

# Whitehall-Coplay School District

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*HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER*

Good Morning,

August 14, 2020

On Monday, August 10, at 4:00 pm, all PA educational institutions received notification from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Health regarding new recommendations for instructional models in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The new recommendations are based on the incidence rates and percent positivity of COVID-19 in each county. There are three levels of community transmission: low, moderate, and high. The Lehigh County information puts the Whitehall-Coplay School District at the moderate level. The recommendation for being in the moderate level is for schools to implement a Blended / Hybrid or Remote Learning educational program for all students in grades K-12.

This information from the state was brought forth at last night's Special Board Meeting, coupled with the previous recommendations from the District Administration to consider a Blended / Hybrid instructional model for all students K-12 upon our return to school. At last week's board meeting on Thursday, August 6, our School Board approved a traditional return, face to face, five days a week, while still allowing for online and virtual schooling for those who wished to remain at home.

However, upon deliberation and further review of the new Health and Safety recommendations from PDE and the DOH in more detail, the consistent recommendation of the School District Administration and recommendation from our medical partner, St. Luke's University Health Network, the Whitehall Board of Education has reversed its initial vote from last week. **The Whitehall-Coplay School District will now be implementing a Blended / Hybrid model of instruction for all grades K-12 to be in compliance with the new PA Health and Safety Guidelines.**

**The District will no longer be offering a Traditional Instructional model for the start of school.** The instructional models that will be available for all K-12 students will be (1) Blended / Hybrid Learning (2) Whitehall-Coplay Learning at Home (3) WCSD's Virtual Learning Program. We will remain in these instructional models until at least the end of the first marking period, which is currently November 4, 2020, or if health data requires us to make an adjustment.

**What does this mean for students that committed to a Traditional instructional model?**

If you have committed to a Traditional model, we will automatically shift your child to a Blended / Hybrid model. If you committed to the Whitehall-Coplay Learning at Home or the WCSD Virtual Learning Cyber Program, your choice will remain the same and no action is required. We recognize that this adjustment may result in some families wanting to choose another instructional model; therefore, we will continue to provide families an opportunity to change their selection. If you already registered for our Whitehall-Coplay Learning at Home program or the WCSD Virtual Learning Program and now would like to switch to the Blended / Hybrid model, you will have the opportunity to do so.

**If you desire to change your selection, you MUST contact your child(ren)'s building administrator to change your selection by 5:00pm on Monday, August 17, 2020.**

- High School - Mr. Davidson - [davidsonn@whitehallcoplay.org](mailto:davidsonn@whitehallcoplay.org)
- Middle School - Mrs. Friebolin - [friebolina@whitehallcoplay.org](mailto:friebolina@whitehallcoplay.org)
- Zephyr - Mrs. Miller - [millert2@whitehallcoplay.org](mailto:millert2@whitehallcoplay.org)
- Steckel - Mrs. Snyder - [snyderc@whitehallcoplay.org](mailto:snyderc@whitehallcoplay.org)
- Gockley - Mrs. Saylor - [saylord@whitehallcoplay.org](mailto:saylord@whitehallcoplay.org)

***For any child not accounted for, we will assume your intention is to have your child(ren) return under the Blended / Hybrid model.***

**The Blended / Hybrid Instructional Model is as follows...**

Students will be split into two cohorts by last name/household name and instruction will be delivered in both an asynchronous/synchronous online and traditional setting with alternating days as listed below.

**Cohort A: Students last name A - L**

- Monday and Tuesday - In-School instruction
- Thursday and Friday - Online instruction

**Cohort B: Students last name M - Z**

- Monday and Tuesday - Online instruction
- Thursday and Friday - In-School instruction

**All Students**

- Wednesday - Online instruction

**We want to make sure children in the same household with different last names attend school on the same days of the week. We will use the last name of the oldest student in the household to determine the days of the week for all children in the household. If you have any specific questions or concerns with regard to the scheduling of cohorts, please contact your child(ren)'s building administrator.**

The WCSD Learning At Home and Virtual Learning Program options remain available to all WCSD students and are listed below, as well as informational links to both programs.

- Whitehall-Coplay Learning At Home ([WCSD Learning at Home Flyer](#))
  - Students will participate in their assigned classes through live streaming. Students will be able to interact with their WCSD teacher as though they were physically in the classroom.
  
- WCSD Virtual Learning Program (K-12)
  - Parents/Guardians have the option to enroll their child in the Whitehall Coplay School District Virtual Learning Program. *For more detailed information on the WCSD Virtual Learning Program, please visit our webpage at: <https://www.whitehallcoplay.org/domain/3344>*

While this has been a difficult time for all stakeholders and we are disappointed that we are not able to offer a traditional model of instruction at this time, our faculty and staff are excited to welcome our students back (in-person or virtually) and we continue to be committed to providing a safe and healthy return for our school community. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience these new decisions may create for you, but as we have indicated, things can change at a moment's notice. Some things are out of our control, and the health and safety of our entire school community is our top priority. We greatly appreciate your ongoing support.

Respectfully,

WCSD Administration