

Plan A

Guidance, Expectations & Information

The information in this guide will be updated as needed. All updates will be noted in the Table of Contents.



Orange County Schools
Hillsborough, NC

March 26 - June 2021

Dr. Monique Felder, Superintendent



March 26, 2021

Greetings!

As part of our commitment to keep you informed and to be transparent in all decisions that affect OCS students, staff and families, this outline will give you an idea on what to expect in light of the new law that requires elementary schools to return to classrooms under Plan A.

Per the new law, Plan B will **no longer** be an option for students in Grades K-5 come April 1, 2021. Plan A allows for three feet of physical distance instead of six feet in the elementary tier, and everyone is still required to wear a mask while on school property and transportation. While students may be within three feet of one another in classrooms, the OCS School Board still requires at least six feet of distance among cohorts during meal times.

In collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, the Governor has also given districts the discretion for having students in Grades 6-12 in school under either Plan A or Plan B. At their meeting on March 22, the Board voted to keep students in Grades 6-12 in Plan B through the end of this school year and to reopen all schools in August in Plan A. Districts across the state must still continue to offer all families, PreK-12, a fully virtual/remote learning option.

We want you to know that OCS is well-positioned to implement the new requirements because of our extensive planning and previous successes with in-person instruction. As a reminder, our Exceptional Children (EC) in special settings and Pre-Kindergarten students have been in-person learning since October 27. Our Kindergarten and First Grade students returned to in-person learning on January 26; and, we recently completed a successful two-week orientation for our in-person learning students in Grades 2-12.

For elementary schools, we have less than a month to implement the new requirements. For middle and high schools, the new law outlines that middle and high schools are required to operate under Plan B at a minimum, which we implemented on March 8. On March 22 in a Board Work Session, school board members voted for secondary--middle and high school--students to remain in Plan B through the remainder of the current school year. Elementary students who opt for in-person learning will return under Plan A, per the Board, on April 7, 2021.

This document will shed some light on the new requirements, and hopefully reassure you that OCS is already in compliance with the majority of the law's requirements. Further, transition into Plan A should be seamless, as there is only one major change in the key components required by law for Plan A, in comparison to Plan B, which is now in full swing in OCS.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation as we implement the new K-5 requirements. We appreciate your patience and flexibility as we navigate school in an era of COVID and do everything we can to ensure learning continues and that it occurs in the safest environment possible.

This guide clearly and thoroughly outlines everything we are doing, along with what we need you to do, to maximize a safe and healthy environment for your child. It includes information regarding:

- How the school day will look regarding instruction, scheduling and remote learning opportunities;
- Health screening requirements;
- Preventive measures such as face coverings and handwashing;
- Cleaning and disinfecting practices;
- Social distancing;
- Transportation; and
- Meals.

We ask you to take some time to familiarize yourself with the important information contained in this guide. As you do so, please know that our care and concern for your child's safety and learning guides all we do. This will never change.

Despite the challenges we face as a result of COVID-19, we look forward to working with you to create a wonderful school year for our students.

In service to children,

Dr. Monique Felder

OCS Superintendent

This information is subject to change.

Please understand that knowledge about the COVID-19 virus and the best practices to respond to the pandemic continue to evolve. For this reason, guidance, plans, and policies related to returning to work and school at OCS will also evolve. This guide will be updated as needed and updates will be designated as such. Families will be notified via email of updates. Please ensure your school has a valid email address on file and that your contact information is always up to date.

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Overview

This guide details guidance, expectations, and information specific to our shift to Plan A beginning on April 7 for our in-person students in K-5. This guide is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), Orange County Health Department (OCHD), and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).

Our top priority in all decisions is the health, safety, and well-being of our students, staff, and community. This guide is subject to updates. If and when the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic change, this guide may also change.

To combat the spread of this virus as a community, the expectation is that all staff, students, and families comply with the procedures, protocols, and requirements outlined in this document and in any linked documents and websites.

In addition, the OCS community is expected to comply with state and local regulations. If state or local

requirements differ from the guidance provided below, OCS students and staff will follow the stricter requirements.

Please check the district's [COVID-19 site](#) regularly for the latest information.

Student Compliance and Accountability

Attention and strict adherence to the health safety protocols we have in place are among the most important actions we can take to support safe and successful instruction in our school buildings.

Returning to School

We are committed to challenging and engaging students in relevant, rigorous, and meaningful learning.

Learning Environments

Families want options for their children. Many are excited to return to their school buildings; some are not yet ready.

To provide in-person learning options when allowable, state officials requested that school districts develop three plans (A, B, and C) for different learning environments for the 2020-2021 school year. The plans in which we operate are based on state and local officials, [NCDPI guidance](#), and [NCDHHS guidance](#) regarding the safe reopening of schools.

Daily In-Person Instruction (Plan A) - GRADES PK-5 and Separate Settings EC, IEP & 504 PK-12

Students in this plan will attend class in the school building with their teachers and classmates Monday - Thursday. Students receive daily, in-person instruction and support from school staff.

Hybrid (Plan B) - Grades 6-12

In-person students in grades 6-12 will continue their current alternating weeks schedules (Monday - Thursday) via Cohorts A and B. This plan will experience a combination of in-person learning in the school building with their teachers and classmates and online instruction.

Fully-Online Instruction (Plan C)

Under this plan, all students will experience fully-online instruction as a result of school closure based on decisions from state and local officials. All learning opportunities will happen remotely and will include recorded and live instructional sessions. Instruction will be accessed through the use of a technology device.

All instruction continues to be relevant, rigorous and meaningful.

It's our core belief that all students deserve to be challenged and engaged in relevant, rigorous, and meaningful learning each day. This school year, regardless of which learning environment your child attends, they will be taught rigorous content every day that aligns with North Carolina's grade-level standards.

Here's what will be the same across all learning environments and across all schools:

- All schools will take attendance.
- All classes will use similar, district-supported learning materials, texts and instructional tools.
- All students will receive appropriate support and services through the general education program, special education through an Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), 504 plans, Academically & Intellectually Gifted (AIG), English as a Second Language (ESL), and intervention.
- All students will get support from their counselors, social workers, and school psychologists, as needed.
- All schools will focus on establishing effective relationships and community.

Health Screening Responsibilities

Conducting regular screenings for symptoms and ongoing self-monitoring throughout the school day can help reduce exposure to COVID-19. Students and employees who are sick or not feeling well must stay home. Students are required to have a health screening at home, before riding school transportation, and when arriving at school. If a student begins to not feel well while on campus, shows signs of illness, or becomes sick during the day, they must immediately tell an employee. A parent or guardian will be expected to promptly pick them up from school.

At-Home Screening Requirement

All students should have their temperature taken every day at home before coming to school. Students must stay home if:

- They or anyone they live with have tested positive for COVID-19, and have not met the criteria for returning to school;
- They or anyone they live with have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 and have not met the criteria for returning to school;
- They are experiencing chills, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell or new cough or have a temperature of 100.0°F or higher;
- They or anyone they live with are being tested for COVID-19 and waiting for results.
- The family has been advised to quarantine

In addition, students must be free of any symptoms of illness unless the student has a confirmed diagnosis from a healthcare professional attributing the symptoms to something other than COVID-19.

School Bus Screening Requirement

A completed [bus attestation form](#) is required before a student may be assigned a seat on the school bus. After arriving at school, all bus riders will be asked the symptom screening checklist questions and have their temperature taken at school before being allowed to enter the building.

[Download the Bus Attestation Form](#)

[Bus Attestation Form - Spanish](#)

At-School Screening Requirement

When arriving at school, all students will be instructed to use designated entrances to undergo a health screening. The health screening process contains two parts: a symptom screening checklist and an on-site temperature check using a touchless thermometer. Car riders will be screened in the car. Individuals dropping off a student at school should not leave until the student has passed the health screening

process.

Students who are feeling unwell or have a temperature of 100.0°F or higher will be escorted to the school's Care Center. Employees will contact students' parents/guardians to immediately pick them up from school.

OCS Screening Forms	English Spanish
OCS Screening Forms for Those who Cannot Answer for Themselves	English Spanish

Note of Importance: If students are absent due to quarantine or isolation, these absences will be excused.

Returning to School After Diagnosis, Exposure, or Illness

To learn when your student can return to school after an illness, exposure, or diagnosis of COVID-19, see below. If you have questions, contact your school nurse.

[When Sick Children may Return to School](#) [When Sick Children may Return to School--Spanish](#)

What to do When a Household Member Gets Sick

If someone in a student or employee's household is experiencing COVID-19 like symptoms and/or is awaiting test results, the student and/or employee must remain home. If a household member is positive for COVID-19, the student and or/employee must remain home. Individuals who have been fully vaccinated (i.e. at least two weeks after receiving their second dose in a two-dose series or one dose in a single-dose series AND have no symptoms from when they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine.

Health Information is a Private Matter

Each individual's health information is a private matter. No one should publicly declare another employee or student as sick. In the event others need to be notified of a suspected or positive case of COVID-19, local health officials and OCS school nurses will notify them and provide them with further instructions. To protect individual privacy, notifications will not identify anyone by name or contain information that could be used to identify them.

Confidential documentation of who has been in the sick/care center (isolation room) will be kept by the school nurse for the purpose of contact tracing if necessary. In the event contact tracing is necessary, the school nurse will contact the health department communicable disease (CD) team. Information provided to this team is the same as for any communicable disease protocol we follow in the schools (i.e., for pertussis, measles). Information shared will include close and classroom contacts, bus rider information, after school participation and sports participation or extracurricular participation (if that is allowed at this point). The Memorandum of Agreement with Orange County Health Department allows for this sharing of information, as does the fact that COVID-19 is a reportable communicable disease.

References: [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit](#) and the [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, and Confirmed Cases of COVID-19](#).

Notification for Positive COVID-19 Case

We will notify parents via email when the school is notified that someone reported to have COVID-19 was onsite.

OCS is required to report confirmed cases of COVID-19 to the Orange County Health Department and work with them for follow-up and contact tracing. If a person with COVID-19 was in an OCS facility while infectious, OCS will coordinate with local health officials to notify anyone who was in close contact with the infected person, while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with [FERPA, NCGS 130A-143](#), and all other state and federal laws. Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone confirmed to have COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more within one day of the infected person experiencing symptoms or testing positive.

If one employee or student contracts COVID-19, will the building close?

NC Department of Health and Human Services does not require or recommend that schools close as a result of a student or employee testing positive for COVID-19. We will follow the recommendations of the Orange County Health Department (OCHD). OCHD will determine through contact tracing who, if anyone, will need to quarantine.

How will someone know if they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 and need to quarantine?

OCHD will determine through contact tracing who, if anyone, will need to quarantine. Only individuals who had close contact with someone confirmed to have COVID-19 will need to quarantine. OCS and OCHD will work together to ensure that individuals believed to have been exposed to COVID-19 are notified.

What if a student or employee doesn't report their case?

The district cannot require individuals to self-report any medical information, including a COVID-19 diagnosis. However, it is our hope that individuals will notify us so we can respond appropriately and provide support. To assist with maintaining a healthy school community, we ask students, staff, and visitors to follow notification procedures to assist with any response to positive COVID-19 cases. We are cleaning and sanitizing our facilities daily, with more frequent cleaning and disinfection of high contact areas.

Special Education Services

Students with disabilities may require accommodations and/or modifications to the general health guidelines in order to provide the required services and to maintain healthy practices including the wearing of a face covering/mask. Orange County Schools is committed to working closely with students with disabilities and their families to address the student's individual needs. Families should continue to work with the school based IEP team including the building principal, the student's special education teachers and/or related service provider to address questions and concerns that may arise.

Arrival and Health Screening

Most students will be required to have a daily health screening and temperature check when they arrive at

school. Students who ride vendor transportation will be screened before boarding. Schools may have a separate health screening entrance designated for students with special needs who may not be able to use one of the established health screening entrances. Schools may assign a known employee to conduct the screening.

Face Coverings

Students are expected to follow general *NC Face Covering Requirements for Schools*. If a student cannot tolerate a face covering, they must submit a request for an [OCS Student Face Covering Accommodation Request Form](#).

Physical Distancing

Students and employees are expected to follow required physical distancing and minimizing exposure guidelines. Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be available for employees whose duties require a closer proximity to students and/or the management of bodily fluids (e.g., toileting, feeding, etc.). Staff assisting students in instructional needs, hand-over-hand assistance, or physical redirection requiring close proximity (closer than 6 feet) will wear cloth face coverings and splash guard face shields.

Handwashing

Teachers will incorporate handwashing breaks into the school day and reinforcing handwashing during key times throughout the school day, such as:

- before eating;
- using the restroom; and
- touching shared objects.

Students who require assistance with handwashing will have hand-over-hand assistance. If the student is unable to access a hand-washing station, hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol) will be provided.

If your child has sensitivities to hand sanitizer, please communicate this with your child's teachers so they can provide your child other opportunities to clean their hands.



[Handwashing Steps Video](#)

Step 1: Wet hands with safe running water

Step 2: Apply enough soap to cover wet hands

Step 3: Scrub all surfaces of the hands – including backs of hands, between fingers and under nails – for at least 20 seconds

Step 4: Rinse thoroughly with running water

Step 5: Dry hands with a clean, dry cloth, single-use towel or hand drier as available

Maintaining Healthy Spaces

Face Coverings

North Carolina requires a face covering for all employees, essential visitors, and K-12 students at all times, even when 6 feet or farther from other individuals, including:

- inside school buildings and anywhere on school grounds, including outside;
- while traveling on buses, vendor transportation or other OCS vehicles.

A face covering must be secured safely over the nose, mouth, and under the chin.

Face coverings are an additional step to help slow the spread of COVID-19 when combined with everyday preventive actions and physical distancing in public settings.

Face coverings will be provided for students who do not have access to one. If given a reusable face covering, it is the responsibility of the family to wash it when needed and bring it back to reuse it.

The consensus of leadership is that gaiters and face coverings with vents are NOT acceptable at OCS. Administrative and school level leaders agree this is best, due to the science and all recommendations provided by both the ABC Science Collaborative and the Orange County Health Department. Therefore, OCS is of the position that Gaiters—even if they are double layered, per the CDC—and face coverings with ventilation are NOT allowed in OCS.

CDC Guide to Masks: Also, according to the CDC, some face masks/coverings work better than others. To read the latest Scientific Brief for more information on this topic, click here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>

Exceptions for Wearing a Cloth Mask/Face Covering

As a general rule, cloth mask/face coverings are REQUIRED; and exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis with appropriate staff (i.e., the EC facilitator, school nurse, or principal) for those not wearing a mask. Considerations include learning needs, safety, and any potential alternatives. Students with exceptions should be noted in the PowerSchool medical alert. In this case, 100% Remote Learning (OCS Virtual Academy) may be recommended for the safety of the child.

Cloth masks/face coverings should not be required for individuals who:

- Cannot tolerate a mas/face covering due to any medical, behavioral condition or disability (including, but not limited to, any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious or incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to put on or remove the mask/face covering without assistance)

Parents/guardians should contact their school nurse if they have concerns that their child cannot wear a mask/face covering.

Staff should consult with Human Resources. Individual circumstances will be taken into consideration along with applying the most stringent public health prevention measure possible. Safety is our highest priority; this is for the students' safety, the staff member and for the safety of those around them.

- Students and staff must wear masks/face covering inside and outside unless eating, taking a physically distanced mask break or if they are alone in an office/classroom, or not within six feet of another person outside.
- Masks/face coverings shall be stored in a manner to protect from contamination after being taken off.
- Students and staff will be provided with a break away lanyard and water resistant, zippered pouch to safely store masks/face coverings while taking a mask break, eating or drinking.
- Students and staff should have an extra clean mask/face covering in a zip-lock sealed bag available on campus.

Please note that bandanas, tie-on fabrics, other coverings with gaps or those that are thinly layered are not allowable alternatives as they do not meet the CDC guidelines for a mask/face covering.

All students and staff will be taught/trained on best practices for:

- Putting on and taking off mask/face coverings
[How to Wear and Safely Remove a Mask](#)
- Respiratory etiquette (how to safely cover a cough or sneeze)
[Cover your Cough/Sneeze](#)
- Avoiding touching the face
[How to Protect Yourself and Others](#)

Handwashing

Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick. The CDC recommends everyone wash their hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Teachers will be teaching handwashing in the classroom, incorporating handwashing breaks into the school day, and reinforcing handwashing during key times throughout the school day such as before eating, using the restroom, and touching shared objects.

Hand-Sanitizing Stations

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not readily available, individuals are encouraged to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol). Schools will provide hand sanitizer at every school entrance and exit, in the cafeteria, in every classroom, and on every bus and transportation vehicle.

If your child has sensitivities to hand sanitizer, please communicate this with your child's teachers so they can provide your child other opportunities to clean their hands.

Physical Distancing

Schools are taking actions to ensure all campus spaces and buildings support health and safety. These actions include: signage and floor markings to remind students of physical-distancing practices, strategic furniture placement in classrooms, and changing the typical "traffic flow" inside school buildings to promote and facilitate physical distancing in hallways, bathrooms, and during times of transition.

Before and after school, we ask students to avoid congregating on campus. Employees will direct students to clear the hallways and parking lots and leave campus in an effort to encourage physical distancing.

All schools will physical distance whenever possible, but when students return for daily in-person instruction under Plan A, all students should continue to stay apart from other students, employees, and visitors, to maintain as much physical distancing as possible. In all other areas, six feet of physical distancing is expected to be maintained.

All students and employees are required to maintain six feet of physical distance whenever face coverings are removed for eating or drinking, even if operating under Plan A.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Buildings will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day and every evening. The CDC defines cleaning as removing germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces or objects. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects. Hospital-grade disinfectants are used in all school facilities. **Students are not permitted to assist with cleaning and disinfecting.**

Classrooms

Disinfecting supplies will be provided to each classroom to support the cleaning of desks and other high touch surfaces between classes, after lunch, and the cleaning of shared program materials/equipment as desired. After school each day, desks and other touch points will be disinfected.

Restrooms

Custodial Services will clean and disinfect all restrooms using approved procedures during the day, and after school hours.

Response to Presumptive, Suspected or Positive COVID-19 Illness

Specific areas occupied by an individual experiencing symptoms will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

Visitors

Only essential visitors will be allowed on school campuses in an effort to protect the health and safety of our community by minimizing the number of people on sites.

All efforts will be made to keep necessary visitors to a minimum, including the use of virtual or telephone meetings with families and guests.

If it is essential to have family members or visitors enter the facility, they must go through the same health screening process as students and staff. All visitors are required to follow guidelines in the Face Covering section of this document. Any meetings with a family member or visitor must follow physical-distancing guidelines.

Water Fountains

In response to COVID-19, students will be prohibited from drinking directly from water fountains. All students are encouraged to bring their own bottled water or reusable water bottles. All water bottles should be clearly labeled with the user's name. It is the students' responsibility to keep track of their water bottles and take them home for regular cleaning.

All employees and students must be physically distanced at least 6 feet from others when removing their face covering to drink.

Eating Meals

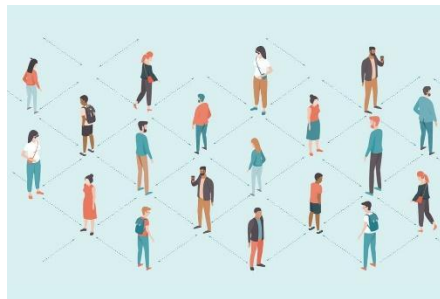
Since face coverings will be removed for meals, all individuals must maintain at least six feet of physical distance while eating, even when operating under Plan A. When individuals are done eating, they should immediately put back on their face covering.

Please be reminded that **face coverings should only come off for meals with no talking** and following the district's [meal procedures](#) outlined previously. **No other "masks breaks" are allowed.**

Safest Meal Strategy

1. Meals consumed outdoors:

- a. Safe spaces for outdoor eating shall be designated. Spaces shall be:
 - i. Located a safe distance from roadways, parking lots, and other safety or environmental factors.
 - ii. Away from the playground during recess hours.
 - iii. If located in a shared space, they shall be marked and secure in use zones established.
- b. Unless raining (if no tent or overhead covering is available), snowing or at/below freezing temperatures **students shall eat meals outdoors.**
 - i. [Weather chart for guidance](#)
- c. Classes shall remain together during meal/snack times. Permission to deviate shall be approved by the site administrator.
- d. While sitting on benches, picnic tables, ect. or picnic style while on mat, towel, ect. (Students should not sit directly on the ground).
- e. **Greater than 6ft apart.** Students shall be spaced at a distance of 6ft or greater apart. Spaces shall be marked. If picnic style eating is to occur, grid mapping should be used to determine space and seating spots indicated.



- f. Meal procedures shall be followed.

2. Meals consumed in Classrooms:

Though eating outside is the preferred option, it may not always be possible due to inclement weather. The next strategy is to eat inside, having students in their classrooms reduces risk of widespread transmission.

- a. **Greater than 6ft apart** if possible.
- b. Meal procedure shall be followed
- c. Air purifier shall be running and turned to III, door(s) and window(s) opened.
 - i. Note: Weather may not permit the window to be wide open, cracked is acceptable to allow additional outside air into the space.

3. Meals consumed in Shared Spaces

This option may be selected **only** if neither eating outside nor in the classroom (due to 6ft distance requirements) are possible. Students may be rotated through larger designated spaces such as café, media center, ect., with students **spaced greater than 6ft apart if possible**.

- a. Spaces for students to sit shall be indicated.
- b. Table surfaces shall be properly cleaned and disinfected between cohorts of students. Disinfectant shall be used as directed and required contact times shall be followed.

REMINDER: Masks can ONLY come off for meals with no talking and following the meal procedures outlined previously. Our **GREATEST** defense against COVID-19 are the 3Ws (Wear, Wait, Wash), especially “Wear” (MASKING).

OCS Plan A Meal Procedure

- Wearing face coverings/masks and physical distancing, students wash/sanitize their hands and go pick up their lunch (or wait for their lunch to be delivered to their classroom).
 - If dining outside, students shall sanitize their hands prior to leaving the classroom.
 - Additional hand sanitizer dispensers shall be located near the designated entrance/exit door.
 - If students leave the classroom to pick up their lunch, they must practice hand hygiene upon entering the classroom.
- If dining in classrooms, the air purifier shall be turned to level III, door(s) and window(s) shall be opened.
- Teacher instructs students to prepare their snack/meal for consumption. For example, students open their beverage and add straw, twist cap off juice container, unwrap food, peel bananas, cut apples, remove crust from bread, open box of raisins, get napkins out, etc.
- Once all lunch prep work is completed by all students, the teacher/adult instructs students to remove their face coverings/masks so they can consume their breakfast/lunch.
 - [Modeling correct face covering/mask removal](#)
 - [Instructions for those who wear glasses](#)
- Teacher reminds students that they cannot talk and that they have 15 minutes to consume their food and beverage. Set a timer. When students finish consuming their snack/meal they put their face covering/mask back on and wait patiently until all students are finished.
- When all face/coverings masks are back on and the 15 minutes are up, students gather their trash and at the direction of the teacher/adult, discards their trash in a receptacle/garbage bag outside their classroom for easy retrieval by the custodians
- Students wash/sanitize their hands after discarding their trash
 - When eating outside, students and staff shall practice wash/sanitize hands immediately upon re-entering the building.
- Students can spend the remainder of their scheduled lunch time speaking with each other with their masks on and physically distanced.

Please note: There will likely be at least one student attempting to talk during breakfast/lunch and/or not finishing their breakfast/lunch in 15 minutes allotted. There should be a plan for managing students that veer off track without derailing the whole class. Additionally, plan for students who pack their breakfasts/lunches. For example, if additional adult supervision isn't available, “breakfast/lunch packers” should go with the rest of the class needing to pick up their breakfast/lunch from the cafeteria. “Breakfast/Lunch packers” should also participate in the before departing and after returning to the

classroom hand sanitizing steps; they should also proceed with preparing the breakfast/lunch they brought to school for consumption like everyone else and follow all remaining steps in the protocol.

Cleaning and Disinfecting a Surface

If students and staff are to eat in a shared space or non-cohorted(pod) classroom, the surfaces of tables and or desks must be cleaned and disinfected between use.

- Wipe the surface to remove food/debris with a paper towel.
- If a spill is present, wipe with a towel/cloth saturated with a mild detergent solution.
- Spray the area with approved disinfectant and wait the appropriate contact time prior to next use.
- If the surface is still wet prior to use, and contact time has been met, wipe the surface with a dry paper towel.

Questions/Additional Information

Should you have questions or need additional information, please contact Sara Pitts, Director of Child Nutrition, OCS, at sara.pitts@orange.k12.nc.us or Jarwin Hester, Director of Safety and Environmental Health, OCS, at jarwin.hester@orange.k12.nc.us.

Sharing food is discouraged. If food or drink is provided for other students or employees, it must be commercially bought and commercially pre-packaged in individual containers with separate, disposable utensils for each person.

Prepared School Meals

Our child nutrition employees will continue to prepare food in our school kitchens following very strict food safety and sanitation procedures required by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), and NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). All meals will be individually packaged for direct service to students.

Breakfast and lunch will be **free for all** students. Students will not need to provide their student ID in order to get a meal. Meals will continue to be served at [feeding locations](#) for students who are learning remotely.

Please complete the [2020-2021 school year free and reduced-price meal benefits application](#). Although an approved meal benefits application is not necessary to receive free meals this year, it is necessary for other grants and education related programs that benefit our students.

Our menus will continue to feature student favorites, our signature in-house speed-scratch specialties, fresh Got To Be NC farm-to-school fruits and vegetables, and will provide the protein, whole grains, low-fat dairy, fruits and vegetables that are important ingredients in a nutritious meal.

Transportation

Seating capacity on buses will be consistent with the NC Department of Health and Human Services' guidelines .<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/media/401/open> (page 5-6) Students will sit at least two students per seat.

Cloth masks/face coverings are required at the bus stop and before entering the bus for all students and adults. The face covering must be worn properly, fully covering their nose and mouth the entire time at the bus stop and while students are being transported on the bus. If a student does not have a face covering, one will be provided upon boarding the bus.

Hand sanitizer will be available on all school transportation vehicles for safe use by employees and older

children.

Touch points, including doors and windows, grab handles, arm rests, hard seats, door handles, and seat belt buckles, will be disinfected between each bus run with an EPA-approved disinfectant for SARS CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

Athletic Activities

The school board has approved [this schedule](#) for the gradual return of high school athletic activities. Middle school athletic activities will resume on a limited basis in the second semester. Orange County Schools' Middle School Athletics will begin spring sports on March 15, 2021. Students will remain in their designated cohorts and have the ability to choose from a selection of Spring athletics. The Spring sports selections are Baseball, Softball, Girls Soccer, Track & Field, and Lacrosse (6th graders cannot participate in Lacrosse). Spring sports will be available for all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders--this year only, there will be no cuts. The offering of athletics, however, will look different than in years past. The sports offered will be non-competitive and focus on conditioning and skill-building only at this time. The district's goal is to get our middle school students physically active and we strongly encourage our students to participate.

Middle School athletics will follow all safety guidelines that the high schools are following around, attestation & screenings before workouts, masking, and social distancing. We are also collecting physicals and concussion forms just like in a regular school year. The Middle School athletic directors met with Orange High School's trainer last week to discuss & ensure that they are following all safety guidelines. These plans are subject to change. If you have any questions, please contact your Middle School Athletic Director.

Below is a summary of health and safety protocols for student-athletes, staff and spectators. Contact your school for more detailed information and workout schedules.

Athletic Forms

The following documents are required for athletic participation. These documents should be submitted prior to attending their first athletic pre-season activity.

- [Initial Screening Form](#) (must be signed prior to beginning participation)
- [High School/Middle School Athletic Participation Form](#)

Safety Requirements

Check temperature before leaving home. Anyone with a temperature of 100.0 degrees or higher, or reporting signs or symptoms, must not participate. Coaches and athletes will be screened on site daily by answering symptom screening questions and getting their temperature checked. Participants who are being dropped off should have their ride wait until the participant has successfully passed the daily health screening and has been cleared for that day's activities.

Face Coverings

All individuals are required to wear a face covering at all times. This includes coaches, participants, athletic trainers, managers, and anyone else gathered for the activity.

Workout Guidelines

During high school off-season activities, gatherings are limited to no more than 25 people total indoors and 50 people total outdoors, including staff, athletic trainers, managers, and participants. If this guidance differs from federal, state, or local guidelines, you must adhere to the requirements that are most

restrictive.

Pods should be used keeping the same groupings of participants in each pod during each session.

In person off-season activities must be limited to no more than 90 minutes per day per student.

During in-season activities, participant numbers are not limited. However, coaches should consider grouping athletes in groups for practices.

Middle school activities scheduled for the spring of 2021 are considered in season, however no contests will take place.

Weight rooms and locker rooms remain closed.

Spectators for High School Contests

Schools must adhere to [North Carolina High School Athletic Association](#), state and local restrictions on group sizes. Spectator attendance is open only to immediate family members of home team participants. The host school would determine allocation of tickets to all programs and allocate the tickets in a clearly communicated plan.

Positive Test

If a person on a team tests positive for COVID-19, anyone who has been exposed will quarantine for 14 days and watch for symptoms. Individuals who have had positive screenings must follow all guidelines set by the school nurse before being allowed to return.

Field Trips

For the current school year, in-person field trips have been suspended to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

Technology

General Guidelines

- Bring the device assigned to you fully charged to school each day.
- Your teacher will give directions on how to identify your device.
- Before going home, power off the device and put it in your backpack.
- Never throw your backpack, especially when your device is inside!
- Keep sharp objects away from your device.
- Don't share your device with anyone.
- Don't touch someone else's device.
- Check to make sure nothing is sitting on your keyboard before closing the lid of your device.
- If your device is not working properly, let your teacher know so you can arrange to get a replacement at your school.

Technology Support

See your teacher or in-school technology support for help with your technology.

Social and Emotional Health

The volume of information in the media and elsewhere about COVID-19 can cause concern for parents and students. Here are some tips to help address your family's social and emotional needs:

- Share age-appropriate information with students and correct misinformation.
- Reassure children that they are safe and that adults are working to keep them safe.
- Emphasize ways children and families can be “germ-busters” and reduce the spread of illness.
- Try to keep routines as normal as possible.
- Limit the amount of exposure to television and social media regarding COVID-19.

Our schools are prepared and available to support all students' mental and emotional well-being. If you have concerns about your student, please contact your student's school counselor.

Calendars

Current 2020-21 school calendars can be viewed on the [OCS website](#). They are subject to change pending state requirements and health guidance.

Stay in Touch

Please ensure that your school has your most recent contact information, including your email address and phone number. We'll use email and phone to share critical information with you.

Resources

- Details about the district's overall response to the COVID-19 pandemic: [LINK](#)
- For Orange County information, including vaccine sites: [LINK](#)
- Information about North Carolina's COVID-19 response, visit the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Resources website: [LINK](#)
- For federal guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus