



CARTERSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS REOPENING PLAN FAQs

Please review our list of Frequently Asked Questions developed in preparation for the reopening of CCS schools on Aug. 18, 2020. This list was initially published on July 17, 2020 and will be continuously updated as needed; any updates will be noted by date.

PART ONE: TRADITIONAL OPTION PROTOCOLS

SECTION I: MAKING A DECISION AND GETTING STARTED

Can I switch from the Traditional Option to Cartersville Virtual Academy in middle of the semester?

The Cartersville Virtual Academy commitment for students in grades K-5 is by each semester and students in grades 6-12 is for the entire school year. Students will remain in their chosen option, whether Traditional or CVA, for the aforementioned timeframe. The deadline to sign up for CVA is July 24.

How will we start the school year?

We intend to start the school year in a Hybrid Model. Our Hybrid Model will run for three weeks and all students, who have not chosen CVA, will start the Fulltime In-Person Model on Tuesday, September 8. We strongly feel it will be important to slowly and intentionally work our way back into our buildings with new protocols in place with half of our students present at a time. This will allow us to make connections with our students while also closely monitoring the effectiveness of our new procedures.

The Hybrid Model will be done alphabetically to ensure an equitable balance of students physically present in our buildings. Students would come to school on either Tuesday/Wednesday or Thursday/Friday depending on their last name (**A-K on Tuesday/Wednesday and L-Z on Thursday/Friday**) and they would work from home on the other days of the week. For immediate families with students of different last names in the same household, students will attend on the days of the oldest child's last name in the house. Mondays during a Hybrid Schedule will be used for student digital preview activities and staff development and lesson preparation.

What if the Department of Public Health recommends a partial or full closure of our school buildings due to the spread of COVID-19?

If we are operating in the Fulltime In-Person Model and the Department of Public Health recommends limiting the amount of students in our buildings due to the spread of COVID-19, we will transition back into a Hybrid Model.

If the Department of Public Health recommends closing all school buildings due to the spread of COVID-19, students will transition to Digital Learning until we are able open up our buildings again and continue with Fulltime In-Person learning. Students enrolled in CVA will continue with that option.

Will my child's school hold a meet-and-greet, open house, walk-through or orientation event before the first day of school?

Schools will hold in-person, back-to-school events for the following grade levels: Pre-K through 9th grade and all students brand new to Cartersville City Schools. Only the student and one parent/guardian can attend. Schedules for these events will be set to limit the number of people in buildings at the same time. You will receive specific information from your child's principal. We encourage and recommend that everyone attending these events do their best to distance themselves from others by at least six feet and bring a mask to wear when social distancing is not possible.

SECTION II: USE OF FACE MASKS/SHIELDS

What is the policy on masks?

We strongly encourage and expect students to wear masks whenever social distancing is not possible (arrival and dismissal, class change, etc.) in our schools and on our school buses, but, at this time, masks will not be a mandatory requirement for our students. If the Federal or State Government mandates masks be worn, then we intend to follow that mandate and require all students to wear masks.

Will masks be provided for students and/or staff?

A limited number of masks will be available for students and staff who need one. All masks must abide by the dress code. Furthermore, students in grades in 6-12 are only permitted to wear an appropriate, solid-colored mask or one only featuring a Canes logo. Schools may also consider clear masks.

Will teachers and staff be required to wear masks?

We will require that our teachers and staff wear masks whenever social distancing is not possible; and if Federal or State Governments mandate masks.

SECTION III: TEMPERATURE CHECKS AND HYGIENE REQUIREMENTS

Will you take temperatures upon arrival of students or teachers and staff?

We will not be taking temperatures of students and staff. In a respectable partnership, we are asking and expecting all families do a temperature check daily prior to arriving at school or arriving at the bus stop. As we have stated previously, navigating this school year will be a true partnership between schools and families and we will all need to do our part. We will distribute information to all teachers and other staff who work directly with students to assist in identifying students who should be sent to the nurse's clinic for evaluation. The nurse will then take a student's temperature; as is our standard practice. If a student has a fever of 100.4°F or higher, his or her parents will be contacted to immediately pick up the student. Students must not come to school if they have a fever of 100.4°F or higher.

What other symptoms should we be checking before we send our children to school?

If a student is living with and/or in regular close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, they must not come to school until that person is well and the quarantine period ends. If a student has traveled to a COVID-19 Advisory Area (as designated by the CDC and posted on its website: <https://www.cdc.gov>) within the past 14 days, they must not come to school until that quarantine

period ends. If a student has a cough, shortness of breath or recent changes in taste and/or smell, we recommend you contact your doctor's office for guidance before sending your child to school.

How will you help/encourage my child to practice good hygiene?

All classrooms have been provided with hand sanitizer that is safe for use on hands. Hand sanitizer donations are always appreciated but they are never expected. We will distribute information to all teachers and other staff who work directly with students to assist them in ensuring students follow best practices to avoid the spread of COVID-19. This includes allowing students time to wash their hands frequently, especially before eating. This also includes encouraging children to use provided hand sanitizer and cover their mouth with a tissue or arm when coughing or sneezing.

SECTION IV: SCHOOL CLEANING PROVISIONS

What extra steps will you take to keep schools clean?

Our custodial provider, Service Solutions, increased its disinfection procedures in the days prior to our closures in March, and deep cleaned all schools during the closure. When our schools reopen, Service Solutions will continue to keep staffing levels higher than usual and focus on frequent disinfection of high-touch areas. This cleaning will include frequent daytime wipe-downs of high-touch surfaces and nightly wipe-downs of student desktops. Hospital-grade, EPA-registered disinfectants and electrostatic sprayers will be used.

Will outside groups like churches or events like family reunions be permitted to rent CCS facilities?

No. At this time our Facility Use Application process, which is utilized for renting facilities, will not be permissible for indoor facility requests. We will continue to evaluate this after the first nine weeks of the school year and throughout the school year.

SECTION V: CLASSROOM PROVISIONS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

Will students share supplies or keep their own?

Students will be encouraged to use their own supplies as much as possible. Some supplies, such as a classroom set of tools or equipment like iPads and laptops, will continue to be shared, and will be sanitized as is possible and appropriate.

When will school supply lists be posted?

School supply lists are posted on individual school websites.

What social-distancing measures will you have in place in classrooms?

When possible, we will move desks/tables/chairs apart and use other common-sense practices. Due to space constraints as well as the nature of teaching and learning, we will not be able to consistently maintain six feet of distance between students or six feet of distance between students and teachers or other staff who work with students. Teachers will be asked to regularly assess their classroom space to maximize as much social distancing as possible. The CCS Transportation Department may implement loading and unloading protocols to help minimize risks.

Will students still change classes?

We will be significantly limiting classroom changes at the elementary level. We are also looking at various ways to keep a safe flow of traffic in our hallways during class changes for grades 6-12.

SECTION VI: STUDENT TRANSPORTATION AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

What extra steps will you take to keep buses clean?

School bus high-touch areas will be disinfected between routes; all bus drivers will be provided with a sanitizer spray, that is safe for use on hands, to keep on board. Additionally, all buses will be thoroughly cleaned daily, and buses will be disinfected weekly using a professional fogging system.

What social-distancing measures will be used on school buses?

While we will not be able to consistently maintain six feet of distance between students, we will use assigned seating to improve safety, as well as loading and unloading efficiencies.

Are there specific drop-off procedures for car riders?

Individual schools will communicate any school-specific requirements but we ask that all parents adhere to specific drop-off times and directions provided by the schools.

SECTION VII: SCHOOL MEALS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

Where will my child eat meals while at schools?

At this time, all students will eat in their classrooms. We will continue to evaluate this after the first nine weeks and throughout the school year. Your child's school will share specific plans with you regarding meal procedures.

How do I know eating school meals is safe for my child?

In addition to our regular high food safety standards we are doing many things to help prevent virus spread: meals will be eaten in the classrooms, all nutrition staff will wear masks and gloves and be screened for temperature/risk factors daily, and food items and cutlery will be packaged and served by a school nutrition employee. Additionally, we have altered our point of sale procedures so students will not use a pin pad (e.g. we will use homeroom rosters or ID cards and a scanner) – the specific point-of-sale procedures will vary by school. Our kitchens, cafeterias, carts, and other high-touch areas will be cleaned/sanitized as often as possible.

Will I be permitted to eat breakfast or lunch with my child at school?

We will not permit guests (parents, grandparents, etc.) in the cafeteria during the first nine weeks of the school year. This practice will be revisited prior to the start of the second nine weeks.

Will water fountains be in use?

Water fountains will not be in use at CPS but water will be available to CPS students in their individual classrooms. Our other schools are exploring options to change out our water fountains to allow the safe filling of water bottles. Water bottles brought from home should fall within student handbook guidelines.

VII. CLASSROOM PROVISIONS, SCHOOL EVENTS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

Will my child still have larger classes like specials (i.e., art, music, PE), connections and electives?

We will continue to offer all of these classes. When possible, we will move desks apart and use other common-sense practices. Due to space constraints as well as the nature of teaching and learning, we will not be able to consistently maintain six feet of distance between students or six feet of distance between students and teachers or other staff who work with students. Teachers will be encouraged to regularly assess teaching strategies to minimize physical contact and maximize social distancing.

Will there be recess at CPS and CES?

Cartersville Primary and Elementary schools will have the ability to schedule recess. Modifications in the amount of time and availability of equipment on the playgrounds may be made to encourage health and safety. The number of students on a playground and in specific outdoor areas should be smaller in number than in the past. Regular cleaning will take place.

Will there still be special events like assemblies and pep rallies?

We will not hold any large indoor assemblies during the first nine weeks of school. This will be revisited prior to the start of the second nine weeks.

Will the After School Program still be offered?

Yes – we will continue to offer this optional program for a fee to our families who need childcare for CPS, CES and CMS students, and we will follow common-sense practices for social distancing. Students can only attend ASP if present in school that day.

Will my school offer after-school clubs, extra-curricular activities and athletics?

Yes – we will continue to offer these optional programs, and we will follow common-sense practices for social distancing. We will follow all Georgia High Schools Association guidance for the athletics and extra-curricular programs it oversees.

Will there be athletic events this year?

The Georgia High Schools Association will determine whether these will be permitted and will issue its own requirements. Upon review, Cartersville City Schools may decide to incorporate additional requirements/measures for safety.

Will field trips be possible?

We will not sponsor any class field trips during the first nine weeks of school. This will be revisited prior to the start of the second nine weeks. The only exception to this will be travel for high school athletics or other required competitions, which will be allowed in accordance with Georgia High Schools Association guidelines.

Will I be permitted to walk my child inside the building to their classroom?

No. This will not be permitted -- not even on the first day. We know this is a favorite tradition for our families, but it cannot be permitted this year. We will have modified open house opportunities with staggered schedules for our students, those transitioning to a new school, and those who are brand new students to our system. This will allow students who are starting school for the first time and/or starting at a school that is new to them to have the opportunity to see their classroom and main areas

before the first day of school. During the first days of school, we will have school staff stationed by the car rider line and bus lanes to ensure our youngest students arrive to their classrooms safely.

Will I be permitted in the front office to bring my child in late, sign my child out, drop something off for my child, attend an IEP meeting, etc.?

Yes, but before being permitted to transition from the front office into the main building, all visitors must answer a series of health screening questions that will be posted online and posted in the front lobby. All visitors entering the main building must submit to temporal scan. Anyone whose questions indicate potential exposure to COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the building; anyone whose temperature is 100.4 or higher will not be permitted to stay in the building. If you do not meet these requirements and need to pick up your child because he or she is sick, a staff member will come outside to bring you your child. If you know you will not meet these requirements, do not come to the school.

Will volunteers be allowed at school?

Essential volunteers will be allowed, but opportunities will be adjusted and/or limited using common sense to ensure social distancing as much as possible. We appreciate all of our volunteers and want them to stay as safe as our students and employees. Essential visitors are those directly involved in the educational process.

Will my child's school hold a Family Engagement event once school begins so I can learn more about their classes?

Schools will hold Family Engagement events, but the format may be changed to a virtual event or an in-person event that uses schedules limiting the number of visitors to the building at the same time. You will receive specific information from your child's principal when these events may be scheduled.

What will the attendance policy be for this school year?

The attendance policy will remain unchanged. Students who are out due to illness will continue to have the opportunity to make up work without academic penalty. Students who are confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 and must quarantine, and students who have been directly exposed to COVID-19 and must quarantine will be granted "Excused Absences."

Will there be attendance awards this school year?

No attendance awards will be permitted in any Cartersville City Schools for the 2020-21 School Year; e.g., "Perfect Attendance," Exam Exemptions.

VIII. Potential COVID-19 Exposures at School

If my child starts running a fever at school, what will happen?

Your child will be taken to the nurse's clinic; you will be contacted so you can immediately pick your child up from school.

What are the DPH Guidelines regarding quarantine?

- A person who needs to be quarantined because of exposure (< 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) now is to be quarantined for ten (10) days from the exposure instead of 14. They

have the option of reducing it to seven (7) days IF they can produce a negative test result that was taken within 48 hours of returning after the 7 days AND they are symptom free.

- Testing needs to occur within 48 hours of their eligibility to return. Therefore, testing on day 6-7 will suffice. A written test result is necessary to return along with being symptom free.
- After the 10 days of quarantining, no test result is necessary to return; only being symptom free.
- Students/staff/parents should still watch for symptoms for the 14-day period after exposure.
- The isolation period of ten (10) days for testing positive for COVID-19 has NOT changed. It is still at least 10 days isolation if you are positive. The person also needs to be symptom free upon returning beginning day 11 or thereafter.
- Contact tracing guidance has not changed...so, still less than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes is the guideline.
- The current guidelines will be effective for those students or employees currently being quarantined. Therefore, schools may need to contact those individuals to tell them the new CDC applicable guidance.

What happens if a student or employee at my child's school tests positive for COVID-19? Will I be notified if/when this happens?

- School nurses or a school administrator will immediately contact DPH upon confirmation or a potential exposure of a COVID-19 case for guidance and to begin contact tracing.
- CCS will notify affected parents/guardians in the event of a positive COVID-19 case in the classroom.
- Per current DPH guidance, CCS can institute closures at the class, school or district level depending upon student and staff exposures and positive COVID-19 cases with the following options:
 - Target closures within a school (i.e., individual classroom or impacted classrooms);
 - Short term closures; and/or,
 - Extended closures.

**Closures will be addressed in a case-by-case manner.*

If there is a case in my child's classroom, will we all have to quarantine for two weeks? for each case?

The Department of Public Health (DPH) determines when quarantine is necessary on a case-by-case basis. Instructions from DPH on whether quarantine is needed and for how long will be included in the Cartersville City Schools notification by email to all employees at that school and the parents of all students in the affected classroom(s).

How many cases will be the “tipping point” for school closure?

Cartersville City Schools will follow the Department of Public Health’s guidance on when to close a school. When considering quarantines and possible closures, we will look at closing individual classrooms and/or schools before we consider closing CCS.

If I hear of a family or employee who has COVID-19 or has been in contact with someone who has, whom should I notify?

Please contact the Department of Health: <https://dph.georgia.gov/>.

Will families who travel during school breaks be allowed to come back in person without a quarantine period?

If a student has traveled to a COVID-19 Advisory Area (as designated by the CDC and posted on its website: <https://www.cdc.gov>) within the past 14 days, they must not come to school until that quarantine period ends.

PART TWO: CARTERSVILLE VIRTUAL ACADEMY PROTOCOLS

SECTION I: MAKING A DECISION AND GETTING STARTED

Can I switch from the Cartersville Virtual Academy to the Traditional Option in middle of the semester?

The Cartersville Virtual Academy commitment for students in grades K-5 is by each semester and students in grades 6-12 is for the entire school year. Students will remain in their chosen option, whether Traditional or CVA, for the aforementioned timeframe. The deadline to sign up for CVA is July 24.

Will all classes available for Traditional Option also be available through CVA at home?

No. Based on available resources, we know we will not be able to provide all classes in our Traditional course catalog through CVA. Please be advised that some Traditional middle school and high school electives and select academic classes will not be offered through CVA; please review the rules thoroughly before committing to CVA.

Where can I find the details of Cartersville Virtual Academy?

Details can be found at cartersvilleschools.org.

SECTION II: PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND ACCESSING SERVICES

Will my child still be allowed to come to school for after-school clubs, extra-curricular activities and athletics?

Yes. If you choose CVA, then you still will be eligible to participate in after-school activities. There will not be special accommodations made for CVA students; however, opportunities and protocols will be the same for all CCS students.

Can my child go on field trips if any are scheduled?

We will not sponsor any class field trips during the first nine weeks of school. This will be revisited prior to the start of the second nine weeks and throughout the school year, as will the opportunity for CVA students to participate.

Can my child use the school media center or counseling services?

Yes. If your child wants to visit the media center, you will be able to email or call the media specialist to make an appointment; there likely will be other students and staff in the media center at the time. If you or your child need a school counselor's assistance, you will be able to email or call the counselor for guidance, and also may, by call or email, request a Microsoft Teams call appointment or an in-person appointment; if you make an in-person appointment, it will be during school hours, and there likely will be other students and staff in the immediate area.

What about school picture days or being included in the yearbook? How will we be included?

Yes. A student can participate in school picture day at the school he or she would regularly attend. No special protocols will be put in place for CVA students; there will be other students and staff in the picture area at the same time.

SECTION III: TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT AND SCHOOL NUTRITION

We don't have a computer. Will Cartersville City Schools provide us with one?

Maybe. Once we have an accurate headcount of the number of students who are signing up for Cartersville Virtual Academy, we will assess how many laptop computers are available to loan, as the majority will be needed for use in schools. Those laptops will be distributed based on the greatest need, as determined by Cartersville City Schools, as supplies last.

If my child qualifies for free or reduced lunch, will meals be provided to us?

Yes. Cartersville City Schools will have to-go meals available to students enrolled in CVA. A plan for distribution/pick up is being developed and will be shared as soon as possible.