

FAQs – Reopening Plan  
(Revised 7-24-20)

1. Do Indiana public schools have to offer onsite instruction for the 20/21 school year?

Per Governor's Holcomb's executive order, schools are allowed to reopen on July 1, 2020. Local school districts are now mandated to determine the manner of reopening and method of delivering instruction, but the state of Indiana currently requires 180 days of instruction with 5 hours of daily instruction for elementary students and 6 hours of daily instruction for secondary students. The WLCSC School Board and administration are making every effort to provide high quality instruction and to support and consider the needs of our students. Data is being collected to determine the viability of options for instruction for the 2020-21 school year. Onsite instruction will be provided for those students/parents who choose onsite instruction. Guidance for schools regarding reopening considerations is provided in the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE) IN-CLASS document which is updated from time to time.

2. Why did the West Lafayette Community School Corporation (WLCSC) release its plan on July 8 with the expectation that the plan may change?

There are many unknowns regarding the reopening of school. Since Governor Holcomb's announcement on June 5 that all Indiana public schools will reopen this fall, the administration, teachers and staff members have been working on a reopening plan in consultation with the Tippecanoe County Health Department officials and selected parents, while collaborating with Tippecanoe School Corporation and Lafayette School Corporation superintendents. The WLCSC administration needs the time to begin implementation for onsite instruction. Based on the input received at the July 8, 2020 School Board meeting, the administration now has some time to take that input and consider how the plan can be improved based upon available resources. Yet, there might be some additional mandates or requirements that will come from the Indiana Department of Education or from the Governor's office.

3. What are the safety protocols that are being put into place to keep students and staff members safe?

Based upon recommendations by the CDC, the IDOE, and the Tippecanoe County Health Department, the WLCSC administration, teachers, and staff members will teach and encourage social distancing protocols. These protocols will look different at each school based upon age of students, the square footage of classrooms and hallways, and the type of school schedule being implemented.

WLCSC has requested a supply of cloth masks from the IDOE. According to the IDOE, masks will be delivered to WLCSC prior to the first day of school. The IDOE is providing at least 1 cloth mask per student based upon 2019-20 enrollment

numbers. These masks will be used for students who cannot get a mask or come to school without a mask.

Since social distancing is limited on school buses, students riding the school bus will be required to wear a cloth mask. Bus drivers will have on hand a limited supply of disposable masks for students to use. However, parents/students should not count on disposable masks being available every day. Also, at each school, the administration, teachers, and staff members will implement procedures for breakfast, lunch, bathroom breaks, recess, hallways and entering/leaving each school to provide as much social distancing as possible.

Below is a list of specific social distancing and safety protocols that are being implemented:

- A. Stagger times for students to enter/exit school;
- B. Discontinue locker room use for students during the first nine weeks;
- C. Allow longer passing periods at the Jr/Sr HS, and at WLES and WLIS set times for students to wash their hands;
- D. Setup classrooms with more distance between students when possible;
- E. Create hallway traffic flows and stagger times when students are in the hallways;
- F. Consider classes outside when possible, especially with large group instruction;
- G. Close down school water fountains except for filling water bottles at approved water bottle stations; and
- H. Institute required seating charts so information can be shared with the IDOE and the Tippecanoe County Health department officials when requested.

(This is not an all-inclusive list. Each school's administration, teachers, and staff members will build upon the above protocols.)

4. Are students and staff required to wear a mask?

Students in grades 3-12 will be required to wear a mask during the instructional day when social distancing is not possible. Students in grades K-2 will be required to have a mask with them at all times and there will be times when the students will be required to wear their mask when social distancing is not possible. Specific protocols will be developed by each teacher and will be supported by the administration. Also, there will be specific instances when masks will be required when social distancing may not be possible like Choir. All employees will be required to wear a mask during the instructional day. All visitors will be required to wear a mask upon entering a WLCSC facility during the instructional day. In some cases, there may be a medical reason that students, staff or visitors cannot wear a mask. There will be times when Masks will be allowed to be removed during the day as when a staff member is not around others, breakfast, lunch and other times deemed necessary. WLCSC will follow any mandate issued by local/state

health departments, the Indiana Department of Education and/or the Governor's office.

5. Why doesn't the school district alternate student days the entire school year to decrease density?

Currently, there are no waivers from the IDOE for the 180 day student instructional calendar and for the five-hour instructional day at the elementary/intermediate schools, and six-hour instructional day at the Jr/Sr High School. Therefore, WLCSC will follow the IDOE requirements for those parents who want full-time onsite instruction. This may evolve depending on how the start of school progresses.

6. Will a virtual/continuous learning option be provided for students who have a qualifying medical/physical condition or a home-life situation that would prevent them from attending school?

Yes, per the requirements of reopening school, WLCSC is required to provide a virtual/continuous learning option for these students who have a doctor's note stating that they should not be in school during this time. For privacy reasons, the doctor does not need to state the condition.

7. Will a full-time eLearning option be available for parents who do not want to send their children to school who do not have a qualifying medical/physical condition or a home-life situation?

Yes, WLCSC will offer a full-time eLearning option.

8. Will students who are participating in eLearning be allowed to participate in choir, band, orchestra, theater, clubs, and athletics?

Yes, so long as the teacher, coach or sponsor approves the student's participation and the student is free of illness or symptoms. The student must follow all safety protocols instituted and parents must provide transportation.

9. Are there any waivers of public school requirements?

At this time, the IDOE has stated that all public schools must be in attendance for 180 days and provide elementary/intermediate students with five hours of instruction per day and secondary students with six hours of instruction per day. These requirements are currently in place for those who want full-time onsite instruction and for those who want full-time eLearning options. If at some future point, should WLCSC have the staffing available for any hybrid approach, these requirements must be followed as well.

10. Can WLCSC's reopening plan change?

Yes, the reopening plan can change and will if additional mandates or requirements are issued by the IDOE and/or the Governor's office. Also, it is possible there will be federal mandates as well like Congress passing legislation giving immunity to public school teachers, administrators and staff members during this time.

11. When will parents know about the final options available for the 20/21 school year?

Online student registration begins July 15. During this process, parents/students can select which do they prefer, full-time onsite or full-time online instruction. By July 24 the administration plans to make known the available learning options for the 20/21 school year pending School Board approval. By July 29, all parents who are interested in fulltime onsite vs online instruction should indicate such.

12. Can parents withdraw their child after registration and/or after school starts?

Yes, parents can withdraw their child at any time. Per Indiana Code, children must be attending school. Therefore, parents can choose to transfer to another school district if the accepting school district approves the transfer, can home-school their child by contacting the Indiana Department of Education, or can select an online option as approved by the Indiana Department of Education.

13. Did WLCSC apply for the CARES act money?

Yes, WLCSC applied for the CARES act money and received \$143,668.40. This money is being utilized for cleaning and sanitation supplies, health and safety supplies for school nurses, PPE, online technology support, and to assist with salaries as is necessary to expand instructional offerings.

14. How will buildings be cleaned and verified?

Custodial/maintenance staff will be implementing cleaning protocols. Each school building will follow CDC protocols as resources are made available. Parents who need more information about their schools' cleaning protocols can contact their child's individual school.

15. Do students need a legal waiver at the beginning of school?

Not at this time. This might change pending new information and/or requirements received.

16. How will the plan for eLearning adjust if temporary shutdowns occur?

If schools are required to temporarily close, then WLCSC staff will move from onsite instruction to eLearning during the closure.

17. When the Tippecanoe County Department of Health or the Indiana State Department of Health indicates a positive test, what is the plan for the school district in terms of temporary or long-term closure?

These decisions will be made on a case by case basis. As is stated in the reopening plan, the school district will follow the Tippecanoe County Department of Health and/or the Indiana State Department of Health officials' guidance. In some cases, a classroom or a school may temporarily close. In some cases, the entire school district may temporarily close. Through tracing protocols, individuals who need to be quarantined will be contacted. As with any immunization, vaccine, or other school entry requirement, parents will be advised what they need to do for their child.

18. How will the schools work to address the social-emotional and psychological needs of students and staff related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Every school in our district is fortunate to have a registered nurse and certified school counselors to support the needs of our students and staff. The Tippecanoe County school districts typically share additional student support resources, including our contracted service providers through organizations such as GLASS (Greater Lafayette Area Special Services). The administration will continue to work with other school districts and community resources to provide assistance to students and staff as needed.

19. Why didn't WLCSC survey parents prior to adopting this plan?

The administration and staff had only about three weeks to get the first phase of a plan put together and share it with the School Board for consideration. Several other school districts surveyed their parents prior to approving their respective plans and found that doing their surveys early didn't give them the most accurate data they needed. Therefore, the administration took the approach of using the online student registration to survey parents about their learning option preferences. This information will be timelier and should ensure a greater number of accurate responses.

20. Are there any plans to reduce in force teachers/staff?

As with any school district, if fewer students are enrolled, then staffing needs will change. WLCSC wants to ensure that all teachers and staff remain employed during this time so long as the number of students attending WLCSC, either onsite or

online, remain somewhat constant and/or the state does not cut public school budgets in the coming months.

21. Who will be teaching online eLearning and the Virtual/Continuous Learning options for students who have a medical/home-life qualifying event?

After registration is completed, the administration, guidance counselors, and special education director will begin developing onsite instruction schedules, eLearning schedules, and Virtual//Continuous Learning schedules. It is the intent of the administration to incorporate WLCSC teachers to provide this instruction based upon the number of students enrolled for onsite vs. online. Schedules should be developed and available sometime during the week of August 3. Also, in the revised reopening plan, parents/students will have the opportunity during the first two weeks of school to move between onsite vs. online instruction. More information will be provided when student registration is completed and after student schedules are developed.

22. Who can I contact if I have more questions?

If you have questions specific to your child's situation, you should contact your child's school office. Office staff will be returning the week of July 20.

West Lafayette Elementary School: 765/464-3212

West Lafayette Intermediate School: 765/746-0500

West Lafayette Jr/Sr High School: 765/746-0400

WLCSC administrators, teachers and staff members want only the best for our students. We will continue to strive for a learning environment that is as safe and healthy as possible. This is an evolving situation and answers to the above questions may be revised from time to time.

If you need further information, please call Central Office at 765/269-4002.