



THE ROAD BACK TO ...



WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS!

SUPPORTING AN LVMS RETURN TO FULL-TIME IN-PERSON LEARNING, 6-8



LVMS PARENTS & GUARDIANS!

1. Please read the following information carefully as the Long Valley Middle School continues its preparations for a potential return to in-person learning.
2. Then complete the Planning Questionnaire found at the end of this reopening bulletin (one for each of your LVMS children) by Wednesday evening, March 24th ... Thank you!

INTRODUCTION:

LVMS is working hard to steadily evaluate a return to full-time in-person learning. As mentioned previously, one of our middle school's biggest challenges is the size of our student population as compared to our available square footage. ***Today, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) announced new considerations for schools. WTS will be reviewing the changes and discussing such as part of the return to full-time in-person learning planning process.*** In order to proceed with planning for changes at LVMS, it is critical to know what method of learning our families will commit to for the remaining months of the school year. This will enable us to best continue to prepare for in-person learning for all students on a full-time basis.

To prepare for the return of students full-time at LVMS we will need to make cohort/homeroom changes for some students in order to reduce the number of students in each class. These revisions to cohorts/homerooms will be made at the discretion of the school. Unfortunately, we will not be able to honor parent requests. These changes *may* occur over the week of Spring Break. When finalized in our student information system, a communication will be sent directly from the middle school. *(Please note that student schedules may not be viewable while these required adjustments are made.)*

WTS remains deeply committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our students, staff, and their families. As our middle school continues its preparations for in-person learning, this guidance document is being presented to help parents, faculty, and staff understand various protocols that will be in place as we strive to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 throughout LVMS. The information here will assist parents in deciding whether or not to have their child(ren) return to full-time, in-person learning this school year. This document incorporates COVID-19-related health recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control. WTS continually monitors for new guidelines or modifications to current guidelines, and is committed to applying those recommendations in a timely manner once received from the NJ Department of Health.

HEALTH SCREENING & MONITORING:

We need the help of every in-person family to recognize the very significant shift that is being considered. **Any symptom of illness is reason enough to stay home and participate in school remotely.** School exclusion protocols may affect individual students, whole classes, or even an entire school as has occurred in the past as we all continue to navigate this pandemic.

Per current guidance, anyone within 6 feet of a confirmed case of COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more within a 24-hour period is considered a “close contact.” Though the late breaking revisions in CDC guidelines (today!) suggest that schools should maintain social distancing of three feet in classrooms, contact tracing protocols maintain an outline of a 6-foot radius for contact tracing purposes. ***Therefore, increases in classroom populations increase the likelihood of a student being identified as a close contact if someone in her/his classroom or bus has COVID-19. These students will need to quarantine for a period of up to 14 days.***

Every parent must conduct symptom screening for their child(ren) prior to coming to school each day using the District’s screening tool - - click on the following link: [Student COVID-19 Health Screening Tool](#). Likewise, WTS staff and faculty members will self-assess their own health using the [Faculty/Staff COVID-19 Health Screening Tool](#). ***Please print and use daily prior to coming to school each day.***

PREPARING FOR THE CHILDREN’S FULL-TIME RETURN TO SCHOOL:

Classrooms: Student desks will be outlined with floor tape to help define each child’s personal classroom desk space. These tape markings will serve as a visual reminder for classmates to respect each other’s area, and will help promote physical/social distancing. In anticipation of the warmer springtime temperatures, windows will be open more fully to increase fresh air exchange. Portable air filtration units will be added to our classrooms. Students will continue to attend physical education and related arts classes and travel to designated instructional rooms as feasible, with disinfecting performed between classes.

THE 5 CORE COVID-19 MITIGATION STRATEGIES:

Face Coverings/Masks: Cloth face coverings (2-ply minimum) will continue to be required for students, faculty, and staff unless doing so would inhibit the individual’s health. All face coverings must cover the nose and mouth completely and sit snugly, yet comfortably on the face. **The use of face shields will be OPTIONAL.** Please continue to ensure that a clean face covering accompanies your child(ren) to school each day (WTS always has spares on hand, should one be forgotten or misplaced). As has been our practice, mask/face covering breaks will occur throughout the day.

Physical/Social Distancing: Due to the size of our student population, physical/social distancing will need to be at a minimum of three feet (based on today’s newly-released guidance from the CDC) in order to accommodate our in-person population on a full-time basis.

Hand Hygiene/Respiratory Etiquette: Handwashing/sanitizing will continue to be scheduled throughout the school day (hand sanitizer is also available when boarding and exiting school buses). Children will need to wash their hands prior to leaving for school each day. Hand sanitizer will consist of 60% alcohol and reflect

Federal guidelines. Teachers will continue to remind students of proper hand-washing etiquette throughout the school day. Proper respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes and keeping hands clean) will continue to be reinforced with students.

Cleaning/Disinfecting: WTS' schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfecting, including frequently touched surfaces and objects, will continue. Bathrooms will be sanitized daily and monitored frequently throughout the day by custodial personnel. WTS' ventilation systems/units will be monitored to ensure that they are operating properly. Open windows will help facilitate the exchange of fresh air in classrooms.

Contact Tracing: In case investigation, public health staff (aided greatly by our School Nursing Team during the pandemic) work with COVID-19 cases to help them recall everyone with whom they have had close contact during the timeframe while they may have been infectious. Public and school health staff begin contacting close contacts to provide them with quarantine guidance and to monitor their health statuses. School personnel speak directly with close contacts (or the parents/guardians of close contacts if the contact is a student) to provide guidance and then follow-up in writing using a letter provided by the New Jersey Department of Health.

Additionally, the Long Valley Middle School will continue to operate in a cohort model, where students will remain together in the classroom for their core classes throughout the school day. Currently, our core teachers travel to the classroom to meet with groups of students. Student cohorts may mix for phys-ed and related arts classes.

LUNCH/RECESS & PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

We are still committed to full days of school with lunch preparations. Students may be able to eat outside - weather permitting. Currently, students eat in large-group settings with six feet of distancing. We will continue to set up flexible eating spaces for students, with six feet of distancing, while students are unmasked and eating. This is another reason your feedback on the attached survey is critical - - we need that information to enable us to effectuate safe environments for our students and staff.

Cleaning/disinfecting protocols will continue. In addition, the lunch option provided by the District's food service vendor, Sodexo, will remain in effect.

Physical education classes will continue with increased opportunities for outdoor classes amid the springtime weather. Students are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and safe footwear to school so they can participate without needing to change for phys-ed.

SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION:

School bus operations will continue, but the number of children on the school bus will be limited to the extent possible to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Face coverings will remain a requirement while on school buses unless doing so would inhibit the student's health. WTS' daily plans for disinfecting school buses will continue and open bus windows will aid in ventilation. In order for WTS to limit the number of children riding the school bus, we need the help of parents who are able and willing to drive their children to and from school each day. This question is posed in the Planning Questionnaire at the close of this guidance document.

TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY:

Understanding the critical role technology plays during periods of atypical school operations, WTS will continue to ensure that faculty, staff, and families have access to the internet and will provide technology devices to families and faculty who may need them.

PARENT MEETINGS AND SCHOOL VISITORS:

Parent meetings will be virtual as WTS will continue to strictly limit school visitors throughout the period of pandemic and recovery.

VISUAL REMINDERS TO SUPPORT A TOTAL TEAM EFFORT:

Specialized signage and markings will remain prominent to remind/encourage/promote social distancing measures and positive hygiene habits.



THANK YOU for reading! Please complete the LVMS Planning Questionnaire for Parents, one questionnaire for each of your middle school children, by next Wednesday evening, March 24th. To access the questionnaire, click [HERE!](#)

Washington Township Schools ~ 3.19.21