



Lowndes County Schools Back to School Plan

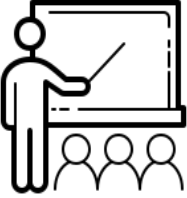
Lowndes County Schools understands the seriousness of the health risks of COVID-19. Therefore, we have enhanced our safety and health practices to provide an environment that is conducive to learning while also putting mechanisms in place that mitigate the risks of COVID-19. All of our schools, programs, and offices will follow the guidance of this document. It is understood that each building has different dynamics and situations; therefore, each building may provide additional information about specific needs. At all locations, the health and safety of our staff and students will be our primary focus and priority. This information may be subject to change based on additional guidance received from the Department of Education and the Department of Public Health.

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ACADEMIC LEARNING OPTION

Lowndes County School System will ensure appropriate and efficient use of available time for preparation, collaboration, instruction, assessment, and remediation

<p>Traditional, face-to-face instruction</p> 	<p>School buildings continue to implement intensive prevention strategies to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Enhanced social distancing is encouraged for students and teachers. Face-to-face instruction is scheduled using the appropriate content standards and grading practices while providing rigorous learning opportunities.</p> <p>Each student (Grades 2 - 12) will have access to a system-issued Chromebook.</p> <p>Students and staff may wear face coverings.</p> <p>Parents must complete SchoolCare registration immediately.</p>
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Cleaning and Hygiene



Washing hands with soap for 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol reduces the spread of disease.

Supplies will be provided to support healthy hygiene behaviors throughout the day (ex. hand soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, wipes). Parents may also send in sealed hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, disinfecting wipes, and facial tissues.

Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol will be provided at the building main entrance, in the cafeteria, and in classrooms. These will be systematically checked and refilled. Children will be supervised in the use of these products.

Students will be directed to use proper handwashing techniques with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and shall be allowed regular hand washing breaks throughout the school day. Signage will be posted throughout the school.

Staff and students will be encouraged to cough and sneeze into their elbows or to cover with a tissue.

Lowndes County Schools custodial staff will clean and disinfect on a regular basis to ensure viral spread via surfaces is minimized.

Student personal items (such as pens, crayons, and scissors) should be kept separately in individual lockers, cubbies, or containers to the extent practical.

Teachers and students should utilize disinfectant and/or wipes in the classroom to clean and sanitize desks and tables once per day where the same student stays at the same desk or table throughout the day. If a different student uses the desk or table, surfaces will be disinfected between uses to the extent practical. Teachers should also clean frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, light switches, computer

keyboards/Chromebooks, mice, interactive boards, and telephones with the wipes. Disinfecting wipes and disinfectants should be kept out of the reach of children. Teachers and students will be expected to pick up all items from the floor and clear desktops and tabletops at the end of each day to allow for more thorough cleaning each evening.

In the event of a COVID-19 event, custodial staff will also isolate and deep clean impacted classrooms and spaces. In some cases, facilities or portions of facilities will be closed and deep clean and sanitize impacted classrooms and areas.



Clinics and Student Health

According to CDC guidelines, symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever (100.4 or higher) or chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Cough
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Diarrhea

All parent/guardians must complete SchoolCare registration immediately as this is a requirement for a student to be seen in the clinic. Please understand, if a parent opts out of SchoolCare, a student will be sent home immediately at the sign of any illness. The following steps will also be taken in our school clinics:

- Students who are sick at school will be sent to the school nurse clinic. If students have COVID-19 like symptoms, the student will be provided a mask if needed and isolated from other students in the clinic for routine reasons. Isolation will be either in a separate section of the clinic or in another isolation room, depending on the school and clinic size.
- Students who are sick must be promptly picked up from school. Staff members who are sick must promptly leave school. LCS will follow current Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines for quarantines and return to work/school timelines.
- Students and staff who become ill should follow the Department of Public Health guidance. If a COVID-19 test is administered, staff and parents can self-report positive tests [to this form](#). This [form](#) will follow HIPPA and FERPA compliance.
- When cases of COVID-19, for students or staff, are confirmed, CDC guidelines will be followed. Response will be dictated by the nature of each case.
 - Anyone potentially exposed to a positive case of COVID-19 is expected to wear a mask for 10 days post exposure and follow CDC guidelines.
 - Guidance from Department of Public Health will be followed.
 - Touchless thermometers will be used in schools when taking student or staff temperatures.



Communication

We are focused on communicating as clearly and thoroughly as possible during these times. We disseminate information, as it is available.

- Please confirm your contact information is up to date for your child(ren).
 - For change of address please visit [this link](#) for forms and instructions for submitting an address change. Proof of the new address is required.
 - Changes in phone numbers and/or email addresses can be changed by parents via our parent/student portal or can be submitted to the student's school. Instructions are available at [this link](#).
- Updates will be shared on our [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).
- There may be situations where a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19. Each case will be evaluated individually. Due to HIPPA and FERPA privacy requirements, we will not be identifying individuals with COVID-19, and we ask that others not speculate about such instances.



Coping and Resilience

Lowndes County Schools recognizes the impact COVID-19 has on families emotionally. Therefore, mental health support will be provided to support the emotional wellbeing of students and staff. Social workers and counselors will provide services including access to mental health support. Please contact your school's counselor for more information. Student support staff will work with community partners to establish support services available to students. LCS has enhanced Social Emotional Learning support available to both staff and students.



Extracurricular Activities and Athletics

All athletic programs that are governed by the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) will follow GHSA rules and regulations. Middle school athletic programs will follow the same guidance as the GHSA high school programs. Any modifications must be approved by the system Superintendent.

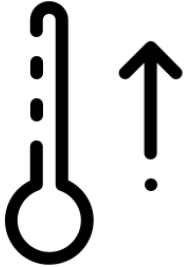
Lowndes High School Student Athletes should report positive COVID-19 test results to the Athletic Trainer, Philip Pieplow at philippieplow@lowndes.k12.ga.us and middle school athletes should report to the middle school athletic director.

For all other extracurricular activities, positive tests to COVID-19 should be reported immediately on the COVID-19 reporting form for the appropriate school.



Face Coverings

Wearing a face covering or a mask is optional for students and staff. At any time, the Lowndes Board of Education may issue a requirement to wear facial coverings. Prior to such, all stakeholders will be notified.



Monitoring for Symptoms

Conducting regular screening for symptoms and ongoing self-monitoring throughout each school day can help reduce exposure. Staff and students are required to self-monitor for symptoms.

The most critical tool in preventing the spread of COVID-19 is to ensure any student or staff who is positive for COVID-19 complies with CDC/DPH guidelines and completes the Lowndes County Schools COVID-19 Reporting Form. LCS will follow guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Department of Public Health (DPH).

Please also keep in mind that children will still get sick with illnesses that are not COVID-19. To err on the side of caution, additional safety measures will be taken regarding all health issues. All students who are out sick with a fever will be required to be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine before being allowed to return to school. This is subject to modification if the CDC or DPH provides different guidance.

By sending your child to school, you are attesting that your child is healthy, has been fever-free for 24 hours.



Student Attendance

Lowndes County Schools will still be required to take student attendance and report student attendance data to the Georgia Department of Education. Students are considered to be in attendance when participating in live or virtual instruction when isolated for a COVID-19 positive test results if reported via the LCS COVID-19 reporting form. Lowndes County Schools cannot completely waive truancy requirements in Georgia law, but will modify the process to avoid punitive action due to COVID-19 related absences. Schools will work with parents to resolve attendance issues related to illness.



Transportation

Physical distancing is most challenging on a school bus due to the limited space available. Strict physical distancing between riders of 6 feet is not practical as it would require as few as 12 riders per bus. Wearing a face covering while riding the bus to and from school is optional. As much as possible, buses will be sprayed down between routes. Children who become sick during the day may not ride the bus home.

COVID-19 Guidelines

COVID-19 Positive Test Results

- DPH/CDC guidance will be followed for all **positive COVID-19 cases**.
- Please report positive COVID-19 cases using the Lowndes County Schools COVID-19 Reporting Form found on the Lowndes County Schools webpage under For Families/COVID Reporting.
- School nurses will determine return to school dates for positive cases.

COVID-19 Isolation Due to a Positive Test: Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19, (regardless of vaccination status) must:

- Isolate at home for 5 days from the date symptoms first appeared or, if asymptomatic, the date of the positive test. Stay away from others in the household as much as possible during isolation.
- After 5 days, if you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving and you have not had fever for more than 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, you may end isolation. If symptoms are not improving or fever has not resolved, you should continue isolating until these criteria are met.
- After ending isolation, you should continue to wear a mask around others for 5 days.

Asymptomatic Close Contacts/Exposures

For 10 days after exposure with no positive test result, as a close contact you must correctly and consistently wear a mask, physical distance, and participate in daily symptom monitoring. If you develop symptoms, stay home and seek medical guidance including COVID-19 testing as directed by medical professionals.

Student Learning While Isolated

With regard to student learning, please contact your child's teacher via email. Additionally, your child can contact their teacher via email and Google Classroom for direction. Students will receive instruction while isolated due to a positive COVID-19 test result.

We concur with the Department of Public Health's order recognizing the importance of face-to-face learning and will continue to diligently monitor the impact of COVID-19 in our buildings.



COVID - 19 Daily Self Screening Questions

Do not send your child to school if the student:

- is awaiting COVID-19 test results, or
- has a recent positive COVID-19 test.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Do you have a fever (temperature over 100.4° F or 38° C) without fever-reducing medications? | <input type="radio"/> Do you have chills ? |
| <input type="radio"/> Do you have a recent loss of smell or taste ? | <input type="radio"/> Do you have a new or unusual headache ? |
| <input type="radio"/> Do you have a cough ? | <input type="radio"/> Have you experienced a new onset of any gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of appetite in the last few days? |
| <input type="radio"/> Do you have muscle aches ? | <input type="radio"/> Have you been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by a medical professional or a local public health official? |
| <input type="radio"/> Do you have a sore throat ? | <input type="radio"/> Are you awaiting a COVID-19 test result? |
| <input type="radio"/> Do you have shortness of breath ? | |

If the reply is YES to any of the questions on the checklist, the student should stay home and follow the guidance from their medical provider. If your student is positive, fill out the COVID Reporting form for your child's school. Forms are on our website, www.lowndes.k12.ga.us under **For Families/COVID Reporting**.