

# Whale Branch Early College High School

## COVID-19 Handbook



2020-2021

Parents, Guardians and Students:

Welcome to a new year at Whale Branch Early College High School where Warriors are on the warpath for excellence. We know we are faced with unprecedented and uncharted times and wanted to give you guidance for this upcoming school year. We know that your years with us will be educationally profitable for you. We are extremely excited about the upcoming year and what the future has for our students.

This handbook is to assist you with guidance and regulations to keep all stakeholders safe, especially our students.

This year, we will continue our theme; Warriors are on the Warpath for Excellence. We want to strive for academic, social, emotional and athletic excellence. Most of all, we want all stakeholders to practice intelligent behaviors and habits.

Here at Whale Branch Early College High School, we want to create a successful and safe learning and teaching environment for all. The Faculty and Staff at Whale Branch Early College High School invites you to become learning and teaching partners as we strive for excellence and accuracy during these uncharted and unprecedented times.

Students, we want to encourage you to be persistent with your studies, stay safe, be healthy and sanitized, manage your impulsivity and reach for your individual and school goals to achieve an Associate's Degree and your High School Diploma.

I look forward to meeting and working with all of you this year to make Whale Branch Early College High School, simply the best.

Have a successful, safe and healthy year of teaching and learning. Let's Go Warriors!!

With kindest regards,

Mona Lise Dickson  
Principal

During the COVID-19 virus, we want to set forth expectations that will ensure a safe, healthy and sanitized learning environment for all. Please review the following expectations as we journey through these uncharted times.

**VISITORS:** While we welcome and encourage people to visit our school, however, we will be refraining from visitors in the building. We will continue to communicate with all stake holders through Zoom meetings, emails and phone calls.

**CAR RIDER:** For the car rider system to move along at a steady and safe pace, there are certain rules that must apply:

1. Turn into the driveway. Follow the line/path and do not park to pick up or drop off your student. Please remain in your vehicle and move with the flow of the car rider line.
2. Cars will pull all the way forward, stacking cars as closely and safely as possible. Students will not exit or enter their cars until they are in the drop off/ pick up area. Parents do not need to get out of the car. Staff members will be along the line to help students out of vehicles.
3. At the end of the day, students must remain in their assigned location until their name is called to come to the car rider line.
4. Car rider tags must be on display in clear view.
5. Your student will exit and enter the car when school personnel open the car door.



**TRANSPORTATION CHANGES:** All transportation changes must be sent/given to the teacher. An email or note signed by the parent should be sent to the front office receptionist regarding transportation changes no later than 12:30 pm. It is important that all transportation changes are clear and made in advance. Notice is critical to maintain and implement our physical distancing plan.

**BRINGING THINGS TO SCHOOL:** Any item not related to, or contributing to, or an item that is a distracting influence, is prohibited. At this time, we will limit the contamination and sharing of items.

**HOMEWORK FOR AN ABSENCE:** Assignments will be scanned and emailed to all parents or sent through our digital platform by the teacher.

**CONFERENCES:** Teacher/parent conferences will be held using the Zoom platform or on the phone.

**LUNCHES:** Lunches will be delivered to your student's classroom during lunch time. Students will not share their food with each other.

**HAND HYGIENE:** Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If there is no soap, please use hand sanitizer with alcohol level of 60% or more.

**BATHROOM BREAKS:** Each classroom will be given a time for students to use the bathroom and ensure physical distancing is followed properly.

**MASK-UP:** All students and staff members will be required to wear a mask on campus. Mask must be cloth or disposal. A mask must fit snugly and completely cover the nose and mouth. It should be free of holes or voids and must protect the wearer and others from the exchange of respiratory droplets. Masks must also be school appropriate and shall not include markings, pictures, or lettering. **Students, parents and staff members may not wear bandanas of any kind for a mask.** Bandanas are not acceptable face covering per existing dress code.



**MANAGEMENT OF POSSIBLE POSITIVE TEST OR CONTACT:** This is in the event that we may have a possible positive test or contact within our school. This is based on what is currently known about COVID-19.

**SICKNESS:** If your student has a temperature, please keep him/her home for 24 hours after having a fever. If your student becomes ill at school, Nurse Simmons will call you to pick up your student immediately.

**Please keep a child home for 24 hours after having a fever**



**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

Any two (2) of the following:

- Sore throat and/or
- Muscle aches and/or
- Chills and/or
- New or worsening cough

**Note:** Any student 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.

Warrior Nation will have a room identified to isolate students or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 identified during the school day.

- Students and staff will be moved safely, respectfully, as well as in accordance with any applicable privacy laws or regulations, to the isolation room for evaluation. The individual will be provided a mask if they are able to use one, and students will be supervised by a staff member who will maintain at least six feet of distance and uses appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- School nurses and other healthcare providers will use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for sick people.

**Return to school:**

- Advise sick staff members and students 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 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) is highly recommended and is strongly preferred over antibody testing.

- 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. 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 student and staff able to use them. Routinely using these precautions will help avoid needing to quarantine all classroom contacts of persons with COVID-19.

- Classroom contacts to a known COVID-19 case 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.
- Anyone identified as a classroom contact of a case and who has symptoms of COVID-19 should be sent home and excluded and will be required to get tested to return to school.
- The classroom will 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

- Household contact: If the student or staff lives in the same household as the case, they will have to quarantine until seven (7) days after their household member has been cleared from their isolation period.
- Other household member 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.



**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION ON COVID-19:**

**South Carolina DHEC**

<https://www.scdhec.gov/infectious:diseases/viruses/coronavirus:disease:2019:COVID-19>

**Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – Get the Facts About Coronavirus**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019:ncov/index.html>

**10 Ways to Ease Your Coronavirus Anxiety**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/smarter:living/coronavirus:anxiety:tips.html>

**Support for Families Helping Students Learn at Home**

<https://expectmoresc.com/support:for:families:helping:students:learn:at:home/>

**Second Step: COVID-19 Response Resources for Educators and Families**

<https://www.secondstep.org/covid19support>

**Inside Social Emotional Learning: SEL Resources for Parents, Educators & School Communities Related to COVID-19**

<https://insidesel.com/2020/03/12/COVID-19/>

**Supporting Children’s Mental Health: Tips for Parents and Educators**

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources:and:publications/resources:and:podcasts/mental:health/prevention:and:wellness:pro:motion/supporting:childrens:mental:health:tips:for:parents:and:educators>

**Still Confused About Masks? Here’s the Science Behind How Face Masks Prevent Coronavirus**

<https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2020/06/417906/still:confused:about:masks:heres:science:behind:how:face:masks:prevent>

**STAY SAFE, HEALTHY AND SANITIZED WARRIORS!!  
WE ARE ON THE WAR PATH TO STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19!!**

A special thank you to Warrior Nation’s COVID-19 Task Force: Shelia Alston, Peter Burvenich, Carlos Cave, Celine Disalvo, Josh Ferguson, Lynn Garrett, Sharika Green, Melanie McGrath, Sonia Perez Roberson, Nurse Jissie Simmons, Pretel Simmons-Hill, and Brad Taracuk. District Staff members: Geraldine Henderson, Jennifer Staton, Mary Stratos and Alice Walton.

