

Houston County Schools



On The Path to Recovery

404 West Washington Street

Dothan, Alabama 36301

334-792-8331

HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND SUPERVISORS

Ashford Elementary School	334-899-3458	Sharon LeRoy, Principal
Ashford Middle School	334-899-5411	Jarod Andrews, Principal
Ashford High School	334-899-5411	Donnie Chambers, Principal
Cottonwood Elementary School	334-691-2587	Paul Strange, Principal
Cottonwood High School	334-691-2587	Darren Stewart, Principal
Houston County High School	334-696-2221	Lisa Towns, Principal
Rehobeth Elementary School	334-677-3838	Dusty McKinley, Principal
Rehobeth Middle School	334-677-5153	Mark Fairris, Principal
Rehobeth High School	334-677-7002	Mike Linder, Principal
Webb Elementary School	334-792-5744	Jodie Shelley, Principal
Wicksburg Elementary School	334-692-5549	Jason Blissett, Principal
Wicksburg High School	334-692-5549	Joshua Robertson, Principal
Alternative School	334-671-9295	Scott Stephens, Principal
Houston County Career Academy	334-899-3308	Chris Kennedy, Director
Houston County Virtual Academy/HOPE	334-702-4168	Delbert Bradley, Principal
Department Supervisors		
Brandy White	334-792-8331	Superintendent
Nicole Corbin		Superintendent Secretary
Bob Blalock		Technology/Networking Services
Judy Thomas		Human Resources/Certification
Cas Haddock		Assessments/Truancy & Accountability

Misty Freeman		Special Education/504/RTI/Homebound
Cheryl Smith		Secondary Curriculum & Instruction
Greg Yance		Elementary Curriculum & Instruction
Derrick Morris		Federal Programs/EL/HomeSchool
Kerry Bedsole		Chief School Finance Officer
Marie Payne		Child Nutrition Program
Dominick Curran		Maintenance
Steve Dasinger		Transportation
BOARD MEMBERS		
~Marty Collins ~Scott Long	~Gary Cox ~Scott Thomas	~David Hollinger ~Vince Wade
		~Chris Lasseter

INTRODUCTION

The past year has reminded us that we truly live among heroes who have continued to do their work amid increasingly strenuous circumstances. Knowing that we still have a challenge ahead, our school system is dedicated to the students of Houston County. Our schools will provide more than just academics to children and adolescents. In addition to reading, writing, and math, children will learn social and emotional skills, get exercise and build lasting friendships through their educational experiences. Therefore, we have created this plan to aid in navigating our school system where employees, students, and families feel safe and reduce the learning loss from the impact of COVID-19.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Five principles should guide all planning, decision making, and execution of plans for the 2021-2022 school year.

1. We will be transparent. We will share what we know and what we don't know and be clear about what we can control and what is outside of our control.
2. We will be equitable. We will center decisions on what is best for all students, families, and educators.
3. We will listen. We will bring together diverse stakeholders and experts to understand realities on the ground and to provide creative solutions.
4. We will put safety first. We will leverage science, data, and public health leadership to inform the decisions we make.
5. We will be decisive. Given the size and scope of the challenge, we must move deliberately and make tough choices. We may make mistakes but will adapt quickly as variables change.

WELLNESS

*** Houston County Schools will be requiring masks for all Pre-K 12th grade students as well as all employees and all visitors. Masks will be required while inside all buildings on Houston County Schools' campuses. The mask requirement applies to all indoor settings, including schools, school district facilities, and school busses. The updated procedures become effective Thursday, August 26th for the faculty and staff and Friday, August 27th for students until further notice. We will continue to evaluate the data and lift the requirements when we feel that we are at a safer level.**

VISITOR PROCEDURES

To help continue to reduce the risk of COVID exposure to our staff and students, all visitors must have an appointment to meet with an administrator, teacher, and/or staff member.

STUDENT SCREENING AND PROTOCOLS

HOME: Home is the primary point of COVID screening. Families are encouraged to self-report symptoms of illness, which could include fever, new onset of cough, etc. Self-reporting mechanisms should include calling the school and your healthcare provider.

TRANSPORTATION: Buses will continue to be sanitized before and after each route. ***All students that are transported on the bus will be required to wear a face mask.**

SCHOOL: School staff will continue to visually check for symptoms (which may include temperature checks). All screening information will be kept as confidential as possible.

*** GUIDANCE IF COVID POSITIVE**

***Any individual that has tested positive for COVID, vaccinated or not vaccinated, must quarantine for a period of ten (10) days and may return to school when they no longer have COVID-related symptoms.**

GUIDANCE IF EXPOSED TO COVID

***An employee or student that has been exposed to someone that has tested positive for COVID (within three (3) feet for a duration of 15 minutes):**

- **If vaccinated - the individual will self monitor for symptoms**
- **If not vaccinated - the individual will quarantine for ten (10) days.**
- **If the individual that has been exposed begins developing symptoms, they must quarantine for a period of ten (10) days from the onset of symptoms.**
- **If you or an immediate family member has been exposed to the COVID virus, please contact your individual healthcare provider.**

Employees, please do the following:

1. Quarantine yourself in a specific room away from others in your home.
2. Contact the following (in order of priority), let them know you have been exposed to COVID19, and then follow their instructions.
 - a. Your healthcare provider
 - b. HCS HR department or designated personnel
 - c. Your supervisor (Your supervisor will work with HR to determine the appropriate next steps.)

Parents/Guardians, please do the following:

1. Quarantine your child in a specific room away from others in your home.
2. Contact the following (in order of priority), let them know your child has been exposed to COVID19, then follow their instructions.
 - a. Your healthcare provider
 - b. School Nurse
 - c. Teacher

HEALTH PROTOCOL FOR EMPLOYEES & STUDENTS

Social distancing is an effective way to prevent any potential infection. Maintaining physical distance will not always be practical inside a school setting, however, we will continue to monitor students for any medical symptoms. Face masks will be ***required** for students and staff members. Visitors and service providers will be ***required** to wear a face mask when present in the school buildings. Gloves will continue to be used by school nurses, custodians and food service workers.

Please continue to practice the following hygiene procedures:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- *** Students, ages twelve (12) years and older, are eligible to take the vaccine, COVID vaccinations are available at several of the local pharmacies and hospitals.**

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

The campus counselors will provide resources for parents and teachers. Counselors will continue to work with students individually or in small groups to address any wellbeing needs. The counselors will allow and encourage feedback on how to develop a stronger outreach program and support their needs. To address students' specific social-emotional needs, counselors will initiate the S4 (School-Based Mental Health) referral process for parents/students to access individualized therapeutic services.

FACILITIES

CLASSROOMS

Employees are expected to disinfect their own personal workspace (teacher desk, phone, etc.) throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces. All teachers and students are expected to wipe down/disinfect their own classrooms, light switches, door knobs and frequently touched surfaces on a daily basis. The teacher will be given spray bottles and a towel with a microfiber pad to wipe down surfaces daily and as needed.

SHARED WORKSPACES/OFFICES

Employees are expected to disinfect their own workspace throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces. Hand sanitizer will be provided throughout the workplace and in common areas. Cleaning sprays and wipes are also available to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. The HCS Custodial Team will clean all workspaces at their designated cleaning time unless extenuating circumstances arise that require more frequent cleaning. Custodians are expected to sanitize and wipe down frequently touched surfaces throughout the day in the common areas (i.e.: exterior door knobs, door facings, snack areas, bathroom faucets and lavatories, etc.). Secretary/Main Office Staff have Plexiglas partitions installed on their desk to assist with direct contact from visitors, parents, and students.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM (CNP)

Child Nutrition employees will wear food safe disposable gloves during meal service times. Kitchen preparation areas will be cleaned between prep jobs which is standard procedure. All employees will ensure that the tables and buffet lines are kept clean and sanitized between groups.

TECHNOLOGY, INSTRUCTION, & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

TECHNOLOGY

The Houston County Schools Technology Department will support all technology learning. Through internet access, instructional materials can be delivered to the children. The Technology Department will build our current knowledge with articles to help with resolving common issues, provide How-To guides, and best practice recommendations relative to technology. The Media Specialists and Technology Specialists at HCS will post updates and information that is relative and current throughout the year to school websites and/or www.hcboe.us. The Technology Department has purchased and developed a plan to maintain and deploy devices to the schools. HCS has received 4,500 devices with more being delivered in the near future. These devices will be for student use at the schools and will be provided to the virtual students at the start of the 2021-2022 school year. In addition to these devices, the district has developed an implementation team of technology integration specialists to train and assist administrators, teachers, and students with the use of all digital resources.

INSTRUCTION

Houston County Schools has developed a plan to recover the learning loss of our students due to the irregularity of school during the COVID pandemic the past couple years. Our intent is to regain skills our students have not mastered. In this attempt, our system will provide additional on-site tutors to all schools. These tutors will provide individual and/or small group instruction to fill learning gaps in all grade levels. Additionally, a digital intervention/enrichment program that is customized to each individual student will be implemented. In an effort to meet student's needs, additional classroom teachers will be provided to reduce class sizes. Teachers will also receive job embedded training and professional development to assist with implementation of new programs and instructional strategies to better serve the students of Houston County.

INSTRUCTIONAL OPTIONS FOR THE 2021-2022

Houston County Schools will provide the two options for parents/students for the 2021-2022 school year.

Traditional

- Students attend classes in a traditional, on campus setting 5 days per week.
- Teacher provides instruction
- Facial coverings for staff and students will be ***required**
- Students will utilize electronics for communication and assignments. This will prepare students to be successful in college and/or future careers. It will also prepare students in the event their instruction expectantly transitions to remote learning.
- Make every effort to follow the CDC guidelines to keep our students and staff safe.

Virtual/Online

- Students complete courses “remotely”. Elementary students will have a check-in schedule where they will meet virtually face-to-face with their teacher for instruction and to complete assignments. Middle and High school students will complete their courses through Edgenuity, an online learning platform. It is essential for virtual students to have assistance from parents/guardians.
- Students will follow a regular weekly schedule where they will be given assignments. The students will be expected to complete all assignments on time.
- Elementary students and teachers will have regular check-in times.
- Teachers will monitor/facilitate student participation in activities, grade assignments and assessments, and provide timely feedback.
- Students will be allowed to participate in dual enrollment courses, career academy courses, band, athletic P.E., extracurricular activities, and graduation ceremonies at their zoned school.
- Students will be required to attend their zoned school or the Houston County Career Academy for scheduled exams and state-mandated assessments.

ATHLETICS & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Houston County Schools is implementing safe and healthy practices for all athletic and extracurricular activities. Schools will implement strategies adopted by the Alabama High School Athletic Association that will help provide the safest environment for our student athletes. These practices are subject to change, but currently include the following:

PHYSICAL STANDARDS

- Changed parent drop-off and pick-up processes to limit contact and building access
- Ensure school-sponsored extracurricular activities, including athletics and band, adhere to established safety and hygiene protocols.
- Athletes will be given the option of providing their own personal water bottles. Items of this nature should not be shared.
- Symptom monitoring will be required.
- Requirement for sick students and staff to stay home.
- Provision of an adequate number of thermometers to monitor students when necessary.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Ensure healthy personal hygiene practices.
- Establish hand hygiene stations at facility entrances.
- In weight rooms, all surfaces including, but not limited to, door handles, sinks, faucets, knobs, toilets, tables, soap dispensers, locker handles etc., will be cleaned and sanitized.

COMMUNICATION

- Coaches/Athletic Director will communicate with the Lead Nurse, Health Department, and visiting municipal officials to identify any local requirements that may be imposed on our players, coaches or fans while visiting another campus for competitions.

SCHOOL WILL BEGIN FRIDAY, AUGUST 8, 2021 AS PER OUR BOARD APPROVED CALENDAR. TEACHERS WILL RETURN AUGUST 2, 2021.

* Updated August 28,2021