

Dear Overpark Elementary Parents and Guardians,

The DCS Return-To-Learn Plan has been released, and we will adhere to all guidelines shared in that document. However, I am sure you and your little mustang(s) have several questions. Hopefully, this letter will give you guidance, ease your fears, and clarify how OES students, parents, and staff will be affected.

First of all, we are so excited to see our little ones for the beginning of the new school year--be it in person or virtually! It has been a long time since I stood in the rotunda in the mornings greeted by the smiles, excitement, and spontaneity of our students. And though this school year has already presented us with unprecedented challenges, we are determined to see the light and joy in every day.

### **Overpark Elementary School Return-To-Learn Plan**

1. **Distance Learning:** You have options! Please refer to the DCS website to get guidance for enrollment and the specific requirements for registration. While your student will not be on campus if you choose full distance learning, he or she will receive instruction from a teacher in the core subjects. Attendance will be taken. Grades will be given. Supplies will be needed. Teachers will be available. We understand that this is a personal decision based on the needs of your family, and there is no right or wrong decision. Parents can register by completing the application online at <https://www.desotocountyschools.org/distancelearning>. Questions about distance learning can be sent to [distancelearning@dcsms.org](mailto:distancelearning@dcsms.org). Applications must be completed by **Wednesday, July 22**. Distance learners must meet all of the same registration guidelines as traditional students. Students who participate in virtual learning will not be allowed to attend activity, recess, or lunch with peers.

While OES intends to begin the year with the traditional school model, you must be prepared for individual students or groups of students to shift to distance learning during the school year. Frequent changes could be made throughout the school year based on the spread of COVID-19 in our schools and community.

2. **Schoology:** Schoology is the distance learning platform for DCS. Every student, every parent, every teacher, and every administrator will have access and be required to use each day. Your student will receive login information, and this will be the primary method of communication. It's really awesome, and you will "be in the know" about the latest happenings at the school. Please refer to the DCS website for more guidance. Also, please make sure your email address is current so that you will receive accurate information.
3. **Student Safety:** We will maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible at Overpark. Social distancing best practices and considerations as outlined by the Centers

for Disease Control (CDC), the Mississippi Department of Health (MDH), and the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) will be in place and maintained from the time your student enters our building until he or she leaves. The safer the environment, the more students will learn. We have procedures in place for the following:

- Arrival procedures
- Classroom organization and desk arrangement
- Line procedures
- Lunch procedures
- Handwashing procedures
- Supplies procedure
- Restroom procedures
- Class change procedures
- Dismissal procedures

4. **Arrival:** Please see the following changes to our arrival procedures:

- School doors will open at 8:05. For their safety, students must remain in vehicles until the doors are opened at 8:05. Do not drop students off before 8:05. Every school in the district has new start times to accommodate changes due to social distancing.
- Duty personnel will continue to greet students with welcoming smiles and mustang love. However...
- Duty personnel will no longer be opening car doors and/or unbuckling students. If your student needs to have the door opened or be unbuckled, we do ask that you move forward or park in the parking lot to walk your student to the door.
- Only children will be allowed into the building. Parents are not permitted to walk students to classrooms.
- Students will go directly to class when they enter the building.
- When breakfast is offered, they will grab it and go to the classroom to eat. Breakfast will be free for all students who wish to eat.

5. **Activities:** Each student on campus will receive activity time. The content, procedures, and materials have been adapted to meet the guidelines for social distancing. Several activity teachers will go to classrooms instead of students travelling to the activity rooms. Students will not be sharing any supplies in these classes.

6. **Lunch:** Students will be served lunch daily as usual. Some classes will eat in the classroom, and some will eat in the cafeteria. In order to adhere to social distancing guidelines, we reduced the number of students in the cafeteria. Teachers will follow the lunch schedule with locations given by administration. Lunch will be provided for distance learners at a time designated by the administration and cafeteria staff.

7. **Recess:** Students will have a recess time with their class. Each class will have its own area for play and will not mix with other classes. Students will remain with their class the entire time.
8. **Dismissal:**
  - Car riders will be dismissed first.
  - The same procedure of not touching car doors will apply during dismissal.
  - Parents must clearly display the first and last name of student in the window.
  - If a different person is picking up, be sure that person has the FULL name.
  - Buses will be next; then daycares.
  - Each student will sit in his or her designated area until called by an adult.
  - Please be patient with us as we iron out the kinks.
9. **Visitors:** There will be no visitors permitted into the building without an appointment and prior approval from the principal unless there is an emergency. Visitors must set an appointment to meet with administration, teachers, the counselor, or any other personnel.
10. **Supplies:**
  - Students are required to have his or her own set of supplies DAILY. There will be no community or shared supplies.
  - Students will be permitted to bring a backpack to keep his or her belongings.
  - Cubbies have been removed from rooms to create more space for social distancing. So it is important to clean and organize the backpack nightly so as not to create clutter within the classroom.
  - Please add a clear water bottle to your supply list. Water fountains will be available for use as of now and will be cleaned regularly. To eliminate the need for the water fountain, provide your child with a water bottle that can be refilled.
11. **Academic and behavioral expectations:** The academic and behavioral expectations of DCS and OES remain the same. We will provide your student with the best education in an environment that is safe and conducive for learning. We ask that you continue to partner with us to uphold these high standards.
12. **Masks:** Masks are strongly recommended for students though not required. We will not be supplying each student with a mask, but our nurse will have some for students who may be ill.
13. **Special education services:** For distance learners, an IEP meeting will be held to discuss how the needs of the students will be met virtually. Please watch for guidance from your child's teachers.

We hope this answers several of your questions and provides some direction for you. If you have any questions, please call (662)890-8745 or email Mrs. Maxwell at [aisha.maxwell@dcsms.org](mailto:aisha.maxwell@dcsms.org).