



THE PLACE TO BE

Lancaster City Schools

Reopening Plan

Revised: August 4, 2020

Lancaster City Schools prides itself on being the place to be for learning, caring and succeeding. While the COVID-19 pandemic has certainly challenged us to think creatively, we are working diligently to provide options for families and students that allow us to continue to provide high quality education and a caring environment for student development, while maintaining safety standards for students and staff. The following Reopening Plan was created with this important balance in mind. We know this situation is not easy for anyone, and we ask for our community's continued patience and cooperation as we work together during the coming school year.

Guiding Principles

These general principles will guide each school within the Lancaster City School District as we move forward with re-opening our schools for the 2020-2021 school year.

1. The District will work closely with the Fairfield County Department of Health to promote safety in each school building. While the ultimate goal is to have all students in school each day, COVID-19 safety concerns will require us to remain flexible and institute operational changes. Additionally, the District will provide a full online option that families may opt-into for each semester of the school year, provided there are enough students interested in this option to proceed.
2. The District will implement recommended safety precautions to mitigate risks. The District will be transparent with all stakeholders that some level of risk will always be present when children and school district employees occupy school district facilities. We cannot eliminate the risk of contracting COVID-19, we can only reduce the risk. Reducing the risk will help keep us in school to maximize learning.
3. The District will strive for equity and access for all students. Our plans include teacher-directed instruction in all scenarios. Chromebooks are provided to all students and hotspots are available for homes without internet. Social and emotional support will continue to be a priority for the District.
4. The district will continue to operate with responsible budgetary practices while providing increased resources to implement additional safety precautions.

Reopening Plan Options

Lancaster City Schools will provide two distinct learning opportunities for students. Enrolled students will automatically be enrolled in our “3 Model” school structure. Alternatively, families can opt-in to a “Full Online Option” for the year, but must do so before August 4 for the first semester.

The 3 Model School Structure

As described in our previous communication with the community, we have been working on 3 scenarios, or models, for the coming year. Which model we will implement will be based upon multiple factors as they relate to the spread of the Coronavirus in our county, our community, and our District.

It is important to recognize that the District may have to switch from one model to another during the course of the school year. This may happen multiple times. In addition, different schools may have to operate in a different model. For example, Thomas Ewing and Tarhe Trails may be in one model with the rest of the district operating in a different model.

For this reason, we have worked to adapt our curriculum to an online environment and to provide professional development to our staff before students enter school. This will allow us to move between the 3 models as seamlessly as possible.

Lancaster City Schools will use the Ohio Public Health Advisory along with district and community level health factors to determine which model we use. We will try to give parents advance notice of a change in models and begin in the new model on the first day of the week. District level conditions, such as staff and student absences, may require a change in models for a classroom, school building, or district with little advance notice. If a change is warranted for these reasons, we may have to notify parents in the morning, similar to a snow day.

Lancaster City Schools 3 Learning Models:

1. **Traditional School Model** - School will be open to all students in a face-to-face setting 100% of the time with safety precautions and approximately 3 feet of social distancing as much as possible throughout the school day. This model may be used when Fairfield County is at a yellow or orange level on the Ohio Public Health Advisory System and the district determines that the risk of attending school is low enough to allow for the traditional model. We will work with the Fairfield County Health Department concerning the caseload specific to the District to make this decision.
2. **Blended School Model** - School will operate in a blended model of in school instruction, remote learning, and virtual instruction. We would be able to then increase social distancing to 6 feet as much as possible throughout the school day. Students will attend school 2 days a week with remote learning 2 days a week and virtual learning on Mondays. Remote learning is student directed learning while virtual learning is teacher directed. This model will be used when Fairfield County is at a red level on the Ohio Public Health Advisory System or the district determines that the risk of attending

school is too high to allow for the traditional model. We will work with the Fairfield County Health Department concerning the caseload specific to the District to make this decision.

Students will attend school following this schedule:

Group A (Student's last name beginning with A-K)
Attend school on Tuesday and Thursday
Attend virtually on Monday
Attend remotely on Wednesday, and Friday

Group B (Student's last name beginning with L-Z)
Attend school on Wednesday and Friday
Attend virtually Monday
Attend remotely on Tuesday, and Thursday

Note: We will try to accommodate families with more than one child with different last names into the same group.

Note: Special Education students in resource rooms or self-contained settings may have a variety of options available.

3. **Virtual School Model** - The District will implement its Virtual Learning Model. Each school will operate virtually five days a week. Students will be provided a Chromebook and access to daily lessons provided by an instructor. Virtual schedules will be implemented to address curriculum, instruction and pacing needed to assure students continue to have access to quality instruction and curriculum. This model will be used when Fairfield County is at a purple level on the Ohio Public Health Advisory System or the district determines that the risk of attending school is too high to allow for the blended model. We will work with the Fairfield County Health Department concerning the caseload specific to the district to make this decision.

The district has announced that we will start the school year on September 1st in the blended model.

Safety Precautions and Operational Changes:

For the first two models above, following is a summary of some of the safety precautions and operational changes the District will implement.

1. All families are asked to perform health checks on students before coming to school each day. If a student has an elevated temperature or any other sign of potential illness, they should stay home. Parents/guardians will need to swiftly pick up from school any students found to have a fever or to be exhibiting signs of illness during the school day. The CDC does not currently recommend universal symptom screenings be conducted by schools, therefore the district does not plan to take students temperatures upon arrival. Parents and caregivers are strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of illness everyday.

2. All students (K-12) and staff will be required to wear cloth face coverings (face masks). Families must provide cloth face coverings for students that cover the nose and mouth. A medical exemption will be required for students not able to wear a cloth face covering. Families can begin working with their children now to practice mask-wearing and determine which style of mask will be most comfortable for their student(s) during the school day. We also recognize that our high school and preschools may need additional accommodations, such as use of a virtual learning day or early dismissal, due to lack of air conditioning should we face days with extreme heat.
3. Hand sanitizer will be provided throughout the building. Handwashing and hand sanitizing will be required regularly throughout the day.
4. Shared surfaces will be frequently cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis in the buildings and on buses.
5. Student drop off and pick up procedures will be modified to reduce student contact.
6. Visitors and volunteers will be limited to the office areas of buildings only.
7. No hallway lockers will be used at the junior high schools or at Lancaster High School.
8. Drinking fountains will be shut off. Students are encouraged to bring water bottles that may be refilled at school.

Transportation

Transportation will be provided to students who live more than a mile from their school or who have special transportation as part of their IEP services. Students and drivers are required to wear face masks. Bus seats will be cleaned after the morning and afternoon runs and loading procedures will be modified to reduce close contact. However, social distancing of six feet cannot be maintained on school transportation, even in the blended model. Therefore, parents are encouraged to transport their students to school to the greatest extent possible.

Risk Considerations

Under the Fairfield County Department of Health's current guidelines, any person who has been in close contact with a person who has contracted COVID for an accumulated 15 minutes or more in the previous 48 hours, has to self quarantine for 14 days. Close contact is defined as a person who was not socially distanced from another person, in other words, within 6 feet of the person. This is regardless of whether the persons were wearing a cloth mask or not. Also, a negative COVID test does not release a person from quarantine who was in contact with a COVID positive person. Therefore, under the traditional model, each person contracting COVID will cause the addition of multiple students and staff to be excluded from school in order to self quarantine for 14 days.

Under the blended model, with the exception of the school bus, social distancing is maintained to the greatest extent possible. Therefore, it is much less likely that a person contracting COVID would cause multiple people to be excluded from school for 14 days.

The Full-time Online Program

The District will be offering a full online option for families and students who choose not to return to school for in-person instruction in grades K -12. Provided we have the minimum number of students choose this option, the courses will be taught online by our highly qualified teachers using Lancaster City Schools curriculum. Students in the online program will need to log on each day and will have a similar schedule to an in-person student day.

The choice to attend our virtual learning option is for one semester at a time. Students will not be permitted to come in and out of the online program unless space is available at their home school site.

1. Elementary Online Program:

Provided we have a minimum number of students, elementary students will attend school online each day on a set schedule with a licensed teacher. The teacher will utilize the District curriculum to instruct the students. Based upon the numbers of students who register, it is possible that these classes may be multigrade level classes. Special Education students with significant health risks will have their IEP developed to meet their individual needs.

2. Junior High and High School Online Program:

Provided we have a minimum number of students, secondary students will attend school online each day with a licensed teacher. Students will be scheduled into classes following the same bell schedule as students attending in person. District teachers will have periods scheduled into the day to instruct their virtual classes. Core subject courses will be offered but additional course offerings will be limited. Special Education students with significant health risks will have their IEP developed to meet their individual needs.

Note: The online program is in the developmental stages. As this program is developed, more information will be provided. In order for us to assign staff, we need parents to make a commitment to the online program **by Friday August 7th**. [Click here to register for the Full-time Online Learning Program](#).

While we know that this plan does not detail every possible scenario for every student and family, we hope that it provides a succinct overview of what we have planned this school year.

We know that there are still many unanswered questions, and we are doing our very best to anticipate these questions and address them as they arise. We hope that you will be patient with us. There is no “manual” for how to do this because it’s never been done before– so we are all learning together as the situation progresses.

As mentioned previously, this will be a challenging year, but with the cooperation of our staff, families, students and greater community, we can rise to this challenge and continue to

ensure Lancaster City Schools is the Place to Be for learning, caring and succeeding, regardless of the methods and processes we must use.

Thank you for your continued support, patience and understanding.