



# Greater Ohio Virtual School

1879 Deerfield Road, Lebanon, OH 45036

## Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

### 2021-2022 Greater Ohio Virtual School Plans

In March of 2020, the Greater Ohio Virtual School main office and remote locations closed due to COVID-19. As an asynchronous online school, GOVS students did not experience any disruption in the delivery of the curriculum and were able to continue with their education throughout the closure. The main office, testing locations, and remote tutoring locations were all closed for the rest of the school year. The main office opened over the summer of 2020 to prepare for the 2020-2021 school year with the following safety guidelines in place for a safe return to in-person services created in partnership with the Warren County Educational Service Center and the Warren County Health Department (The Greater Ohio Virtual School is located at the Warren County Educational Service Center):

### COVID19 REOPENING REGULATIONS AT WCESC/GOVS

Warren County ESC is Reopening to Staff on June 1, 2020, Hours of Operation are 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Visitors permitted by appointment only

We are taking every precaution to comply with guidelines from our state and federal leaders and local health department to keep our staff and visitors safe. Here are a few things you will need to know before visiting:

#### **FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS/PRACTICES:**

- Outdoor signs will be posted at the entrance with instructions on entering/exiting the facility.
- Social Distancing should be practiced by all while in our facility.
- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the facility.
- Plexiglas shields will be in place at all reception/transaction counters.
- Amplified sanitation practices are in place.
- No large gatherings will be permitted until further notice unless social distancing is possible.
- Meeting space guidelines:
  - Small Conference Rooms 1, 2, 3 - maximum of 4 participants
  - Board Room - maximum of 6-8 participants
  - Conference Center A, B, and C - maximum of 50 participants
  - Conference Center A - maximum of 30 participants
  - Conference Center B/C - maximum of 15 participants.
  - Masks are required in all cases.

#### **STAFF PRACTICES:**

- If a staff member is symptomatic or has knowingly been exposed, please STAY HOME and notify your supervisor.
- Temperature checks will be required of all staff.
- Social Distancing should be practiced to the best of our abilities.
- Staff will wear masks at all times unless working alone behind a closed door.

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Central Office 513.695.2924

Fax: 513.695.2588

email: [govs@warrencountyesc.com](mailto:govs@warrencountyesc.com)

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- Staff will wear gloves as needed to perform their job duties.
- Hand washing and the use of hand sanitizer will be a regular practice.
- All kitchen/breakroom areas will be closed, including equipment such as refrigerators, microwaves, ice machines, etc.

## **REQUESTS OF OUR VISITORS:**

- Visitors will be permitted in the building by appointment only.
- Social Distancing should be practiced by all while in our facility.
- Masks are required and will NOT be provided.
- Hand sanitizer should be used upon entering and exiting the facility.
- Please respect the Plexiglas shields in place at all reception/transaction counters.
- Fingerprinting Regulations: Those requiring fingerprinting services should make an appointment via Sign-Up Genius and prepay prior to arriving (no exceptions). Once an appointment is scheduled, an email with a payment link will be sent. Payment will be completed via Eventbrite. Please do not enter the building before your appointment time. No children or other visitors should accompany the customer. Masks are required but not provided. More information regarding our facility practices is available at [www.warrencountyesc.com](http://www.warrencountyesc.com) or by calling 513-695-2900 beginning June 1st. Appointments begin June 3rd.
- All visitors will be required to have their temperature taken upon arrival.

We look forward to once again being able to serve our districts and clients at full capacity. In the meantime, we appreciate your patience and compliance. Thank you.

## **WARREN COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER**

1879 Deerfield Road

Lebanon OH 45036

513-695-2900

[www.warrencountyesc.com](http://www.warrencountyesc.com)

## **USE OF FACE MASKS/COVERINGS**

The Governing Board of Education is committed to providing students, staff, and visitors with a safe and healthy environment. In order to maintain a healthy environment, the Board will follow the mandates and requirements set forth by the federal government, Center for Disease Control, Ohio Governor, Ohio State Health Department, Warren County Health Department, Ohio Department of Education, and other entities ("Directing Entities") as it relates to the protecting the health of students, staff, and visitors. If any of these Directing Entities or WCESC Administration requires staff, students, and/or visitors to wear face coverings/masks while attending school, reporting to work at a school, or visiting a school, the WCESC's Administration will follow and enforce such directives.

## **STAFF**

Pursuant to COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools issued by the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Department of Education, all staff members must wear face coverings when in their classroom, instructing students, moving away from their classroom or workstation, or talking

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directly with someone within the six feet social distancing recommendations. While working independently in an empty classroom or at their own workstation, masks may be removed.

## **STUDENTS**

Students in WCESC programming for students with disabilities will not be required to wear face coverings/masks as specified in the “exceptions” listed below. Per Governor DeWine’s mandates announced on 8-5-2020, all students in grades K-12 will be required to wear masks under the following circumstances:

- On the bus
- Entering and exiting the building
- Hallways during transition periods to class, lunch, restrooms, and recess
- In the classroom (teacher-directed face covering breaks will be implemented throughout the day)

Face coverings/masks should:

- Fully cover the mouth, nose, and chin
- Fit snugly against the side of the nose, side of the face, and cover the chin so there are no gaps
- Parents should maintain a clean face covering for their child
- Not create difficulty breathing while worn
- Held secure through either a tie or elastic, etc. to prevent slipping.

NOTE: This policy may require updates and revisions as state and federal mandates are announced.

## **WCESC USE OF FACE MASKS/COVERINGS – REVISED 8-5-2020**

Face coverings/masks may include masks or face shields. Face coverings/masks are not required to be surgical masks or respirators (as those should be reserved for healthcare works), and shall not be masks designed to be worn for costume purposes, etc. All face coverings/masks shall meet the requirements of the appropriate dress code policies and/or codes of conduct.

## **EXCEPTIONS**

Exceptions to this face coverings policy may be made for the following:

### Students:

- Children younger than 2 years old
- Any child unable to remove the face covering without assistance
- A child with a significant behavioral/psychological issue undergoing treatment that is exacerbated by the use of a facial covering
- A child living with severe autism or with extreme developmental delays who may become agitated or anxious wearing a mask
- A child with a facial deformity that causes airway obstruction.

### Staff:

- Facial coverings are not required when the staff works alone in an assigned work area
- Individuals who have received approval from WCESC administration after presenting medical



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excuse and discussing their request not to wear a face covering/mask due to a physical, mental or developmental health condition, if wearing a mask would lead to a medical emergency or would introduce significant safety concerns.

- In this exception, the WCESC administration may also discuss other possible accommodations for the staff member. Such discussion shall follow WCESC policies and procedures under Section 504 and the ADA.

The Warren County ESC is required to provide written justification to the local health officials upon request explaining why a staff member is not required to wear a facial covering in the school facilities. Therefore, if any of the above exceptions are made, the request for such exception must be submitted in writing to the individual's supervisor, and a decision on the request will be provided in writing. An individual may be required to wear a face shield or other face covering as appropriate for an accommodation of this face covering requirement. Any school nurse or staff who care for individuals with COVID-19 symptoms must use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with OSHA standards. If face masks/coverings are required, and no exception has been applied, students and/or staff who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the applicable Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code, Staff Code of Conduct, and in accordance with policies of the Board. If that student refuses to wear a mask they will immediately be assigned to Option 2 (Online Learning) in accordance with the Superintendent's authority to assign students contained in the Ohio Revised Code. NOTE: This policy may require updates and revisions as state and federal mandates are announced.

## **NOTIFICATION OF VACCINATION OPPORTUNITY FOR WCESC/GOVS EMPLOYEES**

Our staff will have the opportunity to receive their 1<sup>st</sup> dose of COVID-19 vaccine in the upcoming weeks. Please email the following information by 2/1/2021 if you want to receive the vaccine:

1. Name (First, Middle Initial, and Last)
2. Full Address
3. Gender
4. Date of Birth

We need an accurate list so no vaccines are wasted.

Email [Jill.buffenbarger@warrencountyesc.com](mailto:Jill.buffenbarger@warrencountyesc.com) the above information by 2/1/2021 midnight. We will be turning our list in on 2/2/2021.

Thank you!  
Jill

*Jill Buffenbarger RN Nursing Supervisor Warren County ESC 513-695-2900 Ext 2903*  
[Jill.Buffenbarger@warrencountyesc.com](mailto:Jill.Buffenbarger@warrencountyesc.com)  
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Updated June 1<sup>st</sup> 2021

**Beginning Monday, June 1, 2021  
the following will apply:**



Masks will be optional depending on your personal level of comfort.

Temperature check no longer be required, however, sign in is still required



Meeting space limitations will also be lifted but you are encouraged to be considerate of your attendees.

**Plans will be reviewed and updated for the 2021-2022 school year August 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**Plans for continuity of services including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs, which may include student health and food services.**

### **The opening of a new remote student learning center at Western Row Elementary**

While we were creating various remote sites for testing and tutoring before the pandemic, they all had to be shut down due to COVID-19. We will be using the federal money over the next two years to open and maintain a "home base" for students in one of the wings at the WCESC Western Row Elementary Facility in Mason. The ESC let us use Western Row for testing this year, and it will now become a student center for the next two years. We want this to be a place for students to come for tutoring, resources, guidance, or just hanging out and doing work. Upon studying the other e-schools in our coalition, we found that GOVS was the only school that does not offer this home base to students. While we are not expecting all students to come every day, we hope to have a steady flow of students throughout the week. All teachers and tutors will have access to the student center to work with students as needed. Our office staff will be split to keep our space in Lebanon for registration, enrollment, and central office duties. Brian Barot will take staff members to Western Row to run the student center. The hope is that we will increase our student engagement numbers by using this facility while offering students more support and resources than we have been able to in the past.

### **The addition of a full-time Resource Coordinator**

For years we have struggled to support students beyond the curriculum. We often have attendance meetings and discuss the issues that many of our students are facing. Those issues typically end up resulting in withdrawal or poor engagement. We haven't had the staffing to take the next step and address some of these issues like homelessness, teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol dependency, economically

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disadvantaged students, etc. The Greater Ohio Virtual School will now have a full-time resource coordinator through the WCESC, connecting students and families with much-needed support and access to resources. Sommer Bradds has been hired for this position, and the ESC has permitted her to begin working with us over the past few months. She has already made a huge difference in so many ways and will be a valuable asset in our ability to serve students beyond the curriculum. Sommer's office will be at the GOVS Student Center.

## **The addition of a full-time Mental Health Consultant or the official title of Behavioral Interventionist**

If you have been around GOVS for a while, you are well aware of our students' many issues; some of which are tied to mental health concerns. We have noticed a considerable uptick in students struggling with these issues this year, as many schools have around the country have experienced. It is a serious issue that we have not addressed as a school with our students. This position will have the freedom to create help groups for our students and focus on those identified students who might need additional help, along with the ability to link them to specific mental health services should the need arise. Jennifer Johnson has been hired through the WCESC to provide this service at GOVS and will be starting in August. Jennifer's office will be at the GOVS Student Center.

## **The Addition of a part-time Guidance Counselor**

At the conclusion of the 2019-2020 school year, Loren Wall accepted a guidance counselor position at Lebanon High school. Her position was not replaced, and her duties were spread among the staff. Specifically, to Joanna Manchak and Chuck Merk, who did a remarkable job handling the extra responsibilities. Although they did a fantastic job, we have determined that this was a support that could be reinstated and be impactful to our students. Julie Burke has been hired on a part-time basis to serve as a guidance counselor. Not only does she have experience as a guidance counselor in traditional schools, but she also brings with her experience over the last two years with Drop Out Prevention and Recovery e-schools! Julie, Joanna, and Chuck will be at the GOVS student center in Mason.

## **The addition of 5 part-time Academic Coaches to replace the mentoring program**

Another model that most of the pilot schools have that GOVS does not is an academic coach program. Our mentoring program has been a fantastic resource to our students, but we can only ask so much of our amazing mentors as a supplemental position. We will be increasing the responsibilities in the form of academic coaches. The academic coaches will be taking on the mentoring roles of monitoring attendance, checking grades, communication, etc., with the addition of testing responsibilities, daily work at the GOVS student center, approval of documented offline hours, and weekly and monthly communication requirements in-person. These five positions will be working at the GOVS Student Center in Mason on a staggered basis three days a week.

Shawn E. Lenney— Executive Director