

Health and Safety

What does the self-certification process look like?

All WCGS parents will receive a link to a **Student Health Certification Form** before the first day of school. This form will walk parents through a checklist of COVID-19 symptoms and related “yes/no” questions for each student, as well as enter their student’s morning temperature. If a “yes” answer is given to any of the symptoms (one or more) or to the other questions listed, the student (as well as other siblings in the household that attend WCGS) must remain at home. Contact **Attendance** via email (attendance@wheatonchristian.org) or voicemail, and provide specific symptoms or circumstances that are the basis for the absence(s). The school nurse will then be in contact with you directly later in the morning.

The completed **Student Health Certification Form** must reflect all positive responses as a prerequisite to entering the school building every school day for every student. The form must be submitted by the parent each morning **by 8:00am**.

This process has already been implemented with the WCGS faculty and staff, in accordance with IDPH requirements, to ensure the health and safety for all community members as we reopen our school.

All individuals with COVID-like symptoms should be diagnostically tested and should remain home until they receive the test results. See below for further instructions on quarantining.

Will parents and visitors be allowed into the school, and will they be screened?

We will allow a limited number of parents and visitors into the building each day. They will be required to complete a **Visitor Health Self-Certification Form**, have their temperature checked, and have all answers to the questions communicate good health as a prerequisite to entering the school building.

How frequently will handwashing and disinfecting take place?

We will have set times for handwashing and disinfecting, including when students first enter the classroom, prior to eating, and at various transitions throughout the day. The custodial staff will be cleaning areas throughout the day (as well as in the evenings), and teachers will oversee the cleaning and disinfecting of desks and supplies. There will be sanitizing stations throughout the building, as well as sanitizer and disinfectant spray in each classroom.

When must an individual (student, faculty, or staff) self-quarantine?

- **Any individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who is suspected of having COVID-19.** According to IDPH and ISBE, these individuals must complete 10 calendar days of isolation from the date of first symptom onset and be fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medication, and other symptoms have improved before returning to school.
- **Any individual who has COVID-like symptoms who does NOT get tested or who has NOT been seen by a healthcare provider.*** According to IDPH and ISBE, individuals who have COVID-like symptoms who do NOT get tested for COVID-19 and who do NOT provide a healthcare provider’s note documenting an alternative diagnosis must complete 10 calendar days of isolation from the date of first symptom onset and be fever-free for 24 hours.

- According to IDPH and ISBE, individuals who have **COVID-like symptoms but are diagnosed with a non-COVID illness** must meet the criteria for returning to school for the illness with which they have been diagnosed. A healthcare provider's* note documenting the alternative diagnosis and a negative COVID-19 test result should accompany the individual when returning to school.
- **Any individual who has had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.** According to IDPH and ISBE, these individuals are required to remain in quarantine at home for 14 calendar days starting from the last day of contact with the confirmed case.
- **If one household member is being evaluated for COVID-19, the rest of the household must be quarantined until an alternative diagnosis is made or negative result received,** according to IDPH and ISBE. If the sick individual becomes a confirmed case (tests positive) or a probable case (COVID-like symptoms and is epidemiologically linked to a known case) the DuPage County Health Department will place household contacts, including siblings, in quarantine for 14 calendar days.

*A **healthcare provider** is defined as “a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches” and includes medical doctors (MD), advanced practice registered nurses (APN) and physician assistants (PA).

What is considered “close contact” in relation to COVID?

According to IDPH and ISBE, a “close contact” is described as anyone (with or without a face covering) who has spent at least 15 minutes within 6 feet of a confirmed case of COVID-19 (regardless of whether or not a face covering was worn by that individual) **over the course of a day**. The period of close contact begins **2 calendar days before the onset of symptoms** (for a symptomatic person) or 2 calendar days before the positive sample was obtained (for an asymptomatic person). Close contacts to a confirmed case of COVID-19 are required to **remain in quarantine at home for 14 calendar days** starting from the last day of contact with the confirmed case.

What are the requirements for parents to notify the school if their child tests positive?

We ask that parents communicate the information directly to the [school nurse](#) as soon as possible after the test results are received. Designated personnel will assist the DuPage County Health Department with the necessary contact tracing. No personal identifying information will be shared with the school community.

Will an entire class ever be asked to self-quarantine?

Physical distancing, face masks, and other extensive mitigation measures are being put into place specifically to try to avoid this very scenario. It is possible, however, that an entire class may be asked to self-quarantine if the circumstances warrant it, as determined by the DuPage County Health Department in collaboration with Administration. Any individual with whom the confirmed or probable COVID case had close contact will be required to quarantine for 14 days.

At what point would we decide to close the school based on high absenteeism?

Decisions for a temporary pause with In-Person Learning will be made by school administrators in consultation with the DuPage County Health Department during its investigation of a case or cluster of cases. This pause allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school. The pause also allows the local health officials to help the

school administrators determine appropriate next steps, including if an extended pause of In-Person Learning is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

According to IDPH, two confirmed cases of COVID-19 infections occurring within 14 calendar days of each other in individuals in the same classroom would meet the case definition for an outbreak. This would prompt investigation by the DuPage County Health Department that may result in recommendations for testing and quarantining all individuals in the affected classroom(s).

What type of communication will the school provide to families regarding a positive COVID-19 test of a WCGS student?

Families of students within the immediate homeroom and/or grade level, as well as any other close contacts as determined by the DuPage County Health Department, **will be notified immediately upon receipt of the test result information** (the nurse will send a health alert via email). As with all medical notifications, an individual's privacy remains fully protected. The administration will receive further guidance from the DuPage County Health Department on necessary further notifications.

Face Coverings and Distancing

Do all students need to wear a face covering? What types of face coverings are allowed?

Yes, according to IDPH guidelines, face coverings must be worn by all individuals while in school buildings, even when physical distancing is maintained. Please refer to the "Face Mask Guidelines" when necessary. Masks must also be worn outdoors under certain circumstances if distancing cannot be achieved (example: in specific locations during recess).

Will teachers be wearing face coverings?

Since all individuals are required to wear face coverings while in the building, teachers fall into this same category. Based on IDPH guidelines, teachers may wear face shields in lieu of face masks when appropriate. However, when wearing shields, teachers will adhere to stricter physical distancing requirements.

Are medical exemptions allowed for face masks? Does the school need to know the reason for the medical exemption?

Individuals who have a condition or medical contraindication that prevents them from wearing a face covering are required to **provide documentation of the condition from their physician**, as well as suggestions of alternative protective measures that can be implemented in lieu of the face mask. If you believe your child requires a medical exemption, please reach out to the school nurses directly to learn more about this process.

How will parents be made aware if their child is in a class with another child who has received permission not to wear a mask?

As this is protected medical information, there will not be communication to class families regarding the medical exemption status of other students in the building. Parents can be assured that appropriate alternate mitigation methods will be used to protect the health and safety of all students in the classroom if this situation arises.

Do you have extra masks on hand if students, faculty, or staff break or lose them during the day?

Yes, the school nurses have extra masks available for students, faculty, and staff in the office for these types of situations. However, we are requesting that parents **send extra face masks to school** (at least 2 more) with their students to avoid this situation. **Face masks must be changed immediately if soiled, wet, or torn.**

Will students be required to wear masks for P.E. and recess?

Students will not be required to wear face masks while outside and maintaining physical distance for P.E., recess, and any other outdoor instructional time. When they are inside for P.E., teachers will adjust their plans so that students participate in less strenuous activities due to the wearing of masks. Again, masks may also be worn outdoors under certain circumstances if distancing cannot be achieved.

Will student desks be spread out in classrooms?

Yes, there will be physical distancing between desks in all classrooms. Based on our large classrooms and small class sizes, we are able to adhere to state guidelines.

Will students be practicing physical distancing all day?

Yes, students will be practicing physical distancing throughout the day. As stated before, “close contact” is described as spending 15 minutes or more within 6 feet of another individual over the course of the school day. At WCGS, there may be times when a student passes by another student within six feet (in our hallways—which are 12 feet wide, out at recess, etc.), but we will maintain six foot spacing to the best of our ability throughout the day, and certainly for extended periods of time.

In-Person Instruction

How much will students be moving throughout the building?

Whenever possible, students will be kept in cohorts (homeroom groupings for K-5; grade level groupings for grades 6-8). For K-5 students, they will remain with their homeroom class for the majority of the day. For most specials and content areas that are taught by the non-homeroom teacher, those teachers/specialists will go to the homeroom class to instruct the students. Currently, we plan to transition students to the art room, the gymnasium, and outdoor spaces for some specials.

Will the students be switching classes in the junior high?

Students in grades 6-8 will be switching classes, but we have built extra time into our transitions between class periods to ensure thorough cleaning of the desks. A staggered passing period schedule has been created so that only one grade level at a time is in the hallway, and lockers have been spaced to provide distancing in the hallways during the transitions.

What will music class look like?

WCGS will continue to offer music education within safe parameters. More details will be coming as it relates to the specific music course for each student, but here are some general guidelines that we will have in place:

- When indoors, we will be utilizing the Commons for our band and choir rehearsals across the grade levels. It has great ventilation and is a large space, so distancing can be even greater than in a classroom setting. All chairs will be facing the same direction.
- When possible, students will rehearse outdoors. We are renting large tents that will be utilized throughout the day by all students K-8, but they will be reserved for our larger band and choir groups during select time periods.
- We have created modified schedules in junior high to divide our larger groups into smaller performing groups. More information about specific schedules will be communicated by our music department in the coming days.
- For orchestra students, masks will be worn indoors, but may be taken off when rehearsing outdoors. For choir, masks will be worn both indoors and outdoors. For band, masks with slits in the mouth will be worn by the instrumentalists both indoors and outdoors. Additionally, there are bell covers that will be placed on specific instruments to filter the air, regardless of whether they are rehearsing indoors or outdoors.
- The disinfecting of all equipment, chairs, and stands will take place between groups.

How will you guarantee safety during recess?

Recess will continue to be an important part of the day, as each student gets exercise and opportunities to socialize. Students will clean their hands before and after recess. They will be able to remove their masks while continuing to distance outdoors (If parents prefer to have their child continue to wear a mask outdoors, we will certainly help to reinforce that at school). We will spend time during the first week going over expectations with students on how to practice distancing during recess. In addition, we will provide zones for each grade level to help maintain grade level cohorts. These four zones will include the blacktop, playground, and two designated field spaces areas. We have designed a daily rotational schedule for these zones to create variety for students during their recess time each day. Our students will experience recess in a way that is enjoyable, while still maintaining the health and safety that is of the utmost importance. If particular zones or activities do not allow distancing, we will ask students to wear masks in those areas to follow IDPH guidelines. We will continue to review the updated guidelines that are being released regularly to ensure they are in line with our plan for recess.

Will Extended Care be an option?

Yes, WCGS will continue to offer Extended Care. We will maintain cohorts during our before-school and after-school programs to stay consistent with our health and safety parameters.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

The goal of our arrival and dismissal plan is to minimize the number of contacts that students might have with students from a different grade. Therefore, we are asking that students enter and exit specific doors based on their grade level. We know that many families have multiple children at the school and this will cause them to enter/exit at different locations. We appreciate your flexibility and understanding in advance! We would encourage you to choose a pick-up location where your child(ren) can meet you after school. It could be near a particular exit door, or a certain area of the parking lot. A parent could park and meet the student(s) at the exit door before walking together back to the car, or older students could carefully walk directly to their parents' cars in the parking lot. **We believe it will be to your advantage to utilize our parking lots this year to park your**

vehicles and meet up with your children, rather than pulling up and waiting for your students to come to the curb.

All students are required to wear masks while waiting outside before entering the building. Parents who walk their students up to the door will also be required to wear masks.

Additionally, we want you to know that at the beginning of the school year, we are **closing the playground before and after school**. Since we are striving to maintain cohorts of students at each grade level, it would be difficult to manage an overcrowded area with minimal supervision at these key times of the day. We realize that community-building takes place after school on the playground, and we are sad to put this restriction in place, but we believe it is in the best interest of our entire community as we adjust to new protocols.

Since the playground is closed before and after school, we would ask that you drop your students off at their designated location **no earlier than 8:30am** and **pick them up no later than 3:30pm**. We will have faculty and staff supervising the students to help maintain distancing, but your promptness will help us to maximize our plan's effectiveness.

- **Kindergarten.** The kindergarten students will enter and exit the building through their classroom doors—Mrs. Olsen (Door #16), Mrs. Kremers (Door #17), and Mrs. Legel (Door #19). In the morning, the kindergarten teachers will meet their students outside their doors before walking them inside. Half-Day Kindergarten will be dismissed at 12:00pm out their classroom doors, and Full-Day Kindergarten will be dismissed at 3:25pm out Mrs. Olsen's door.
- **Grades 1 & 2**—Door #18 (east side of building, closest to the kindergarten classrooms)
- **Grades 3 & 4**—Door #1 (the main/front door)
- **Grades 5 & 6**—Door #14 (by the gym, closest to the fifth grade hallway)
- **Grades 7 & 8**—Door #3 (west side of the building, near the junior high wing)
*Door #3 is a new location and will require our community to exit the campus with caution as more students and vehicles will be present here. Thank you in advance for your help with this!

Drop-Off: All homeroom teachers will be waiting outside at their designated locations near their assigned door entrance each morning. At 8:40am, we will allow the first “wave” of students to enter the building – one grade level per door – followed by the second wave at 8:45am:

- **8:40am** – Half-Day Kindergarten, 1st grade, 3rd grade, 6th grade, and 7th grade
- **8:45am** – Full-Day Kindergarten, 2nd grade, 4th grade, 5th grade, and 8th grade

*If students miss the initial entrance with their grade level, the additional supervisors who will be outside with the remaining students will allow them into the building when it is appropriate to do so.

Pick-Up: Our teachers will dismiss students on a staggered schedule to reduce crowding in hallways and outdoors, as well as help with traffic flow. Students will be released from school by grade level between 3:20 and 3:25pm, similar to the pattern above:

- **3:20pm** – Kindergarten (full-day), 1st grade, 3rd grade, 6th grade, and 7th grade
- **3:25pm** – 2nd grade, 4th grade, 5th grade, and 8th grade

Remote Learning

We believe there are three scenarios that involve remote learning, and we want to address each one separately below:

1. A school closure based on a state mandate
2. Any K-8 family who selects a 100% remote learning experience
3. Any absent student who is learning from home

1. What will remote learning at WCGS include if the state mandates remote learning for all students?

While we are confident in our plan for face-to-face instruction, we realize many would like to know more about what remote learning would include if we are forced to switch to remote learning as a school. Our program will look much different than it did this past spring when our school was asked to pivot within a moment's notice. While we are so proud of our school community, we had limited time to prepare an e-Learning plan. This year, we will have increased interaction with teachers, synchronous learning (live interaction), asynchronous learning (recorded videos), group interaction, instruction, a Remote Learning Support Team, improved online platforms, less e-mails, a central learning management system for all grades, and the opportunity for families to obtain an additional device for student learning. We believe we would be able to keep our school building open for teachers which would allow for them to use more classroom tools than this past spring.

2. If a family selects a 100% remote learning experience, what will the experience include?

We realize some families would prefer a 100% remote learning option for this coming fall. We want to provide an experience that allows students to grow and flourish in the at-home learning environment. Students would receive a combination of synchronous (live interaction) and asynchronous (recorded) interaction with our teachers and Remote Learning Support Team. All students participating in the 100% remote learning experience should plan to use a device daily, begin each day by logging into the Learning Management System (LMS), engage with other remote learners in an online learning space, and meet virtually with our team at specific times throughout the week.

Students in grades K-5 will receive focused instruction in areas of literacy development and mathematics. In addition, we will provide content, feedback, and assessments for other subjects, including specials.

Students in grades 6-8 will receive daily instruction in all core disciplines: Bible, Mathematics, English, Literature, History, and Science. They will also engage in certain specials that are offered through our junior high program.

3. What if I am absent from school?

Students who are absent will be able to log into the LMS platform at their specific grade level. The LMS will provide guided instruction for each day of learning, including updated activities, specific assignments, and resources. If a student were to experience prolonged absence, we would want to also provide both synchronous (live interaction) and asynchronous (recorded) opportunities for learning. The WCGS Remote Learning Support Team will assist in monitoring absences and assignment completion to ensure support for a student who is experiencing prolonged absence due to medical needs. If students are having symptoms that would prevent them from attending school, we want to encourage them to stay home and we will advance their learning through these remote learning efforts.

Will there be a tuition change for 100% remote learning, or a mandated school closure?

Tuition will remain the same for face-to-face instruction and remote learning. WCGS values our partners and relies on the Board-approved tuition rate to adequately manage the expenses of the school. Our preparation for the upcoming school year has only increased our expenses as we have worked to meet the needs of our families during this unique season. Our mission-driven teachers are a primary part of our annual budget and they are working diligently to care for students and families. Our school continues to be fiscally responsible, thanks to our partners, donors, and alumni base.

If we choose remote learning, could our child(ren) return to in-person instruction, or are we making a decision for the whole year?

Families who select 100% remote learning will be committing to this learning modality through September 25. At that point, families can re-evaluate and either sign-up for another session of remote learning or choose to return to the classroom for in-person instruction. We will provide another survey for all families (remote and in-person) on September 18 to communicate your preference for the next session of learning.

If we choose remote learning, will these students be allowed to participate in activities through the school like music, athletics, and other extra-curriculars?

Yes, we would allow these students to participate in school athletics, music, and activities, unless these are cancelled (or restrictions are in place) by organizations outside of WCGS.

Will devices be provided for home use?

Each remote learner will need to have a device to use throughout the day. We do not have a preference as to the type of device. You are welcome to use one you currently own, or may purchase one of your choosing. If you are in need of help in purchasing a device, please contact [Steve Johnson](#) who can help you work with a vendor to provide a device to meet your needs. We have a limited number of computers available to families on loan.

What does the Learning Management System (LMS) look like at each grade level?

We will provide an LMS tutorial video and handout for all remote and in-person students in the coming days.

Who is the Remote Learning Support Team (RLST), and what exactly is their role?

The Remote Learning Support Team will interact daily with each 100% remote learning student. This team will provide technology and academic support for each student. In addition, remote learners will be assigned to a homeroom teacher (K-8) and will have a class schedule (Grade 6-8). Students can expect to interact with their homeroom teacher and the grade level team through this learning process.

Will our child's spot be held for next year if we decide to participate in remote learning?

Yes, anyone who is enrolled in remote learning or in-person instruction will be automatically enrolled at WCGS for the 2021-2022 school year.

How can we help and support the school?

As we approach this school year, we have increased the number of voluntary and part-time supervisory roles to help oversee more spaces due to physical distancing. If you have an interest in helping please reach out to our Principal, [Marc Painter](#).