



Return to In-Person Instruction

WCPSS Board of Education

November 17, 2020



Desired Outcomes

- Insight into circumstances and factors impacting attendance and grading
- Overview of the end of first semester exam/testing plan
- An update around changes and adjustments to arts and athletic schedules, safety protocols, practices, and guidelines
- Virtual Academy registration numbers and next steps
- Perspectives on the first week of middle school in-person instruction



First Quarter Grading and Attendance

Paul Koh, Assistant Superintendent, Student Support Services
Drew Cook, Assistant Superintendent, Academics



Acknowledging a Complex Problem

Core Belief #4

The Board of Education, superintendent, and all staff, while sustaining best practices, will promote and support a culture of continuous improvement, risk-taking, and innovation that results in a high-performing organization focused on student achievement.

- Evolving circumstances
- Multiple & potentially compounding factors
- A broad range of solutions
- Need for co-dependent actions



Quarter 1 Trends & Observations

Core Belief #4

The Board of Education, superintendent, and all staff, while sustaining best practices, will promote and support a culture of continuous improvement, risk-taking, and innovation that results in a high-performing organization focused on student achievement.

- Quarter 1 data suggest lower attendance / engagement and, as a result, lower academic performance for some students
 - **Quarter 1 Attendance:** Approximately 8.8% of students have 4 or more absences
 - **Quarter 1 Grades:** Approximately a quarter of secondary students had an F in one or more courses
- Overall, principals are reporting a strong connection between lower grades and lack of consistent attendance / engagement

Attendance and Grading

Implications & Guidance

Attendance

Grades

POLICY & GUIDANCE

[Policy 4400](#) shifts with remote learning environment

[Policy 3400](#) & [R&P](#)

[NCDPI Guidance](#)

[District Guidance](#)

EFFORTS TO DATE

No Show/Due Diligence Efforts

School Level Grading Plans

School-based Teams

Intervention & Recovery Practices

Community Partnerships



Attendance and Grading

School Support & Next Steps

Current School Actions to Support Students

- Engage in data-based problem solving to identify trends, root causes, and possible solutions
- Make adjustments as appropriate to grading practices
- Seek creative staffing strategies to provide intervention and student support
- Review and revise current attendance and/or grading strategies to mitigate opportunity gaps
- Leverage family engagement strategies

Looking Ahead

- In-person tutorial and intervention supports during the school day
- Saturday Intervention Programs
- “WP” to reduce high school courseload where appropriate



Attendance and Grading

District Support & Next Steps

Current District Actions to Support Students

- Use Principal PLTs and other opportunities for collaboration and sharing of strategies across schools
- Review relevant school-based practices to identify potential adjustments that could further expand opportunities of support for students
- Strengthen outreach opportunities to partner/connect with families in support of students

Looking Ahead

- Examine how district funds can be used to support intervention efforts (example: GEERS Funds, etc.)
- Review options related to high school exams



End of the First Semester Exam/Testing

Brian Pittman, Senior Director, High School Programs



First Semester Exam/Testing

Considerations for Teacher-Made Final Exams

Teacher-made final exams:

- will be made available to students virtually during last five days of the semester
- will be consistent at the PLT level
- only be factored into the student's overall course average if the exam score benefits the student

Many teachers are exploring projects, portfolios, and other performance-based assessments.

Schools will work with students as appropriate on accommodations related to IEP, 504, EL, etc.



First Semester Exam/Testing

Considerations for State-Mandated Tests

Per state guidelines, State tests (EOCs and CTE) **must be taken on a school campus**, even for Virtual Academy students

- Five-day window still applies
- Possible waiver from NCDPI to extend the window
- Health guidelines must be followed
- Transportation and breakfast/lunch must be provided
- Accommodations (IEP, LEP, 504) must be provided
- Paper and pencil option for schools with insufficient devices (pending NCDPI approval)



First Semester Exam/Testing

Logistical Considerations for State-Mandated Tests

Schools will encourage all students to participate in state testing:

- Students expressing safety concerns will be offered extra accommodations (such as smaller group settings, etc.) as feasible
- Schools will make every effort to engage students who do not test to participate in make-up exams
- Students / families will have the opportunity to submit a medical exemption request if they have medical or safety related concerns with testing
- Students who neither test nor submit a medical exemption will receive an “Incomplete” for the course¹²

Questions?

WHAT   
STARTS
 HERE
CHANGES
 EVERYTHING.



Athletics and Arts Update

Eric Fitts, Senior Director, Middle School Programs



Arts

District Updates & Next Steps

- **PPE Band/Chorus**
 - Resonance Masks (Teachers) have arrived
 - Instrument Masks (Students) have arrived
 - All PPE has been shipped and will be going to schools tomorrow
- COVID Document updated from work group
- Working with ABC Collective to update COVID Document and finalize a start date for band and chorus
- [Middle School Arts Updates](#)



Athletics

District Updates & Next Steps

- Early Observations
 - Optional off season workouts underway for multiple sports
 - [Athletic Calendar](#)
 - Cross country & volleyball regular season contests began November 16
- Face Coverings
 - NCHSAA now requiring face coverings be worn at all times during indoor workouts as well as during volleyball practices and games
- Spectators
 - We plan to open contests to immediate family members of participating athletes the week of November 30
 - Must still follow NCHSAA limit of 25 for indoor and 100 for outdoor events
- Financial Assistance
 - All regular season fees for officials are being covered by the district



Virtual Academy Update

Crystal Reardon, Director, School Counseling

Virtual Academy

Spring 2021 Registration Data: Grades 6-12

	Spring Registration	Fall Registration
Middle	19,250	21,304
High	23,862	25,889
Total	43,117	47,193



Virtual Academy

Spring 2021: Next Steps

- Middle and high school families who registered for the spring semester have received a confirmation letter
- Middle and high schools are in the process of using the WCPSS Virtual Academy registration data to make adjustments to their spring semester master schedules
- District and schools will begin communicating the Elementary Spring Virtual Academy window
- Spring registration window for Elementary Schools: December 2-9



First Week of Return for Middle Schools

Jonathan Enns, Southwestern Area Superintendent



Reflections

What is Going Well

- Similar to elementary schools with respect to initial success
- Elements within school's control are going well (structures, protocols, car pool, etc.)
- Adherence to social distancing and face coverings

Areas of Continued Focus

- Plan B Student Attendance
- Rebuilding student stamina for in-person instruction
- Reviewing practices and processes supporting in-person instruction (Multiple teaching modalities)

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