

Ringgold Return to School

Frequently Asked Questions

7.30.20

This FAQ document has been developed to assist parents as they consider the range of choices being offered for our return to school for the 2020-2021 school year. We realize that this document won't encompass all questions, but we will continue to add to our FAQ document as we are able in the coming weeks.

The FAQ document has been organized into two sections. A section that addresses sanitizing and social distancing questions and a section that addresses instruction, teaching and learning questions.

General Questions:

Sanitizing & Social Distancing

- 1. How will social distancing be accomplished within the classrooms themselves?**
 - *Student desks will be placed 6 ft. apart where possible, and no less than 3 ft. apart in the classrooms.*
 - *All extraneous items will be removed from the classroom to facilitate the spacing requirements that will allow social distancing.*
 - *Group activities will be facilitated through the computers and students will remain socially distance even during collaborative work.*

- 2. Will students eat in the cafeterias? Or will students eat within the classroom?**
 - *The District will be using cafeterias and may also use a combination of classrooms, cafeteria and open spaces to provide distance between students.*
 - *The District will also be using grab and go lunches, individually packaged, so that on weather permitting days, students may choose to eat their lunches outside in supervised, tented areas.*

- 3. Can you describe if Ringgold will be following any of the cohort structure as described by the CDC? More specifically, are there plans to keep students and teachers together as a single unit during the day or cycling teachers as needed for different class**
 - *At the Elementary level, we will be co-horting students for their day. Teachers will cycle through classes while students stay in place.*
 - *At the Middle School level and High School level, where students take content specific classes and electives, co-horting will not be possible, however, the District*

will continue to implement multiple mitigation measures recommended by the Department of Health and the CDC.

- Secondary schools are looking at ways to stagger hall passing times where possible.

4. There is a description of scenarios allowing a return from virtual students into the classroom, is that a decision made by the parents at their time of choice? As an example, could we follow the virtual curriculum for the first semester and then return to school?

- *Yes, parents will be allowed to transition their students from the online model of schooling into the traditional model throughout the year. The District asks that parents choose an option and that students remain in that option for a period of 9 weeks. This will allow transfers to occur at a natural break in student studies.*

5. Should our family choose to travel during the year, would we need to quarantine and move to a virtual option upon our return?

- *It is not mandatory, but is recommended. This is an example of a situation in which students can move from traditional schooling to online schooling. Parents must follow the procedure for temporary/emergency registration to transfer between schooling methods. This will ensure that the District has up to date and accurate records of the student's method of participation in school.*

6. What happens if my child is sick? Will they be given the opportunity to log in from home to access Option 2?

Yes, we encourage students to do work online. We want all students to be successful. It is very important, and we encourage students who are feeling sick to stay home and do their work from home. We ask that if parents anticipate that the absence from traditional learning will be prolonged, that the student be registered into the online model. This will allow our teachers to plan for instruction.

7. What happens if a child is exposed in the school setting (bus, class or cafeteria)? Will all students in contact with that person(s) be notified and quarantined for 14 days? Will they then be given the opportunity to log in from home to access Option 2?

- *Yes. The District pandemic team has discussed contact tracing and the District is employing procedures that will allow contact tracing to be conducted. If an exposure occurs, parents will be contacted.*
- *Quarantine after exposure is recommended (see above).*
- *Students will be given the opportunity to log in from home and to access their classes through online schooling (option 2).*

8. Will all students be assigned a Chromebook that is solely theirs for the entire year to prevent cross contamination? If not, a) how does the school plan to sanitize these devices between classes? And how is the school prepared to handle those students

that are quarantined and temporarily cannot attend that do not have a device to utilize for school?

- *All students will be given a Chromebook.*
- *Students will not have to share Chromebooks and will be instructed not to take part in sharing computers.*
- *If a student forgets their Chromebook, they will be able to view the teacher screen on the smartboard, but their education will be hampered for that day. We will need parent support in ensuring that students bring their Chromebooks to school each day.*
- *Chromebooks can be cleaned with wipes that do NOT contain bleach. Sanitizing wipes have been ordered for the schools.*

9. If someone in the school community tests positive for COVID-19, what will be the next required steps? Will schools need to be closed for deep cleaning? What will the requirements be for contact tracing and testing? How long will staff or students need to be quarantined?

- *This is a difficult question to answer because each case will carry with it specific information that may change the outcome or the action taken by the District.*
- *Generally speaking, if someone tests positive, the District will follow the CDC guidelines.*
- *Parents will be notified, contact tracing will commence and deep cleaning of the school will occur.*
- *We realize this guidance has evolved and expect it to continue to evolve. We will continue to stay informed, and will follow, the latest recommendations of the State and Local agencies.*

10. If a school building or school district has a COVID-19 positive case, how long will a closure be to ensure there's no super-spread to the community?

- *The guidance from the Department of Health and the CDC is ever evolving and the District will continue to follow the guidance of State and Local government.*

11. Will students and staff members be required to wear masks?

- *Yes, students and staff will be required to masks, except when eating or drinking.*
- *Should the Governor's order change, the District will revisit the issue at that time.*

12. How do you socially distance at a bus stop?

- *The District asks that parents and families help teach children about the importance of social distancing. The District also asks that students stay in their own spaces/on their own corners, 6 ft. apart, while at their stop and waiting for the bus.*

13. Do students have to wear masks if they are 6 ft. apart?

- *Yes, the District cares deeply about the safety of students and staff and masks will be required even when students are 6 ft. apart.*

14. Do students have to wear masks at recess?

- *Yes. Recess will look different this year. Students will be permitted to be outside to get fresh air. We will also continue to teach social distancing at recess, as we do indoors. Students will not be permitted to engage in activities that encourage physical exertion during recess.*

15. Can students play on the playground equipment?

- *No, for purposes of health and safety, the playground equipment will not be accessible. It would be impossible to wipe the equipment down between each child's use.*

16. Can students take off their mask at their desks?

- *No, students must wear their mask at their desks.*

17. What if a student misplaces their mask?

- *The District has purchased extra masks and they will be available at each school.*

18. Will students have lockers this year?

- *Yes, each student will be issued a locker, and "cubbies" will still be used at the Elementary schools. This will ensure that student have a secure location in which to store their items.*
- *Students should not share their lockers and should not share their combinations. This is true in all school years, but will be even more important this year.*

19. How often will students be permitted to go to their lockers?

- *Student visits to lockers will be limited. These times typically include before and after lunch (for those who pack lunch) and at the beginning and end of the school day.*

20. Will students be in one classroom the entire school day?

- *At the Elementary level, student will remain predominantly in the same room all day (with the potential exception of lunch and recess). Teachers will rotate between the rooms.*
- *At the MS and HS, because of the content specific classes, student do not always travel by class and cohort, therefore, students will not be in one classroom all day at the secondary level.*

21. Will there be additional lunch periods?

- *The most recent release from the Department of Health has indicated that the Governor's orders do not apply to school cafeterias. However, the District will continue to provide spacing between students in cafeterias.*
- *This will vary by school based on seating availability. In schools where students can be appropriately spaced for eating lunch, there will not be additional lunch periods added.*

- *In schools where additional seating is needed, adding an additional lunch period, or providing additional seating in classrooms will be utilized as means for ensuring appropriate spacing for students.*

22. What efforts are being taken with regard to hallway transitions?

- *Building Administrators are preparing traffic patterns for hallways that promote, where possible, social distancing.*
- *Building Administrators are limiting, where possible, the number of transitions needed.*
- *Building Administrators are considering additional hallway transition times, and potentially staggering of student transitions, where feasible.*

23. Have specific traffic patterns be designed for hallways?

- *Yes, Building Administrators have considered the traffic patterns in hallways and are also ensuring that the patterns are mapped out and marked for students and staff.*

24. Will class size be modified for social distancing?

- *Class sizes in K-2 are set at approximately 20 students in the event that all students choose to return to the traditional setting.*
- *Class sizes in 3-4 are set at approximately 23 students in the event that all students choose to return to the traditional setting.*
- *Class sizes in 5-12 are set at approximately 25 students in the event that all students choose to return to the traditional setting.*
- *The District will provide additional information on class size once the parent registration/election period has closed. Based on feedback from the initial survey of parents we expect that 12% or more may elect online schooling (Option 2) which will reduce in-person class sizes.*
- *Custodians and Building Administrators have reviewed classrooms and continue to set up examples of what classrooms would look like with appropriate spacing.*

25. What are the safety measures being put in place for teachers?

- *Teachers will be provided PPE (masks, cleaning solutions, hand sanitizer, etc.).*
- *Teachers will be socially distanced from students, where feasible.*
- *Thorough cleaning of classrooms will occur each evening and throughout the day as needed.*
- *Teachers will each have their own laptop and are encouraged not to share their device with other persons or professionals.*
- *The District is working to ensure teachers have digital teaching resources.*
- *The District is ensuring that teachers can have student take assessments online so that no copies, or transmission of papers or books will be needed.*

26. Will students get in trouble for “fidgeting” with their mask?

- *No, students will not be disciplined for “fidgeting” or moving their mask around to increase comfort.*

- *Students are not permitted to wear other student's masks, move or manipulate another student's mask, remove the mask to twirl it,*

27. Will Kindergarten students have recess?

- *Yes, elementary students will have a modified version of recess where they are able to stretch their legs and be in the fresh air.*

28. Will start times be changed?

- *Start times will be sent home to students and families in the upcoming weeks. Start times for students will not change significantly, though we are anticipating changes that will reflect a few minutes difference. This is needed in order to sanitize buses before, and after each run.*
- *Teacher start times will change this year in order to ensure that teachers start before students and end after students leave school.*
- *We are expecting an increase in car ridership and as such will be asking for your cooperation as we navigate changes in procedure for car riders and bus riders.*

29. What are the building facility cleaning protocols that need to be followed?

- *There will be thorough cleaning each day and evening to include the classrooms, restrooms, cafeterias, buses, etc.*
- *The District has spent considerable time and effort in ensuring that we have cleaning protocols and materials to complete those protocols.*
- *The protocols and this information is detailed in the Health and Safety Plan that has been released by the District.*

30. Will students be able to socialize?

- *Yes, though it will certainly look different, and we need to teach students how to socialize, while social distancing.*

31. Will the District conduct temperature checks? How will this occur?

- *Yes, the District will conduct temperature checks on students. The District has ordered walk-through scanners that will take the temperature of each student as they enter the school. Nurses also will continue to have no-touch thermometers to use as they see students.*

Instruction, Teaching and Learning Questions

32. Will students continue to receive instruction every day regardless of whether they choose option 1 (Traditional) or option 2 (online schooling).

- *Yes, students will continue to receive synchronous instruction every day, regardless of whether they choose option 1 or option 2. Students in both options will benefit from live instruction and will have opportunities to work in socially distanced, or virtual groups.*

- *Students who choose Cyber Academy will receive a-synchronous (video-taped) instruction*

33. Will students be able to work in small groups with their peers if they elect option 2?

- *Yes, students in option 2 will continue to benefit from working in groups with their peers. Their peers may be in school, or other students who are working in option 2.*
- *The online schooling model will be significantly different from the online schooling that occurred last year, this is one of the significant changes.*

34. Will there be instruction for teachers on how to use Zoom?

- *Yes, there will be instruction on how to use Zoom and breakout rooms, along with the other safety and security features of online meeting spaces.*
- *Teachers will also provide assistance to students as they become familiar with the platforms being used to meet online.*

35. What will Physical Education class look like?

- *Physical Education class will look different this year. There are many aspects to physical education that do not involve physical exertion, such as understanding the principles of exercise, healthy living, nutrition and sports nutrition, developing home workout sessions, etc. Our teachers will focus on this portion of the physical education standards and physical exertion and exercise will certainly be appropriate 'homework' for physical education classes.*

36. What will Art look like?

- *Art classes will look different this year. Art is an expansive study that encompasses more than just pen, paper, pencil and paint. Students will continue to receive Art instruction and teacher may choose to teach about digital art forms, teach student about graphic art design, art history, etc. Regardless of the mode of instruction, Art instruction will continue to be an exciting class for students.*

37. What will Science experiments look like?

- *Teachers will still have the ability to demonstrate scientific experiments to students. This will allow students to do the important work of observing, analyzing, developing hypothesis, gathering data and even participating in scientific journaling. Scientific inquiry will continue to occur in classes, and some teachers may choose to also use digital laboratory resources as they proceed through the year.*

38. What will school testing look like?

- *With regards to state standardized testing, schools have not yet received any information suggesting that testing will change. To our current knowledge, PSSA and Keystones will resume this year.*
- *Classroom assessments will occur virtually and we are working with our Learning Management System experts to ensure that our teachers and students can submit, score and provide electronic feedback to students. The LMS (Learning Management System) will allow for the development of assessments will not*

require the use of paper and pencil, scanning and emailing paperwork back and forth.

39. What will music class look like?

- *Music class will look different this year. There are many aspects to music and many ways for students to learn about reading music, playing an instrument and singing/vocal instruction. Teachers may choose to focus on the underlying music theory (tempo, rhythm, musical expression), music history, or teachers may teach students how to create music at home and use software to digitally combine sounds and tracks. Teachers will continue to ensure that students are taught from the PA standards and that they will continue to increase their musical knowledge.*

40. Can online students see the recording of class instruction after class?

- *Yes, online and traditional students will have access to the recordings after class. This will be a valuable resource to parents and students who may wish to revisit the lesson taught in class as they work on their after-school assignments.*

41. Will the class schedule look the same for traditional and online students (Options 1&2)

- *Yes, the class schedule will be the same. Online students will refer to the class schedule as if they were in the building. The class schedule and class links will be available on the learning management system (LMS) and all in one place for students.*

42. Will students have their own Chromebook?

- *Each student will be issued their own Chromebook.*
- *Students are expected to bring their Chromebooks to school each day (if attending in the traditional setting). Because the District will be using digital resources, participation may be hampered for students who do not have their computer with them in school.*

43. Will you be putting out a materials list that each student will need to have for traditional class considering there won't be sharing of anything?

- *No, because each student has a Chromebook and because of the use of digitized resources, we will not need to issue student material lists.*

44. How will IEP's be met?

- *IEP's are individualized education plans. Students with IEP's will continue to see their teachers (in person or synchronously) and will receive specific and individualized instruction on their IEP goals.*
- *Paraprofessionals will provide additional support to students regardless of the option parents choose (traditional or online).*
- *Progress monitoring will continue to take place via Zoom for students who choose option 2 (online method of schooling) or option 1 (traditional setting).*
- *Specific digital intervention resources,*

45. How will you make sure books are clean?

- *Because we are not confident that we could possibly clean every book before, during and after use, the District has elected to use digital resources for this school year.*

- *Our Building Administrators and Curriculum Department have been working together and consulting teachers to ensure that we have resources for teachers and students. This will eliminate the need for books.*

46. Will students be permitted to check out library books?

- *No, library books will not be circulated during the pandemic.*
- *The District is working to provide digital books and leveled resources that will encourage and allow our students to continue to be avid readers!*

47. If you choose the Ringgold online option and decide it is not the right fit, can you switch to in person seamlessly?

- *Yes, however, we are asking that parents choose an option and remain with that option for increments of 9 weeks. This will allow the school and teacher to better plan for student instruction.*
- *In cases of emergency, the District will continue to work with parents and families.*

48. As a society, we have now been molded to be scared of any sniffle and sneeze. Will the attendance policy be revised to make it easier to not send our students to school should they just have a typical cold that I would normally send my students to school with? Currently as it stands we only have 10 days. A runny nose can last for a week.

- *In these cases, parents may elect to have their student log in, attend live classes and complete their work from home.*

49. If option number one is chosen are students going to be the brick and mortar school five days a week or just two?

- *Students who attend the traditional setting (Option 1) will attend 5 days per week.*
- *The only way this would change would be if enrollment numbers increase substantially and appropriate social distancing could not be accomplished. We do not see that as an issue at this time.*

50. If a student gets sent home with a sudden fever, will a Covid test be required by the school?

- *We will follow the guidelines of the CDC and the Department of Health as they continue to evolve.*