

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM'S RE-ENTRY PLAN

The chart below sets forth a plan for a return to an in-person learning model. In an effort to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff, we have elected to implement a staggered, gradual return to in-person learning (for those who signed up for the in-person learning model initially.) It is important to note, that data-driven decisions are paramount when considering the health and safety of our students and staff, as such, should a return to an all-digital environment be necessary, we will pivot to that model. Students who wish to remain in a virtual setting may do so. **It is important to reiterate**---all data sources will be reviewed prior to implementing the plan below; if the data do not support moving forward, school system officials will adjust the phase-in process. **This plan continues to be flexible and responsive to our local COVID-19 data.**

Re-Entry Phases	Analysis of Transmission Trends	Questionnaire	Student Report Date	Elementary School Grades	Middle School Grades	High School Grades	Special Education
Current Status			September 8*	All Digital	All Digital	All Digital	All Self-Contained Students ** In-Person
Phase 1	September 11*	Questionnaire emailed 9-11 if data supports a return; submit by 9-14 at 5:00 PM	September 21*	Pre-K, K, 1 In Person	Grade 8 In Person	Grade 12 In Person	All Self-Contained Students ** In-Person
Phase 2	September 18*	Questionnaire emailed 9-18 if data supports a return; submit by 9-21 at 5:00 PM	September 28*	Pre-K, K, 1, 2, 3 In Person	Grades 8, 6 In Person	Grades 12, 9 In Person	All Self-Contained Students ** In-Person
Phase 3	September 25*	Questionnaire emailed 9-25 if data supports a return; submit by 9-28 at 5:00 PM	October 5*	All Grades In Person	All Grades In Person	Grades 12, 9, 11 In Person	All Self-Contained Students ** In-Person
Phase 4	October 2*	Questionnaire emailed 9-25 if data supports a return; submit by 10-5 at 5:00 PM	October 13*	All Grades In Person	All Grades In Person	All Grades In Person	All Self-Contained Students ** In-Person

*All dates are subject to change based upon current COVID-19 conditions in Newton County.

**Severe/Profound Intellectual Disabilities; Moderate Intellectual Disabilities/Community-Based Instruction; Emotional Behavioral Disabilities; GNETS; Special Needs Preschool

The health and safety of our students and staff is our number one priority when considering the re-instatement of in-person instruction. As such, the review of Department of Health data to determine trends in the transmission rate of COVID-19 is critical to the decision-making process. The above chart represents our efforts for a staggered, controlled return to in-person instruction. **The model allows for continued observation and study of the rate of community transmission of COVID-19** while working to return to the classroom those students who selected in-person instruction. According to our medical partners, for our return to be successful, it is important that everyone understand that the wearing of a mask **is a mandated part** of our enhanced safety protocols. On August 18, 2020, members of the board of education, in partnership with school system administration, determined that **students and staff are mandated** to wear masks **while in our schools and on our school buses** unless there is a documented clinical concern preventing the use of a mask. **Students who refuse to wear a mask will not be permitted to ride the school bus or attend classes in person; instead, they will remain in the virtual environment.**

Process

Each Friday, school system staff will review our community data related to the transmission of COVID-19 to determine if each of the aforementioned "Phases" can be implemented. For example, on September 11th, if the totality of the data/evidence demonstrates a downward trend in COVID-19 transmission in our community, eligible students who wish to return to in-person instruction will have the opportunity to make that choice.

Please make certain that your email address/contact information is updated in Infinite Campus as we will reach out to parents via email to determine which students will transition to the in-person model. A questionnaire will be emailed to parents in which you will be asked to let us know the following:

1. Your student(s) plans to return to in-person instruction,
2. Your need for transportation, and
3. Your need for school breakfast and/or lunch.

The questionnaire will be sent out Friday and must be submitted by 5:00 PM on the following Monday. The information obtained in the questionnaire is critical to the planning process for our principals, teachers, transportation team, and school nutrition team; **therefore, if you do not meet the deadline to submit the questionnaire, your student will remain in their current instructional model.**

In the event that the data does not support a return to school, parents with students in the impacted grade levels will be notified, and we will look at the data the following Friday (one week later.) Students already in school will remain in-person even if the next phase cannot move forward due to community transmission of COVID-19. We will simply slow down the phase-in process to allow for the community transmission rate to return to a downward trajectory.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who makes the decision to re-open schools?

School system staff, in consultation with health department officials, review multiple data points to determine if there is a **downward trend** in the transmission rate of COVID-19 in our community.

What data will be utilized to make the decision to re-open schools for in-person instruction?

School system staff rely on the following data to inform their decisions regarding re-opening schools: the fourteen day case rate, rate of positivity, 7-day moving average, hospitalizations, and emergency room visits related to COVID-19. Additionally, school system staff will refer to Harvard Global Health Institute COVID-19 Risk Levels Dashboard which can be found at the following link: <https://globalepidemics.org/key-metrics-for-covid-suppression/>

When will you review the data?

Every Friday. Should the totality of the data reveal that the transmission rate of COVID-19 is on the rise, **school system officials will delay the implementation of any phase of re-entry.**

When will the questionnaire be sent to families?

The questionnaire will be sent **if there is a downward trend of COVID-19 community transmission** for students returning to school as follows:

Phases	Questionnaire Emailed	Questionnaire Due Date
Phase 1 Return-Pre-K, K, Grades 1,8,12	September 11 th	September 14 th at 5:00 PM
Phase 2 Return-Grades 2,3,6,9	September 18 th	September 21 st at 5:00 PM
Phase 3 Return-Grades 4,5,7,11	September 25 th	September 28 th at 5:00 PM
Phase 4 Return-Grade 10	October 2 nd	October 5 th at 5:00 PM

What happens if the transmission rate **has increased** from one week to the next?

Students who are already served in-person will remain in the building, **but the next Re-entry Phase will be put on hold.** The date for the new re-entry will be updated, and school system officials will review data the following Friday. Our model allows for week to week consideration of community transmission of COVID-19.

How will I know that the school system is moving forward with each of the Phases?

An announcement will be made via our website, social media, and school messenger emails/calls. **It is critical that your contact information in Infinite Campus is current and includes a current email address.**

I have not received phone calls or emails from the school system. How do I update my contact information?

In order to update your contact information, parents will need to create a "Parent Portal" account. You will find directions to create an account by following this link: <https://campus.newton.k12.ga.us/campus/portal/parents/newton.jsp>.

Parents/guardians can now update student information remotely. **Email and phone number changes will update the student's profile within 24 hours.** Other changes (relationship changes, address changes etc.) will require school approval and may require additional information.

I don't want my child returning to school in person at this time. May we continue virtual learning?

Yes. Only parents who originally selected the in-person instructional model are eligible to return to in-person learning need to respond to the questionnaire. Secondary students who selected Option 3, the self-paced virtual option, **will not be able to return to in-person learning until second semester.**