help reduce the spread of COVID-19, especially for those who are sick but may not know it. Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators (“N-95s”), or other medical personal protective equipment (PPE).



Wear a cloth face cover

All students, staff members and visitors must wear a cloth face covering (facemask) in school buildings and on school buses.

Facemask Do's and Don'ts

For Healthcare Personnel

When putting on a facemask

Clean your hands and put on your facemask so it fully covers your mouth and nose.



DO secure the elastic bands around your ears.



DO secure the ties at the middle of your head and the base of your head.

When wearing a facemask, don't do the following:



DON'T wear your facemask under your nose or mouth.



DON'T allow a strap to hang down. DON'T cross the straps.



DON'T touch or adjust your facemask without cleaning your hands before and after.



DON'T wear your facemask on your head.



DON'T wear your facemask around your neck.



DON'T wear your facemask around your arm.

When removing a facemask

Clean your hands and remove your facemask touching only the straps or ties.



DO leave the patient care area, then clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water.



DO remove your facemask touching ONLY the straps or ties, throw it away*, and clean your hands again.

*If implementing limited-reuse: Facemasks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage. Folded facemasks can be stored between uses in a clean, sealable paper bag or breathable container.

Additional information is available about how to safely put on and remove personal protective equipment, including facemasks:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/using-ppe.html>.

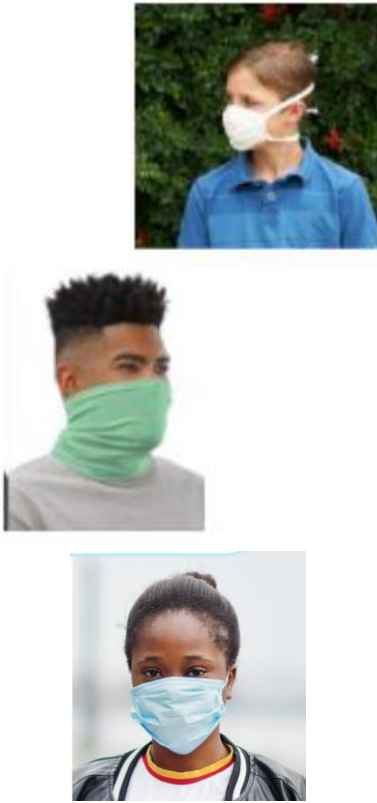



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[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

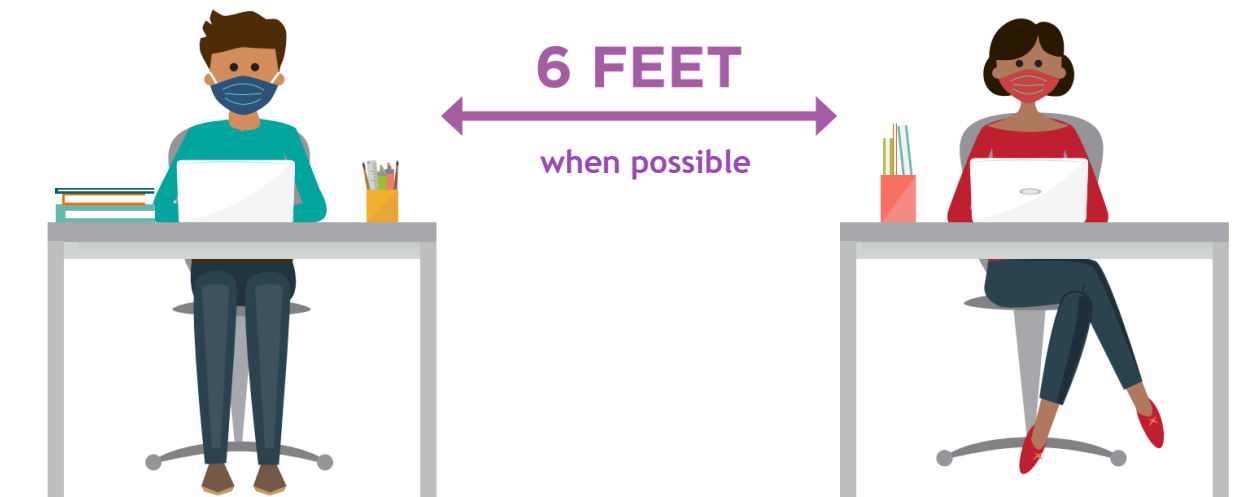
Each student and staff member will be provided with a cloth facemask at the beginning of the school year. If a student or staff member forgets his/her facemask, or a visitor does not have a facemask, a new cloth facemask or disposable facemask will be provided.

There are many types of facemasks that may be worn at school. Below is an illustration of examples of acceptable and unacceptable facemasks:

Examples of Acceptable Facemasks	Examples of Unacceptable Facemasks
 <p>The 'Acceptable' column contains three photographs of people wearing standard facemasks. The top photo shows a person wearing a white surgical-style mask. The middle photo shows a person wearing a green cloth mask. The bottom photo shows a person wearing a blue surgical-style mask.</p>	 <p>The 'Unacceptable' column contains four images of non-standard masks. From top to bottom: a black balaclava with a white eye opening; a white plastic mask with black eye cutouts; a black crow mask with a long beak; and a brown mask with a large, protruding snout and small eye openings.</p>

Social Distancing & Minimizing Exposure

During the school day, students and staff are required to practice social distancing to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Social distancing is a key tool to decrease the spread of COVID-19. Social distancing means keeping space between yourself and other people.



StrongSchoolsNC: Public Health Toolkit (K-12) Interim Guidance • Published June 8, 2020; Updated July 14, 2020

4

The schools will mark six (6) feet of spacing on floors, seats, and desks to remind students and staff to stay six (6) feet apart when possible in waiting and reception areas, in lines and at other times when they may congregate such as lunch, recess, or class change. Specific designations established are:

- Plexiglass physical barriers have been added for extra protection at reception desks, library check-out stations, and similar areas.
- Furniture, such as desks or seating in classrooms, break rooms, and reception areas, have been arranged so that students, teachers, staff and visitors are separated from one another by at least 6 feet when possible (see **Classroom Setup**).
- The sides of hallways will be designated as one-way, with directional reminders on the walls and/or floor.
- The designation of entrance and exit pathways for classrooms and restrooms with directional reminders on the walls and/or the floors has been done to reduce the chance that people meet face-to-face.

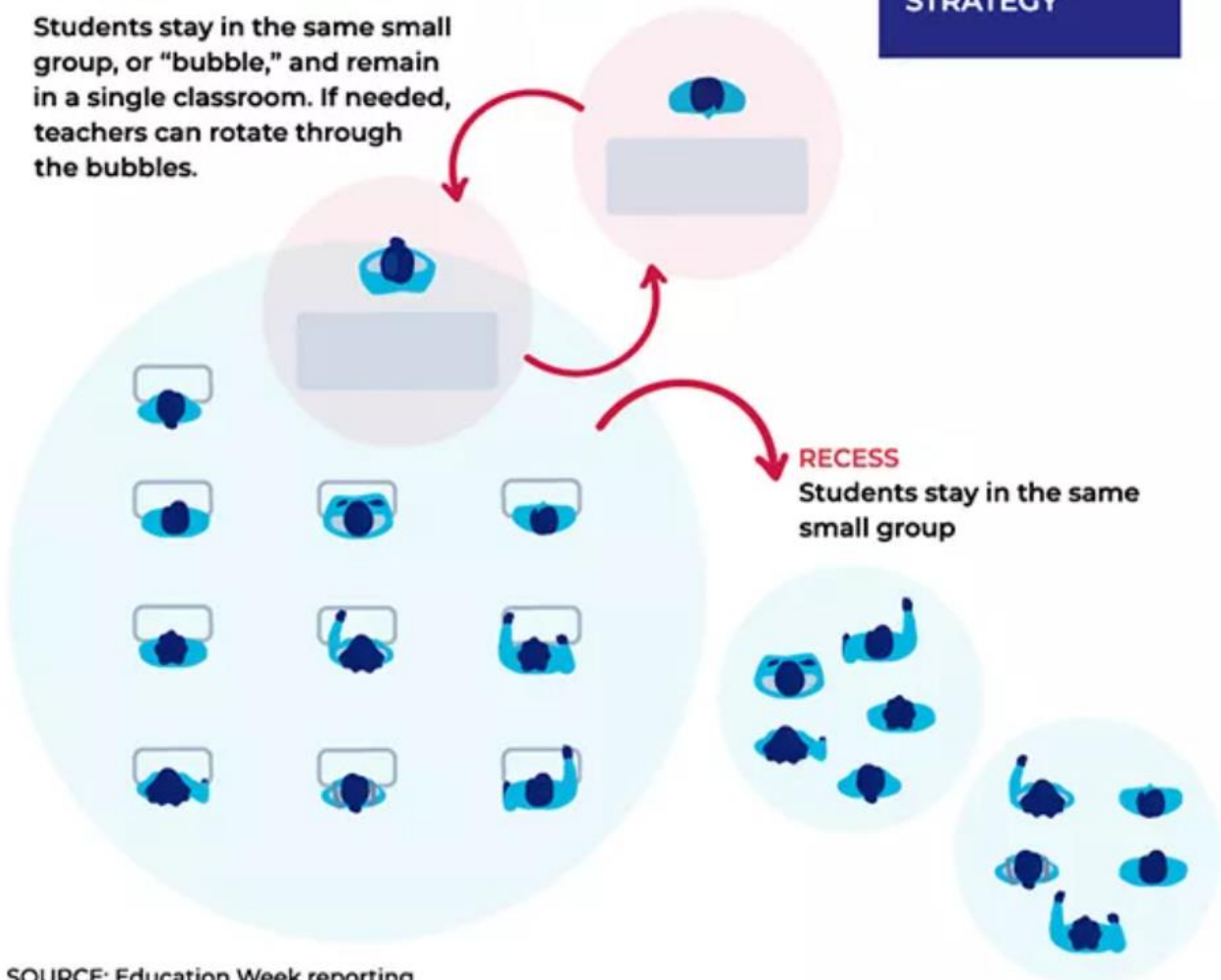
Through announcements and signage, students, staff, and visitors will be frequently reminded to stay at least 6 feet apart when possible from one another.

Classroom Setup

Classrooms must be set up to ensure that students are social distancing with a least six (6) feet of distance when possible between each student and staff. The size of the classrooms is the main reason that student numbers must be limited. Extra desks and chairs will be removed or marked as unavailable to assist students and teachers with social distancing. Below are diagrams indicating possible classroom setups:

Limiting Exposure and Transmission

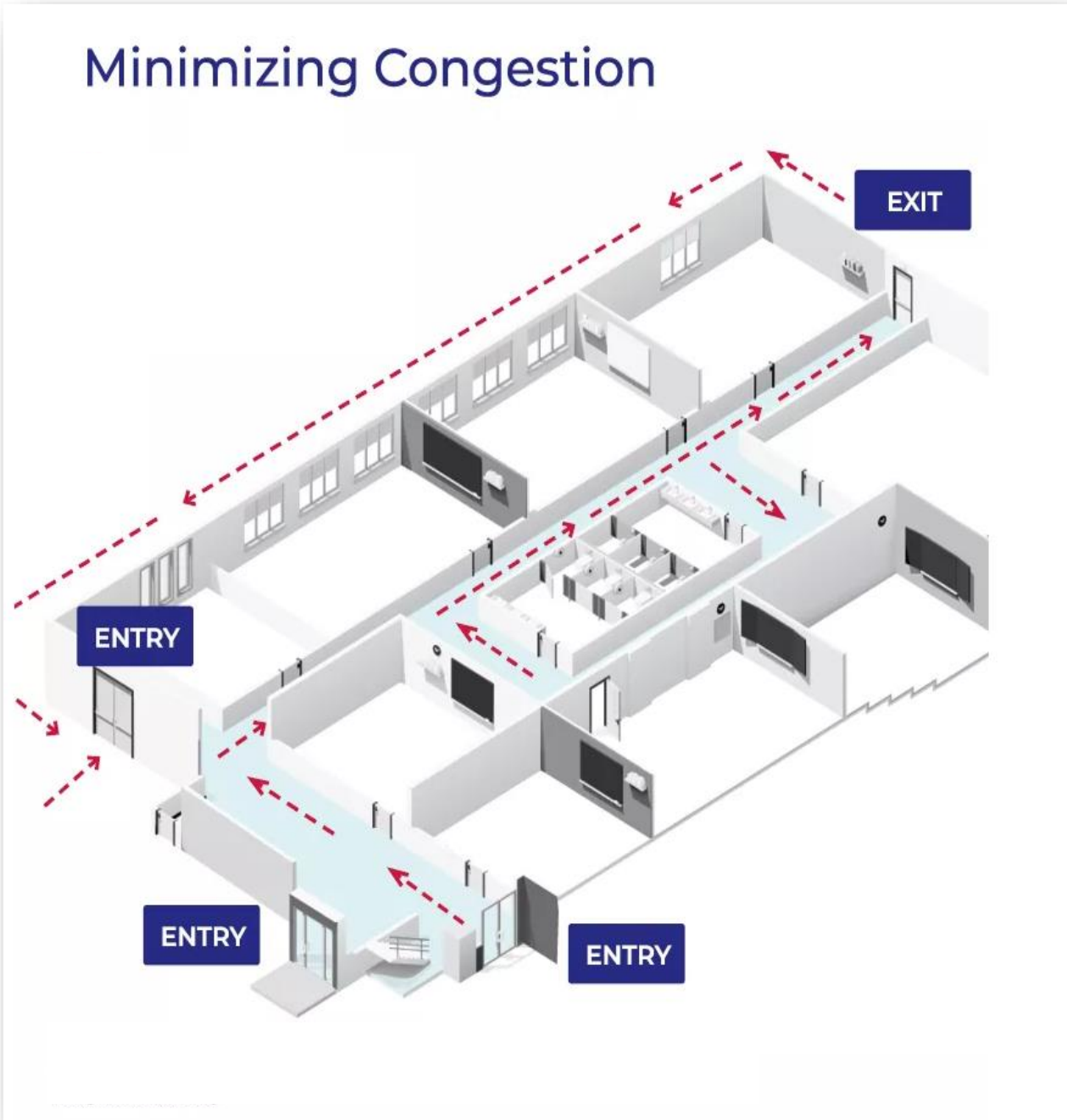
Students stay in the same small group, or "bubble," and remain in a single classroom. If needed, teachers can rotate through the bubbles.



SOURCE: Education Week reporting

School Buildings - Managing Transitions

Schools will establish transitioning pathways marked with signage to ensure social distancing as students and staff move throughout the building. Below is a diagram indicating the type of plans each school will include in their social distancing protocol:



Technology

Teachers use a variety of technology modalities to provide quality instruction for their students. For remote instruction, technology can bridge the gap from school to home.

Devices

While Gates County Schools is not a one-to-one school district, technology inventory is growing and a limited number of Chromebooks and iPads will soon be available for students who do not have their own device. Devices will be used to assist students with virtual/remote instruction.



MiFi

Internet connectivity is an issue that can impede virtual/remote learning. In Gates County, there are areas that do not have internet availability and/or there are families who do not have internet service. As a solution to this issue,



Gates County Schools has investigated several options, including MiFi units by Kajeet. Kajeet MiFi's are portable Internet hotspots that students can take home and use to connect to the Internet. Currently, we are in the process of determining how many devices we will need to deploy and we will purchase additional units as needed to support our virtual/remote learning initiative.

Bus Hotspots

In addition to individual MiFi's, we have purchased larger hotspots that are mounted on buses. These buses will be taken to a variety of communities at specified times for multiple households to connect to the internet for virtual/remote learning purposes.

Google Classroom, Canvas, and Zoom

Google Classroom, Canvas, and Zoom are three of the main methods for teachers to remotely connect with students. Through these online programs, teachers can interact with students in real time and they can provide assignments, lessons, and videos that students can access at any time.



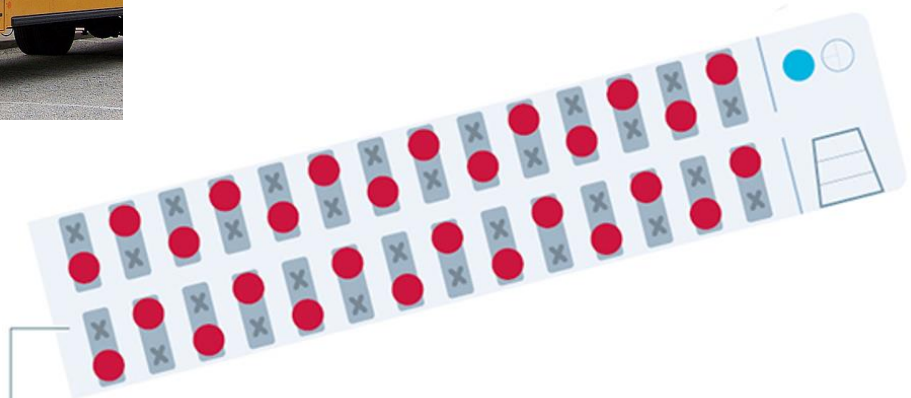
See the **Virtual/Remote Learning** section for more details.

Transportation

School buses will run normal routes with the reopening of schools.



How Many Students Can Ride the Bus?



WITH FACEMASKS:
One Student per Seat when possible

School Bus Guidelines:

- All students in grades K-12 and all staff must wear cloth face coverings when they are on a school bus.
- Students must present the bus driver with their signed attestation ticket each morning. Riders' temperature must be below 100 degrees F.
- School buses will be cleaned and disinfected daily (see **Cleaning and Hygiene, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting**).
- Students will not be present when a school bus is being cleaned.
- Cleaning and disinfecting products will not be stored on a school bus.
- Cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted prior to each morning run and after each set of runs.

School Nutrition

On August 31, 2020 the extension of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) was provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), allowing all students to eat free of charge through December 31, 2020. On October 9, 2020 the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the USDA issued COVID 19: Child Nutrition Response #59_EXTENSION allowing the SFSP and the Nation School Lunch Program (NSLP) Seamless Summer Option to continue to operate through June 30, 2021. With this extension, all Gates County Students are allowed to eat free of charge.



Under Plan A, meals will be provided to all students according to the plan outlined in the tables below:

Learning Option	Delivered	Parent Pick-Up	Provided In School
Face-to-Face	Monday	-	Tuesday thru Friday
Virtual/Remote	Monday, Wednesday and Friday	Tuesday & Thursday <i>(see info below)</i>	

School	Meals	Pick-Up Time	Pick-Up Location
CMS	Breakfast & Lunch	9:30am - 11:30am	CMS-Outside Cafeteria Door
GCHS	Breakfast & Lunch	8:00am - 11:00am	GCHS-Outside Cafeteria Door

The 2020-2021 Free and Reduced Priced Meals Household Application is now available on the district website, at the central office, and at all schools. It is imperative that parents complete an application for students to qualify for free and reduced meals and to be eligible for other benefits provided as a result of the pandemic.



Cleaning and Hygiene, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting

Hand Washing

Due to the nature of school activities, students and staff need to be able to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer throughout the day to minimize the transmission of viruses, germs, and bacteria. Many classrooms do not have sinks where students and staff would be able to wash their hands. Schools will provide soap in all restrooms and at all sinks. Students and staff will utilize handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Reinforcement of handwashing will also be done during key times such as: before and after eating food; after using the restroom; after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; after touching objects with bare hands which have been handled by other individuals.

Handwashing is critical to avoiding the spread of COVID-19



NCASA "Ensuring student success through visionary leadership"

Hand Sanitizer

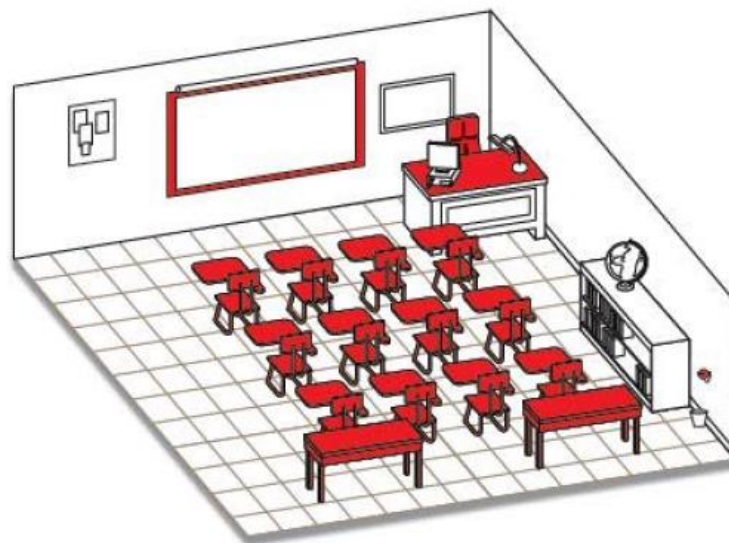
Hand sanitizer will be provided for use throughout the schools. Hand sanitizer stations are throughout the common areas of the buildings such as the main office area, hallways, cafeteria, and entryways. The sanitizer stations are touch-free to reduce the transmission of germs and viruses. In each of the classrooms, individual hand sanitizer dispensers are mounted to the wall and/or on the teachers' desk.



Cleaning and Sanitizing During the School Day

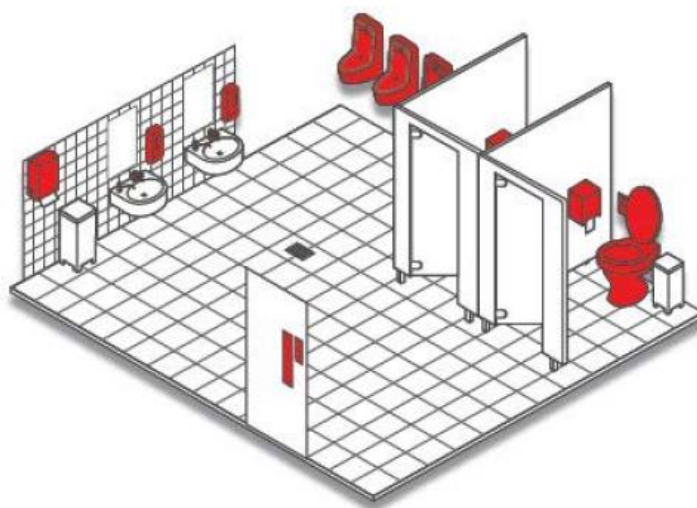
Before, during, and after the school day, custodians will perform ongoing and routine environmental cleaning and sanitizing of high-touch areas (e.g., door handles, faucet handles, toilet handles, light switches, desks, tables, chairs, cafeteria tables, kitchen counters, carts) with an EPA approved disinfectant for SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19). School staff will clean and disinfect during the school day and during workdays.

Below is an illustration of key points for cleaning and disinfecting during the school day:



Classrooms:

- telephones / computers / electronics
- desks / tables
- switches
- door handles
- chairs
- pencil sharpener/ metal surfaces



Restrooms:

- door handles
- switches
- dispensers, paper towel holders
- bathroom handles, toilet flush, shower control, taps
- toilet seats, splash walls

Cleaning and Disinfecting After the School Day

Classroom and cafeteria surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at the conclusion of each school day. Touch points in common areas and bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day. An electrostatic sprayer with a nozzle that delivers a disinfecting solution to the front, back, and sides of surfaces will be used to clean group areas bi-weekly. This system provides superior coverage and is effective in use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, as well as other viruses and bacteria. The system will be used in addition to normal cleaning procedures and will only be utilized when the school day is over.

Cleaning and Disinfecting School Buses

School buses will be used to transport students to and from school. School buses may be used to transport meals to students on virtual/remote learning. Because individuals touch multiple places on the bus such as the handrails getting on and off the bus, the seats, the seat backs, and the windows, these areas will be cleaned after each route.



To ensure CDC recommended guidelines for sanitizing are followed on the school buses, the most efficient and effective method is to use Portable Sanitizer Foggers. Similar to the electrostatic sprayer, the Portable Sanitizer Fogger can cover multiple surfaces but it is portable as a backpack system that staff members can wear as a backpack and walk through the buses easily to sanitize each area of the bus. The Portable Sanitizer Fogger for each school will allow the transportation department to quickly and efficiently sanitize all areas of the school buses. This process will be done one to two times weekly.

Virtual/Remote Learning

Virtual/Remote Instruction will be provided as part of the blended learning plan. Under Plan A, virtual/remote learning will be offered as an option four (4) days per week for students who choose to participate in virtual/remote learning only. Mondays will be virtual/remote for all students and will allow students to work on assignments. Details of the Remote Learning Plan and each school's Remote Learning Handbook can be found in the Plan C Document on the district website and each school's website.



Personnel Policies and Regulations

As the school district continues to operate schools, for the 2020-2021 school year, under an alternate plan due to COVID-19, a few select policies and procedures of Gates County Schools are highlighted and defined for employees.

Technology

In regard to remote instruction, the following policies provide guidance for employees when working with students and parents through a remote environment: Policy 7320-Technology Responsible Use, 7323-Use of Personal Technology to Conduct School Business, and 7335-Employee Use of Social Media. These policies can be accessed online on the Gates County Schools website or through the following link:

<https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>.

Workday and Overtime

The work schedule for employees will be as follows during Plan A:

11 Month & 12 Month Full-Time Employees Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.		10 Month Full-Time Employees Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Directors Coordinators Supervisors Specialists Technology Staff Principals Assistant Principals Athletic Director	Secretaries Bookkeepers Finance Department Maintenance Custodians Mechanics- (staggered work times beginning at 6 a.m.)	Teachers Instructional Coaches School Counselors Librarians Teacher Assistants School Nurses School Resource Officer Social Worker
School Bus Drivers		School Nutrition Staff
Regular bus route times.		Regular Schedule Cafeteria staff will report as assigned by the Director of School Nutrition.

All employees are expected to be present during all working hours. If an employee is not present, the appropriate leave must be taken. The board of education discourages overtime work by non-exempt employees. Any overtime work must be approved prior to working by the employee's direct supervisor. Please refer to Policy 7500 for further information. The policy can be found at <https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>.

Dress Code

Policy 7340 and Regulation 7340-R define the expectations for employee dress. Below are three excerpts from the policy and regulation on dress code. The entire policy and regulation can be accessed at <https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>.

The board believes that the appearance and the conduct of its faculty are of supreme importance in establishing a positive image for education in the community and for presenting a good example for students. Therefore, the board affirms its expectation that all personnel will be professionally, neatly and appropriately attired for the work to be done.

Administrative and supervisory personnel shall set a good example in personal appearance and good manners and shall encourage and expect employees to dress in accordance with the board's expectations.

All employees, while on duty or in attendance at school functions, should dress professionally and appropriately for their job duties and responsibilities.

Teleworking

During the COVID-19 pandemic while Gates County Public Schools is offering Remote Instruction Only, there may be situations where teleworking is an option for some employees. The Teleworking Policy-7503 is a new policy adopted in May of 2020. The policy may be found in its entirety on the school district website at <https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>. After reviewing the policy, if an employee feels they may be qualified to request to telework, the employee should notify their principal or direct supervisor who will then contact the Director of Human Resources for further information and directions.

Vulnerable Populations

Individuals who are considered high-risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 include people who:

- Are 65 years of age or older
- Have a high-risk condition that includes:
 - chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - heart disease with complications
 - compromised immune system
 - severe obesity - body mass index of 40 or higher
 - other underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as diabetes, renal failure or liver disease

As a school district, we are committed to providing extra securities for our vulnerable population. To do so, we will:

- ✓ Review all current plans such as Individual Healthcare Plans, Individualized Education Plans or 504 plans for accommodating students with special healthcare needs and update their care plans as needed to decrease their risk for exposure to COVID-19.
- ✓ Accommodate students and/or their families, teachers, and staff with documentation of being at high-risk from COVID-19 and provide alternative learning arrangements or work re-assignments if feasible.



Coping and Resilience

The outbreak of COVID-19 can be stressful for many. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Schools can play an important role in helping students and staff cope and build resilience to support the well-being of the school community.

School counselors can provide teachers, staff, families, and students (if age-appropriate) with information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness, such as 211 and Hope4NC Helpline 1-855-587-3463, as well as other resources.

As a school district, we will focus on mental health as well as physical health by:

- Encouraging teachers, staff, students, and families to talk with people they trust about their concerns about COVID-19 and how they are feeling.
- Supporting teachers, staff, students and families eating healthy, exercising, getting sleep, and finding time to unwind.
- Encouraging teachers, staff and students to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19, including social media, if they are feeling overwhelmed or distressed.



Evaluation of the Instructional Plan

As we have all witnessed since the March 14, 2020 announcement that NC schools would be closed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the impact of the virus has been widespread. Additionally, the virus impact has increased, flattened, and then increased again. The CDC, NCDHHS, the Governor's Office, and NCDPI constantly monitor the virus impact and provide guidance for our schools.



With that being said, we know that the situation is fluid and can change at any time. We will continually monitor our instructional plan along with the impact of the virus on Gates County and will adjust our plan as needed with appropriate notice time for parents, students, and staff.

Our goal is to provide a quality education for our students in a safe and healthy learning environment. As we work through the pandemic together, we value the input and feedback from all and encourage you to share any concerns, positives, or negatives that can be helpful in evaluating our plan.

Thank you for your support, patience, and grace as we move forward with educating our students in the 2020-2021 school year.

Resources

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance#schools>

*Please Note: NCDHHS requirements are updated daily.

StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit

<https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/guidance/Strong-Schools-NC-Public-Health-Toolkit.pdf>

StrongSchoolsNC Infection Control and PPE Guidance (K-12)

<https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/guidance/education/Strong-Schools-NC-Public-Health-Toolkit-PPE-Guidance.pdf>

StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12) Frequently Asked Questions

<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/media/401/open>

Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 (K-12)

https://files.nc.gov/covid/PHT-ScreeningReferenceGuide_6.30.pdf

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/news/covid-19-response-resources>

CDC - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Gates County Schools Policy Manual

<https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>

Senate Bill 220: The Reopen Our Schools Act of 2021

<https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2021/Bills/Senate/PDF/S220v3.pdf>



Appendix A: GCS Learning Options Form

Gates County Schools

Learning Options 2020-2021

Gates County Schools (GCS) is considering the option of re-opening schools in the 2020-2021 school year under Face-to-Face Plan A (Elementary) and Face-to-Face Blended Plan B (Middle & High). Gates County School parents/guardians with health and/or safety concerns will have the option to continue their child's participation in Virtual/Remote Learning Only.

All parents/guardians must complete this form with their choice of learning option for their child. One form must be completed for each child. Participation in Virtual/Remote Learning Only requires a nine-week commitment for elementary students and a one-semester commitment for middle and high school students. Students participating in Virtual/Remote Learning Only will be required to come on campus at the end of the school year to take state assessments.

Learning Options forms must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian and returned to the child's school by **Friday, November 20, 2020.**

Elementary Face-to-Face Plan A:

- Temperature checks and wellness attestations for staff and students daily
- 4 days a week face-to-face instruction on campus, one day remote
- Social distancing in the classrooms, hallways and buses
- Masks worn except during outdoor recess and lunch (other short mask breaks as needed)
- Breakfast and lunch in the classroom with the exception of Pre-K, Kindergarten and First Grade

Middle and High School Face-to-Face Plan B:

- Temperature checks and wellness attestations for staff and students daily
- At least 2 days of face-to-face instruction on campus
- Social distancing in the classroom, hallways and buses
- Masks worn except during lunch and mask breaks
- Breakfast and lunch in the classrooms



2020-2021 GCS Learning Options Form

Student's Name: _____

Student's Grade Level for the 2020-2021 School Year: _____

Student's School:

_____ Buckland Elementary _____ Gatesville Elementary _____ T.S. Cooper Elementary
_____ Central Middle _____ Gates County High

Learning Option Choice:

_____ Face-to-Face Plan A - Elementary
_____ Face-to-Face Plan B - Middle and High
_____ Virtual/Remote Learning Only - All Schools

Virtual/Remote Learning Only Option: Parents who opt for their child to participate in Virtual/Remote Learning Only due to COVID-19 concerns, after the reopening of schools under Plan A or Plan B, must check to agree to the following:

- I confirm the student has daily access to a reliable internet connection and a Chromebook or Laptop or iPad OR will be on packet (pencil/paper) participation.
- The student commits to remain in Virtual/Remote Learning Only for a minimum of nine weeks for elementary students and one semester for middle and high school students.
- The student will participate in daily virtual/remote learning.
- The student will participate in state and local assessments (benchmarks and course exams). State assessments will be given on campus.
- I recognize that some courses for high school and middle school students are incompatible with Virtual/Remote Learning Only and might need to be postponed until the student returns to Face-to-Face instruction OR might require the student to come to the school for lab/skills work.

Meal Option: (All meals are free to all students for the 2020-2021 school year)

_____ School Meals _____ Meals provided by the home

Transportation Option (Face-to-Face Students Only):

_____ School Bus _____ Parent Provided (such as parent brings child to school)

Parent/Guardian Contact Information:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Office Use Only Date Received: _____ Received by: _____

Appendix B: Attestation Ticket

Attestation Ticket

Students will be given a weekly Attestation Ticket Booklet. Parents/guardians are required to attest to the health of their child based on COVID-19 symptoms each day that the student will be attending school for face-to-face instruction. If the student is a school bus rider, they must present a signed ticket with all questions answered “NO” to the school bus driver prior to getting on the school bus. Students who drive to school or are transported to school by vehicle, must present the signed ticket with all questions answered “NO” to the staff member at the school entrance.

Below is a sample of the cover of the Attestation Ticket Booklet and a sample of the Attestation Ticket:

Gates County Public Schools Symptom Checklist Ticket



DAILY COVID-19 SYMPTOM CHECKLIST FOR GATES COUNTY STUDENTS

YES

NO

- Has your child had close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, or has any health department or health care provider been in contact with you and advised quarantine?

- Does your child have any of these symptoms: fever, chills, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, new cough, new loss of taste or smell?

- Has your child recently been diagnosed with COVID-19?

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

School (circle one): GCHS CMS BES GES TSC

Appendix C: Albemarle Regional Health Services

ALBEMARLE REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

Partners in Public Health: Inspiring people to lead healthy lives.

Pasquotank • Perquimans • Camden • Chowan • Currituck • Bertie • Gates • Hertford



Pasquotank County Health Department 252-338-4400	Perquimans County Health Department 252-426-2100	Camden County Health Department 252-338-4460	Chowan County Health Department 252-482-6003
Currituck County Health Department 252-232-2271	Bertie County Health Department 252-794-5322	Gates County Health Department 252-357-1380	Hertford County Health Department 252-862-4054

www.arhs-nc.org
252-338-WELL

gs