



West Seneca Central School District

2020-2021 Parent Handbook

The Mission of the West Seneca Central School District is to provide a diversified educational program which will produce literate, caring, ethical, responsible, and productive citizens who are capable of adapting to change.

During this uncertain time of the COVID-19 pandemic and school reopening, West Seneca Central Schools are dedicated to the well being of its students and families. This handbook will serve as a resource for families as we begin the 2020-2021 school year.

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West Seneca Central Schools Reopening Plan

To begin the 2020-2021 year, the first day of school in remote instruction is **September 8, 2020**.

Over the course of the last several weeks, our district has carefully reviewed guidance from the New York State Department of Health and New York State Education Department to develop a reopening plan that best suits the educational needs and safety of the West Seneca School Community. In order to provide our students with the safest learning environment and the most regular and consistent access to teachers, the West Seneca Central School District will utilize a multi-faceted plan for reopening. Phase 1 of the plan will have ALL students beginning the school year in a remote learning instructional model (i.e. students will be learning from home and not attending school in person). The Remote Learning Option was determined to best ensure the safety and welfare of our students, staff, and community. Students will be learning remotely, at home, with a combination of synchronous (live) and asynchronous learning. Students will begin this instructional model on the first day of school, September 8, 2020. In order to allow parents to plan, we are setting a time frame for this model of instruction to be in place through the Thanksgiving Holiday. With this in mind, we will be continually assessing our capacity to safely bring some or all students to campus for instruction and/or targeted services throughout this time frame. Our goal as a district is to eventually return all students to our campus this year in some capacity.

As students are learning remotely and begin to transition back into our school buildings, please refer to procedures within this 2020- 2021 handbook for guidance.

Section I: Health and Safety Guidelines

Since the school experience will be very different from before with desks far apart from each other, teachers maintaining physical distance, and the possibility of staying in the classroom for multiple classes, it is unlike anything your child is used to. Before school is in session, you may want to talk to your child and explain that all these steps are being taken to keep everyone safe and healthy. CDC has created recommendations to help adults have conversations with children about COVID-19 and ways they can avoid getting and spreading the disease.

Children may worry about themselves, their family, and friends getting ill with COVID-19. Parents, family members, school staff, and other trusted adults can play an important role in

helping children make sense of what they hear in a way that is honest, accurate, and minimizes anxiety or fear. Here are the contacts for our school professionals:

West Senior: School Social Worker: Mrs. DiPasquale 677-3368	East Senior School Social Worker: Mrs. Syracuse 677-3312	Allendale Elementary School Social Worker: Mr. Hanley 677-3670
West Middle School Social Worker: Mrs. Smart 677-3513	East Middle School Social Worker Dr. Scozzaro 677- 3536	Northwood Elementary School Social Worker Mrs. Fitzpatrick 677- 3649
West Elementary School Social Worker Ms. Caprio 677-3166	Clinton Elementary School Social Worker Mrs. Schoepflin 677-3631	Winchester Elementary School Social Worker Mr. Rejewski 677- 3594

Facts about COVID-19 to discuss with children

Try to keep information simple and remind them that health officials are working hard to keep everyone safe and healthy.

- COVID-19 is the short name for “coronavirus disease 2019.” It is a new virus. Scientists and doctors are still learning about it.
- Recently, this virus has made a lot of people sick. Scientists and doctors are trying to learn more so they can help people who get sick.
- Doctors and health experts are working hard to help people stay healthy.

What can I do so that I don’t get COVID-19?

You can practice healthy habits at home, school, and while at play to help protect against the spread of COVID-19.

Guiding Principles to Keep in Mind

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as handwashing, staying home when sick) and environmental cleaning and disinfection are important principles that are covered in this document. Fortunately, there are a number of actions schools are taking to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread during school sessions and activities.

Actions to Prepare for In-Person Classes

- Check with your child each morning for signs of illness. If your child has a temperature of 100.0 degrees or higher, they should not go to school.
- Make sure your child does not have a sore throat or other signs of illness, like a cough, fatigue, nausea, chills, headache or body aches.
- If a child had close contact with a COVID-19 case, they should not go to school.
- Review and practice proper hand washing techniques at home, especially before and after eating, sneezing, coughing, and adjusting a face covering. Explain to your child why handwashing is so important.
- Talk to our child about precautions to take at school. Children will be advised to: wash and sanitize their hands more often, keep physical distance from other students, wear a cloth face covering, avoid sharing objects with other students, and use safe hand sanitizer.
- Make sure your information is current at school, including emergency contacts and individuals authorized to pick up your children from school.
- Plan for possible school closures or possible periods of quarantine.
- Talk with your child about how school is going and about interactions with classmates and teachers and communicating their feelings.
- You can be a role model for your child by practicing self care: take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, eating well and staying socially connected.



Face Covering Requirements- All of our students are required to wear a face covering following these guidelines:

- Cloth face coverings should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- Cloth face coverings should cover the nose and mouth, and be secured with ear loops or ties
- Face coverings should allow for breathing without restriction
- It is encouraged to have multiple cloth face coverings so they can be washed and dried daily without damage or change to shape
- Label your child's face covering clearly so they are not lost
- Practice with your child putting on and taking off masks without touching the cloth
- Help build children's comfort with wearing a face covering by praising them for wearing it correctly and talking about how they protect people from getting sick
- Consider practicing storing face coverings (e.g. in a zip lock bag) at times of not wearing it, like while they are eating

Student Health Screenings

All parents/guardians are asked to screen their child EACH DAY before they depart for school using the following questions:

1. Have I knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has had symptoms of COVID-19?
2. Have I tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
3. Have I experienced any symptoms of COVID-19 including a temperature of greater than 100.0F in the past 10 days?
4. Have I travelled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days?

Parents who answer “YES” to any of these questions for their child should not send their child to school and contact the school nurse and the child’s medical provider.

If you test positive for COVID-19

TAKE STEPS TO HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19



STAY HOME.

Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.



STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR DOCTOR.



GET REST AND STAY HYDRATED.

Take over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better.



SEPARATE YOURSELF FROM OTHER PEOPLE.

As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people and pets in your home.



If a student becomes sick...

Parents will be required to follow normal call-in procedures for children who are ill and cannot attend school. Please contact the school and provide a follow up note upon return to school.

Please notify the school nurse of any COVID-19 related symptoms.

If the student takes a test for COVID-19, follow State and Local guidance for isolation, quarantine and contact tracing.

Please contact the school nurse prior to returning to school following any COVID-19 related illness.

West Senior Mrs. Boody 677- 3380	East Senior Mrs. Reigle 677- 3319	Allendale Elementary Mrs. Komosinski 677- 3664
West Middle Mrs. Thibault 677- 3508	East Middle Mrs. Boxler 677- 3564	Northwood Elementary Mrs. Pisto 677- 3644
West Elementary Mrs. Larson 677-3256	Clinton Elementary Mrs. Zubler 677-3624	Winchester Elementary Mrs. Donnelly 677- 3584

Section II: Building Operations

Safety Drills

New York State requires safety drills for fire and lockdowns to be conducted in schools. While these drills are practiced, social distancing and face mask requirements will be in effect. This may result in drills taking longer. Students will be instructed that social distancing and face mask requirements will be secondary considerations in the event of a true emergency.

Parent/Guardian Visitors to the School Buildings

At this time, in order to ensure the safety of our students/staff, visitors will be limited to only parents/guardians with scheduled appointments. If you are arriving at the school for a scheduled appointment, please use the buzzer system to communicate with our school staff. When you arrive, please sanitize your hands upon entry to the building and wear a face covering. Disposable masks will be available if you need one.

Before entering, all visitors must answer the following health screening questions:

1. Have I knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19?
2. Have I tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID19 in the past 14 days?
3. Have I experienced any symptoms of COVID 19 including a temperature of greater than 100.0 F in the past 14 days?

4. Have I traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID 19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days?

Visitors who answer “Yes” to any of these questions will not be permitted access to the building.

*All efforts will be made to conduct meetings remotely through telephone calls, e-mails, Google Meet sessions, etc.

Community Use of Facilities

For the start of the school year, district facilities will not be available for use by community organizations and groups. This will enable us to focus on supporting our students and maintaining a clean and safe environment.

Transportation

Buses:

- When students are riding our school buses, all school rules and procedures should continue to be followed.
- As students board the school bus, the student will be asked to pause to take their temperature before boarding. Any student with a temperature reading over 100 degrees F will be assisted to return to their home safely.
- All students are asked to wear a cloth face covering at the bus stop and on the school bus. Buses will be equipped with disposable face coverings for any student that needs one.
- As students board the bus, they will be asked to seat themselves from the rear of the bus forward to minimize students from walking past one another. Students from the same household are encouraged to sit together.
- Bus drivers and aides will be required to wear facial coverings at all times.

Parent Transportation:

To ensure safety and an organized flow of traffic, each building has procedures in place for parent drop-off and pick-up. Please follow these safety procedures as they are explained.

Food Service:

- Students will be asked to practice proper hand hygiene before and after eating meals
- Social distancing will be considered when preparing lunch spaces for students
- School meals will be individually prepared and served when possible. When possible, food will be wrapped to reduce the possibility of contamination.
- Daily breakfast will be served in a pre-packaged “grab-and-go” container for students to take to their homeroom to eat.

Section III: Teaching and Learning

In planning for the 2020-2021 academic school year, we must ensure that all students have the opportunity to safely engage in learning regardless of the instructional model in place: in-person, remote, or hybrid. It is important to note that it is possible for a shift between models to occur as the school year progresses.

PLEASE NOTE: The West Seneca Central School District understands the need for safe and secure virtual classroom solutions to protect our students and community. Moreover, our students’ privacy and the confidentiality of their personally identifiable information are protected under federal law. Accordingly, independent audio or video recording of virtual classroom sessions or instruction is not permitted. Taking or posting of images, videos, or screenshots of classmates, teachers, or class content to the web, to social media or any other forum will not be tolerated, and will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Further, it is prohibited to share Google Meet invites with any other individuals.

Tips for successful remote learning

Create a flexible schedule and routine for learning at home:

- Have consistent bedtimes and get up at the same time, Monday through Friday.
- Structure the day for learning, free time, healthy meals and snacks, and physical activity.
- Make sure you dedicate a learning space in the home with good lighting, free from distractions. Remember, this is your child’s classroom...give your child space to engage in the lesson on their own as if they were in the physical classroom. Therefore, parents/guardians should refrain from engaging in dialogue with teachers

during class time. Parents/guardians can contact teachers during designated office hours and/or email.

Consider the needs and adjustment required for your child's age group:

- The transition to being at home will be different for preschoolers, K-5, middle school students, and high school students. Talk to your child about expectations and how they are adjusting to being at home versus at school.
- Consider ways your child can stay connected with their friends without spending time in person.

Look for ways to make learning fun:

- Have hands-on activities, like puzzles, painting, drawing, and making things.
- Encourage children to build a fort from sheets or practice counting by stacking blocks.
- Practice handwriting and grammar by writing letters to family members. This is a great way to connect and limit face-to-face contact.
- Start a journal with your child to document this time and discuss the shared experience.
- Use audiobooks or see if your local library is hosting virtual or live-streamed reading events.

Student tips for successful **VIDEO CALLS**



1



Check in with your teacher. Gather your materials.

2



Be on time. Check in thru the chat when you arrive.

3



Stay engaged (nod or thumbs up) if others are talking.

4



Mute your mic if you're not speaking.

5



Use the chat or raise hand to share ?s/ideas.

6



Wait for teacher to call on you or unmute your mic.

7



Take notes in a doc or on paper for reference.

8



If using video, look at the camera, not the screen.

Online Learning Etiquette

West Seneca Central Schools Online Learning Student Etiquette			
			
When engaged in online learning, always...	When engaged in teacher-led whole group instruction...	When engaged in small group instruction...	When engaged in individualized instruction...
Be on time and ready to learn.	Mute your microphone if you experience background noise.	Mute your microphone if you experience background noise.	Put forth 100% effort.
Make sure your device is charged/plugged in and ready to go with video on at all times.	Be ready to take notes.	Be ready to take notes.	Listen attentively.
Be prepared...Have all materials ready.	Give others a chance to participate.	Encourage others and give classmates a chance to participate.	Ask and answer questions out loud and when prompted.
Use the device only for its intended use.	Ask questions...use the chat box or raise your hand.	Work together when possible.	
Wear clothing that is within the dress code.		Ask questions...use the chat box or raise your hand.	
Choose a good location, free from distractions.			
Be present, be focused, and participate fully.			
Be respectful of your teachers' and classmates' privacy...do not photograph, record, and/or share			
Choose your words carefully and use good body language.			

Please note that the Student Code of Conduct is in effect during this period of remote learning and students are expected to comply with all rules and any infractions are subject to disciplinary action as outlined therein.

Learning plans

- All students will be provided with an electronic device to be used in school and at home.
- The District will work to provide families in need of an internet connection at home.
- All teachers PK-12 will use Google Classroom to post assignments, communicate with students and families, create assignments, and share information.
- Teachers will use PowerSchool to access assignments, grades, and attendance.
- Daily student attendance will be recorded in PowerSchool, regardless of the model of instruction. Parents are encouraged to review their child's attendance

and assignments in the Parent Portal

- If you have any questions for teachers, please contact them during teacher office hours, For other questions, please contact your child's school.

Online Resources

For all information related to online learning please use this link to visit our website. This can be found under the ACADEMICS tab, in the WSCSD GO folder.

<https://www.wscschools.org/domain/2605>

This link is our hub to support you with remote learning.

Internet Safety

Be sure to keep your chromebook close to you. When you're done using it for the day, put it in a safe place at home. Don't leave it by itself, outside, or in a public place.

For more tips about Internet safety please refer to this guide:

https://lqz672gt11i33308z3oiv786-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Security-Tips-for-K12-Online-Learning_Final.pdf

12 **ONLINE SAFETY TIPS**
EVERY CHILD NEEDS TO LEARN

A stranger online is still a stranger

Too much of anything can be bad, use the internet wisely.

Do not lie on social media

Don't believe everything you see online

Do not share personal information

Use the internet and social media for good and to learn.

When in doubt do not share. Remember anything you share stays online forever.

Likes and followers aren't really that important

Do not click on suspicious links.

Do not keep secrets from your parents. If anyone asks to meet you, speak up.

Do not be rude online

Cyberbullying is wrong.