

Dawson County School System's Reopening Plan (Release Date: July 20, 2020)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (The district will continue to add questions over the next two weeks.)

Need more information, have questions about enhanced safety protocols or learning options, refer to FAQ below.

If you don't find the answer there, please submit your question(s) at <https://forms.gle/N4TG2a9pU58ro8zv9> We will contact you as soon as possible.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
1. Will Dawson County Schools start back in August?	Dawson County Schools plan to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year on August 7, 2020 unless directed otherwise by the Governor, Department of Public Health, or Georgia Department of Education.
2. What guidelines will be in place when schools reopen?	Enhanced safety protocols are shared on the district's website.
3. Will masks be required for staff and students?	Masks/face coverings are encouraged, not required, when social distancing isn't possible. Staff and students will be allowed to bring face masks/coverings from home. Masks/face coverings will be required for bus drivers, bus monitors, and nutrition staff.
4. Will social distancing be followed on buses?	It will be difficult to social distance on the buses, but students will be separated as much as possible. Buses will have hand sanitizer available for students and students may wear masks.
5. Will my child eat in the cafeteria?	Students will eat in school cafeterias and the number of students in the cafeteria at one time will be minimized. To foster social distancing, some students may eat in classrooms on certain days if schools are using a rotating cafeteria schedule. Due to social distancing, visitors cannot be accommodated in the cafeteria at this time.
6. What will happen if a student or a teacher is determined to be ill while they are at school?	Symptoms will be evaluated by the school nurse and based on this evaluation, staff members may be sent home and students may remain in isolation, with supervision, while parents are contacted to pick them up. The Department of Public Health will be notified immediately for guidance on next steps.
7. What about attendance?	Every student, regardless of grade level and whether learning in-person or virtually, will be expected to attend and adhere to the school board-approved academic calendar. Attendance will be recorded. All perfect attendance awards, school monthly attendance awards, exam exemption based on attendance, and all other attendance incentives will be waived for the 2020-21 school year.

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<p>8.What if I do not feel comfortable sending my child back to school?</p>	<p>Parents should review the district's enhanced safety guidelines which are aligned to the recommendations made based on "Georgia's Path to Recovery for K-12 Schools". Parents should select Option #1 or Option #2 outlined in the July 10, 2020 district update and complete the Commitment Form no later than July 24, 2020 if selecting Option #2. Parents will be provided additional information for online learning once details are finalized.</p>
<p>9.What will online learning for K-5 look like?</p>	<p>There will be a combination of both live and recorded lessons and independent work. The district is working to finalize plans for K-5. The final guidelines will be shared shortly after July 24.</p>
<p>10.Will parents be notified if their student was exposed to COVID-19 at school?</p>	<p>In the event of a positive COVID-19 test result in any school/facility, the Director of Youth Health Service will reach out to the Department of Public Health for guidance and next steps. The district will follow HIPPA and FERPA guidelines.</p>
<p>11.What if my child has a fever in excess of 100.4?</p>	<p>Parents should keep their child(ren) at home if they are ill. Any student and staff member with a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection should not be present at school.</p>
<p>12.If I select the online learning option for my child, will meals be delivered?</p>	<p>No. There will be a curbside service offered to parents to pick-up meals. Please contact Mrs. Linda Byrd in the Nutrition Department for more information.</p>
<p>13.If I select online learning options for my child, will the district provide a device?</p>	<p>All K-12 students will have an opportunity to check out a school-issued iPad. Insurance on these devices will be recommended and can be purchased upon receipt.</p>
<p>14. If I have more than one child, do I have to select the same learning option for my children?</p>	<p>No, parents should select the option that works best for each individual student.</p>
<p>15.Will after school be available for elementary?</p>	<p>Yes, YMCA is the district's after school provider. Details will be provided by the school.</p>
<p>16.If my child does online learning, will they be allowed to participate in after school extracurricular activities?</p>	<p>The system plans to allow those students who select online learning to have access to extracurricular activities. However, the details are school specific and will be shared by each school. Athletic programs will follow guidance from the Georgia High School Association (GHSA).</p>
<p>17.What happens if my child is attending school face-to-face, gets sick and has to stay home for an extended time?</p>	<p>The student will be allowed to complete his/her lessons through Schoology.</p>
<p>18.Can I walk my pre-k, kindergarten, or 1st grade student into the building on the first day of school? (Applies to August 7 and 10)</p>	<p>Yes, as long as the parent agrees to enter and exit the building at times specified by the school and drop the child off at the classroom door. Parents are encouraged to wear masks.</p>
<p>19.What about Open House?</p>	<p>Schools will not hold traditional Open Houses. Each school will make plans and communicate with parents. Virtual meetings or phone calls with teachers will also be an option. School plans shared with parents on July 20, 2020.</p>

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<p>20. Will my child have recess?</p>	<p>Outdoor play is essential for elementary students. Therefore, schools will stagger the number of classes at recess at any given time and will spread out classes on the playground.</p>
<p>21. If my child has an IEP, can I select the online learning option?</p>	<p>The district remains committed to providing students eligible for special education services with an individualized education program (IEP) that opt for remote/virtual learning. Because online learning may affect how special education and related services are provided, each student's IEP team will work to ensure that the student receives services to the most possible extent.</p>
<p>22. If the number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise, could the district return to 100% online learning?</p>	<p>Yes, if the Governor or public health officials call for school closures, the district could move all students to an online format. If that occurs, the district will share guidelines and plans with parents.</p>
<p>23. Will the school system require all students and staff to be tested for COVID-19 before schools reopen?</p>	<p>The health department does not recommend widespread testing before the start of the new school year.</p>
<p>24. Why are schools opening?</p>	<p>Dawson County Schools is planning to open for students on August 7, following the guidance from the Ga. Department of Education and the Ga. Department of Public Health listed in "Georgia's Path to Recovery for K-12 Schools." Information is changing on a daily basis. Any updates to the district's reopening plan will be communicated to parents.</p>
<p>25. Can students bring book bags? Will they get lockers?</p>	<p>Schools will allow book bags. Elementary schools will encourage students to use the same cubby for storage. Lockers will not be assigned. Contact your child's principal with specific questions.</p>
<p>26. Are you contact tracing?</p>	<p>Dawson County Schools will work under the direction of the Georgia Department of Health to fulfill all contact tracing requirements.</p>
<p>27. Will visitors be allowed?</p>	<p>Outside visitors will be limited. Visitors must call the front office before entering and be screened for symptoms. Contact your child's school for specific questions.</p>
<p>28. Was a hybrid model considered?</p>	<p>Yes, the district looked at all options and various school schedules to serve students on hybrid and decided that both an in-school and on-line option would be better to serve the needs of students and families. Should the county's situation change, all options will be revisited.</p>
<p>29. If I want my child to wear a mask, will the district provide one?</p>	<p>Students may bring masks/face coverings from home if desired. If a parent prefers their child wear a mask and cannot provide one, the parent should contact the school for assistance.</p>
<p>30. Do the schools have UV sanitizers/ ion sanitizers/ GPS sanitizers in the HVAC systems?</p>	<p>No</p>

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<p>31. When and who cleans rooms who provides cleaning items?</p>	<p>Classrooms will be sanitized each day at the end of the day by the custodial staff. Teachers will have a spray bottle of sanitizer in their classroom as well as a bottle of hand sanitizer. The Maintenance and Operations Department will provide the disinfecting items.</p>
<p>32. With more parents driving children to school, is the district concern about carpool lines being long?</p>	<p>The district anticipates a higher number of car riders. The district's Safety Coordinator is working with local officials and school administrators to address the concern. As in normal practice, the district will evaluate the car pool line at each school the first few days of school and make adjustments as needed.</p>
<p>33. Will my child be subject to temperature screening on bus or when entering the school?</p>	<p>Mass and random temperature checks will not be implemented. The district will seek help from parents to monitor the temperature of their children. Teachers and staff will be requested to self-monitor. Any student or staff member who shows signs of illness will be checked for symptoms, including checking the temperature in the nurse's office.</p>
<p>34. Why are bus drivers required to wear masks?</p>	<p>The district is following the guidance required by the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Department of Public Health.</p>
<p>35. Why is the district allowing sports to practice?</p>	<p>The district is allowing students to participate in sports based on the Georgia High School Association's guidelines.</p>
<p>36. What is my child's teacher has COVID?</p>	<p>The district will follow reporting and contact tracing guidelines provided by the Georgia Department of Public Health. Students and staff members who have come in contact with a positive COVID case will be notified following HIPPA and FERPA regulations.</p>
<p>37. How were guidelines developed?</p>	<p>The district developed the reopening plan based on the recommended guidelines from the Georgia's Path to Recovery for K-12 schools developed by the Georgia Department of Public Health and the Georgia Department of Education.</p>
<p>38. What if my child has a cough and not COVID? Will school test for COVID?</p>	<p>School nurses are licensed and certified to assess symptoms and determine if follow-up is needed, not to diagnose illnesses. The school system will not do COVID testing.</p>
<p>39. What if my child is exposed? When is room cleaned?</p>	<p>Parents will be notified if there is a positive case. The district will follow HIPPA and FERPA guidelines and will follow the Department of Public Health's guidance for relocating classes and disinfecting the impacted area.</p>
<p>40. Does the district have a pandemic plan?</p>	<p>Yes, the plan was developed in collaboration with our Safe Schools Coordinator and Director of Youth Health Services.</p>
<p>41. Will my child be sent home if he/she has a fever?</p>	<p>Students will be sent home based on the assessment of the school nurse. Students having a fever of 100.4 or higher should not be at school. The nurse will contact parent and provide guidance.</p>
<p>42. What if a child is positive, will all kids be tested?</p>	<p>If a student tests positive, the school will contact the Department of Public Health and follow the guidance provided. In order to return to school, students must meet the return to school criteria established by the Department of Public Health. Students in the impacted class will not be required to be tested.</p>

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<p>43. Will the school give a daily COVID report and will it be public knowledge?</p>	<p>Community spread data is shared by the Georgia Department of Public Health. In the event of a positive COVID-19 test result in any school/facility, the Director of Youth Health Service will reach out to the Department of Public Health for guidance and next steps. The district will follow HIPPA and FERPA guidelines when notifying parents of exposure.</p>
<p>44. Will kids be given more time to wash hands?</p>	<p>Yes, additional time will be given to students to wash their hands with soap and water during the school day. Younger grades will be encouraged to use soap and water frequently. Also, hand sanitizer will be provided in all classrooms.</p>
<p>45. Where do you get subs if a teacher has COVID and what if the teacher has COVID?</p>	<p>Dawson County Schools utilizes an outside service to provide substitute teachers. They are aware needs will be higher in FY21 and have always provided a high fill rate. The district will follow the guidelines from the Georgia Department of Public Health if a teacher test positive for COVID 19.</p>
<p>46. If I select the online option, what happens after the first nine week or 18 weeks of school?</p>	<p>The district plans to offer the online option for the 2020-2021 school year.</p>
<p>47. Why is there a nine week commitment for k-5 and a semester commitment for 6-12?</p>	<p>The time commitments are to ensure that no gaps in learning occur and to allow the district to allocate staff effectively to serve students. The courses provided through Edgenuity for 6th-12th grades are 18 week courses. If parents request to switch to face-to-face after the commitment period, they will be able to do so. If health concerns exists that require a change from face-to-face to online learning prior to the nine weeks/18 weeks ending, parents can make a request to the school.</p>
<p>48. I would like to know more about the online options before making a decision.</p>	<p>The district is working to finalize online learning options, which are significantly dependent on the number of students who sign-up. The final guidelines for online learning will be shared shortly after July 24. If you are considering the online option, go ahead and submit the commitment form. The district will allow parents an opportunity to switch to face-to-face before school starts after reviewing the final guidelines for the online options.</p>
<p>49. What if I submitted a question and do not see a response on the FAQ?</p>	<p>The district is working to contact every parent who submitted questions directly. Many of the questions submitted are specific to individual children or family situations. If you haven't received a response, you will in the next few days. If you submitted questions about your child's schedule for online, course offerings online, and gifted services for the online option, general guidance will be addressed in the online learning guidelines that will be shared shortly after July 24. After that, you will be able to contact your child's school to receive help with specific scheduling questions. All students who select the online option will have a teacher or counselor assigned to them for support.</p>
<p>50. I have additional questions, what do I do?</p>	<p>The district will leave the form open for parents to submit questions/feedback for the next two weeks. If any updates are made to the reopening information, they will be communicated on the website, social media, and via email to parents.</p>