

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated July 20, 2020

REVISED ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Do you have the new school year calendar?

Yes. You may find it at <https://www.bentonvillek12.org/Calendars>.

What is the first day of kindergarten?

Kindergarten start date is Thursday, August 27. Orientations will take place August 25-26. Families will receive specific information from their child's principal regarding their orientation date and time.

What is the first day of school?

Monday, August 24, 2020.

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

Since Governor Asa Hutchinson has delayed the start of school, can our family change our selection for school this fall?

We have extended the deadline for your family's decision to 11:59 p.m. on July 22.

It's our hope this extension will allow you to carefully consider your decision knowing whether face coverings will be required while on campus this fall. If you do not wish to change your initial response, no action is needed from you. We will accept the final response we receive from your family.

I've not yet received the email in which I make my selection for virtual or blended school?

That email was shared with families Thursday, June 25. All communications from Superintendent Dr. Debbie Jones can be found at <https://www.bentonvillek12.org/Page/24372> If you are not receiving emails or have the wrong email address in our system call your campus registrar.

FACE COVERINGS

How do you define a face covering?

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) provides a detailed description as to what constitutes a safe and effective face covering. That information may be read at https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/guidance_face_coverings.pdf

Will all Bentonville Schools students be required to wear a face mask?

Last week, Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson granted local school boards the authority to determine policy regarding the use of face coverings in school for both students and staff. As a result of this change in guidance, we will recommend for school board approval that all K through 12 students be required to wear a face covering that covers the nose and mouth when social distancing measures, as determined by the teacher, aren't possible. This proposal will also require face coverings on the school bus.

For those with specific health conditions that require they not wear a face covering, a physician's note shall be provided to the school nurse stating the health condition that prohibits a face covering.

Will parents be required to provide a face covering for their students?

Yes. Parents or guardians should supply face masks for their children.

Will all teachers and staff members wear a face covering or mask each day to school?

We will recommend for school board approval that all teachers and staff be required to wear a face covering that covers the nose and mouth when social distancing measures, as determined by the teacher, aren't possible.

Will students on school buses be required to wear a mask and socially distance?

We will ask **all** students to wear a face covering on the bus because of the inability to properly distance. This does not imply students will be denied transportation due to not having a face covering. There may be exceptions for students with health, sensory or other conditions. Students should maintain a distance of 6 feet apart while waiting on the bus to arrive.

If staff and students are asked to wear masks, how will they learn phonics?

A clear plexiglass shield will be used when teaching phonics so students can see their instructor's face.

Will a face covering be required during p.e. and recess?

We will make every effort to properly distance students during these times so they can remove their face coverings. Students will not be expected to exercise or play wearing a mask.

Are face shields allowed?

The Bentonville Schools Reopening Task Force, chaired by Dr. Stephen Goss, does not support the use of a face shield unless worn in conjunction with a face mask. Face shields do not provide the same protection afforded by a true face mask.

SOCIAL DISTANCING AT SCHOOL

What will distancing look like in the classroom?

We will physically distance in the classroom as space allows. When a distance of six feet is not possible, we will ask students and staff to wear a face covering. In accordance with Arkansas Department of Health directives, efforts will be made to limit close contact between students. We will limit contact through the following actions:

Arrange classrooms and other areas to maximize spacing between students and teacher to the extent possible.

Amend schedules to conform with social distancing guidelines (e.g. stagger lunches, minimize transitions, teachers may go to students).

Will elementary school students be allowed to change classes or will they remain in their homeroom all day?

Students will not remain in the classroom all day. P.E. and recess will take place outside or in the gym. Music and trips to the library will continue in their usual spaces.

What will school plays, concerts and performances look like in the fall?

The Arkansas Activities Association will release guidance for all AAA activities but large group gatherings will be limited.

Will my child be allowed to play on playground equipment at recess?

Time on playground equipment will be rotated amongst classes. We'll make every effort, weather permitting, for children to be outside everyday but not all children will be able to access playground equipment on a daily basis. Equipment will be cleaned repeatedly throughout the day.

BENTONVILLE SCHOOLS VIRTUAL

What is virtual school going to look like?

We have a detailed description [HERE](#) to help you better understand what you can expect in our virtual school setting.

Will virtual learning be similar to what our family experienced this past semester?

No, the spring semester was perpetuated by a crisis health situation. It was a quick transition to a digital platform so we could safely and quickly comply with the state government's closure order. Bentonville Schools Virtual is a format we've had in place for the past year, although this is our first year to welcome students K-4. You'll find a more structured learning environment with teachers who have had adequate time to prepare for a virtual platform.

If my child commits to virtual learning this semester, can she still return to her zoned school spring semester?

Yes. We will continue to follow our normal enrollment process which will allow any student to return to his/her zoned school provided there is still room at the child's home school.

Will TREC be available virtually?

Yes.

Is there a charge for virtual school?

No. There are no fees associated with virtual school.

Will my high school senior be able to continue taking the online NWACC classes through BHS if she chooses to do virtual school?

Yes.

Will your teachers still use Google Classroom in virtual school?

K-4 will use See Saw & Google Tools. Grades 5-12 will use Google Classroom.

Can all teachers use the same platform for digital learning?

We've refined our student and parent online platforms to provide a more seamless transition this fall.

Will dyslexia intervention still be available for virtual and blended students?

Yes.

Can students take Pre-AP classes if we select the virtual education option?

Yes.

Do I have to provide my own computer?

No. All students in Bentonville Schools are provided a Chromebook for use that remains the property of the school district. Families are required to purchase Chromebook insurance, which is available through the District for \$20. Payment may be made at mypaymentsplus.com.

Will clubs, athletics and extracurricular activities continue for virtual students?

We're considering a number of plans so students in grades 6-12 may continue to participate in band, choir and clubs while remaining socially distanced. We don't have every answer on this topic yet.

Will students in virtual school be allowed to attend field trips?

We don't anticipate many field trips in the upcoming fall semester but, should an opportunity present, virtual students will attend field trips with their virtual classroom. Virtual students will not attend with their traditional school classmates.

Will my child still receive speech in a virtual classroom?

Yes. Speech, physical therapy and occupational therapy service will be offered virtually.

If my child chooses virtual school, may I still serve on PTO?

Yes. Your child's zoned school will still be your PTO.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

My child receives special education services. Do you have more information regarding IEP planning for your virtual school?

Yes. Our special education students may be best served in our Blended Learning environment. We've created a separate FAQ specifically for your family at <https://www.bentonvillek12.org/Page/24504>

BAND, MUSIC, CHOIR & ORCHESTRA

Will my child still be able to take p.e., art, music, etc.?

We will hold all electives with revised safety plans to better ensure the safety of students.

Will orchestra be in-person and offered virtually?

All courses with activities governed by the Arkansas Activities Association will meet in-person. This includes orchestra, choir and band in grades 6-12. You may be a virtual student and attend only athletics, orchestra, choir, band, etc. in-person.

What will high school band, choir, orchestra, and large group athletic classes look like?

Details are developing. We continue to wait for state guidance on how to safely conduct some courses.

MISCELLANEOUS

If my child is exposed to someone who has tested positive but is without symptoms, can he return to school?

ADH requires a person exposed to COVID-19 to complete a 14-day quarantine period, even though they may have a negative test result during the quarantine period. You can find more information regarding quarantine guidance at https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/quarantine_covid_notice.pdf

Will you host virtual open houses?

Yes. Principals will share details in late July.

My child has a food allergy. How will he or she safely eat in the classroom?

Students with food anaphylaxis will eat DAILY in the cafeteria at a designated "Nut Free/Allergy Free" table.

Students with food anaphylaxis will follow their class assignment schedule and when sack lunch and school lunch students eat in the classroom, desks/tables will be designated in each classroom as a "no food/no lunch space." These desks/tables will be reserved for students with an anaphylactic allergy during instruction time.

Will my child's teacher be responsible for taking temperatures prior to entering the classroom?

Guidance from the state government requires parents to take their own child's temperature prior to the beginning of the school day.

What will the District do when we have positive cases?

The state has issued its guidance should the report of a positive case in one of our schools. You may find that guidance at http://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/public/userfiles/Communications/Ready/ADE_Response_Levels_for_On-Site_Learning_RV5.pdf

Will I be allowed to have lunch at school with my child?

No, unfortunately. Parent and guardian visits to school will be limited to essential activity. We must minimize risk for all students.

Can I walk my child into school?

No, unfortunately. Parent and guardian visits to school will be limited to essential activity.

Will an alternating digital and traditional schedule be an option this fall? Or a half day schedule?

No. There are no plans to schedule alternating days for students.

Will my high school student still be able to participate in the Ignite Professional Studies program?

Students choosing remote learning at home in the Virtual School model can attend Ignite in person.

Will there be bottle filling stations for the refilling of water bottles during the day?

All schools will have a bottle filling station. You will need to send water bottles filled for the day. In emergency situations, your child may refill his/her bottle.

Will teachers and staff who are high risk or don't feel safe returning to work be allowed to keep their jobs?

We want and need you back at work. If there is a specific reason why you believe you cannot or should not return to work, please let us know so we can address your concern.

If you need leave under the FFCRA, please consult the poster/notice we have provided.

As per that poster, an employee is entitled to take leave related to COVID-19 if the employee is unable to work, including unable to telework, because the employee:

Generally, employers covered under the FFCRA must provide employees:

Up to two weeks (80 hours, or a part-time employee's two-week equivalent) of paid sick leave based on the regular rate of pay:

- 100% for qualifying reasons #1-3 above, up to \$511 daily and \$5,110 total;
- 2/3 for qualifying reasons #4 and 6 above, up to \$200 daily and \$2,000 total; and
- Up to 12 weeks of paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave paid at 2/3 for qualifying reason #5 above for up to \$200 daily and \$12,000 total.

A part-time employee is eligible for leave for the number of hours that the employee is normally scheduled to work over that period.

If you take FFCRA leave after a mandatory recall, due to any of the reasons above, you will be ineligible for unemployment because the District is legally bound to pay you the formulas listed above.

Can you guarantee the safety of your students and staff?

No. Every risk cannot be mitigated, but we will do all we can to ensure the safety of our staff and students. The well-being of our students, teachers and their families is our top priority.

How do you intend to provide a safe, sanitized environment?

We will work with our custodial staff to comply with sanitation and safety directives from the Arkansas Department of Health. Those actions include the following.

- Custodial services should distribute wastebaskets, tissues, and CDC-approved hand sanitizer (see cleaning guidelines) to every office and classroom so that

these materials can be used upon entry and exit into any discrete location and during transit between sites.

- Signage about frequent handwashing, cough etiquette, and nose blowing should be widely posted, disseminated, and encouraged through various methods of communication.
- Custodial staff should follow guidance from the ADH about the use of face masks and other PPE needed when performing cleaning duties.
- Custodial staff will use the [CDC guidance](#) on cleaning.