

**2020-21**

**Return to Schools  
Guide for Families**

## OVERVIEW

Lexington Two is monitoring the spread of COVID in our area as we near the September 8 start of the 2020-21 school year. We will adjust reopening plans as needed, if the risk of COVID spread in Lexington County remains high, as determined by DHEC. We will continue to update families on any changes through August.



The district is offering families a choice of two instructional plans, based on data collected through surveys of Lexington Two families and employees; guidance from health, safety and education agencies at state and national levels; and AccelerateEd Task Force recommendations. We know and understand the importance of returning to in-person learning -- not just for academics, but for the social, emotional and physical well-being of students. Our goal is to return to in-person, 5-day instruction as quickly and as safely as possible, once COVID-19 cases and the risk of virus spread decline to acceptable DHEC levels.

Our current instructional models for students in 2020-21 are:

- **Full-time virtual instruction (5K-12)**
- **In-person instruction at schools with a hybrid/blended plan of 2 in-person school days and 3 virtual days (3K-12)**

In addition, the district will implement specific measures for reopening to do everything possible to protect the health and safety of students and employees. Among them:

- Reduced classroom, bus and group activity capacities
- **Required face coverings for all staff and students**, unless medically prohibited
- Use of symptom screening and temperature checks, as well as protocols in response to suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases
- Availability of cleaning/sanitizing products in classrooms, as well as overall increased frequency of cleaning of facilities throughout the school day

# COMPARING THE PLANS

## VIRTUAL ACADEMY PROGRAM

The Lexington Two Virtual Academy program will serve 5K-12 students as a comprehensive schooling option. Families who choose this program commit for the 2020-21 school year. Students may request to return to face-to-face instruction, but such requests will only be considered at semester breaks as space and safety allow at the student's home school. Virtual instruction will be delivered by certified Lexington Two educators, with students adhering to South Carolina and Lexington Two academic standards. Students will be provided a device and families are responsible for providing other equipment and supplies. If reliable internet is an issue, contact your home school for guidance. **Deadline to apply is August 1 at [lex2.org/virtualacademy/](http://lex2.org/virtualacademy/)**

## HYBRID/BLENDED INSTRUCTION

The hybrid/blended option for 3K-12 students incorporates 2 days of in-person learning at the student's home school with 3 days of virtual learning. This option minimizes exposure by creating half-occupancy in the building and classes each day. Students will report in-person on Monday/Thursday or Tuesday/Friday. Virtual days will include a mix of digital platforms, assignments, and Google meetings with teachers. Specific details on what days students report to school and for virtual learning will be determined as the plans are finalized. Student learning will be supported through Acellus and Google Classroom to align to South Carolina standards and courses at all levels. Students with siblings in Lexington Two schools will be placed on the same rotations for in-person school days and virtual days for ease in child care, transportation and scheduling. Federal, state and local guidance for health and safety will be followed for in-person school days.

## **NOTE: TEMPORARY REMOTE LEARNING**

Should a classroom/school close temporarily due to COVID-19, students enrolled in the hybrid/blended option would be taught virtually by teachers from their home schools. Lexington Two educators have undergone significant training and development in virtual learning techniques and strategies over the summer, so students and parents can expect an effective approach to new learning, assignments and assessments. Attendance is expected, and grading will be done as established by the SC Department of Education Uniform Grading Policies and district policies.



# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## *In-person hybrid/blended instruction*

- Students will attend in-person instruction 2 days a week (Monday/Thursday or Tuesday/Friday) and virtually 3 days a week. Virtual days will include a mix of digital platforms, assignments and Google meetings with teachers
- In-person school days will have staggered start and dismissal times. Parents will not be allowed to walk children into the school
- Students will remain in their classrooms for core instruction during the school day
- The school day will include related arts, PE and recess
- Students who qualify for services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, Gifted, etc., will receive those services as required. Provision of those services may require transition to another classroom during the day
- Students will have access to media center materials, whether through staggered visits to the media center or delivery of materials to classrooms
- Breakfast will be offered. Students will be offered a choice of lunch meals to eat in the cafeteria, socially distanced, or in the classroom, depending on school size. Students also may bring their own lunch
- No large group gatherings or assemblies. Student movement within the building will be managed, and social distancing will be maintained



# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## *Lexington Two Virtual Academy*

- SC Standards-based instruction in English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and other areas
- Students have a structured daily schedule with designated start and end times for classes, within the framework of the standard elementary school day
- Real-time class instruction with a certified Lexington Two teacher (not necessarily from student's home school), supplemented with Independent student work, classroom discussion and small group instruction
- Limited related arts offerings
- Social/support activities to build relationships
- Students who qualify for services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, Gifted, etc., will receive those services as required
- Support will be provided through a variety of formats, including phone calls, emails, and trusted virtual platforms for schools like Class Dojo
- Digital coursework through Seesaw, Google classroom and related platforms
- Grading structures will be the same as in a traditional school, with standards-based report cards for 5K-2nd grade and report cards for 3rd-5th grades with accountability measures in place to ensure progress monitoring and academic growth
- Personal technology provided; assistance may be available for internet access
- Parents/guardians play significant roles in helping students structure a schedule that allows for a healthy balance of academics, social interaction, exercise, and extracurricular activities.



# MIDDLE SCHOOL

## *In-person hybrid/blended instruction*

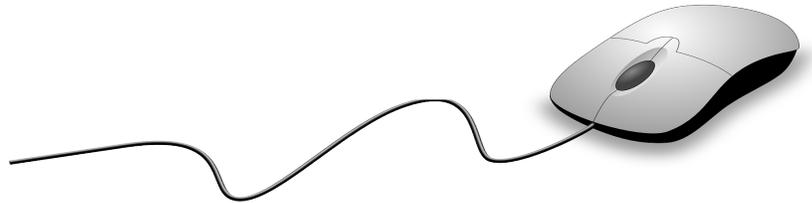
- Students will attend in-person instruction 2 days a week (Monday/Thursday or Tuesday/Friday) and 3 days virtually each week. Virtual days will include a mix of digital platforms, assignments, virtual peer collaboration, and Google meetings with teachers
- In-person school days will have staggered start and dismissal times
- Students will receive core instruction in English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies
- Students will participate in two related arts classes in an alternating day schedule, one each day, with a possible change in classrooms
- Students will have daily intervention to address skills gaps, as well as social and emotional learning
- Students who qualify for services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, Gifted, etc. will receive those services as required
- Students will have contact from school staff during their three virtual days, easing concerns if a child is home alone
- Breakfast will be offered. Students will have a split lunch in the cafeteria, with half of the grade level going to the cafeteria while the other half goes outside or to another designated location, all socially distanced. Students will be offered a choice of lunch meals. Students also may bring their own lunch



# MIDDLE SCHOOL

## *Lexington Two Virtual Academy*

- SC Standards-based instruction in English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and other areas
- Structured daily schedule with designated start and end times for classes, within the framework of the standard school day
- Real-time class instruction with a certified Lexington Two teacher (not necessarily from student's home school), supplemented with Independent student work, collaborative virtual student work groups, virtual study groups outside class, and small group instruction
- Limited related arts offerings
- Students who qualify for services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, Gifted, etc. will receive those services as required
- Social/emotional support activities to build relationships
- Support provided through a variety of formats, including phone calls, emails, and trusted virtual platforms for schools like the Remind app
- Grading scale based on the SC Uniform Grading Policy, with accountability measures in place to ensure progress monitoring and academic growth
- After-school extracurricular activities at home schools for students who meet eligibility requirements for any sport or activity. Transportation will not be provided



# HIGH SCHOOL

## *In-person hybrid/blended instruction*

- Students will attend in-person instruction 2 days a week (Monday/Thursday or Tuesday/Friday) and 3 days virtually each week. Virtual days will include a mix of digital platforms, assignments, virtual peer collaboration, independent assignment/project work and Google meetings with teachers
- In-person school days will have staggered start and dismissal times
- Students generally scheduled for 4 courses a day
- Honors, dual enrollment, AP, Early College and career pathways programs will be offered
- Supports to help students meet requirements of SC High School Diploma, including college and career help through guidance departments
- CATE students seeking professional certifications will be able to schedule required in-person time
- Students who qualify for services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, Gifted, etc. will receive those services as required
- Staggered times for transitions to other classrooms, as well as for coursework at the Innovation Center
- Breakfast will be offered. Students will be offered a choice of lunches to eat in the cafeteria or in another large common area designated for meals. Students may bring their own lunch



# HIGH SCHOOL

## *Virtual Academy instruction*

- SC Standards-based instruction in English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and other areas
- Structured daily schedule with designated start and end times for classes, within the framework of the standard school day
- Real-time class instruction with a certified Lexington Two teacher (not necessarily from student's home school), supplemented with Independent student work, collaborative virtual student work groups, virtual study groups outside class, and small group instruction
- Students generally scheduled for 4 courses a day
- Honors, dual enrollment, AP, Early College and career pathways programs will be offered based on enrollment and professional certification
- Students who qualify for services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, Gifted, etc. will receive those services as required
- Supports to help students meet requirements of SC High School Diploma, including college and career help through guidance departments
- CATE students seeking professional certifications will be able to schedule required in-person time
- Classroom support provided through a variety of formats, including phone calls, emails, and trusted virtual platforms for schools
- After-school athletic and extracurricular activities offered at home schools for students who meet eligibility requirements for any sport or activity. Transportation will not be provided



# COMMON GROUND

## *Virtual Academy and hybrid/blended instructional models*

No matter which instructional model your family selects, our goal is to ensure that all students receive engaging and relevant learning to prepare them not only for their K-12 journey but for college, career and life. Both the virtual and in-person models will be taught with content that aligns with South Carolina's grade-level standards.

### **Among the common ground across the Lexington Two Virtual Academy and hybrid/blended instructional models:**

- All students will have common content and assessments
- All classes will use similar, district-supported learning materials, texts and instructional tools
- All students will have the same grading structures
- All schools will take attendance
- All students who qualify for services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, Gifted, etc. will receive those services as required
- All schools will focus on building relationships and community
- Teachers will provide small group and learning coaching in person or virtually



## INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

- Gifted/talented students receive instruction that matches the strengths and needs of each individual. Students will continue to be challenged at their level of instruction, either by a Gifted/talented teacher providing activities and learning experiences to a number of students or by the regular classroom teacher differentiating instruction among all students in the classroom. Students can expect to see advanced learning experiences in the Virtual Academy and hybrid/blended instructional models.
- Students who receive special education will continue to receive those services as outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). If you have specific questions about your child's IEP services, please contact the Special Services Department at (803) 739-4022.
- Students who have 504 plans will receive the applicable accommodations as defined in their plans. If you have specific questions about your child's 504 plan, please contact your child's school.
- Students who receive support through our English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program have a language acquisition plan that identifies their level of services and instructional supports. Every effort will be made to maintain consistent contact with students and their families to maximize service delivery. If you have specific questions about your child's ESOL services, please contact Jennifer Wise via email ([jwise@lex2.org](mailto:jwise@lex2.org)) or phone (803) 739-4051.
- Social/emotional support will be provided through a variety of formats such as telephone calls, emails, virtual platform meetings such as Google Meet, individually or as a group, as needs arise. Our partnership with Lexington County Mental Health provides support to students in need. Our school counselors will work with students and families who are in need of additional support. If you have specific concerns or questions about your child's social and emotional health, please contact the counselor at your child's school.



# PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

## **Athletics and extracurricular activities**

Lexington Two will follow the South Carolina High School League's phased re-entry plan for athletics and follow all district protocols for extracurricular activities. Students enrolled in both the Virtual Academy and hybrid/blended plan will be able to participate in available activities at their home schools, provided they meet eligibility requirements.



## **Field Trips**

In-person field trips are suspended to ensure the safety of students and staff. Lexington Two will encourage virtual field trips, when possible.

## **After-school programs**

After-school programs will continue to be available but may be modified by the district or community organization for school schedules and reduced capacity recommendations.

## **Volunteer programs**

Lexington Two has placed a temporary hold on its volunteer programs as the 2020-21 school year begins this fall, based on guidance from health officials. We so appreciate all of our volunteers! Please know that once it is safe to resume volunteer activities, Lexington Two will notify families and community organizations immediately through schools and social media.



# HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

*Lexington Two will implement enhanced health protocols to help protect employees*

- All employees must practice social distancing and will be provided with two face masks. Teachers also will be offered clear face shields as an option
- Daily temperature checks will not be required, except for high-risk children. However, schools will be stocked with thermometers for anyone who may want to conduct them more generally
- Masks or face shields must be worn at all times while moving throughout the building, unless medically prohibited
- Lexington Two will provide cleaning/sanitizing products in classrooms so that high-touch items and surfaces can be cleaned frequently
- Plexiglass/sneeze guards will be installed in high-traffic and select close-contact areas
- Signs and stickers outlining social distancing and other requirements will be used
- Only essential visitors will be allowed inside schools, beyond the front office, and they must wear masks
- Parents/guardians will not be allowed to walk children into buildings each morning or visit their children at lunchtime. Schools will seek virtual opportunities for parents
- Staggered arrival and departure times for students, as well as managed transition times, will help reduce traffic in public spaces, such as hallways



# STUDENT MEALS

## Meals

- Breakfast and lunch will be offered at all elementary, middle and high schools

## Lunch choices

- There will be a choice of lunch options
- Students may bring their own meals

## Lunch locations

- Depending on school size, elementary school students will either eat in the cafeteria or will eat in their classrooms, both socially distanced
- Middle school students will have a split lunch in the cafeteria, with half of the grade level going to the cafeteria while the other half goes outside or to another designated large common space, both socially distanced
- High school students will eat in the cafeteria and other larger common spaces identified for meal consumption or in classrooms, all socially distanced



## Virtual Academy lunch

- The district is working to offer meals for pick-up during designated times at select school locations for Lexington Two's Virtual Academy students. Details are still being finalized



# TRANSPORTATION

**Details regarding bus routes and stops will be provided once data is collected on the number of students choosing to attend the Lexington Two Virtual Academy.**

## **State guidelines**

Under state guidelines, buses will operate at reduced capacity for each route. As a result, the district is encouraging parents who are able to provide student transportation, to allow for quicker transport of students who may not have another option.



## **Seating and safety**

- While entering the bus, wait until a student is on the top step before boarding behind him/her. Allow distance while walking down the aisle to a seat
- Buses will be loaded from back to front, with assigned seating. No students will be allowed to sit on the two front seats, per DHEC mandate
- Students and drivers are required to wear masks, unless medically prohibited
- Windows and roof vents will be open to maximize ventilation
- Each bus will be cleaned and disinfected after morning and afternoon routes, per DHEC guidelines

# CLEANING PROTOCOLS

- Over the summer and in anticipation of the start of the new year, all schools have been thoroughly cleaned, disinfected and sanitized using DHEC and SDE protocols
- Each weekday, classrooms, restrooms, cafeterias, hallways, offices and other spaces in Lexington Two schools will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to the arrival of students and again with the departure of faculty and administrators at the end of each school day.
- Lexington Two has purchased misting machines for each school and for bus transportation. These disinfecting machines will be used throughout the school day to disinfect public areas and other locations in schools
- Playground equipment will be cleaned and disinfected after each recess schedule
- All outside athletic facilities and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected daily
- High-touch areas such as door knobs, sink handles, paper towel dispensers, light switches and commonly used equipment will be wiped down throughout the school day
- Lexington Two will provide disinfectant products in classrooms so that high-touch items and surfaces can be cleaned frequently
- Hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed in schools, many located in areas with multiple users, such as hallways
- Bottle filling stations will be provided as an alternative to water fountains



# REGISTRATION FOR THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

Lexington Two is offering families two instructional choices to start the 2020-21 school year amid COVID-19. Families may select the best option for their child: a full-time Virtual Academy (5K-12) or an in-person hybrid/blended plan of 2 days at school and 3 virtual days (3K-12). Regardless of which option is selected, families will need to provide two proofs of residency, along with other required documents.

**Lexington Two is monitoring the spread of COVID in our area as we near the September 8 start of the 2020-21 school year. We will adjust reopening plans as needed, if the COVID spread in Lexington County remains high, as determined by DHEC. We will continue to update families on any changes through the remainder of summer.**

## **Virtual Academy**

Those interested in our full-time virtual learning experience for 5K-12 students may visit [lex2.org/virtualacademy/](http://lex2.org/virtualacademy/) for more information, to view FAQs, and to fill out an application.

**The deadline for families to apply for the Virtual Academy is August 1.**

## **Hybrid/blended instruction**

Those interested in our hybrid/blended instruction for 3K-12 students, integrating 2 days of in-person learning at school and 3 days of virtual learning, may log on at [lex2.org](http://lex2.org) and click the “Register” button. There are registration options for new and returning students.



# DHEC: COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

*Lexington Two will follow DHEC guidelines on suspected/confirmed COVID-19 cases. These DHEC procedures were in effect at the time of the release of this Return to Schools Guide for Families.*



## **Interim COVID-19 guidance for schools: Management of suspect and confirmed COVID-19 cases**

This guidance is intended for schools to plan their response to known or possible cases of COVID-19 as well as known contacts. This is based on what is currently known about COVID-19 and will be updated as more information and guidance become available.

### **Students or staff with symptoms of COVID-19**

Students and staff should be excluded from school if they have:

- Any one (1) of the following
  - Fever – or-
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing -or -
  - Loss of taste or smell -or –
  - New or worsening cough
  
- Any two (2) of the following:
  - Sore throat
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Chills
  - Fatigue
  - Headache
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Diarrhea
  - Nausea or vomiting

**Note:** Any child with any one of these symptoms should consider not attending school regardless of meeting exclusion criteria. If these symptoms are explainable by an underlying condition (such as shortness of breath or cough for an individual with asthma) exclusion may not be necessary.

Schools should plan to have a room identified to isolate students or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 identified during the school day.

- Students and staff should be moved safely, respectfully, as well as in accordance with any applicable privacy laws or regulations, to the isolation room for evaluation. The individual should be provided a mask if they are able to use one, and students should be supervised by a staff member who maintains at least six feet of distance and uses appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) if available.

## DHEC: COVID-19 PROTOCOLS / PAGE 2

- School nurses and other healthcare providers should use [Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions](#) when caring for sick people. See: What Healthcare Personnel Should Know About [Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID19 Infection](#).

### Return to school

- Advise sick staff members and children not to return until they have met criteria for return.
- Students or staff excluded for these symptoms should not return until they have either tested negative for COVID-19 or a medical evaluation determines that their symptoms were more likely due to another cause (e.g. sore throat due to strep throat). In this later case, the individual can return when they meet criteria for that condition.
- Students or staff that require testing for COVID-19 will require a negative PCR test (mouth or nose swab) or similar rapid test that directly detects the virus or must complete the current isolation criteria for COVID-19 to return to school.
- Current **isolation criteria** for COVID-19:
  - Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 and persons with symptoms of COVID-19 (see list above) who do not get tested, should isolate until:
    - Ten (10) days have passed since symptoms started - and -
    - Three (3) days (72 hours) have passed since last fever without taking medicine to reduce fever - and -
    - Overall improvement in symptoms.
  - Those who test positive by a PCR test but do not have symptoms will be required to stay out of school until ten (10) days after the specimen was collected.
  - The criteria above should be used to determine eligibility to return to school. Negative PCR test results are not required after meeting these criteria.

### Testing

A student or staff member who develops symptoms of COVID-19 but does not get tested could limit DHEC's ability to appropriately respond to new cases and ensure the health and safety of other students and staff. PCR testing (nose or throat swab) or similar rapid test that directly detects the virus is required as there is delay in developing detectable antibodies. A negative antibody test is insufficient to rule out a new infection.

- Location of testing sites is available on the DHEC website: <https://scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-screening-testing-sites>
- Location of DHEC mobile and pop-up testing sites: <https://www.scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-mobile-pop-clinics>

### Cases in classroom

If a student or staff member tests positive, they could have been contagious with the virus up to 48 hours before their symptoms began or before their test specimen was collected (for those with no symptoms).

- Prevention - Routinely using these precautions will help avoid the need to quarantine all classroom contacts of persons with COVID-19:

# DHEC: COVID-19 PROTOCOLS / PAGE 3

- It is essential that staff ensure maximum distancing between students and other staff while in the classroom and throughout the day to limit the possibility of transmission.
  - Encourage the use of masks among students and staff able to use them.
- Anyone known to be a **close contact** (defined as being within six (6) feet for fifteen (15) minutes or more) to a COVID-19 case while contagious must be excluded from school for fourteen (14) days after last contact with the person with COVID-19. This exclusion requirement applies even if masks were worn if social distancing was not maintained.
- For any classrooms where social distancing could not be maintained (classes with young children who do not have assigned seating throughout the day), all children and staff must be considered close contacts and must complete a fourteen (14) day quarantine period.
- Students and teachers in a classroom with a known COVID-19 case in which social distancing was reliably maintained should remain together in the same cohort to the extent that is possible. They should receive screening for fever and symptoms (see above) each morning until 14 days after last contact with the case. Note: anyone determined to be a “close contact” must be excluded.
  - Any of these students or teachers who are monitored and found to have symptoms of COVID-19 should be sent home and excluded and will be required to get tested or complete the required isolation period to return to school.
- The classroom will need to be closed for [cleaning and disinfection](#) before use again.

## **Quarantine**

Some students or staff may have been told they were a close contact to a case of COVID-19 and have to complete a quarantine period. This means they will be required to stay home so they do not risk exposing others to COVID-19 if they become sick. DHEC staff will inform them of the length of their quarantine period. For students, a parents’ note that they have been cleared from quarantine may be used to allow return to school

- **Close Contact:** The standard quarantine period is fourteen (14) days after last close contact with person while they were contagious with COVID-19.
- **Household contact:** If the student or staff lives in the same household as the case and has daily close contact, they will have to quarantine for an additional fourteen (14) days after the day their household member has been cleared from their isolation period.
- **Other household members in quarantine:** If the student or staff lives in the same household as someone in quarantine, they will not necessarily need to quarantine themselves unless the household member in quarantine is then determined to be a COVID-19 case. DHEC will notify those who are required to complete quarantine.

Note: This guidance is consistent with information available as of July 8, 2020 and may be updated as new information on this novel virus and evolving situation become available.

July 8, 2020