

# Whitehall District Schools

541 E. Slocum Street \* Whitehall, MI 49461 \* Ph: 231-893-1000 \* Fax: 231-894-6450

August 9, 2021

Dear Whitehall District Schools Community:

We are looking forward to the upcoming school year! We have received many questions about what school will look like for the 2021-2022 school year. This update will provide you with our current plans for the start of the 2021-22 school year. Last year our goal was to be as close to normal as possible. This year we hope to get even closer to normal (while continuing a few things we found work really well). Please know we are thoughtful in our effort to provide the best educational environment for all of our students.

## General Information

### What will our instructional model look like?

- All F2F (face to face) students will attend school five days per week following the published school calendar: [21-22 School Calendar](#)

### When does school start?

- Our first day with students is Tuesday, August 24, 2021. This is an orientation day. Busing provided for secondary students. Expect more details from your child's school. The first full week of school begins August 30, 2021.

### What is the cost of breakfast and lunch for the 2021-2022 school year?

- School breakfast and lunch will be provided free of charge; however, ala carte items (i.e., a cookie, a bag of chips, a bottle of water, etc.) will have to be purchased with funds through an established food service account.

### Will Whitehall District Schools offer a virtual option for students?

- Yes. Families that would like to continue virtual learning will participate in the Whitehall Virtual Academy. Any families interested in the option must connect with their building principal as soon as possible for planning.

### What are the start and end times for schools?

- The school day will be from 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM. Actual start and end times will **vary** slightly by school and student cohort. Our buses will begin running at 7:00 AM and the last stop should be no later than 4:30 PM.

We look forward to a great school year at Whitehall District Schools! If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to contact your building office or myself at 231-893-1001.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jerry McDowell  
Superintendent  
Whitehall District Schools

## COVID-19 & Communicable Disease Mitigation Strategies

**Masks** - WDS **recommends** indoor masking for all staff and students, regardless of vaccination status.

- WDS will **require** all unvaccinated staff working with students to wear masks during the school day.
- WDS will **require** all persons – regardless of vaccination status – wear masks on school buses.

**Physical Distancing** - WDS will maintain at least three feet of physical distance between students within classrooms whenever possible.

**Testing** - WDS will have Covid test kits available and we will be capable of administering them upon parent request. Testing requirements for athletes was lifted by the MHSAA on June 22, 2021.

**Ventilation** - WDS will improve ventilation by opening multiple doors and windows and begin making changes to the HVAC or air filtration systems when able. We will avoid crowded and/or poorly ventilated indoor activities (e.g., engaging in outdoor activities when possible).

**Handwashing and respiratory etiquette** - WDS will promote handwashing and covering coughs and sneezes.

**Stay Home when Sick** - WDS will encourage staff and students to stay home if they are sick.

### Covid Symptoms

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose

**Contact Tracing** - WDS will collaborate with our local health department and assist them in communicating quarantine and isolations as directed. We will check to make sure Covid positive individuals are not in school.

**Cleaning and disinfection** - WDS will continue to clean daily, using disinfectants in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency COVID-19 webpage to remove germs on surfaces, which further reduces any risk of spreading infection of Covid and other viruses.

**Vaccination** - WDS encourages all eligible people to get vaccinated.

**Community Transmission** - WDS will monitor our level of school transmission of Covid by individual cases as reported by the local health department. Increased school cases may result in increased mitigation strategies to include required masking, classroom/building/district closure, or other effective measures.

To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine, visit [Michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine](https://Michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine)

For more information about COVID-19 in Michigan, visit [Michigan.gov/coronavirus](https://Michigan.gov/coronavirus).