

RETURN TO THE CLASSROOM



GUIDE FOR PARENTS

2020-2021



THE GOAL

It has been the goal of the Tuscaloosa City Schools to return students to full time, in-person instruction as soon as possible. It remains the belief of the Board of Education that in-person, high-quality instruction delivered by a certified teacher provides students the best opportunity for academic success.



Staggered Learning Followed by Full-Time In Classroom

Given improving community health conditions, we are moving forward with plans to transition students back into buildings for face-to-face learning. This plan includes a two-part approach:

1. Staggered learning for a period of time
Followed by
2. Full-time, in classroom learning

Phase 1: Staggered Learning

By dividing students at each school into two groups and alternating the days that each group is in school with virtual, independent learning from home, there will be fewer students in the building at any given time, allowing for safer face-to-face instruction.

Students will be divided into two groups: Green Group and Gray Group.
Local schools will notify parents of each student's designated group.

Students in the Green Group will attend face-to-face instruction in school on Monday and Tuesday of each week.

Students in the Gray Group will attend face-to-face instruction in school on Wednesday and Thursday of each week.

On the days that students are not attending face-to-face instruction in school, they will be provided virtual/asynchronous instruction. Note that this will take the form of assignments and learning opportunities for students to complete on their own as teachers will be engaged at the same time in teaching the students who will be on campus.

Households with multiple TCS students will be in the same group (either Green or Gray) to ensure parents/guardians need not worry about the logistics complications of one student assigned the Green Group and another student assigned the Gray Group.

 **At School** (synchronous)

 **At Home** (asynchronous)

| | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| GREEN GROUP |  |  |  |  |  |
| GRAY GROUP |  |  |  |  |  |
| REMOTE STUDENTS |  |  |  |  |  |

Phase 2: Full-Time, In Classroom Learning

At the earliest date allowed by local health conditions, all Tuscaloosa City Schools will return to full time, in-classroom operations. All students who have not opted for full-year virtual will return to in-classroom learning.

Tuscaloosa City Schools is committed to a continued emphasis on preserving the health and safety of our students and staff. The structures and procedures implemented during our staggered schedules will remain in place.

- Social distancing, will be enforced to the greatest degree possible.
- Face coverings will be required for all students and all employees throughout the school day.
- Frequent hand-washing and other personal hygiene practices will be followed.

| SAME | DIFFERENT |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schoology is the learning management system• Strong, regular communication• Social distancing, to the extent possible, masks, hygiene | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All students attend school every day except full-year virtual students• Instruction takes place face-to-face• Participation in all classes as "normal" |

TCS will follow the Alabama Department of Public Health Toolkit as it relates to students and employee travel. In the event self-quarantine is necessary due to travel, students will have the option to attend school virtually.

Full-Year Virtual Students

Students who signed up for full-year virtual will have a regular school day schedule. However, TCS will follow screen time recommendations to provide live instruction. Your child's teacher will provide a schedule for small group instruction and live instruction.

These procedures, expectations, and services will continue for full-year virtual students.

- Students must visit campus to take state-required standardized tests, particularly in the Spring during the formal annual student assessment window.
- In-person services will be provided as needed, such as small group instruction and remediation.
- Students retain access to extra-curricular activities such as after-school clubs, athletics and student events.
- All student rules and procedures - particularly those related to health and safety - apply any time a full-time virtual student visits his/her school campus.
- Schools and the district are firmly committed to providing on-going communication, both regarding issues that concern all students and issues unique to full-year virtual students.

Phased Re-Opening Schedule

Subject to local health conditions

- Sept. 21 – Oct. 9** Staggered schedule for Elementary and Middle School students.
- Sept. 28 – Oct. 9** Staggered schedule for High School students. High School students will remain in full time virtual until Sept. 28.
- Oct. 12** Full return to classroom, five days per week for Elementary, Middle and High School students.

Requests to Change from Virtual to In Classroom or From In Classroom to Virtual

Requests will be reviewed and approved to change from virtual to in classroom or from in classroom to virtual only as staffing/scheduling allow. If the student's school staffing/schedule allows for a change, the request will then be forwarded to the Deputy Superintendent for approval. There are no guarantees that requests will be granted.



What Your Child Can Expect Each Day

Students and parents should be aware that changes in most procedures are necessary. We encourage parents to help prepare students for the reality that school will look and feel a lot different than it usually does.

Here are some points to consider discussing with your student.

- Social distancing rules will require students to be seated as far away from each other as possible. Students may be asked to sit alone or only with siblings on the school bus.
- Breakfast and lunch will take place in classrooms or in a setting that allows for significant social distancing, to the extent possible.
- At times, temperatures may be checked as a screening safety measure.
- Break, recess and PE will be different. PE classes will be restricted to non-contact activities.
- There may be more breaks for handwashing each day. Students may be asked to wash upon arrival, several times during the day and before going home.
- Music and art classes and library lessons will be delivered virtually to elementary students.
- Gifted education services will be provided through a virtual learning platform. Gifted specialists will collaborate with general education teachers to assist with planning to meet the needs of gifted learners in the general education setting.
- Wearing masks may make it harder to understand what the teacher is saying. It may be harder for the teacher to understand students. It is important for students to let the teacher know if they are having difficulty hearing what is being said.
- Students will not be allowed to gather before or after school.
- Because of staggering and some families choosing virtual learning for the year, your child may not see their same friends at school.



Daily Check List Before School Each Morning

Do not send your child to school if they show any of the following symptoms.

- New cough
- New loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue

IF THE ANSWER TO EVEN ONE OF THESE IS "YES", DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL.



How Tuscaloosa City Schools is Keeping Students and Staff Safe

- At times, temperatures may be checked as a screening safety
- Practicing six-foot social distancing, to the extent possible
- Requiring all students, staff and visitors wear face coverings
- Frequent cleaning and disinfecting
- New hand sanitizing stations
- Appropriate PPE for all employees



Rules & Procedures For Staggered and Full-Time, In Classroom:

Tuscaloosa City Schools will fully and rigorously implement all Alabama Department of Public Health guidelines for the health and safety of our students, staff, families and community.

- Social distancing, to the extent possible, is required for all students. We expect students to avoid physical contact and maintain distance from others to the greatest degree possible.
- Face coverings are required for everyone in all school buildings.
- Students should engage in frequent hand-washing and / or hand sanitizing while at school.
- Most procedural practices will be adjusted in all schools - transitions within the school, seating charts and arrangements, hall/bathroom passes, etc. Each school will provide detailed communication of required procedures and will teach them to students.

Face coverings are required of everyone in all school buildings.



We remain committed to making decisions based on changing circumstances. Thank you in advance for your patience and flexibility as we continue to make adjustments along the way.

