



Superintendent's Report

Submitted by Nick Verhoff

August 12, 2021

2021-2022 School Re-Opening Guidelines

As we head into the beginning of a new school year, Putnam County School administrators realize some uncertainty remains as to what the future will bring. As you know, COVID is still with us and creates many concerns. All protocols indicated below will be followed by Putnam County Schools for the 2021-22 school year, but this could change with state-ordered mandates or case increases amongst children. Flexibility will be key as we begin yet another year. Therefore, please understand that the protocols and procedures described below **are subject to change.** Our respective school districts will do our very best to be open, honest and transparent with all decisions we make when it comes to your students.

Face Coverings

There will be no face covering (mask) mandates at Putnam County Schools to begin the 2021-2022 school year for staff or students. Face coverings (masks) **will be recommended** for staff, K-12 students and visitors at all times.

Cleaning/Sanitizing Protocols

Putnam County Schools will put forth our best effort to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and other various illnesses. We will continue our COVID cleaning protocols regularly throughout this school year and Putnam County Schools will continue to encourage healthy habits such as frequent hand washing and the use of hand sanitizer stations throughout our respective buildings.

Health/Temperature Checks

Please do not send your child to school if they have a fever of 100.5 or above or have symptoms of COVID. While we understand the importance of attending school, you as parents and guardians are the first line of defense.

COVID-19 Vaccine

Putnam County Schools have no plans to require any staff member or student to receive the vaccine as a requirement to attend school. Putnam County Schools believe receiving the vaccine is a personal decision of staff members, school visitors and parents of our students. Putnam County Schools will not conduct COVID-19 testing, nor will we inquire about the vaccination status of our staff or students. Putnam County Schools will remain neutral on the topic of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Quarantine/Close Contact

If a staff member or student contracts COVID-19, they must be isolated until the Putnam County Health Department gives the all clear to return to school. Guidelines for determining Covid-19 exposure in K-12 classroom settings (i.e. close contact) are outlined in the Ohio Department of Health's Covid-19 Fact Sheet. That document is attached to this letter. Putnam County Schools will work to follow those guidelines.

Hours of Operation

Putnam County Schools plan to be open for all K-12 students five days a week. Putnam County Schools will not deviate from that plan unless state-ordered mandates or case increases amongst children and/or staff affect changes to that plan.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

Putnam County Schools intend to operate all athletics and extracurriculars without attendance restrictions, but we ask you to please not attend any school-related activities if you have a fever of over 100.5 and/or are not feeling well.

If you have any questions regarding these re-opening guidelines, please feel free to contact me at cg_verhoff@cg.noacsc.org or 419-659-4301.

2022 Commencement Date Scheduled

For those parents who have seniors in school for the 2021-22 school year, we want to make you aware of the Class of 2022's commencement date, which is scheduled for Sunday, May 22 @ 2 p.m. in the high school gym. Please note the change of this date, as it is one week earlier than what has been scheduled in the previous seven years. This date is the Sunday before Memorial Day weekend, as compared to previous years when it has been held on the same weekend as Memorial Day weekend. Please plan accordingly.

Please fill out Free and Reduced Lunch Waiver Form for 2021-22 School Year!

Earlier this year, the USDA extended the nationwide meal waivers that will allow free school meals to ALL students through June 2022. This means ALL students, regardless of their free/reduced meal status, will be eligible for free breakfasts and lunches at school for the entire 2021-2022 school year.

So why are parents/guardians being asked to fill out free/reduced waiver applications for this school year? These waiver guidelines are the same measures used to determine if a family is required to pay school fees. School fees are \$60 per student for the 2021-2022 school year. If you believe you may be eligible for your child's school fees to be waived or reduced, you must complete and submit the free/reduced lunch application. Please fill out this form and return to the elementary or high school office. Once processed, parents will be notified if school fees are due. If you have any questions or need assistance regarding this process, please feel free to contact my office at 419-659-2639.

Open House is back for 2021-22!

After missing Open House to begin last school year, we will return to our traditional format on Monday, August 23, from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Please come out to meet your child's teacher for this school year. Parents can pay 2021-22 school fees at this time as well. Secretaries will be set up in the elementary gym to collect fee payments.

The kindergarten teachers will host a separate orientation for their students earlier that day on August 23 at 1:00 p.m. Our newest Bulldogs will get more individualized attention in order to get their school year started off on the right foot!

Final Forms for 2021-2022 School Year Now Available

Parents and students can begin filling out their Final Forms information for next school year now. Log in at <https://columbusgrove-oh.finalforms.com/> and click the "Click to Switch to 2021-22 Registration" button at the top of the page to get started. Please contact Mr. Keehn at cg_keehn@cg.noacsc.org if you have any issues.

Beginning of the Year Items:

- 1. Elementary, Middle, and High School Start and Ending Times-** The elementary and middle school students (K-8) will start at 8:00 a.m. and dismiss at 2:50 p.m. daily. High school students will begin at 8:00 a.m. as well, but will dismiss at 2:55 p.m.
- 2. School Supplies Lists-** These lists are posted on the district website. You can come to the building and receive a hard copy as well.
- 3. School Fees-** School fees for the 2021-2022 school year remain the same as last year. Fees for grades K-11 are \$60. For grade 12, fees are \$75. Additionally, for high school students taking an online technology course, there will be a \$15 fee per course. Please make checks payable to Columbus Grove Local Schools. Payments can be submitted at the offices or they may be given to your child's teacher. Secretaries will be in the elementary gym collecting fees at the Open House on Monday, August 19.
- 4. Pick-Up and Drop Off Reminder –** A few years ago, we implemented one-way transportation on Pendleton during pick-up (2:30-3:15 p.m.) and drop off (7:30-8:00 a.m.) This has worked well and increased safety measures in this high traffic area. Please remember that Pendleton will become a one-way street during these times when school begins on Wednesday, August 25.

- 5. Breakfast & Lunch Prices-** Free breakfasts and lunches which were implemented last school year will continue for the 2021-22 school year. ANY student who chooses to get a breakfast or lunch will not be charged. This free breakfast/lunch does NOT apply to ala carte items.

Sign Up for Meals Plus

Columbus Grove Schools use the Meals Plus program to handle the transactions for the breakfast and lunch program for students at school. This program allows parents to have online access to their child's meal account, enabling them to deposit money in their account.

Please visit <http://cg.noacsc.org/parents-students/alerts/meals-plus-reminders> for more information regarding this convenient system.

If you have further questions regarding the start of the school year, please visit our website at <http://cg.noacsc.org/> for more information. District office numbers are 659-2631 (elementary), 659-2156 (high school), and 659-2639 (superintendent).

Anonymous Bullying Reporting System

The Columbus Grove Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The District encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that he/she believes to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. In an effort to increase our abilities to address and further prevent bullying behavior, Columbus Grove Schools has designed an anonymous online harassment reporting system. If an adult or child suspects a student being bullied, they are encouraged to report the bullying behavior to school officials in person or via the District's secure "Safe Schools Help Link" service online under "Tools" of the Parents/Students/Community tab. This online service is up and running and will remain so for the entire school year.

Substitute Bus Drivers Wanted

Columbus Grove Local Schools is accepting applications for substitute bus drivers. This position has the potential of becoming a full-time bus driver in the future, if applicants are interested. Substitute bus drivers are contacted to drive extracurricular and field trips and occasionally drive a regular morning or afternoon route. Certification requires the completion of attending a pre-service class, a written and driving test, CDL license, a medical physical exam, drug test, BMV check of driving record, and a background check. Cost for training will be reimbursed by the district for any individuals who serve as a substitute bus driver for Columbus Grove Local Schools. If you are interested in becoming a bus driver for Columbus Grove School, please contact the Superintendent's Office at 659-2639 for further information.

Upcoming Events:

Thursday, August 12

- Fall Athletic Pictures
- @ 7:00 p.m.- Athletic Boosters meeting in the commons
- Varsity Golf @ Bluffton Golf Course – 4:00 p.m.

Friday, August 13

- Varsity Golf@ Pike Run - 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, August 17

- @ 8:00 p.m.- August Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, August 19

- @ 9:00 a.m.- Student Orientation- All 7th grade and new 8-12 students (HS gym)
- @ 10:30 a.m.- 1:1 Device Orientation- All 8th grade and new high school students (Commons)
- @ 1:00 p.m.- Student Orientation- New K-6th grade students
- @ 1:30 p.m.- 1:1 Device distribution - 9th-12th grade students (Media Center)

Friday, August 20

- Varsity Football @ Pandora-Gilboa – 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 21

- JV Football vs. Pandora-Gilboa – 10:00 a.m.

Monday, August 23

- 6:00-7:30 p.m.- Open House
- Freshman Football @ Liberty-Benton – 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 24

- Apollo- First day for first year students
- Varsity Soccer @ Miller City – 5:00 p.m.
- Varsity & JV Volleyball @ Ayersville – 5:30 p.m.
- Varsity Cross Country – Ice Breaker Invit. @ Upper Sandusky – 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 25

- First day of the 2021-22 school year (and returning Apollo students)

Thursday & Friday, August 26 & 27

- Kindergarten Testing

Monday, August 30 – Friday, September 3

- Kindergarten Phase-In Days

Monday, September 6

- No School – Labor Day