



Upshur County Schools



2020-2021 Re-Entry Framework Blended Model “2 Days Staggered”

APPROVED – AUGUST 11, 2020

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The guidance in this framework is subject to change as additional information about the spread and prevention of COVID-19 is known. New directives from Governor Jim Justice and public health officials may be forthcoming and may evolve prior to the start of the school year or during the school year. We are prepared to alter our learning plans to comply with any new directives and to best safeguard student health and learning needs.

Administration

Dr. Sara Lewis-Stankus
Superintendent
Dr. Debra Harrison
Assistant Superintendent

Board of Education

Dr. Tammy Samples, President
Mrs. Katie Loudin, Vice-President
Dr. Greenbrier Almond
Mrs. Kristi Wilkerson
Mr. Patrick Long

Dear Families,

What a year 2020 has been! In a matter of weeks, the COVID-19 pandemic shuttered communities; residents stayed home, and everyone began the anxious wait for when things would return to near normal. Upshur County school personnel stayed on the job to prepare and deliver meals throughout Upshur County. Teachers continued their work with students online. Graduation was modified.

It was tough, and we learned alongside all of you.

We have never lost sight of the fact that our children NEED to be in school. However, we understand that we must do this with the utmost safety in mind. Upshur County Schools is committed to both of those charges.

The framework that follows presents guidelines that our schools will follow as we reenter on September 8. It is intentionally general because we understand the coronavirus pandemic is an ever-changing situation. Our preferred option is a return to school, five days a week, with established safety measures in place. We will reconfigure schools to implement physical distancing and strongly encourage personal hygiene to slow disease spread. We will urge the use of face coverings and other personal protective equipment. These measures, practiced by everyone, provide the best chance of keeping exposure to the virus to a minimum.

While a preferred option is a five-day week, we understand that we may have to alter those plans. We will remain flexible, and we will work with local health authorities as well as state health and education officials to keep as many children in school as much as possible. We may temporarily close individual schools, or schedules may be altered. We may use a combination of in-person and online learning. In any event, we will strive to give you, our families, timely information so you can plan appropriately. If your student needs to stay home, we have hired a remote learning teacher to meet their needs.

Finally, we know there is no replacement for what our students experience in schools. Yet, we recognize that we may be required to return to a fully remote mode of instruction. We are ready for that, and we have listened to your concerns about improving our instruction. Our teachers are already working on syllabi and curriculum maps, so parents and students know what to expect. We are working out the details to ensure your children have more interaction with teachers. Our remote learning teacher is ready to support student learning at home. If needed, we will hire or train more teachers.

Until we are able to return to a more traditional, long-term school schedule – our new normal – this framework will allow us to educate our children as safely as possible. We want our teachers and students back in school, in the classroom, as soon as possible!

Thank you, and we look forward to serving you in the fall.


Dr. Sara Lewis-Stankus

Superintendent

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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SCHOOL STARTS?

This document will repeatedly say that a return to in-seat learning, five days per week, is our preferred option. It *is* our preferred option. While COVID-19 data in Upshur County do not indicate community spread¹, the data also do not indicate that the virus is as controlled as we would like. Therefore, Upshur County Schools will start the 2020-2021 school year under “Yellow: Modified Operations,” and it will remain in-place for nine weeks, at which time the district will determine if longer precautionary measures are necessary.

	Attending School		Virtual School
Students	Group A (Last Name A-L) In-School: Mon, Thu Remote Learning: Tue, Wed, Fri	Group B (Last Name M-Z) In-School: Tue, Fri Remote Learning: Mon, Wed, Thu	Families register as per guidance published via social media, website, and local media.
Feeding	Group A (Last Name A-L) Mon, Thu: In-school (staggered schedules) Wed: Boxed meal delivery/pick-up	Group B (Last Name M-Z) Tue, Fri: In-school (staggered schedules) Wed: Boxed meal delivery/pick-up	Wed: Boxed meal delivery/pick-up
Face Coverings	Grades 3-12: Required when physical distancing cannot be maintained Grades PreK-2: Recommended in classrooms; required when moving throughout a building		N/A
Facilities	Use will be limited per guidance from the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department, WVDE, WVSSAC, etc.		Students needing additional attention, those with unreliable internet access, etc. may contact the Central Office to discuss on-site support options.
Visitors	Visitation will require an appointment.		N/A
Extra-Curricular Activities (including Athletics)	Upshur County will follow WVSSAC guidelines regarding athletics. Other extra-curricular activities should be virtual (if possible), and must adhere to physical distancing guidelines, Gubernatorial mandates, etc.		Virtual student will be eligible for athletics and other activities (pending appropriate safety and preventive measures applicable to all athletics and extra-curricular activities).

NOTE: This modified operation, including the elements of it, are subject to change pending guidance from the Governor’s Office, the West Virginia Department of Education, and state and local public health authorities.

¹ “Community spread” means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. (CDC, 2019: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#:~:text=Community%20spread%20means%20people%20have,where%20they%20became%20infected.>)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the spring of 2020, Upshur County Schools, as well as school districts throughout the nation, implemented various, heretofore unprecedented decisions to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff, and to sustain the learning environment for its students in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Upshur County Schools quickly deployed remote learning options for students from March 16 through May 27, 2020. Further, the school district supported the social-emotional needs of students through various means and provided for the nutritional needs of its families by organizing countywide delivery of meals (with weekly deliveries numbering well into the thousands).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released guidance for school re-entry in May 2020. According to those guidelines, school districts should consider the following risk levels.

- **Lowest Risk (of Disease Spread):** Virtual-only classes, activities, and events
- **Additional Risk (of Disease Spread):** Small, in-person classes, activities, and events where students remain with the same teacher throughout/across school days and where groups of students do not mix or share objects (e.g., staggered/rotated scheduling to accommodate smaller class sizes where students may remain six feet apart)
- **Highest Risk (of Disease Spread):** Full-sized, in-person classes, activities, and events during which the sharing of classroom materials and supplies and the mixing of groups of students for classes and activities occurs

Upshur County Schools realizes the many, seemingly competing elements of this decision. Our priority, and the element that serves as the central context for all decision-making is student safety. We remain sensitive to the social and emotional impacts of prolonged isolation. We know that the interactions and experiences students gain from in-person school cannot be matched. Face-to-face options best support the many ways our students learn, and as such, in-person schooling is the preferred option for re-entry in the Fall of 2020. We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over, and that we must continue frequent collaboration with local public health and medical officials in Upshur County, as well as with regional and state health and education partners to make decisions to ensure the continued safety of our students. The above-noted risk levels feature heavily in those discussions. Thus, Upshur County Schools will utilize the guidelines provided by public health officials in conjunction with the knowledge of our educators to make decisions best suited to our facilities and communities. We will stay abreast of research and guidelines from the CDC, World Health Organization (WHO), as well as colleges and universities from all over the world to inform that decision-making.

In May 2020, the Superintendent convened a countywide advisory board to participate in Upshur County's re-entry planning. That advisory board consists of the following members.

- Dr. Sara Lewis-Stankus, Superintendent, Upshur County Schools
- Dr. Greenbrier Almond, Board Member, Upshur County Schools
- Mr. CJ Rylands, Council Member, City of Buckhannon
- Mr. Rick Simon, CEO, Community Care of WV
- Ms. Stephanie Bennett, Organizational Representative
- Ms. Denise Spratt, Organizational Representative
- Ms. Jodie Akers, Director of Transportation & Student Services, Upshur County Schools
- Ms. Samantha Leput, Asst. Principal, BUHS
- Mr. Michael Wilson, Student Council & Senior Class Advisor, BUHS
- Ms. Michael Lane, School Improvement Specialist
- Mr. Michael Lynch, Principal, BUMS
- Mr. Mitch Wood, Asst. Principal, BUMS
- Ms. Amy Cale, Asst. Principal, BUMS
- Ms. Deborah Shapiro, Athletic Director, BUMS
- Ms. Taylor Tenney, Faculty Representative, HES
- Dr. Debra Harrison, Assistant Superintendent, Upshur County Schools
- Dr. Joseph Reed, Medical Director, Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department
- Mr. Don Nestor, President, Foundation for Better Schools in Upshur County
- Ms. Ann Osburn, Representative, WVEA
- Ms. Tonya Jeffries, Organizational Representative
- Ms. Jessica Lane, Senior (Student), BUHS
- Ms. Cameron Zuliani, Senior (Student), BUHS
- Ms. Jody Johnson, Parent
- Dr. Jeffery Harvey, Director of Safety & Preparedness, Upshur County Schools
- Ms. Amanda Craig, Principal, RCES
- Ms. Susanne Britton, Principal, BAES
- Mr. Eric Bland, Asst. Principal, BAES
- Ms. Kasey Baisden, Principal, FCES
- Ms. Michelle Fleming, Principal, UES
- Ms. Catherine Coffield, Counselor, Upshur County Schools
- Mr. Brian Allman, Milken Award Winner, Faculty, BUMS
- Ms. Brenda Hyre
- Dr. Tammy Samples, Board President, Upshur County Schools
- Mr. Terry Cutright, President, Upshur County Commission
- Mr. Skip Gjolberg, CEO, St. Joseph's Hospital
- Ms. Alisa Lively, West Virginia Wesleyan College
- Mr. Brent Kimble, Organizational Representative
- Ms. Melinda Stewart, Director of Secondary Curriculum & Instruction, Upshur Co. Schools
- Mr. Eddie Vincent, Director of Wellness & Child Nutrition, Upshur County Schools
- Ms. Rebecca Bowers-Call, Director, Fred Eberle Technical Center (CTE)
- Ms. Gabrielle Rhodes, Principal, WDES
- Mr. Randall Roy, Asst. Principal, BUHS
- Ms. Lori Justice, Nurse, Upshur County Schools
- Mr. Jonathan Pollack, Principal, BUHS
- Mr. Rick Reynolds, Athletic Director, BUHS
- Mr. Wilson Harvey, Counselor, Upshur County Schools
- Mr. Quinten Oldaker, Technology Specialist, Upshur County Schools

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With the input of the advisory council, the results of a community survey in which over 1,800 residents participated, and an employee survey of over 330 faculty and staff, county directors compiled a re-entry framework that outlined three primary operational paradigms: (a) a preferred option, (b) modified operations, and (c) full remote learning. The directors intentionally left the modified category general to account for the on-going coordination that would need to occur with local health authorities. When the Upshur County Board of Education approved the framework on July 10, 2020, building administrators convened leadership teams to consider how the framework's preferred option, a full five-day week, would look with appropriate safety precautions like physical distancing, the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), etc. built in. Planning for the preferred option represented the most challenging exercise under the framework from the standpoint of health and safety, which is why it was the first issue addressed. Principals drafted and submitted those initial plans by July 17, 2020, and the central office forwarded those to the health department for a first round of vetting.

Board members and directors alike acknowledged that case numbers in Upshur County and the surrounding region, while not indicative of community spread, did not suggest that the virus was truly "under control." As such, following the July 21, 2020, regular board meeting, Upshur County Schools decided to launch the 2020-2021 school year under the "Modified Operations" category (per the process noted above).

Upshur County Schools recognizes that these plans are dynamic, and that community members, extended stakeholders, faculty, staff, and students should expect them to change frequently. Key among the considerations necessitating change will be the state of pandemic situation locally and statewide, and Upshur County Schools will follow Gubernatorial executive orders regarding school calendars, operations, and the use of personal protective equipment (like face coverings).

Importantly, Upshur County Schools presented all of these options (and their associated documents) to the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department to ensure that the measures taken in schools are consistent with the expectations of Upshur County's public health authority. The following tables present Upshur County's graduated re-entry schedule (with a target date for the resumption of school of September 8, 2020), the board-approved re-entry framework, and a description of potential options under the "modified" category.

NOTE: Per Governor Jim Justice's August 5, 2020, briefing, Upshur County Schools understands that the state is developing a code system that identifies a county's level of risk based on community transmission. That "dashboard" will be available to the public, and the state will collaborate with local public health and education officials to modify school operations based on the risk ranking. The current understanding of that dashboard will be as follows.

- Green indicates that a county is experiencing minimum community transmission, allowing counties to operate under general re-entry guidelines while continuing to follow best health practices to prevent the spread of the disease.
- Yellow indicates that a county is experiencing moderate community transmission and increased restrictions may be necessary.
- Orange indicates that a county is experiencing higher community transmission and further restrictions will be necessary, in collaboration with local health officials.
- Red indicates that a county is experiencing substantial community transmission. Under these conditions, all in-person instruction would be suspended and remote learning plans would be activated. Staff would continue essential support services, including meals, student engagement, and special education.

With the exception of "Red," the color rankings in the state's risk dashboard may not align with the current version of the color-coded options below; in other words, based on forthcoming WVDE and WVDHHR guidance regarding the dashboard, Upshur County Schools may revise the framework below for greater alignment.

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UPSHUR COUNTY SCHOOLS 2020-2021 RE-ENTRY FRAMEWORK			
	Preferred Operations	Modified ² Operations	Full Remote Learning
Definition	All schools resume five-day academic instruction. Students will attend five days of school.	In collaboration with Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department and WVDE to assess the risk to students and personnel, a school(s) opens under a modified schedule. All preventative, cleaning, etc. measures under "Preferred Operations" remain in place under "Modified Operations."	In collaboration with the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department, WVDE, and the Governor's Office to assess the risk to students and personnel, schools implement a remote learning plan.
Duration	N/A	As per the direction of the UBHD, WVDE, Governor's Office, etc.	As per the direction of the UBHD, WVDE, Governor's Office, etc.
Preventative Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Limited visitors; require the use of appointments & all visitors wear PPE. -Elementary students stay in core groups. Secondary schools reduce class changes to the extent possible. -When changing classes at secondary schools, students, faculty, and staff required to use PPE -Use of one-way travel in hallways of all schools (where practical, of course). -Encourage use of outdoor classrooms, when appropriate. -Creative use of large areas in schools (e.g., gyms, cafeterias, libraries) for small (class or cohort-sized) groups. 	<p>ALL ITEMS UNDER "GREEN" OPERATIONS PLUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teach and reinforce healthy hygiene in buildings and on buses (i.e., washing hands with soap/water for at least 20 seconds, using hand sanitizer, avoiding touching face, etc.). -Discourage large gatherings. -Further prohibit nonessential visitors, including volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations as possible. 	N/A

² "Modified" can mean many things depending on the level of risk, ranging from altering instruction days, school censuses, targeted school closures, remote learning at one or multiple schools, etc.

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UPSHUR COUNTY SCHOOLS 2020-2021 RE-ENTRY FRAMEWORK

	Preferred Operations	Modified ² Operations	Full Remote Learning
Cleaning Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased hand sanitation stations in each school and on all buses. -Intensify cleaning of high traffic areas, commonly touched surfaces, and restrooms. -Provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors. -Encourage teachers to clean (i.e., wipe down) high-touch surfaces in their classrooms regularly. -Limit use of shared spaces and sharing of classroom items. -Require cleaning of large gathering areas (e.g., libraries) and specialty rooms (e.g., music classrooms) after each class usage. -Students required to clean one-to-one device daily. 	<p>ALL ITEMS UNDER "GREEN" OPERATIONS PLUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Disinfect and intensify cleaning of high traffic areas, commonly touched surfaces, bathrooms at least every 1 hour and recommended disinfection of buses after each run. -Remember that multiple daily runs will require extra time between runs for cleaning. -Scheduled rotations of heightened cleaning in impacted schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students do not report to schools. -Faculty/staff report to their schools and strictly maintain physical distancing.
Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Absences will be addressed with Upshur County policy/practice. -Accommodate needs of children and personnel who are at documented high-risk with utilization of excused absences and sick days with physician documentation. 		<p>Though students will not be in the buildings under this option, staff will be expected to attend. Consider absence needs on a case-by-case basis.</p>
Comm-unications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Enhanced communication with families and stakeholders. -Utilize multiple means to communicate with families. 	<p>ALL ITEMS UNDER "GREEN" OPERATIONS PLUS:</p> <p>Per need, consider regular, scheduled communication with families and other community partners.</p>	<p>Regularly utilize district and community resources and social media to support.</p>

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UPSHUR COUNTY SCHOOLS 2020-2021 RE-ENTRY FRAMEWORK

	Preferred Operations	Modified ² Operations	Full Remote Learning
Child Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establish lunch schedules and procedures that maintain physical distancing. -Assure all food service employees wear PPE at all times. 	<p>ALL ITEMS UNDER "GREEN" OPERATIONS PLUS:</p> <p>Utilize protocols developed by the dept. of wellness/child nutrition to have meals carried into classrooms by individual students, or in smaller cohorts in the cafeteria separated 6 feet apart or offer grab and go boxed meals delivered to students in classroom setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Utilize protocols developed by the dept. of wellness/child nutrition to serve meals through distribution sites or bus delivery. -Utilize programs such as backpack programs, community collaborations.
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pursue virtual group events, gatherings, or meetings and promote physical distancing of at least six feet between people; limit group size. 		No student travel.
Buses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the bus. -Provide hand sanitizer to support healthy hygiene behaviors. -Utilize seating charts. 	<p>ALL ITEMS UNDER "GREEN" OPERATIONS PLUS:</p> <p>Implement protocols developed by the Dept. of Transportation to operate buses (i.e., one or two student-per-seat rule, PPE, adjustment of delivery times and dismissal times of groups of students).</p>	Student transportation on buses ceases. Buses will be utilized for food delivery.
Meetings/ Use of Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as possible. 	<p>ALL ITEMS UNDER "GREEN" OPERATIONS PLUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Postpone or cancel noncritical gatherings and events that do not comply with Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department regulations for physical distancing and small groups. -If necessary, prohibit utilization of school facilities by outside groups, gatherings or events. 	Prohibit utilization of school facilities by outside groups, gatherings or events.

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UPSHUR COUNTY SCHOOLS 2020-2021 RE-ENTRY FRAMEWORK

	Preferred Operations	Modified ² Operations	Full Remote Learning
Extra-Curricular Activities and Events	Follow WSSAC guidelines.		Cancel all extracurricular activities.

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UPSHUR COUNTY SCHOOLS 2020-2021 RE-ENTRY PLAN GRADUATED RE-ENTRY³

Under this graduated re-entry, students would start schools in small groups to allow for training on physical distancing, expected hygiene, and other preventive measures **along with one-to-one device training**. Beginning the week of September 14, 2020, schools would begin the regular blended model for the next eight weeks.

GRADE		SEPTEMBER				
		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		7	8	9	10	11
Elementary	Pre-K		In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)		
	K		In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)		
	1		In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)		
	2		In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)		
	3				In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)
	4				In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)
	5				In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)
BUMS	6		In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)		
	7				In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)
	8				In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)
BUHS	9		In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)		
	10				In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)
	11				In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)
	12				In Session (Group A)	In Session (Group B)

³ This graduated re-entry is based on the modified operation in place at the launch of the 2020-2021 school year.

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COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

This section includes a list of the communicative means available to Upshur County Schools and the best uses of those means based on the types of messages the district will need to deliver throughout the 2020-2021 school year.

Keeping families informed, about pandemic-related information as well as other matters pertaining to their children’s education, is a critical role of Upshur County Schools. Since the COVID-19 response is likely to change frequently, Upshur County Schools understands the need for a communications plan. Numerous media are available for communicating with families. Those include the following.

- Email
- Learning management systems
- Mass notifications (e.g., ParentLink) – voice and text
- News media
- Telephone
- Social media
- upshurcountyschools.com
- Signage at entrances to schools
- Messaging through community partners

Upshur County Schools realizes that various media are more suited to certain types of messages that will require dissemination during the re-entry to school. Information about schedules, alterations, closures, etc.

Necessary Message	Means of Communication
Updates on scheduling, closures, alterations, etc.	Social media, mass notifications, website, news media (as we formerly did for snow days)
Public health guidance targeted at faculty, staff	Email, telephone
Major changes to re-entry plans	Social media, mass notifications, website, messaging through community partners, signage at schools, news media (as we formerly did for snow days)
Curriculum-related information (on a student-by-student basis, regardless of operating paradigm)	Email, telephone, learning management systems
COVID-19 case information	N/A Protecting personal, confidential information is important. Case-specific information is only shared with those with a need-to-know, at the direction of the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department.

As Upshur County alters its operations based on intelligence from the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department or guidelines for state and local officials, personnel and families will receive communications through, at minimum, the systems identified above. Upshur County Schools will make every effort to ensure communications are issued in a timely fashion.

Individual schools will be required to disseminate COVID-19 information and combat misinformation through multiple channels to staff, students, and families. Building-specific leadership teams should make every effort to ensure the consistency of the information released. Schools will also put up signs, posters, and flyers throughout their facilities about physical distancing, hand hygiene, the use of face coverings, cleaning high-touch surfaces, etc. See Appendix 1: Sample Signage.

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PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT & OTHER SAFETY MEASURES

This section includes the required personal protective equipment for faculty, staff, and students, along with general safety measures, what happens if there is a positive-confirmed case in a school, and guidelines for responding to a localized outbreak.

Employee and student health and safety are paramount concerns. To this end, enhanced cleaning efforts have been identified and employee trainings scheduled accordingly. Upshur County Schools will review personal hygiene (e.g., hand washing) with students and employees (as well as post signage). The district will take every precaution per CDC, WVDHHR, and WVDE recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Students, as well as visitors (to include itinerant, traveling teachers, central office directors, etc.) will be subject to symptom screening upon entry into schools. Symptom screening is primarily a self- (or parent-) certification process that looks for common symptoms indicative of COVID-19 (e.g., fever) as well as other risk factors (e.g., exposure to a known positive case). See attached for a list of screening questions and other guidelines.

Upshur County Schools understands that a component of providing a safe working environment involves the use of personal protective equipment. Other safety measures can enhance risk reduction efforts. Descriptions of those efforts appear below.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Face Coverings⁴
 - “Face coverings” include masks, face shields, gaiters, bandanas, etc.
 - Upshur County Schools will provide two washable and re-usable cloth masks to each student.
 - Upshur County Schools will also provide two washable, re-usable cloth masks and one face shield to faculty and staff.
 - Faculty and staff members will wear protective face coverings when indoors.
 - Exclusion: Those who cannot remove the face covering without assistance, or those who have trouble breathing through a face covering for medical reasons.
 - Protective face coverings are required for students age 9 and above when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
 - Adherence to Gubernatorial executive orders may require individuals to wear coverings more frequently.
 - Face coverings are recommended for younger students (i.e., those 8 years of age and under), though modifications may be necessary.
 - Face coverings may be removed in a classroom setting when the students can maintain 6’ of physical distance or when temporary protective shields or divider folders are in place on desks/tables.
 - Face coverings will be required when moving through school buildings (e.g., going to gym or lunch, changing classes at the secondary level, etc.).
 - Exclusion: Those who cannot remove the face covering without assistance, or those who have trouble breathing through a face covering for medical reasons; those who are two years of age or younger
- Install Plexiglas or similar barriers at reception desks.
- The use of gloves, under certain circumstances (e.g., kitchen operations, visits with the school nurse, etc.), is appropriate. Otherwise, carefully consider the use of gloves.

General Safety Measures

- Utilize small, consistent groups of students (i.e., “cohorts”) wherever possible. Cohorting limits contact between students and assists with any contact tracing that may be necessary.
- We realize that consistently maintaining 6’ physical distance in our existing facilities is impractical at full enrollment and other normal circumstances.

⁴ See the table below for additional information on face coverings.

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- Upshur County Schools supports families utilizing virtual schooling options through the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE), supported by Upshur County, to lower the censuses in our buildings.
- Principals will evaluate course offerings and will be encouraged to temporarily suspend some elective offerings (with typically low enrollments). Doing so will enable administrators to add additional sections of core classes, thus lowering the average number of students in a class. Fewer numbers in individual classes will better enable the creation of appropriate physical distancing.
- Post signage throughout buildings to remind faculty, staff, and students about physical distancing, hand hygiene, etc.
- Provide appropriate supplies to support healthy hand hygiene (e.g., sanitizer, soap, etc.).
- Require all visitors to schedule appointments.
- Enhance cleaning efforts for high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, other handles, desks/tables, etc.).
- Schools will identify COVID-19 sick areas for faculty, staff, or students who present with COVID-19 symptoms while at schools.
- Upshur County Schools is working with Community Care of West Virginia (CCWV) regarding options for testing district employees. More details to follow.

Ventilation Considerations

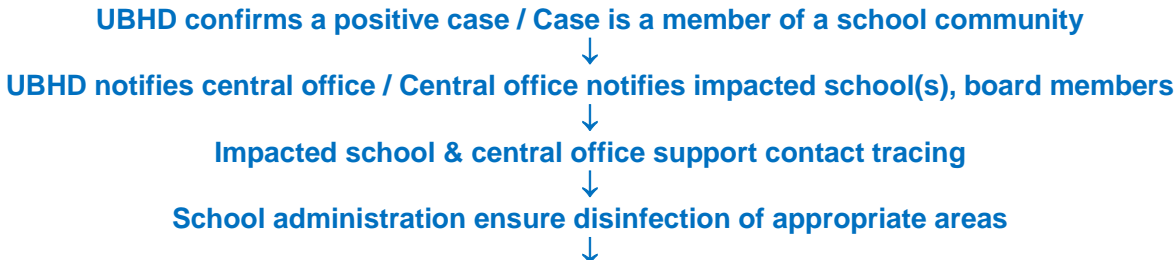
Though transmission of COVID-19 is presumed to be primarily through person-to-person contact or contact with contaminated surfaces, there is growing evidence that the virus may be aerosolized and transmitted through the air. To date, entities such as the Global Heat Health Information Network (supported by the WHO) maintain that “air conditioning and ventilation systems that are well-maintained and operated should not increase the risk of virus transmission” (<http://www.ghhn.org/heat-and-covid-19/ac-and-ventilation>). Fortunately, many of the schools in Upshur County utilize systems that are “100% outside air.” These systems enable greater dilution of potentially contaminated indoor air with “clean,” outdoor air. Upshur County Schools will, per the list below, also explore improved filtration on these systems. Upshur County Schools wants to ensure the safety of its buildings and will consider the following steps (contingent on the design specifications of the systems at the individual school buildings).

- Increase ventilation with outdoor air (i.e., opening windows where possible) (per U.S. EPA and WHO recommendations)
- Improve central air filtration by changing filters more frequently and cleaning air handler units (per U.S. EPA and WHO recommendations)
- Ensure exhaust fans in restroom facilities are operating at full capacity when the building is occupied (per WHO recommendations)
- Increasing attention to maintenance of HVAC units to ensure proper operation

Positive-Confirmed Case in a School NOTE (6 AUG 2020): Section may be updated pending guidance from the West Virginia Department of Education.

Definition: Case is traced to exposure to a known positive-confirmed case; no evidence of community spread, as defined by the UBHD; no known community or site-specific outbreaks

- Positive case quarantines as directed by the health department
 - Known exposures of positive case quarantine as directed by the UBHD
 - Others in the school increase monitoring for symptoms
- Decision-Making



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Central office arranges for a substitute, if necessary



Central office works with impacted populations to determine the applicability of remote learning during the period of quarantine

Localized Community Outbreak

Definition: Minimal or no community spread, as defined by the UBHD, but an outbreak in a school or community is present

- The school serving the area of the outbreak closes as determined in collaboration with the health department
 - Students attending that school attend virtually
 - Students from the area of the outbreak that attend BUMS or BUHS attend virtually
 - All other schools maintain operations at whatever their “pre-outbreak” level
- Decision-Making

UBHD confirms a positive case / Case is a member of a school community



UBHD notifies central office / Central office notifies impacted school(s), board members



Upshur Schools closes affected school for 14 days (and alters attendance for students from the outbreak area)



Central office works with impacted populations to arrange for remote learning during the period of quarantine

Wearing protective face coverings is required in indoor spaces per Governor Justice’s order, effective July 7, 2020, for faculty, staff, and students age 9 and above (excluding those who cannot remove the face covering without assistance, those who have trouble breathing through a face covering for medical reasons, and those who are two years old or younger). The order applies to all situations when maintaining 6’ physical distancing is not possible. Protective face coverings are **recommended** but not required for students, age 2 years through 8 years (though Upshur County will require temporary use of face coverings when moving through school buildings).

Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment. Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. Face coverings are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Consider cloth face coverings for younger children if it is determined they can reliably wear, remove, and handle face coverings per CDC guidance throughout the day. Individuals should be reminded frequently not to touch the face coverings and to practice proper hand hygiene.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:

- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious,
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance, or
- Anyone who cannot tolerate a face covering due to developmental, medical, or behavioral health needs.

Any student who cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition, including those with respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition, or disability, and students who would be unable to remove a covering without assistance are not required to wear face coverings. Individuals who are communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired or who has another disability, where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication, are not required to wear an opaque face covering. However, those individuals should consider other types of coverings (e.g., clear plastic face shield).

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In order to inform and support families proactively, school administrators will collaborate with school nurses to send the following information home with students (or otherwise provide it to students) at the start of school (West Virginia Association of School Nurses, June 2020).

- Upshur County Schools Re-Entry Framework
- Age-appropriate symptom screening checklist for classrooms (from the WVDE re-entry toolkit)
- Basic COVID-19 information sheets that include signs and symptoms, hygiene tips, physical distancing explanations, etc.
- Helpful resources from the WVDE, CDC, etc. regarding symptoms, protecting yourself and others, when to come to school, proper PPE usage, etc.

Upshur County Schools regularly collaborates with the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department and other community partners in preparedness planning for pandemic and other emergency situations. In July 2020, Upshur County Schools made Buckhannon-Upshur High School's (BUHS) stadium and parking lot available for a free, two-day public COVID-19 testing event. The district intends to support future testing events, if scheduled. Upshur County Schools is a member of the Buckhannon-Upshur COVID-19 Community Task Force as well as the Buckhannon-Upshur COVID-19 Recovery Team, and directors participate in both of those efforts. The task force and recovery team support information sharing and community-wide response and recovery to the pandemic.

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PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS

This section includes special considerations to protect Upshur County Schools' employees, to include a brief overview of leave options and options for reducing risk to those with underlying medical conditions.

The CDC has encouraged school districts to develop protocols for employee leave and excused absences due to COVID-19 (May 2020) that include the following guidelines.

- Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable staff members to stay home when they are sick due to COVID-19, have been exposed to COVID-19, or are caring for someone who is sick due to COVID-19.
 - Examine and revise policies for leave, telework, and employee compensation.
 - Leave policies should be flexible and not punish people for taking time off and should allow sick employees to stay home and away from co-workers. Leave policies should also account for employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school and/or childcare closures, or if there is a need to stay home to care for sick family members related to COVID-19.

Further, the CDC has identified older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions as being at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

- 65 years and older
- Underlying medical conditions, including chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- Serious heart conditions
- Immunocompromised from cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune-weakening medications
- Severe obesity (BMI of 40 or higher)
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- Liver disease

Upshur County Schools will follow the guidelines outlined in the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA).

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PROGRAMMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

This section includes a look at what a day of school will look like in 2020-2021. It also identifies special considerations for programmatic elements such as child nutrition, the fine arts, special education, assessment and grading, etc.

Regarding daily school operations and public health accommodations, Upshur County Schools will collaborate with the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department and local community resources to provide professional development to building-level administrators and staff. The training will likely include public health guidelines relating to the flow of students through the building, the utilization of classroom and school spaces with student schedules, and on-going review of school-specific plans and protocols. Intense review and final modifications of plans will occur between the original August 18th target start of school and the revised September 8th target start.

The following protocols will be in place for the preferred re-entry paradigm of five-day-per-week instruction. Modified operations and the changes therein largely seek to reduce the census of our buildings; thus, the following measures will be sustained regardless of the number of students in attendance.

The following general measures will support prevention when operating under the preferred paradigm.

- Except under exigent circumstances, all non-student and non-employee visitors to schools will need to make an appointment.
- Upon arrival at school, students will be assigned to cohort groupings as quickly as possible. Cohorting is important to both limit spread, and if necessary, to support contact tracing. Cohorting may look different at individual schools. In some instances, students will be held in “bus cohorts,” with proper PPE and physical distancing maintained in large areas such as gymnasiums. In these schools, students will transition to “class cohorts” as quickly as possible, with which they will remain until the end of the day. Other schools will move students into class cohorts upon arrival.
- Cohorting at elementary schools is relatively straight forward, and it will be supported to the maximum extent possible. Alter schedules, revise elective offerings, etc. at secondary schools to support staying in cohorts as much as possible.
- Schools will maintain maximum physical distancing throughout the day as is feasible. When in lines, teachers will ensure students are, at minimum, an arm’s length apart, with a target of 6’ physical distance (because face coverings are mandatory when moving about the building).
- Custodial personnel will be re-trained to improve attention to regular sanitizing and disinfection efforts.
- Encourage students, faculty, and staff to bring their own drinking water.
- Disable water fountains throughout schools in favor of refilling stations for bottles. Utilize touchless refilling stations as much as possible.
- Designate hallways as one-way, where possible, posting directional reminders on the walls/floors. When hallways cannot be maintained as one-way, stagger the times that students are in the hallways. At the secondary level, this means altering the schedule so that classes dismiss at staggered intervals.
- Designate entrance and exit doors, with signage, at double door sets.
- Teachers, such as art and music, will travel to classrooms as much as possible, particularly at the elementary level, to support continued cohorting.
- Post signage throughout the schools as reminders about physical distancing, to denote “safe standing” areas 6’ apart, etc.
- Suspend activities and assemblies that involve bringing together large groups.
- Discourage large groups on playgrounds; instead, rotate students on playgrounds and disallow use of equipment that is difficult to quickly clean between playground periods.
- Utilize outdoor classroom settings, as much as possible per the weather and other safety considerations, when possible.
- Stagger feeding schedules, to include slightly shortening and adding additional lunch shifts, to maintain cafeteria capacities at 50% or less. Stagger students at tables to keep students from sitting beside each other (within 6’) or directly across from one another.

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- Consider feeding options in classrooms whenever feasible.
- Conduct field trips, parent/family meetings, assemblies, and performances virtually.
- Postpone all out-of-county or out-of-state field trips or travel, assemblies, and other large group activities as per guidance from state and local public health authorities.
- Utilize teleconference or web conference (e.g., MS Teams) meetings for required IEP, SATs, 504, MDT modification, and services when possible.

Safety measures for classrooms will include the following.

- Hand sanitizer will be available upon entry into a classroom.
- Teachers will clean high-touch surfaces in their classroom multiple times daily.
- Teachers will limit the use of shared objects in classrooms (including electronic devices, toys, books, games, and other learning aids).
- Where appropriate, keep student belongings separated. Discourage toting items to/from home daily.
- Control restroom usage so that students are not in the restrooms in groups.
- Re-arrange classroom setting to maximize physical distancing as much as possible. Face desks one way; use a single side of tables so that students face one way; etc.
- When using tables, space students as far apart as possible (or 6', if feasible).
- Utilize seating charts in classrooms, when possible, to support contact tracing.
- Utilize temporary desk shields when students cannot maintain 6' physical distancing nor wear a face a covering.

Safety measures specific to buses will include the following.

- Personnel will create as much space as is possible between students on buses. Examples include a single student per seat, skipping rows, etc. When and where possible, administrators will consider scheduling additional runs, etc. to support physical distancing on buses.
- Utilize seating charts on buses to support contact tracing.
- Buses will be disinfected between uses.
- Personnel will "deep clean" buses (in addition to per-use disinfection) weekly.

Modified operations, as noted above, do not necessitate changes to these guidelines. These operations, rather, will alter the number of individuals in school buildings and their schedules. We understand that case figures will likely change, guidelines will evolve as public health officials learn more about the virus, etc. Adaptability is key! As such, directors, building administrators, and teachers are planning for curricula delivery under full attendance, blended, and remote operations. This document will be updated with specific guidance about toggling between protective levels as it becomes available.

As noted above, student attendance will be determined by the first letter of the student's last name. Group A consists of students with last names beginning with A through L, while Group B will be students with last names beginning M through Z. Upshur County Schools understands that special circumstances may arise in which parents would need to petition for a different attendance schedule for their child. Upon approval of this framework, the central office will distribute an MS Forms questionnaire that enables parents to request a change. Eligible criteria for requesting changes include (a) ensuring siblings in the same household with different last names attend together, (b) parent work schedules (e.g., inflexible shifts that better align with the other cohort, classifications as essential workers, etc.), and (c) inflexible child care options that align better with the other cohort. Families will also be able to identify instances of poor internet availability via this form, and Upshur County Schools will work with those families.

Further, Upshur County Schools is exploring all available options to ensure students have access to curriculum, whether in-seat or virtually. These options include extra personnel to support remote learning, creative solutions for increasing broadband access throughout the county, scheduling/accessibility options for at-risk students to use certain portions of buildings, etc. As noted above, this framework will be updated as this information becomes available.

Child Nutrition

The CDC recommends that students receive individually plated meals in classrooms instead of communal dining in a cafeteria. Upshur County Schools has considered this advice, and meal delivery to classrooms will be

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utilized when feasible. However, it remains important to plan for meal delivery in cafeteria settings. In cafeterias, the following guidelines apply.

- No self-serve options will be available unless they are monitored and the options from which to pick are packaged individually.
- Students will receive meals from cafeteria workers in proper PPE.
- Building administrators will alter schedules, to include shorter dining periods and more scheduled dining periods to maintain cafeterias at approximately 50% occupancy or less.
- Students will stagger seating at tables, such that no one sits directly across from one another and students on the same sides of tables maintain 6' physical distancing.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided throughout cafeterias.
- Schools will utilize pre-packaged or boxed meals when appropriate.
- Schools will be able to clean and disinfect trays and utensils using equipment on-site. Per the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department, Upshur County Schools will add an extra three-bay sanitizing step to ensure it is safe to re-use those utensils.

Upshur County Schools, per state directive, will continue to support the nutritional needs of its students. Under the modified operation proposed at the start of the 2020-2021 school year, Wednesdays will serve as meal delivery days. Students that attend in-person on their designated two-days per week will receive three-day meal boxes on delivery days, whereas students attending virtually will receive five-day boxes.

In the event the entire district transitions to fully remote course delivery for a period of more than one week, Upshur County Schools will initiate a process to provide meals to community members (in a manner similar to the spring and summer of 2020). Upshur County Schools will work with community partners to sustain backpack and other similar programs.

Fine Arts

Participation in choir, band, and other similar programs is vital to students' social-emotional learning health as well as their overall mental well-being. Often, fine arts classes or events may include students who are from different cohorts from within a school and, in some cases, may include events with participation from schools throughout West Virginia. In consideration of the potential for mixed cohorts of students and other dynamics of the programs, the following guidelines will apply.

The CDC and NAfME (National Association for Music Education) recommend general cleaning techniques for instruments that have not been used or handled for more than five days. Essentially, if students are picking up instruments for the first time since school has been closed, the instruments will not need more than general cleaning. Out of an abundance of caution, all instrument cases should be sprayed with an aerosol disinfectant. Also, school-owned instruments should not be shared or handled by more than one student unless cleaned as recommended by NAfME. See <https://nafme.org/covid-19/> for additional information. Summer band camps are under the jurisdiction of the WVSSAC. Other resources include the National Federation of State High School Associations Music Committee and the NAfME Fall 2020 Guidance for Music Education.

Organizations such as the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) recommends measures such as securing spaces for small ensembles or sectional rehearsals (for a majority of rehearsal time), and considering large spaces (auditorium, gym, outdoors) that could support full ensemble rehearsals where physical distancing could be maintained. The ACDA has also identified possible strategies to reduce the spread of droplets and aerosols based on emerging research. These include strategic placing of singers with suggested physical distance, the use of acoustic shields between rows or individual singers, pivoting instructional strategies to reduce the number of singers singing at any given time, the use of humming rather than open-mouth singing, extended use of audiation as an instruction strategy, and the increased use of student leadership and student-led instruction to facilitate division into smaller groups. See <https://acda.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ACDA-COVID-19-Committee-Report.pdf> for additional information. Locally, choral classes necessitating performance are being considered for spring with individualized opportunities for advanced students. Lecture-based, general music classes remain a preferred option for the fall semester.

Theater classes at the secondary level will continue in the fall, though in-person (i.e., live audience) performances will not occur. Instruction will be lecture-based with performances taped. Theater competitions in the fall will be virtual.

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Art teachers in the county are compiling additional supplies to support each student having their own sets of supplies. Classroom arrangements for art will be similar to other classrooms, whereby desks and tables will be arranged to support maximum physical distancing, single sides of tables will be used, etc.

Special Education

Upshur County Schools will be flexible in the delivery options to students with disabilities in order to make reasonable efforts to provide services. Regular communication and collaboration with families are always vital, but they are particularly integral when servicing the individual needs of students with disabilities. Upshur County Schools will follow the guidelines released by the U.S. Department of Education for implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) during the response to the pandemic and as a school may enter into various level designations throughout the school year. When it is necessary to hold meetings for a required modification to services provided to students, it is recommended that teacher teams utilize teleconference or web conference (e.g., MS Teams) meetings for IEPs, SATs, 504s, when possible.

Under modified (“yellow”) or full remote (“red”) operations, Upshur County Schools will support the needs of its students. As noted above, faculty will be operating in our schools under all options and will be available to meet individually (or in small, physically distant groups) to support individual education programs (IEPs) and other specific student needs.

International Students

Upshur County Schools recognizes the value added to its programs through International study, and the district will continue to support attendance by exchange students. As International students arrive in Buckhannon, they will be required to quarantine for 14 days to monitor for symptoms. The district will encourage testing during this period, and the results of the test may alter the length of the quarantine period.

English Learners

Virtual learning adds another dynamic for English learners whose primary home language is not English. They are immersed in their native language many times with only the support of a parent/guardian who has limited English proficiency. Therefore, these students need exposure and the ability to speak and listen to the English language. The goal through the pandemic was to make sure the students were engaged in the regular classroom work rather than focusing on the English language development of the student. Therefore, several needs emerged which need to be addressed for the re-entry process, which include, but are not limited to:

- Working with parents and students through parent meetings at various times to establish the expectations of the virtual learning.
- Provide extended learning programs to support each student’s academic learning to fill in his/her learning gaps.
- Provide support to classroom teachers so that they will be able to modify their virtual classroom work as well as provide opportunities for the student to engage in speaking and listening to the English language.
- Allow the EL teacher to provide additional instruction for developing English proficiency.

McKinney-Vento

If you meet the requirements under McKinney-Vento, special support and resources will be provided.

Career Technical Education

Upshur County Schools recognizes that some course content cannot be delivered effectively through an online platform. This is particularly true in CTE programs of study where students may normally be required to take part in hands-on activities, such as drawing blood, operating welding equipment, or participating in simulated workplace experiences that require face-to-face collaborations. The district will work closely, in collaboration with administrators at Fred Eberle Technical Center, and with guidelines from the WVDE Office of CTE, to make determinations about NOCTI testing, completion requirements, competency-based hours, and experiential learning project requirements.

Dual Credit Offerings

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Students who are enrolled in dual credit courses will follow the guidelines put forth from the higher education institution that offers the dual credit course. Upshur County Schools will issue letter grades and credit for dual credit courses during all level designations among school(s) throughout 2020-2021.

Advanced Placement Classes

It is the intent that students who take AP courses will take the applicable AP exam associated with the coursework. Students enrolled in AP courses will receive instruction from a syllabus approved by the College Board. Upshur County Schools will issue letter grades and credit for AP courses during all level designations among school(s) throughout 2020-2021.

Assessment & Grade Promotion

Upshur County Schools will follow all West Virginia Department of Education guidelines concerning testing, assessment, grading, and promotion.

Privacy Concerns

Upshur County Schools will promote information sharing with staff, caregivers, and local health officials in compliance with FERPA. Families should alert the school if someone in the home has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Families should understand that Upshur County Schools may have reporting responsibilities to the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department throughout the response to the pandemic. Further, Upshur County Schools will support Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department efforts at contact tracing should a positive case be confirmed within a school. Every effort will be made to maintain the privacy of personal health information.

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ATHLETICS & EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

This section includes a discussion of COVID-19 impacts to athletics and other extra-curricular activities.

Upshur County Schools will work within the guidelines provided by the WVSSAC regarding athletics and other extra-curricular activities. As noted above, field trips and other activities regarding travel (outside of SSAC guidelines) will be discouraged. This document will be updated as additional information is received from public health authorities (state and local), the West Virginia Department of Education, and entities such as the WVSSAC. Based on information from the Governor's Office and the West Virginia Department of Education, if at any point the state mandates Upshur County to delivery content remotely, all athletic and extra-curricular events will be cancelled for the period of remote delivery. Athletic competitions may be altered based on the risk dashboard ranking of a county, to include cancellation of a contest.

Under modified operations, field trips and other activities requiring travel will be disallowed. Travel associated with athletics will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Under a remote learning scenario, whether county- or state-imposed, all face-to-face extra-curricular activities, to include athletics, will be suspended.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Sample Signage

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APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE SIGNAGE

COVID-19 Should I come to school?

COVID-19 SHOULD I COME TO SCHOOL?

HOW TO SCREEN FOR COVID-19

IF I HAVE:	THEN:
1 NO SYMPTOMS	Proceed to school
2 EXPOSURE, NO SYMPTOMS	Cannot go to school Home for 14 days since exposure
3 DIAGNOSIS, NO SYMPTOMS	Cannot go to school Home for 10 days since first positive COVID-19 test
4 AT LEAST 1 SYMPTOM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Chills • Shortness of breath/ breathing difficulty • New cough • New loss of taste or smell 	Cannot go to school Home until: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 days since first symptoms • No fever for 3 days (without fever medicine) • 3 days of symptom improvement, including coughing and shortness of breath

West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

WEST VIRGINIA
Department of
**Health & Human
Resources**

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COVID-19 SHOULD I COME TO SCHOOL?



HOW TO SCREEN FOR COVID-19

IF I HAVE:

THEN:

1 NO SYMPTOMS	 Proceed to school
2 EXPOSURE, NO SYMPTOMS	 Cannot go to school Home for 14 days since exposure
3 DIAGNOSIS, NO SYMPTOMS	 Cannot go to school Home for 10 days since first positive COVID-19 test
4 AT LEAST 1 SYMPTOM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Chills • Shortness of breath/ breathing difficulty • New cough • New loss of taste or smell 	 Cannot go to school Home until: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 days since first symptoms • No fever for 3 days (without fever medicine) • 3 days of symptom improvement, including coughing and shortness of breath



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



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INSERT MOCK-UPS OF SIGNAGE PURCHASED FOR UPSHUR COUNTY (upon purchase)

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