

# *CROSS COUNTY* **THUNDERBIRDS™**

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ON PURPOSE.**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**What is the first day for students?** Our anticipated school start date is August 24th, 2020. All dates are subject to approval from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Health.

**Will we have Open House?** New students to the district, incoming 7th graders, and incoming kindergarteners will have Open House on Tuesday, August 18th from 5:30-7:30 PM.

**How normal will the day be for a student?** Our goal is for your student(s) to have as normal of a day as possible while we also attempt to be as safe as possible. Students will not remain in the same classroom all day but will be able to transition from one class to another. Our district has a plan for sanitizing areas and increased cleaning to allow for students to maintain as normal of a school day as possible.

**Will bus transportation be provided?** Yes, the district will provide bus transportation for all students. Students should socially distance at their bus stop and bus drivers and prekindergarten through twelfth grade students will wear masks on the bus. Since buses are a contained space, parents who are able to drive their children to school are encouraged to do so.

**Who will be required to wear face coverings?** In response to the Governor's executive order requiring face coverings in indoor settings for certain populations, staff and students grade prekindergarten through twelfth grade will wear face coverings when physical distancing cannot be achieved. Students or staff with health issues and special needs will not be required to wear face coverings. Staff will provide mask free time each day when students are able to socially distance at every opportunity possible. These breaks will be prioritized and encouraged by the district to give students time to work and learn without a mask. We will continue to monitor the guidelines from the Arkansas Department of Health and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and will reevaluate this directive as we get additional guidance from the state.

**Do we need to provide masks for our student or will one be provided?** The district will provide up to 3 reusable/washable masks for every student.

**Will social distancing guidelines be observed?** Social distancing will be observed as much as feasibly possible but at times students will be closer than the recommended 6 ft. apart. When social distancing requirements can not be maintained, students in grades prekindergarten through twelfth grade will wear face coverings or masks. Our team is in the process of looking at our common spaces to increase the space between students. However, we can not guarantee that students will always be 6 ft. apart.

**Will classrooms be arranged differently to protect students?** When possible, classrooms will be arranged to provide more space between students. To increase the space between students, desks or tables might be arranged to face a single direction, dividers may be used to separate table space, and common/flexible seating areas might be removed. Our goal is to increase the distance between students without limiting the collaboration and interaction our students need to learn. When possible, students will not share supplies, materials, or equipment.

**Will students attend school every day or will we have some type of alternative schedule?** We intend to follow our typical schedule with students on campus for instruction daily. We understand that there may be students out sick throughout the year and that some students may be at home due to contact tracing or quarantine orders. In the event this happens, those students will be able to continue learning from home using a blended learning approach. Our staff and teachers will work with students individually when this occurs.

**Will our students have the same arrival and dismissal times?** Depending on guidance from the Arkansas Department of Health, arrival and dismissal times may be varied, in order to increase social distancing and to decrease the number of students in the cafeteria and common areas before school starts.

**Will students at the elementary still have extra classes like PE, music, art, and library?**

Yes, students will continue to participate in their special activity classes and check out library books. To increase social distancing and keep environments clean, there may be times that their teacher may present a lesson in the student's classroom. In other situations, like PE, students may have an assigned area in the gym with specific materials assigned only to their classroom to decrease the number of students touching the same object.

**Will my elementary student have recess?** Yes. Elementary students will have outdoor recess time. There may be restrictions that limit the number of students they come in contact with. Additionally, our staff will frequently sanitize the playground equipment. We will make every effort possible to find times where students can remove masks and work, play, and collaborate as they did prior to COVID-19.

**Will my student eat lunch in their classroom?** We do not anticipate students eating lunch in their classrooms. Additional tables will be added to both cafeterias to decrease the number of students who sit at the same table. It is possible that an extra lunch will be added. Elementary students will still eat breakfast in their classrooms as they did in the 2019-2020 school year. High school students will still have a grab-and-go option for breakfast during school mornings. The process for picking up this second chance breakfast may change to help our students socially distance.

**What special precautions will be implemented in regard to cleaning and sanitizing?**

Sanitation and cleanliness will be a high priority for our district as we return in the fall. We will be adding additional staff to clean high touch surfaces (door knobs, light switches, etc.) and restrooms on a continuous basis throughout the day. We have also purchased disinfectant sprays to quickly sanitize rooms between usage. We will also provide time for hand washing and hand sanitizer throughout our campus. Students may be asked to sanitize their hands each time they leave and enter a new space.

**Will students and adults be screened daily?** We will follow the most current guidance from the Arkansas Department of Health regarding the screening of both students and staff. This may involve taking temperatures upon arrival and asking questions such as:

1.) Have you had a fever of 100.4°F or greater in the last 2 days? 2.) Have you had a cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell? 3.) Have you been in contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days?

**If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, what will happen?** In the event an individual tests positive, we will follow the latest guidance from the Arkansas Department of Health. If a positive test is reported, Cross County School District will follow the response levels from the Arkansas Department of Health and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Students and staff that are considered a Probable Close Contact will undergo a 14-day quarantine. More information provided from the state about response levels can be found here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gGO4fVmYEGPREoYw8N5GGISQb1QfoBGK/view?usp=sharing>.

**If a student comes to school sick, what will happen?** If a student comes to school sick, the school nurse will screen the student and check their temperature. If temperature is over the Arkansas Department of Health guidelines, the student will be sent home and will need to be fever free for 48 hours without medication before returning to school. When the child returns to school they will check in with the school nurse. This procedure may change depending on information from the Arkansas Department of Health or Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

**What happens if we have school closures again?** If schools close again, a plan for at-home digital learning is being developed. Students will learn how to use Echo and Google Classroom by participating in lessons throughout the first week of school that will teach how to submit work digitally, how to access learning materials, and how to get help from a teacher when learning online.

**In the event of a temporary school closure, how will the district serve students who have special needs (Special Education, 504, Dyslexia, etc).** In the event of a school closure, students will participate in live instruction with scheduled video conferencing or telephone sessions.

**How will you help fill any gaps my student has from the previous year?** Curriculum teams have worked to revise the curriculum so that missed essential standards will be addressed when students return. Additionally, students will be assessed to determine individual strengths and deficits. These assessments will determine if students need additional support.

**What advice do you have for students with special needs (autism, asthma, panic attacks, anxiety, etc.) or students with weakened immune systems and pre-existing conditions?** The district will be prepared to accommodate students through both onsite and offsite instruction with special needs. Our Special Education instructors will be taking extra precautions when working with students. If parents have concerns about their students who may be at high-risk because of COVID-19, they may explore the virtual learning option which allows the student to continue their education from the safety of their own home.

**If I don't want my student to return to a traditional classroom, what are my options?**

Cross County School District is offering a fully virtual learning (online) option for any student who is not able to return to traditional, in-person school this year. All students have the opportunity to use blended learning for absences as needed.

**If students choose to do fully virtual/online learning, will they be able to participate in extracurricular activities?** Yes, students participating in fully virtual/online learning will be able to participate in available extracurricular activities provided they can attend all scheduled, in-person or required practices and contests. All attendance guidelines and GPA requirements will still be enforced. We anticipate sports activities in the fall with possible modifications as required by the Arkansas Department of Health. At this time, we are still awaiting guidance on both band, choir, and all other extracurricular activities.

**What if I selected the fully virtual learning option on my parent survey?** If you selected the fully virtual option, please consider attending our virtual learning parent night on Tuesday, August 4th at 6:00 PM in the elementary school cafeteria to learn more. Computer pickup for fully virtual learning students will be by appointment in the evening on Thursday, August 20th or during the day on Friday, August 21st.

**What is the difference between fully virtual learning and blended learning?** Fully virtual learning is for a student who is unable or uncomfortable attending in-person classes for entire quarters or semesters. Blended learning is a mix of on-site and online instruction to be used in the situation that a student is ill, quarantined, or the school is briefly closed for in-person instruction. You do not need to opt in to blended learning since it will be used only in specific situations and on a case-by-case basis. No matter what type of learning (fully virtual or traditional, in-person) a student selects, all students will be held to the same standards, expectations, and attendance requirements. All students will receive the rigorous education you have come to expect from the Cross County School District.

**How is blended learning different from AMI packets?** Blended learning is new learning that mirrors what would happen in the traditional classroom. It is not busy work or review and will not look like AMI packets or the work done during school closure in March, April, and May of 2020. Blended learning is the method CCSD will use for instruction in the case of whole school closure due to weather or illness. Blended learning will be graded and students will be expected to complete their blended learning work to be counted as present and as progressing towards the next grade level or graduation requirements.

**How much time will my child be working at home if they have chosen fully virtual learning?** Students choosing fully virtual learning will need to dedicate at least three to four hours for learning, product development, assignment completion, and other school work each day. The time commitment for students may fluctuate depending on the work a teacher assigns, the class(es) they are enrolled in, and the time of year.

**What support will a family need to provide a student who has chosen fully virtual learning?** Families who have chosen fully virtual learning for their student will need to provide the home support to guide their student through the online learning process. Families with elementary school students who have chosen fully virtual learning may need to provide significant support as these children learn foundational skills. For optimal learning, students choosing the fully virtual learning option will need reliable high speed internet.

**Will a student who has chosen fully virtual learning ever need to come on campus?** Yes. Periodically, students participating in fully virtual learning will need to come to campus to take high stakes tests, quizzes, and assessments. Students or their guardians may occasionally be asked to pick-up or drop-off technology, texts, manipulatives, or other lesson materials.

**Will my virtual student be able to communicate live with someone?** Yes, students selecting the fully virtual option will have opportunities to view live class sessions from time to time. Students will be able to ask questions and seek help from a certified staff member although this helper may not always be their teacher.