



WALTON COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

COVID-19 Information for Parents and Employees **2021-22 School Year**

The top priority of the Walton County School District is to keep students safe and healthy as we transition back to normal operations this year. We are looking forward to the upcoming school year and are excited you are part of the team.

Below are several questions and answers related to the start of the school year and COVID-19 protocols. If you need additional information, contact your child's school or visit the district website at <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us>.

1. Are there currently any Emergency Orders in Florida or in Walton County involving schools and COVID-19?

No.

2. Will schools continue to provide extra cleaning of classrooms, buses, and other areas?

Yes. We will retain the COVID-19 mitigation protocols put in place last year to help keep our schools as clean as possible. That includes disinfecting and cleaning frequently touched surfaces more regularly throughout the school day.

3. What other measures are being continued?

- Hand sanitizer will be available in the classroom and other common areas.
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting protocols will be in place in schools and on buses.
- Masks will be optional in the school building and on buses. Schools and buses will have a supply of masks available.
- Water bottle filling stations and/or water fountains will be available in schools to fill up water bottles. We will be adding more water bottle filling stations this year.
- Signs will be displayed to remind those in schools about social distancing and the use of hand sanitizer/washing of hands.
- COVID-19 contact tracing will occur as required by the Department of Health.
- Proper handwashing will continue to be emphasized daily.

4. **Will masks be mandatory in schools this fall?**
No. Masks were not required last year in schools, and at this time they will not be required this year. Parents are welcome to provide a mask for their child if they choose. Schools will have a supply of masks available if a parent requests one for their child.
5. **Will masks be mandatory on school buses?**
No. Parents are welcome to provide a mask for their child if they choose. Masks will be available if requested on the bus.
6. **Will an online option be available this year?**
Yes. Walton Virtual is the district's primary K-12 virtual option. Information about this option is available at <https://wvs.walton.k12.fl.us/>
7. **Will wellness/temperature checks be done daily upon arrival to school?**
No. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to monitor their students for symptoms before school each day. Please keep your child home from school if they exhibit any COVID symptoms or if they are sick.
8. **What are the COVID symptoms?**
Fever greater than 100.4°, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficult breathing, headache, body or muscle aches, GI symptoms (diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain), new loss of taste or smell, nasal congestion/runny nose.
9. **If my student is identified as a close contact through contact tracing at school, will they be quarantined?**
Keeping students in school is critically important for their academic growth and overall mental health of all student. Florida Statute gives the Department of Health the authority to contact trace and impose quarantine guidelines on individuals. The guidelines below explain how both Vaccinated and Non-Vaccinated Close Contacts will be handled at this time by each school in the district.

VACCINATED CLOSE CONTACTS:

- **Asymptomatic** (symptom free) close contacts who are **vaccinated** or **previously diagnosed** with COVID-19 within the last three months **will not have to quarantine**. Protocol for the individual would be to monitor for symptoms daily for 14 days.
- **Symptomatic** close contacts should stay home and seek testing. If negative, return when symptoms are resolved for 24 hours with no medication. If positive, notify Department of Health and stay home for isolation period as directed by DOH.

NON-VACCINATED CLOSE CONTACTS:

- **Asymptomatic** (symptom free) close contacts who are **not vaccinated** who choose to remain in school should:
 - **Days 1-14 (days after exposure to positive individual)**
 - Monitor for symptoms daily by parent/guardian
 - Mask is recommended to be worn

- Practice social distancing as much as possible
 - Daily Screening by the School Nurse at the beginning of each day for a wellness check
- **Symptomatic close contacts should quarantine and:**
 - **Contact your physician and Department of Health for guidance**
 - **Early return to school option with negative COVID-19 Test (Earliest day to test is Day 5 of quarantine)**
 - Return to school no earlier than Day 8
 - Monitor for symptoms daily by parents/guardians
 - Mask is recommended to be worn - Days 8-14
 - Social Distancing is recommended – Days 8-14
 - Daily screening by the School Nurse at the beginning of each day for a wellness check - Days 8-14
 - **Without Testing (Day 11) (days after exposure to positive individual)**
 - Student without testing may return to school no earlier than Day 11 with symptoms that are improving and no medication for 24 hours.
 - Monitor for symptoms daily by parents/guardians
 - Mask is recommended to be worn - Days 11-14
 - Social Distancing is recommended – Days 11-14
 - Daily screening by the School Nurse at the beginning of each day for a wellness check - Days 11-14

10. What will happen if a student exhibits multiple COVID symptoms while at school?

Similar to last year, students with multiple COVID symptoms will be sent to the health clinic, socially distanced, and given a mask. Parents will be contacted to determine if symptoms are due to a pre-existing condition. If not, the parent will be required to pick up the student. The student will be able to return to school once they are symptom free without medication for 24 hours.

11. Are there any single symptoms that will require my student to be excluded from school?

Yes. If a student has any one of the following symptoms, they will be excluded from school: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or new loss of taste or smell. The student will not be able to return to school until they are symptom free without medication for 24 hours. **EXCEPTION:** If the student experiences a loss of taste or smell, parents should contact their healthcare provider and follow Department of Health guidance for isolation.

12. What should I do if my child develops COVID symptoms away from school?

Students who have COVID symptoms that are not due to a pre-existing condition should be kept home until they are symptom free without medication for 24 hours. Students exhibiting a new loss of taste or smell may not attend school. If the student experiences a loss of taste or smell, parents should contact their healthcare provider and follow Department of Health guidance for isolation.

13. **If there is a positive case at home, will my student be excluded from school?**
Parents would follow the guidance of the Department of Health regarding quarantine protocol.
14. **Will students who are isolated or quarantined be able to make up their school work?**
Yes. Please contact your child's school for information on receiving make up work.
15. **Will absences due to isolation/quarantine or COVID symptoms be excused?**
Yes. Absences of this type will be excused with a note from a parent or doctor.
16. **COVID-19 cancelled or modified many different types of school events last year, such as field trips and athletic and performing arts events. Will these return to normal this year?**
Yes. Our plan is to allow normal school activities such as field trips to resume. Athletic events and extracurricular activities such as band and choral concerts will occur without limits on seating capacity. We will be mindful as we move into the school year and make adjustments as needed.
17. **Will parents be able to volunteer in classrooms this fall and chaperone trips?**
Yes. We are pleased to have our parents return to schools as volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, please contact your child's school for more information.

Walton County School District will update COVID-19 protocols as new guidance comes available throughout the school year.