



Washington Elementary School

COVID-19 Reopening Handbook

Connect - Prepare - Reopen

Washington Elementary School
301 Washington Avenue
Union, NJ 07083

Overview

Creating a connection with the Washington Elementary School (WES) Family/Community has never been more important. The past year has required us all to work together and communicate with one another to best serve our students and support their learning.

WES is committed to taking every step necessary to ensure all students have what they need to stay connected to their lessons, teachers, peers, and resources. We will continue to update you with information as we progress through the school year. It is important that you feel part of this process and confident in your child's education.

To maintain a strong sense of family and to keep you updated, please make sure you update your most recent contact information, including your email address and cell phone number in the Genesis Parent Portal.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic continues to create uncertainty, we remain committed to working with local and state health partners to develop a layered set of safety measures and protocols to help keep our family, especially our children, safe. The district may need to shift between learning models based on direction from our local and state public health officials and real-time health data. Therefore, it is important to understand some basic terminology found in this plan.

COVID-19 Terminology

100% In-person: All students attend classes physically in-person.

Hybrid: Students attend classes in-person and virtually.

100% Virtual/Synchronous: Students attend classes at home, in real time, simultaneously with peers who attend in-person.

Asynchronous: Students learn from home, using a variety of tools, when other learning options are not available due to outbreaks and/or quarantining.

Quarantine: Used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent the spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their doctor and state and local health departments.

Isolation: Used to separate people infected with COVID-19 (those sick and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it is safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific "sick room" or area and use a separate bathroom (if available).

Confirmed Positive Case: An individual case of COVID-19 that has been verified/confirmed by public health or another healthcare provider.

GOALS

1. Implement protocols and structures that protect the health and safety of students, and staff.
2. Develop sound educational learning options for students and parents.
3. Maximize academic and social emotional growth opportunities for students.

HEALTH & SAFETY

For the WES hybrid model to be successful, it is imperative that staff members, students, and families continue to follow the social distancing guidelines set by the State of New Jersey and the CDC outside of school hours. In-person learning is dependent upon our school community following the guidelines with regularity and attentiveness. We must continue to do our best to support one another in adhering to these guidelines, and we ask that families emphasize the importance of these procedures through discussion with your child.

Prevention Measures

Parents and Guardians - Daily Health and Safety Expectations

Parents MUST complete the COVID form for their child(ren) daily BEFORE 8:00 am. Failure to do so will result in your child being refused entry to the school building. You will receive a phone call from the school if you did not complete the Covid form for your child. Any student who comes to the school without the form being completed will remain in a secure and supervised location within the school until the form is completed, or the student is picked up.

- Take your child's temperature before they leave for school to ensure they do not have a fever.
- Review health and safety expectations with your child.
- Send your child in every in-person day with a clean face covering that securely covers the nose and mouth.

Student - Daily Health and Safety Expectations

All students must practice proper [CDC infection control measures](#):

If coughing or sneezing, students must cover their mouth and nose with a tissue, or the inside of their elbow, and immediately discard the tissue.

Avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.

Avoid touching any surfaces unnecessarily.

Refrain from physical contact, including hugs and hand-shakes.

Face Coverings

Face coverings are required for all students and staff in all Township of Union Public Schools. In accordance with guidance from the CDC, the NJDOH and the NJDOE, the following requirements are in place until further notice.

and on school transportation, **except** in the situations listed below. In all cases, appropriate six-foot physical distancing is required:

A multi-layer cloth face covering that covers the nose and mouth and secures with ear loops must be worn at all times by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds,

- while drinking
- during physical education classes when outdoors, when activities can occur with proper social distancing between individuals.
- While outside if 6 feet from other individuals
- Eating snack
- Mask breaks

Exceptions to mask/face covering requirements may be made for those for whom it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors. A medical note must be signed by your child's primary professional care provider. The exemption must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse. Face shields or physical barriers may be utilized as an alternative in some instances.

A student's mask/face covering is to be provided by the student's family. The school will supply disposable face coverings for individuals who arrive at a district building without one, or while boarding school transportation. In the event a mask is damaged during the day one will be provided by the school. **Gaiters, bandanas, and masks with one-way valves, and comparable items**, do not comply with this CDC guidance and are not permitted in district buildings or buses.

If the student is not willing to comply with the mask/face covering policy, they will be sent to the main office. Appropriate support and education on the importance of wearing a mask/face cover at school will be reviewed with the student. Every effort will be made to have students comply with these requirements so they may remain in school. ***If the student still refuses to comply, parents will be called and the student will be sent home.***

Students who fail to comply with the mask/face covering policy will be prohibited from in-person learning. Please refer to the link below for additional information.

[TUPS Covid-19 Addendum to Code of Student Conduct](#)

A copy of this addendum will be on Genesis, in the parent portal, for all parents and guardians. Please sign this form to document your receipt, acknowledgement, and compliance with the terms of the addendum and this handbook.

Visitor Policy

Visitors will be limited from entering the school building except for contracted service providers and those deemed necessary by building administrators. All visitors must make appointments before entering any district buildings. To keep our students and faculty safe, visitors who are permitted to enter the building must adhere to the following safety protocols:

- Enter and exit only through the front entrance of the school
- Verify that they are symptom-free
- Wear a mask/face cover at all times
- Apply hand sanitizer upon entry
- Maintain all social distancing guidelines while in the building
- Successfully complete the TUPS Visitors' Covid-19 Screening Question Form before entering any TUPS building.
- Visitors will have their temperatures taken before entering any TUPS building.
- Must have an appointment in order to enter the building
- Must call from their car prior to coming to the front door of the building
- Visitors will be given a disposable name tag to wear

Parent/Teacher/ School Counseling appointments: Will be conducted virtually or by phone conference as much as possible. If an in-person meeting is a necessity, an appointment must be made and communicated with the appropriate staff and the main office. A visitor log will be maintained by security personnel. The log will include the date of visit, contact phone number, arrival/departure times, and the areas visited within the building.

Parents dropping off items for students during the school day can leave a clearly-labeled item in the designated drop box in the main entrance vestibule. Items that have intrinsic and extrinsic value should not be left in the drop-off bin in the vestibule.

Learning Expectations

All students are expected to meet deadlines as set by their teachers. Students will be expected to fully engage in learning for the entire duration of each school day.

Classroom Environment

Classrooms are arranged to maximize space between seating and desks while maintaining compliance with the CDC guidelines. Clear desk shields have been placed on every teachers' desk, as well as students' desks, to increase safety between students and staff members. Teachers will implement distance procedures into classroom routines.

Computers

Students will be required to have a district-issued Chromebook for in-person/hybrid learning. Personal devices from home will not be permitted in school. Please make sure you pick up, and sign-out, a district-issued Chromebook, from WES, between 9:00 am and 2:30 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. All schools will be closed every Wednesday beginning the week of March 1st. Students will:

- take their Chromebooks to and from school daily.
- fully charge Chromebooks BEFORE entering school.
- bring Chromebook chargers.
- not share any Chromebooks, or anything else, during the school day.

Since we will have students in a blended environment, students who are virtual as well as in-person, please send in headphones so that it cuts down on distractions. Students will still be expected to go onto Google Meets while in the classroom and participate with students who are at home. Conversations and discussions are very vital, and are an important core of instruction. To help support discussions, headphones are needed.

Cohorting

To assist with contact tracing and to minimize contact, students will be divided into two cohorts based on the first letter of their last name. See **Daily Elementary Schedule (starting 3/15/21)** on page 12.

Cohort 1 - A to L,

Cohort 2 - M to Z

Cohort 1 will receive in-person instruction at the school on Monday and Tuesday of each week and will continue with remote learning Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday facilitated by both synchronous and asynchronous learning. Cohort 2 will receive in-person instruction at the school on Thursday and Friday of each week and will receive remote learning on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday facilitated by both asynchronous and synchronous learning.

Wednesday of each week will be 100% virtual learning for **all** students and staff.

A confirmed list of each cohort will be released to parents no later than Friday, March 5th so families can plan and arrange for childcare and transportation.

Virtual Learning Guidelines

During virtual learning sessions the following guidelines will be in effect:

Students must attend the **entire** class/virtual session, and return digitally when directed, and/or complete the asynchronous learning activity.

Students will be encouraged to have their video on in whole-class sessions, break out sessions, and support sessions unless agreed upon by the teacher.

Students will have their first and last names as identifiers during each live session and use their Township of Union school account. Students may be denied access to class if they do not login with their district email account.

Students will have blank or non-descript backgrounds. Students with distracting backgrounds will be asked to remove them.

Students will set up a workspace and commit to a location for the entire session. The workspace should have all materials needed and ready for use.

Recording of live lessons is prohibited. Any use of teacher, or student, images is prohibited. Students will abide by the class rules and expectations their teachers have outlined.

Attendance Policy

The TUPS Attendance Policy applies to both in-person and virtual learning classes. All students are to be present at all times during a live lesson. Staff will take attendance utilizing Genesis for both in-person/hybrid and virtual students. As you already know, please call and/or email the school nurse if your child will be absent. Please call or email the WES nurse, Virginia Chi at (908) 851- 6466 and vchi@twpunionschools.org. . To assist us in preventing learning loss, to the best of our ability, it is important that students are fully and actively engaged in the learning process for the entire school day.

Entering School

Students must wear a mask/face covering when entering the building.

Exit doors have been assigned by class. Refer to this link for the entrance and exit door for your child. Students are to enter and exit through their assigned doors..

- School begins at 8:45 am
- No students can arrive at school prior to 8:30am
- Staff members will be at each entrance door confirming that the daily Covid-19 Questionnaire on Genesis has been submitted for each student.
- Students will not be permitted to go to their assigned areas without the daily Covid-19 Questionnaire being submitted.
- Students will be late/tardy at 8:50 am and must enter through the main entrance and check in with the greeter.

Signs will be posted to help ensure safe student and staff movement. These markings should be followed during entrance to, and exit from, the school. All staff and students will stay to the far right while traveling through the hallways and stairwells. Everyone will have to stay in single file lines while traveling and there will be no passing. Teachers will review this, and all safety procedures, with their students. Students should maintain a proper social distance at all times.

Exiting School

We will stagger our exit times to maximize social distancing.

- Grades K - 2 will dismiss at 12:55pm
- Grades 3 and 4 will dismiss at 1:00pm
- Students will not be permitted to travel through the building to pick up siblings for dismissal

Early Dismissal

Parents requesting an early dismissal must send an email to their child's teacher referencing the student's name, grade and reason to their child's teacher. Students being dismissed early by a parent must sign out at the greeter's desk in the lobby before exiting the building. Parents must wait in the vestibule for their child. Verification of ID and student information will be conducted through the vestibule intercom. Students will not be dismissed early anytime after 12:30 pm unless it is for an emergency.

Student Travel Within Building

Students are expected to meet the social distancing guidelines at all times while entering, exiting, and moving throughout the building. Students are not permitted to gather in the hallways, cafeteria, library or common areas at any time. Students will walk on the far right side of all hallways and staircases and will take the most direct route to their destination.

No one will pass anyone else while walking throughout the school.

Classroom Expectations

Teachers must maintain assigned seating to assist with contact tracing should a student be identified as being diagnosed with COVID-19. All seating should maintain guidelines for distance, face the same direction, and be six feet from the front of the room where the teacher is located.

- Students will not be permitted to share any textbooks, computers, snack, or any other materials.
- Students will need to bring their own hand sanitizer and masks to school each day.
- Disposable sanitizer wipes will be provided in each classroom.
- All teachers will maintain a bathroom sign out form to assist with contact tracing should a student be diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Seating should not be moved by students at any point unless directed by the teacher.
- When entering the school students must go directly to their classroom. Staff will be present at entrance doors and throughout the school to assist students.
- When leaving a classroom chairs should remain down at the end of the day for disinfecting by the custodial staff.

Water Fountains

Water fountains will not be used until further notice. Students are encouraged to bring their own water. To drink from their desk with minimal risk, students should be encouraged to use a bottle that they can sip from while pulling the mask up to expose their mouths while still covering their nose, rather than pull it down completely.

Bathroom Procedures

Each classroom will be assigned bathroom break times. Only one student will be able to leave the classroom at-a-time for emergencies. All hallway travel, and time out of the classroom, will be recorded by the teacher to help with contact tracing. Each teacher will have a log for this purpose. Students will use hand sanitizer before leaving, and after re-entering, their classrooms. This will be in addition to any handwashing. Students must practice good hand hygiene by washing with soap and water for more than twenty seconds.

Physical Education

During in-person learning, PE teachers have been tasked when possible to create activities, games, and exercises that allow for social distancing and minimal usage of equipment while keeping their students active and safe.

Specials

Music, Art, Spanish, Computers, and Health

All in-person specials will be in your child's classroom, except for physical education. Physical education will be conducted in the gymnasium.

Counseling

School counselors will continue to incorporate SEL into lessons and will remain available for all virtual and hybrid students. Counselors will continue to conduct their lessons virtually for ALL students.

Busing

Students will be required to wear a mask the entire time they are on the school bus. A mask will be provided for students who do not have one. The driver will load the bus rear to front. The driver will unload the bus front to back to ensure physical distancing. School bus drivers will make sure the bus is set up and labeled for proper social distancing. Students are to remain in the same seat during the entire ride. As weather permits, windows will remain open to increase air circulation. Buses will be cleaned after each transportation run is complete.

CONTACT TRACING

The school nurse will notify parents/guardians whose students have been identified as being in “close contact” of a person with a positive case. Public health officials will also contact those individuals to outline next steps the student’s family should take.

It’s important to note that not all families will be notified of every case related to a school community. Families whose children are directly affected by the cases (such as if their child was a close contact of the person with the positive test result or if the impact of the case or cases is more extensive) will be notified.

Contact tracing is a confidential and private process. The Township of Union Public Schools and public health employees cannot and will not release the name or other private information about a student or staff member who may have come in contact with someone at school with a verified/confirmed case of COVID-19.

If the impact is widespread or if a cluster is identified by public health officials, parents and staff members at the affected school will be notified by the principal via the district's mass notification system.

Note: The sections of this COVID-19 Handbook Insert supersede sections of the Student Handbook for 2020-2021 until rescinded. Please understand that knowledge about the COVID-19 virus, and the best practices to respond to the pandemic, still continue to evolve. For this reason, guidance, policies and plans related to returning to school will also evolve. We will adapt to those changes and update this guide as needed in an effort to maintain a safe and healthy environment. The content in this handbook is not inclusive of all procedures and protocols.

Contact tracing is the process used to identify persons who have come into contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

- A.** If the TUPS becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for COVID-19, district officials must immediately notify local health officials, as well as staff and families as appropriate, of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.
- B.** Upon notification that a student or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19, the local health department will work in conjunction with the District Contact Tracer and building principal to determine the close contacts of the individual.
 - a. All close contacts will be contacted and health department recommendations to quarantine will be advised.
 - b. A close contact is defined as being within 6ft for a period of at least 15 minutes with or without a mask.
- C.** District Wide/ Staff Contact Tracer- Linda Ionta

- D. Building Level Contact Tracer- Building Nurse**
- Compiles and communicates COVID-19 related illness and exposure to the Union Department of Health.
 - School Nurse (ES) will and attendance/Staff (MS/HS) will: Report to Mrs. Ionta any COVID-19 related issues and ask COVID-19 specific questions about absence of students from school
 - All nurses will be provided with a tracing tool in order to collect information about COVID exposure. (to ensure questions are asked respectfully and ensure parent/guardian that confidentiality will be maintained)
- E. District Contract Tracer** will be provided with the following information when collaborating with the Health Department
- Identity of person
 - Date the person with COVID-19 was last in the building(s) and what type(s) of interactions the person may have had with other people, how long their interactions were with other people in each building, and if other persons in the buildings have developed symptoms.

The district will be using a COVID-19 flow chart to determine proper protocol.

Daily Elementary Schedule (starting 3/15/21)

8:45am - 1:00pm	1:00pm - 2:30pm	2:30pm - 3:00pm
LIVE synchronous lessons with classroom teachers and special area teachers.	Lunch & Teacher Prep Period	Asynchronous lessons, W.I.N., SEL, Small Group Instruction, G&T, and RTI

Daily Procedures At-A-Glance

Arrival:

1. Hybrid students may be dropped off no earlier than 8:30am.
2. School begins at 8:45 am for all hybrid and virtual students.
3. All hybrid students will enter through their designated entrances (see link below) and wear a mask.
4. All students and staff will use hand sanitizer when entering and leaving the building.
5. Students will proceed directly to their classroom after a staff member has confirmed successful completion of the daily Covid form.

Lunch Distribution:

1. Bagged lunches will be distributed to each classroom for all students.
2. Virtual students can pick up their lunches at the following locations:
 - a. Washington
 - b. Franklin
 - c. Jefferson
 - d. Union High School

Visiting the Nurse:

1. Limit visits to nurse's office for non-medical conditions
2. Staff will call the nurse's office when a student is in need of assessment. The staff member will provide the following information over the phone. Students will stop at the nurses office door and wait for a temperature check. If the student does not have a temperature, he/she will be seen by the nurse for further assessment.
3. Students will stand in the appropriate social distancing floor markings outside of the office.
4. If the student has a temperature of 100.4 or greater, or displaying any of the identified COVID-19 symptoms he/she will be instructed to go directly to the isolation room where parents will be notified and children will be monitored. The parents should pick up the children within 60 minutes (which I know in most cases it won't happen) once notified by the nurse.

Bathroom:

1. Bathrooms should have no more than 2 students at a time in the bathroom.
2. Use the bathroom with their mask on, and thoroughly wash their hands after finishing.
3. Classes will follow the bathroom break schedule

Hallway Movement:

1. Students will sanitize their hands upon leaving, and entering any office or classroom.
2. Students and staff will always stay to the right when moving through the building. There will be no passing in the hallways.
3. There will be signage in the building indicating the flow of traffic. Teachers will review these procedures with students.

Dismissal:

1. Dismissal will be at staggered times.
2. Parents, and authorized adults, will legally park their cars and follow all local municipality parking enforcement laws.
3. Students should not loiter after dismissal and should depart the school grounds as quickly as possible.
4. Staff will be monitoring dismissal procedures to ensure that all safety protocols are being followed.
5. To eliminate students walking around the building, We will not be allowing siblings to go to other classrooms to meet

IMPORTANT LINKS

Federal

[CDC guidance for schools](#)

[CDC Guidelines on Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)

CDC Training Videos

[How to Wear a Mask](#)

[Handwashing](#)

[Social Distancing](#)

[COVID-19 Stop the Spread of Germs](#)

[11 Symptoms of COVID 19 \(Coronavirus disease\) - Updated CDC guidance](#)

[Taking Care of Your Daily Health During COVID-19](#)

State

[New Jersey COVID-19 Information Hub](#) - Testing & Vaccination Information

[New Jersey Department of Health](#)

[New Jersey Department of Education COVID-19 Guide](#)

<https://www.nj211.org/mental-health-resources>

<https://www.njmentalhealthcares.org/>

Local

[Township of Union Public Schools](#)

[Genesis Parent Portal](#)

[Policies](#)

Entry/Exit doors -

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1D9BbwQaBU30aj96aeiMYbxBZdrlzajlk/view?usp=sharing>

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