

Gadsden City Schools

Reopening Guide 2020-2021

**This document is intended to provide information and guidance as we plan to reopen schools.
This is a fluid document and is subject to change.**



Introduction

Gadsden City Schools, with guidance from the Alabama State Department of Education, has developed this plan to reopen schools. Our plan to reopen provides an approach and steps that are advisable before students and faculty return to school buildings, along with direction that is applicable throughout the 2020-2021 school year.

The recovery plan includes the guidance and recommendations from health officials; it is strongly aligned to the reopening guidelines that have been provided by state and federal leaders. It is designed to help schools prioritize the health and safety of students and teachers as the school buildings are reopened.

Gadsden City Schools reopening plan focuses on the health and physical requirements necessary for reopening school buildings. We will continue to provide guidance and recommendations to schools on navigating the academic, social, and emotional effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on students and employees.

Important Items

Staggered Chromebook Pick-up (Week of August 10th)

- Students with parent's last name starting with A-E - TBD
 - Students with parent's last name starting with F-K - TBD
 - Students with parent's last name starting with L-Q - TBD
 - Students with parent's last name starting with R-Z - TBD
-
- First Day for Remote School - August 17, 2020

Teacher In-service - Professional Development Plans

- **New Employee Orientation - Aug. 5th - virtual meeting**
- **All GCS employees will report to their home school for training and preparation for reopening schools - Aug. 6 - Aug. 14**
- **Trainings will be conducted in small groups with social distancing or via online webinars.**
- **Aug 6th -**
 - **Opening Session 8am - Welcome back systemwide webinar by Mr. Reddick and staff**
 - **All staff will remain in home schools for discussion of district and building based plans for virtual learning**
- **Aug 7th and Aug. 10 -**
 - **Online training for new learning platforms**
 - **Elementary - IXL, Star Ren., USATestPrep, MYon, Google Classroom, Sondag,**
 - **Secondary - IXL, Star Ren., USATestPrep, MYon, Google Classroom, Edgenuity**
 - **CPR training and other small pull-out trainings**
- **Aug. 11 - Aug. 14**
 - **Set up virtual classrooms and develop week one lesson plans**
- **Teachers are encouraged to participate in virtual trainings offered throughout the summer for Google Classroom, LETERS, AMSTI, etc.**

Instructional and Technology Services

GADSDEN CITY SCHOOLS WILL OFFER THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Remote learning will take place for ALL STUDENTS at the beginning of the school year and reviewed weekly to determine when TRADITIONAL LEARNING will be made available.

1. **Remote** - Students work online from home and teachers regularly check-in and provide virtual instructional. (Google Classroom, Google Meet, SchoolsPLP, etc. Once the traditional learning option becomes available, students choosing to remain on the remote learning option will commit for at least 9 weeks before being allowed to return to traditional. **Full-Time remote instruction will require a greater daily time commitment than was expected during last spring**)
2. **Traditional** - Face to face instruction physically in the school buildings. (A blended schedule may be necessary based on changing CDC guidelines, ADPH, and mandates/recommendations from the ALSDE.
3. **Blended** - **BLENDED IS ONLY AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS OR SCHOOLS THAT ARE AFFECTED BY COVID-19.** For students who choose traditional learning, a blended option will available in the event of illness. This will enable students to transition between traditional and remote and back again, which will be crucial if we need to close a classroom or a school for cleaning and disinfecting, or the entire district. Blended will also be provided if your child needs to quarantine or stay at home due to COVID-19 for an extended amount of time. After completing the required quarantined period, your child will return to the Traditional school setting. In the event schools are closed, efforts will be made to provide access to WIFI for students who need it.

Traditional Learning Option

NOT AVAILABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF SCHOOL

- The schools will be open five days a week, and all traditional students will attend school daily. (A blended learning schedule may be necessary based on changing CDC guideline ADPH, and mandates from the ALSDE.)
- Students will not be allowed to congregate in areas of the school upon arrival. Students will go directly to the cafeteria to pick up a grab and go breakfast. All students will socially distance during breakfast or go to a designated area if students are not eating. **Masks are highly encouraged.**
- Pre-K-12 students will have staggered class changes and all hallway movement will be in the same direction.
- All schools will have staggered release times to buses and car lines.
- Students will be seated in rows facing in the same direction.
- Students will spread out as much as possible in the classroom to promote social distancing.
- Physical Education and enrichment will take place. Groups must spread out in the gyms, playgrounds, and athletic fields. Staff will enforce limited physical contact between students.
- Students with underlying health conditions should consider the Remote Learning option.
- If a student is found with a temperature of 100.4 or higher, the student will be placed in isolation until parent/guardian can pick them up from school. The student may not return to school until they have been symptom-free without medication for 72 hours.

Traditional Learning Option

NOT AVAILABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF SCHOOL

Staggered Entry - Purpose

- ❖ Allow students and parent to learn new school procedures that have been put into place due to COVID-19 prevention in a small-group setting
- ❖ Allow students to acclimate back to school in a small group setting
- ❖ Allow teachers to have small groups of students to access gaps in learning in small group settings that may be due to school closure
- ❖ Establish a schedule that could perhaps be followed in the event of partial school closure or potential teacher/substitute shortage due to teacher illness

Staggered Entry Beginning TBD

- ❖ Students with parent's last name starting with A-E - TBD
- ❖ Students with parent's last name starting with F-K - TBD
- ❖ Students with parent's last name starting with L-Q - TBD
- ❖ Students with parent's last name starting with R-Z - TBD

STUDENTS WILL ONLY COME TO SCHOOL ONE DAY THE FIRST WEEK, DETERMINED BY THE FIRST LETTER OF PARENT/GUARDIAN LAST NAME.

Remote Learning

- All Students will begin on August 17, 2020. School staff will contact students about picking up Chromebooks.
- Students will work online from home and teachers will regularly check-in and provide virtual instruction.
- Students will not attend school in an on-campus manner.
- Students **MUST** have access to the Internet. We will work with families if needed.
- Students will be provided a device, if needed, once they have met all requirements of the Usage Agreement.
- Students must abide by all policies and procedures when utilizing a device provided by GCS.

Remote Learning

- Courses online using ALSDE approved Curriculum
- Students are expected to work independently and take ownership of their learning.
- Quality, virtual instruction administered by GCS teachers during designated school hours.
- Assignments and tests will be rigorous and graded.
- Elective and Advanced options may be limited.
- May still participate in athletics/extracurricular activities.
- Will still participate in ALSDE required assessments.

School Procedures

- In the event of a parent checking a child out of school, there will be a camera at the front door to show your identification and your child will be sent to you at the front door. Parents will not be allowed in the school buildings.
- Parent conferences will be by telephone or electronic device only.
- Each school will develop a transition plan based on their number of students and facility layout that ensures minimal contact with students from other classrooms.
- Each school will only have 50 percent occupancy in the lunchrooms. Procedures will be determined by the school principal.
- Facial coverings - Per current health order (Item 13c), teachers are required to wear facial coverings when they are within 6 feet of students. Facial coverings for students are highly recommended and suggested.
- Water fountains will not be available. Students are encouraged to bring individual water bottles with their name on the bottle. Students will not share water bottles with other students.
- Restrooms will be sanitized multiple times daily.
- Locker use will be minimized or not used at all.
- Each school will develop a individual plan that fits their schools population, demographics and environmental conditions.

Classroom Procedures

- Classrooms will be sanitized on a regular basis.
- Students will practice social distancing in the classroom as space allows.
- Students will have assigned seating in order to help with contact tracing.
- Classroom teachers will educate students on best practices for self-care for as well as care of others (hand-washing, limit sharing of personal items, sneezing in elbow, etc.) Desks and table surfaces will be cleaned during transition times.
- Classroom teachers will minimize teaching practices that group students in close proximity.
- Students will only be allowed to bring essential items into the classroom.

Elementary Education

Guidance for Elementary Schools

- Elementary schools will develop an individualized plan that fits their school's population, demographics, and environmental conditions.
- *The following will be included and implemented in each elementary school's individualized plan.*

Learning Opportunities in Elementary Schools

Procedures

- Schools will be open five days a week.
- Masks are highly encouraged for students.
- Staff will wear masks and/or face shields.
- Students will not be allowed to congregate in areas of the school upon school arrival or dismissal. (Guidelines will be set by individual schools)
- Students will go directly to the designed areas listed in their individual school plan.
- Students will be encouraged to bring bottled water. Water fountains will not be available.
- All schools will have a staggered release time for buses and carline
- Classrooms will be sanitized on a regular basis
- Students will practice social distancing throughout the schools as space allows

Learning Opportunities in Elementary Schools

- Students will have assigned seating
- Classroom teachers will educate students on best practices (hand washing, limiting sharing of personal items, sneezing in elbow, etc.)
- The classroom teacher will minimize teaching practices that groups students in close proximity.
- Students will only be allowed to bring essential items to school. Clear backpacks are required.
- Check-ins and check-outs will follow Gadsden City Schools' practices for COVID-19
- Restrooms will be sanitized multiple times daily.
- Parents are highly encouraged to check student's temperature and for symptoms prior to sending them to school.
- Visitors are not allowed and prior approval must be made for parent teacher conferences, meetings with principal, and administration staff.

Instructional Guidance

- Once Traditional Learning begins, parents must adhere to the listed options for a minimum of nine weeks.
- Blended option may be used in the event of a school or classroom outbreak.
- Staggered entry will begin when students return to Traditional Learning to orientate students to social distancing and school practices.
- Students will parent last names starting with
 - A to E- TBD
 - F to K-TBD
 - L to Q- TBD
 - R to Z- TBD
- Students are expected to take ownership of their learning. Assignments and tests will be rigorous and graded in all learning opportunities.
- Students with individualized learning plans (IEPs) will be graded based on the student's ability and assignment completion.

Extra-Curricular Activities Elementary

- **Physical Education and Enrichment will still take place.**
- **Groups must spread out in the gym, on the playground, and athletic fields.**
- **Outdoor physical education will be implemented unless there is inclement weather.**
- **The staff will enforce limited physical contact between students.**
- **Each individual school will address club activities.**
- **Field trips and class parties will not be allowed due to COVID-19.**

Examples of Online Resources for Students and Parents

- [Kahn Academy](#)
- [ABC Mouse](#)
- [Splash Learn](#)

Please check your School's Webpage for Additional Resources

Traditional Learning Opportunities

- Daily attendance will be required whether Remote or Traditional
- Face to face instruction will physically occur in the school building.
- Social distancing guidelines will be followed based on each school's individualized plan

Remote Learning Opportunities

- **Students work on-line from home and teachers will regularly check in and provide remote instruction via google classroom, google meet, etc.**

Blended Learning Opportunities

- **Blended is only available to students who are affected by COVID-19**

GCS Secondary Schools

- Each school will develop an individual school plan to address specific guidance for 6-12 students.
- Class changes will be staggered to avoid large crowds in the hallways.
- Lockers will not be used in most cases in order to limit congestion and reduce class transition time.
- Desks will be wiped down at the end of each class.
- Students will carry clear backpacks to each class with necessary materials and chromebook.
- Academic assignments will be posted primarily through Google Classroom or other online learning platforms such as IXL, UsaTestPrep, MYon, etc.

GCS Secondary Schools

- Hallways and bathrooms will be closely monitored to ensure social distancing is observed during class changes.
- Plans for entrance and exit from school each day will be outlined in each school plan.
- Students should bring a bottle of water to school each day.
- Whether students choose the remote or traditional learning option, Student assignments will be standards-based and graded for accuracy.
- Students will have assigned seats in all classrooms to monitor contract tracing.

Extracurricular Activities Secondary

Additional Guidance may be forthcoming as athletic seasons progress.

- Students are encouraged to self-report to administrators, sponsors, or coaches if they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. The student will then need to abide by applicable protocols.
- All athletic teams, band, cheer, and academic clubs will follow guidance as applicable during meetings, practices, transportation, competition and other organized activities provided by the AHSAA, ADPH, ALSDE, and the Gadsden City Board of Education. These guidelines will be distributed by the respective supervisor.
- Only Essential Personnel will be directly involved on sidelines or club-based practices, competitions, etc.

Safety and Wellness

- Each school will have a safety committee that will adhere to the guidelines of Gadsden City Schools safety and wellness measures and the CDC guidelines.
- Teachers and staff will follow the safety and wellness guidelines and implement social distancing as much as possible.
- Signage regarding hygiene procedures will be posted throughout the school.
- Principals and staff will continue to work on plans to improve social distancing.
- The Gadsden City Schools safety and wellness practices will be followed by all schools along with each individualized school plan.
- Designated areas will be set aside for sick students.
- School counselors and school social workers will be available when needed.

Safety and Wellness Measures

- All staff will be required to complete the annual Standard Precaution Training
- Posters and signage available for classrooms and school hallways.
- CNP workers, bus drivers, nurses, and custodians will be provided with PPE.
- PPE can be requested by other personnel and provided based on availability.
- If a child has a pre-existing condition, parents are advised to speak with their child's primary care physician about returning to school.
- Parents will be encouraged to take students' temperatures and assess students before sending to school. Students who have a temperature of 100.4 or higher and/or exhibiting symptoms should stay at home.
- Parents should discourage students from taking non-essential items to school. Items taken to school should be sanitized as feasibly possible.
- Teachers and staff will follow safety and wellness guidelines.

Operations and Facilities

- Post signage regarding hygiene and covering the mouth when coughing.
- Custodial staff will be trained in recommended cleaning guidelines issued by OSHA and CDC.
- Air filters will be changed regularly.
- Water fountains will be disabled. Individual water bottles are encouraged.
- School leaders will conduct and document facility walkthroughs with custodial staff to ensure classrooms, common spaces, and the exterior are prepared and safe for staff and students.

Health and Wellness

Parent/Guardian Prevention

- Parents, monitor your student for COVID-19 each morning BEFORE sending them to school. A student with a temperature of 100.4 or greater, cough, congestion, shortness of breath, sore throat, muscle pain, headache, chills, new loss of taste or smell, or stomach symptoms should STAY HOME. Consider COVID testing if no other explanation.
- Parents, administer any morning medication doses at home in order to limit the number of students in the health room, thus limiting possible exposure to illness.
- Teach and reinforce proper handwashing, coughing/sneezing into tissue or bend of elbow, not touching eyes, nose, and mouth, and not sharing personal items/supplies.
- Parents, update contact information at your student's school and make plans to ensure someone is available to check your student out if needed.

Health and Wellness

Parent/Guardian Prevention

- Students are not required to wear a mask, however they are strongly encouraged
- Parents, if your student has a chronic or pre-existing health condition, please speak with their primary care physician about their return to school.
- Make sure your student's immunizations are up to date. Student's entering K-4, K-5, and 6th grade will most likely need immunizations.
- Parents, notify the principal or school nurse immediately if your student has been tested for COVID, has been exposed to COVID, or if anyone in the household tests positive for COVID.
- Parents should discourage students from taking non-essential items to school. Items taken to school should be sanitized as feasibly possible.

Health Room Visits

- Teachers will limit sending students to the nurse for minor problems (ex. bandaid). Each teacher will be provided with bandaids to keep in the classroom.
- Teacher/Staff will call the school nurse prior to sending a student to the nurse office in order to limit the number of students in the health room and limit exposure.
- Any student that presents to the nurse office with a temperature 100.4 or greater and/or symptoms of illness will be provided a face mask and placed in an isolation area/room with social distancing measures in place until student is checked out. Nurses will wear appropriate PPE while caring for these student's. The student may NOT return to school until they have been symptom free without medication for 72 hours or have a physician's release.

Health Room Visits

- Contact tracing will be performed by the Alabama Department of Public Health.
- The Alabama Department of Public Health defines a direct exposure as being in contact with someone closer than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes
- Students who have tested positive for COVID will require a physician's release before returning to school.
- School nurses will sanitize and disinfect the health room numerous times throughout the school day. Custodians will clean and disinfect the health room after school each day.

This plan is based on current guidelines from the ADPH, ALSDE, CDC, and local physicians and is subject to change as new recommendations are released.

Child Nutrition Program

- **Local CNP will adhere to current nutrition guidelines and practices**
- **Families are encouraged to prepay for meals to reduce the handling of money.**
- **Students will use lunch cards to swipe for meals at the registers in an effort to pay for meals without using the keypad.**
- **Each school will create cafeteria procedures based on their individualized school needs/demographics.**

Child Nutrition Program

- GCS will work with the ADPH to follow current guidelines. The lunchroom will begin with 50 percent occupancy and the rotation of classrooms dining in the cafeteria and those dining in the classrooms.
- Outside visitors and/or family guests will not be allowed to dine in the school cafeterias.
- Students will not self serve meals.
- Local school CNP will adhere to current nutrition guidelines and practices.
- Families are encouraged to prepay for meals to reduce the handling of money.
- Students will use lunch cards to swipe for meals at the register in an effort to pay for meals without using the keypad.
- Remote Learning Students will pick-up lunches weekly.

Transportation

Social distancing will be utilized on buses with students with disabilities. Bus drivers and assisting staff will be required to wear PPE (Face shields, shoe guards, etc.). Students will be provided with PPE equipment such as face shields, masks, etc when needed on the special education buses. Only transportation staff and aides will be allowed to enter the bus when loading and unloading students. (If parent or guardian has to board the bus for any reason, they must wear PPE equipment). Parents and guardians will be reminded that it is their responsibility to check their child's temperature and screen for COVID-19 symptoms prior to them being placed on the bus. Roof hatches and windows will be opened when applicable to help circulate fresh air.

Transportation Guidelines

- Woods Brothers Inc. will sanitize and disinfect each bus after morning and afternoon routes as required by the Transportation contract.
- Routes may be altered to allow for lower seating capacity as needed.
- Arrival and departure times may also be altered or staggered to accommodate the number of students using bus transportation.
- Each bus will be equipped with a hand sanitizing station.
- Students using bus transportation will be required to wear PPE.
- Drivers and other staff assisting with the transportation of students will wear PPE.
- Bus drivers and assisting staff will receive training in recognizing the symptoms of COVID-19.
- Parents/guardians will be reminded that it is their responsibility to check their children's temperature and screen for COVID-19 symptoms prior to being placed on a bus.
- Roof hatches and windows will be opened when applicable to help circulate fresh air.

Mental Health

Goals and Vision of the Roadmap

The Gadsden City School System Roadmap was created in the hopes of providing information about the many resources, support systems, and services that are available to help best support the mental health and educational needs of our children and their families.

The services that help support the healthy social and emotional development of children can be somewhat overwhelming and confusing at times.

It is to be used only as a guide and easy to reference source of information. Intended audiences include families, school personnel, mental health professionals, human service providers, and others.

Focus on Mental Health

It is critical for Gadsden City Schools to focus on the mental health and well-being of our staff and students. Mental health concerns can be identified and supported both at home and at school, and it is important for Gadsden City Schools to consider the mental health of its entire school community.

Home

Gadsden City Schools should educate and support families on identifying the indicators that signal staff and students are suffering from anxiety, depression, or lack of coping strategies. Families should be provided with resources and contact information for community mental health resources.

School

Gadsden City Schools will ensure our staff is trained on identifying the indicators that signal staff and students are suffering from anxiety, depression or lack of coping strategies.

Support Coping and Resilience

- Encourage employees and students to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19, including social media, if they are feeling overwhelmed or distressed.
- Promote employees and students eating healthy, exercising, getting sleep, and finding time to unwind.
- Encourage employees and students to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling.
- Ensure staff are educated on the signs and symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Gadsden City Schools should leverage their school counselors and social workers to support staff and students.

Community Resources for Families Substance Abuse/Mental Health

- Mountain View Hospital
- Riverview Medical Center
- Gadsden Regional Hospital

Abuse and Neglect

- CED Mental Health Center
- Department of Human Resources
- The Barrie Center for Children
- Hill Crest Behavioral Services

Parent Education/Support

- Family Success Center
- CED Mental Health Center
- Head Start
- Charlotte Campbell Parent /Teacher Resource Center
- Child Find
- United Way Program
- Extended Family
- Quality of Life
- Even Start
- Children under the age of 5 years old
- Single Pregnant Girls Classes

School Counseling During COVID-19: Online Lessons and Resources

- Virtual Elementary School Counseling
- Virtual Middle School Counseling
- Virtual High School Counseling

Career Development

- Google Expeditions
- Social/Emotional Development
- BrainPOP provides movies with social/emotional learning components that students can watch and respond to.
- CASEL has collected a number of resources to assist in addressing students' social and emotional needs.
- Centervention game-based behavior interventions help students practice social and emotional skills.
- Inside SEL links to a number of social/emotional learning resources.

Career Development

- Inside SEL links to a number of social/emotional learning resources.
- NewSel offers social/emotional learning lessons students can complete remotely.
- Tech Tools and Distance Learning
- Flipgrid offers a platform for recording and sharing videos (free for educators)
- Loom allows you to capture your screen, voice and face and instantly share your video (free for educators).
- Microsoft Teams lets you collaborate while working remotely with your team (free access).

Other

Helping Children and Families Cope with the COVID-19 Pandemic:

A resilience-enhancing activity book that helps children and families deal with the psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The material is highly interactive and designed for adults to work on together with children.

Virtual School Day: More than 100 free live K-12 classes available all day long intended to help parents fill their children's day with enriched learning. Some popular classes are "Intro to Spanish for Kids," "Coolest Women in History," "Java Programming Basics" and "The Story of Your Favorite Fairy Tales."

Special Education and Special Population Reopening Guide

Introduction

While reopening may present challenges for all, students with disabilities may experience these challenges to a greater extent than their peers and may take longer to remediate lost skills. Students with disabilities face many challenges. Health concerns may be disproportionately affected by changes in their education, requiring flexibility in how their re-entry occurs. To address the complexities of returning to school for our students who receive special education and related services, further guidance will be forthcoming and will be shared as it is released from the state department of education.

Requirements

With the understanding that there has been no waiver of requirements under the IDEA for provision of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). During COVID-19 school closures, schools were required to provide FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students, as well as those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students. Schools may not be able to provide all services in the same manner that they are typically provided. Federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the individualized needs of students receiving special education services.

Guidance and policies related to school reopening plans apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for individual education programs under the IDEA and accommodation plans for eligible students under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. A student's individual needs will be addressed in their IEP, however, the nature and/or severity of a student's disability may require unique considerations. Protocols should consider the student's developmental level and skills and the IEP team's decision.

Guidance

- Anticipate flexibility with these guidelines for specific special education programs, so long as the program follows established standards as well as public health strategies such as proper hygiene, social distancing, and cleaning/sanitizing.
- Implement protocols to communicate safety guidelines to students, staff, and families to ensure that they feel safe within the school environment (use multiple means of communication in multiple languages to ensure equal access to the information).

Self-contained Classrooms

- Classrooms with high-risk students in our most restrictive environment who may have underlying health conditions or undergoing disease treatment will be sanitized and cleaned throughout the day.
- The use of social stories, visual cues, and other appropriate developmental strategies will be used to reinforce new concepts and protocols put in place by the individual schools for the safety of the students and staff.
- High-risk students and/or families who may require remote instruction full time due to underlying health conditions, undergoing disease treatment, or those with family members who are at-risk (virtual reopening plan is highly encouraged).

Educational Services

Traditional

Special Education-specially designed instruction will be delivered per the IEP by a certified special education teacher and general education teacher through face to face, google classroom, and educational programs including IXL, Lexia, Freck, USATest Prep, Education.com, News-2-You, Matt and Molly, and programs identified in the student's IEP.

Educational Services

Virtual

Special Education-specially designed instruction will be delivered per the IEP by a certified special education teacher and general education teacher through google classroom, Screencastify, and educational programs including IXL, Lexia, Freck, USATest Prep, Education.com, News-02-You, Matt and Molly, and programs identified in the student's IEP.

Educational Services

Blended

Special Education-specially designed instruction will be delivered per the IEP by a certified special education teacher and general education teacher through google classroom, Screencastify and educational programs including IXL, Lexia, Freck, USATest Prep, Education.com, News-2-You, Matt and Molly, and programs identified in the student's IEP. Students will follow the traditional rotation set aside by the individual schools for re-entry.

Specially-designed instruction will be determined by the IEP on a case by case basis. The location and amount of services will be determined by the IEP team. The team will need to consider all safety guidelines when determining the location of these services.

Related Services

Related services will be provided in school for all traditional students based on the student's IEP. Virtual students will receive services by Alabama Pediatric Therapy Services. The school system will contact and set up services per the student's IEP. Due to COVID, these services will be provided via teletherapy and/or in-office visits. The school system will contact Alabama Pediatric Therapy Services with the amount of services needed per the IEP. Once this contact is made, the parent will contact APTS to schedule the day and time of the services.

Blended (affected by COVID 19)

Students will receive teletherapy until cleared for other options.

School Closure

Gadsden City School System will follow all federal and state guidelines for services. Services will be delivered under the COVID-19 guidelines and safety measures.

Students who receive speech services, will receive individualized speech kits based on their IEP along with teletherapy.

Extra-Curricular Activities for Special Education Students

Extra-curricular activities will be limited. The Special Education Department and students will follow the guidelines set up by the Gadsden City Board of Education in reference to extra-curricular activities. Beautiful Rainbow Café will operate on a take-out basis only to eliminate personal contact and to encourage social distancing.

English Learners (ELs)

While returning to school will present challenges for all, English learners (ELs) may experience these challenges to a greater extent than their peers, as they transition back to a school setting from remote learning and continue to develop their English language proficiency concurrently while learning grade-level academic content. To mitigate these challenges, schools must make every effort to provide support to ELs to allow them to access academic content as well as providing them with their supplemental language instruction program. English language development is a part of universal instruction. It is paramount that grade level content is provided with adequate scaffolds and supports, so that ELs may access the grade level content being provided in the classroom while developing language proficiency.

English Learners Requirements:

- Understand that like all other students, ELs are entitled to FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education). The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IV, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (1974) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) provide guidance on the services to which ELs are entitled. ELs must have access to the general education curriculum as well as to a supplemental language instruction education program. During school closures due to COVID-19, ELs continue to be entitled to receive their supplemental EL instructional program in addition to their general education program of mainstream, grade-level and content-area instruction. Such language instructional education programs may consist of a range of services, including English as a Second Language (ESL), Sheltered Instruction and others. When returning to school buildings, language instruction education programs must continue.
- Provide ELs who are also identified as students with disabilities supports for their EL needs, as well as supports for their disabilities. During COVID-19, these dually identified students must continue to receive these supports. As in times with traditional schooling, dually identified students should have their language needs represented in their annual meetings about their IEP.

Considerations for Outreach to Families of English Learners:

- Communicate with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in English in a language they understand as required by Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. As during traditional schooling, communications during school closures due to COVID-19 may be provided through translation and/or interpretation.
- Build in time for translation in order to provide timely communication
- Consider personal check-ins with ELs and families, using an interpreter if needed
- Explore strategies to increase the access and understanding of families to online instruction and resources
- Provide support for the social emotional needs of ELs and families

English Learners Guidance

- Consider that flexibility may be necessary for the implementation of specific supplemental language instruction education programs, but these programs must continue to be provided to ELs during remote learning.
- Establish systems for ongoing collaboration between Classroom and EL teachers, and EL support providers. Ensure that mainstream teachers embed accessibility tools, such as scaffolds, explicit vocabulary instruction and differentiated supports into their grade-level and content-area instruction.
- Develop and maintain ongoing communication with families of ELs regarding remote learning and returning to their school building. Create procedures for supporting translation and interpretation for families with limited English proficiency regarding remote learning, instructional methods and returning to school.
- Develop a school culture where multilingualism is seen as a rich asset that contributes to the school and broader communities.
- Offer web-based, on-demand professional learning on how to serve ELs effectively.

English Learners Guidance

- Establish a process for carrying out the required procedures for potential English learners and identified English learners including:
 - ensuring adherence to the statewide identification procedures (i.e., Home Language Survey, English language proficiency screener);
 - continuing to provide parental notifications (i.e., EL identification letter, EL continuation of services letter, EL exit letter);
 - adhering to annual English language proficiency assessment requirements;
- Attend to the SEL needs of English learners, understanding that ELs may have unique, individual needs from each other and from their non-EL peers.

Screening of New English Learners:

Once schools reopen and students are attending schools, our school system will use state-identified EL screening tools to test students for EL services eligibility. However, due to modified school schedules, some schools may still need to identify students as provisional ELs until all students have been screened and identified as ELs.

Strategies to Consider for Continuing English Language Development Services and Ensuring Access to General Education:

- Provide small group and individual support based on each EL's needs
- Use scaffolding instructional strategies
- Focus on developing productive and receptive language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Use formative assessments to identify gaps
- Develop digital opportunities for review and recover
- Ongoing collaboration between classroom teacher and EL teacher providing appropriate instruction
- Provide office hours to touch base with individual ELs when needed.