

Dear Lake Cormorant Middle School 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 that you and your child(ren) have several questions.

Hopefully, this letter will give you guidance, ease your fears, and clarify how LCMS students, parents, and staff will be affected.

First, let me say how happy I am to be welcoming you and your child(ren) back to school, whether in person on campus or by distance learning. I know parents have made some tough decisions these last couple of weeks, and I understand that everyone needs to make the best choice for their family's peace of mind and safety.

Lake Cormorant Middle School Return-to-Learn Plan

1. **Distance Learning:** You have options! Please refer to the DCS website to get guidance for enrollment and specific requirement 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. 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 participate in extracurricular sports/activities during the school day or attend lunch with peers.

While LCMS 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 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 great tool for learning that can provide parents with the most up-to-date information regarding the school and your student. Please refer to the DCS website for more guidance.

Please make sure that all contact information on file with the school, including your email address, phone number, home address, and emergency contact, is correct and current so that you will receive accurate information in a timely manner.

3. **Student Safety:** We will maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible at LCMS. 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 procedures
 - Restroom procedures
 - Class change procedures
 - Dismissal procedures

4. **Arrival:** Please see the following changes to our arrival procedures:
 - Car riders will drop off and pick up students at the front of the school. Teachers will be out front directing traffic and welcoming students.
 - School doors will open at 7:50. For their safety, students must remain in vehicles until the doors are opened at 7:50. Do not drop off students before 7:50. Every school in the district has new start times to accommodate changes due to social distancing.

5. **Dismissal:**
 - Car riders will be dismissed first at 3:30.
 - Bus riders will be dismissed at 3:35, and busses will leave campus at 3:40.
 - Our goal is to have all car riders off campus before buses pull off campus.

6. **Check-Out Procedures:** The front office will handle student check-outs but parents/guardians will call in advance and give a specific time for their arrival on campus. The front office will pull the student from class one minute before arrival time. Only the person picking up the student will enter the front office with an ID to sign-out his/her student.

7. **Break:** A limited menu of snack items will be sold daily in the classroom by your student's 2nd period teacher.

8. **Lunch:** Students will be served lunch daily as usual. We have added additional lunch periods and arranged seating in the cafeteria to support social distancing during lunch. We will not be accepting outside food brought to students during lunch time nor will visitors be allowed during lunch. Lunch will be provided for distance learners at a time designated by the administration and cafeteria staff.
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, counselors, or any other personnel.
10. **Parent/Teacher Conferences:** Parents wanting to set up a conference with teachers will schedule meeting through the LCMS Counseling Center. Meeting will take place by Zoom. Administration will be available to meet with parents by Zoom or in person by appointment.
11. **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.
 - 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.
12. **Academic and behavioral expectations:** The academic and behavioral expectations of DCS and LCMS remain the same. We will provide your student with the best education in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. We ask that you continue to partner with us to uphold these high standards.
13. **Masks:** Masks are strongly recommended for students though not required. We will not be supplying students with masks, but our nurse will have some for students who may be ill.
14. **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. There will be a video on our school website August 1st for parents and students that will hopefully address any further question or concerns about returning to school. If you still have questions, please feel free to call me at (662)781-0778 or email me at lisa.steiner@dcsms.org. You can also visit our school Facebook page or <https://lcm.desotocountyschools.org/> for current information.