

Ware County Schools

Opening Plan

for the 2021-2022 School Year

Revised 7.22.2021



Overview

Ware County Schools has developed this comprehensive guide to provide information regarding a safe reopening of our campuses for the 2021-2022 school year. The document was produced with guidance from our local health partners and the Georgia Department of Education's document entitled [Georgia's K-12 Recovery Plan](#) as well as Georgia Department of Public Health's [Guidance for Georgia K-12 Schools and School-Based Programs](#) document.

The information in our Open Plan may be updated as we take into consideration revisions in the guidelines made by local, state, and federal officials.

Ware County Schools Return to School Committee

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Dr. Sonya Bennett Director of Student Achievement 6-12	Mr. Joe Meadows Director of Transportation	Mrs. Jeri Ray, Principal Wacona Elementary School
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Mrs. Mary Ann Chaney Director of Finance	Dr. Buford Kellogg, Principal Ware County High School	
Dr. Reginna Germano Testing & Professional Learning Coordinator	Dr. Shawn Benefield, Principal Ware County Middle School	

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Safety Procedures

The Ware County School District will take into consideration the recommendations provided by Georgia Department of Public Health, Centers for Disease Control, and Georgia High School Association as we develop and implement safety procedures for faculty and staff members, students, and parents/visitors.

Safety Procedures - Faculty and Staff Members

- Staff members will follow the the Ware County Schools Return to Work COVID-19 procedures.
- Staff members will self-monitor temperature and symptoms daily before reporting to work.
- Staff members who are sick must stay home.
- Staff members who report to campus while sick will be sent home immediately.
- Staff members are encouraged to wear a mask or face shield while in close proximity to students or fellow staff members.
- All staff members will practice hygiene measures designed to prevent transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable illnesses.

Safety Procedures - Students

- Signage will be posted throughout school campuses outlining safety requirements.
- When physical distancing of 3 feet is not practical, students will be highly encouraged to wear a face covering (mask, neck gaiter, face shield, etc.).
- Decorative designs on face coverings shall be limited to school mascots/logos or prints that adhere to school dress code guidelines.
- School nurses and staff will monitor students for symptoms.
- Students who are sick must stay home.
- Students who report to campus sick will be sent home immediately. Students waiting for parent pick up will wait in an isolated area to prevent exposing other students and staff members to illnesses.
- Each school will develop procedures for clinic wellness visits that prevents healthy students from mingling with those who are ill.
- Drinking fountains will be turned off. Water will be available at filling stations. Students should bring their own water bottle to school. Water bottles must be clear so the bottle contents are visible.

Safety Procedures - Parents and Visitors

- Signage will be posted throughout school campuses outlining safety requirements.
- Parents and visitors will have limited access to the school building.
- Parents and visitors should have a mask available upon entering school facilities.
- To reduce potential spread of germs, parents will not be permitted to walk their child(ren) to class.
- Parent meetings may be conducted face-to-face or virtually, unless there are extenuating circumstances preventing virtual meetings. In these instances, precautionary measures will be taken while conducting face-to-face meetings.

Safety Procedures - Classrooms

- Signage will be posted throughout school campuses outlining safety requirements.
- All classrooms will be stocked with hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes.
- Heating and air conditioning units will be maintained to ensure proper ventilation and air exchange.
- Throughout the school day, custodians and staff members will frequently clean high-touch areas, including desk tops, table tops, door handles, computers, restrooms, etc.
- Electrostatic sprayers will be utilized weekly to disinfect classrooms, cafeterias, locker rooms, and other common areas.

Transportation

- It is highly recommended for bus drivers, monitors, and students to wear a mask while on the bus.
- All students will sit in an assigned seat on the bus.
- The bus driver will provide hand sanitizer to each student upon boarding the bus.
- Students who are sick should not board the bus.
- If a student is sick and a parent is not home, an additional bus will be used to transport the student to the school until a parent is available to pick the child up. The student will remain in an isolated area until the parent arrives.
- Bus windows may be lowered during the route to provide ventilation, weather permitting.
- Buses will be sanitized after each morning and afternoon route.
- Bus routes are being designed to limit the transfer of students from one bus to another to the extent possible.
- Riding a school bus is a privilege. Please be considerate of these recommendations.

Instructional Plans

- Traditional (In-person)
 - Students will attend school five days per week on a regular schedule.
 - For quarantines and school closures, students will complete work online with their traditional teacher(s) through Google Classroom and other resources.
- Remote/Digital Learning Option (Online)
 - Students will utilize an outsourced online educational organization (Edgenuity)
 - All students, whether traditional or digital, may be invited to attend extended day activities such as the Gator All-Star Academy, which will provide both remedial academic and enrichment activities.

Instructional Plan - Traditional (In-person)

- Face-to-face instruction and assessment at school takes place on school campus.
- Google Classroom will be used by K-12 teachers and students to prepare for movement from “Brick to Click” (Traditional to Digital) situations in the event of school closures due to COVID-19, weather, etc.
- Grading expectations, behavior expectations, and promotion guidelines are consistent with Ware County Schools guidelines.
- In the event of school closures or quarantines, instruction and locally created assessments will occur online remotely using Google Classroom and other resources to digitally engage students in rigorous instruction and assessment based on students’ needs (Gifted, AP, Advanced Content, Special Education, REP, EIP, etc.).

Instructional Plan - Digital Learning Option (Online)

- This plan is an option for parents who are uncomfortable sending students back to “Brick” (Traditional school) at this time. The deadline for registering for the digital option for students who were enrolled in Ware County during the 2020-2021 school year was June 9, 2021.
- Digital instruction will be outsourced to a separate organization (Edgenuity) and will not be provided by a WCSD teacher.
- Online rigorous instruction and accompanying assessments will be based on students’ needs (Gifted, AP, Advanced Content, Special Education, REP, EIP, etc.).
- Instruction and accompanying assessments will occur exclusively at home.
- Grading expectations, behavior expectations, and promotion guidelines are consistent with Ware County Schools guidelines.
- Requires a device for each student and reliable WiFi accessibility. Devices will be checked out to students in need.
- Parents/students choosing the Digital Learning Option must remain enrolled in that instructional option until the end of the school year.

Instructional Plan - Digital Learning Option (Online)

- Students participating in the Digital Learning Option will be expected to log in and participate in live and recorded online lessons, assignments, and assessments daily.
- Some electives, specialized advanced academics(including some honors and gifted courses, and connections/specials courses may not be available through the outsourced program.
- Students must keep up with instructional pacing and turn in assignments to be graded according to established due dates.
- The student's daily schedule will consist of screen time and offline work as assigned by the student's teacher(s).
- Digital Learning Option students will complete local and state assessments in a safe learning environment at the school site in which they are enrolled.
- There will be NO option to return to traditional learning during the school year.
- **NOTE:** The school district reserves the right to require the student to return to traditional learning for reasons including but not limited to consistent failure to complete assignments and assessments on time, poor performance, and/or failure to participate in digital classes as expected.

Special Education and Digital Learning

The Ware County School District will remain responsible for the education of students eligible for special education services with an individualized education program (IEP) who opt for digital/distance learning. Because digital/distance learning may affect how special education and related services are provided, the IEP team will work to ensure that the student receives services to the most appropriate extent possible.

School Meals

- There will be occasions when students eat breakfast and lunch in classrooms or outdoors.
- Schools may extend dining hours/schedules in order to reduce the number of students in the cafeteria at one time.
- In the event Ware County Schools must offer services strictly online, meals will be provided to students at specific pick-up locations.
- Water will be available at filling stations. Students should bring their own clear water bottle to school.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

- All athletic events will be conducted under the guidelines of the Georgia High School Association.
- All extracurricular activities will follow all safety guidelines, as recommended by the CDC and Georgia Department of Public Health.
- Students who are enrolled in Digital Learning may continue to participate in extracurricular activities.

Collaboration with Parents and Family Members

- Please support the Ware County School District and its efforts, policies, and protocols. We appreciate your efforts in helping us keep our students and staff members safe.
- Please monitor your child for high temperature or COVID symptoms daily.
- Please keep your child home if they are sick or exhibit any symptoms, such as fever or cough.
- Please teach your child good hygiene practices, including washing hands frequently and using hand sanitizer when available.
- Please ensure your child has a clear, plastic refillable water bottle to bring to school.
- Please support your child by watching for stress and anxiety; notify school staff with concerns.
- Please communicate with your child's teacher and school by phone, email, text, or virtually if you have questions or concerns.
- Please know we have examined all possibilities to be sure we are making decisions that are safe for both staff and students while allowing for optimal learning environments.
- Please be considerate of changes due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the district's control.

Communication

- Please visit our system website at www.ware.k12.ga.us for the latest information.
- School-specific information can be accessed by visiting www.ware.k12.ga.us and selecting your school from the Schools dropdown menu.
- We will continue to use our school and system Facebook pages, our Thrillshare call-out system, and the Waycross Journal Herald to share important updates.
- Please ensure that your child's school has updated contact information for your family.