

**Westmoreland Central  
School District**

**COVID-19 *Updated*  
Continuity of Education Plan  
2020-2021**



Purpose: The goal of this document is to provide guidance and support to faculty, students, and families as we pivot to the introduction of reopening the Westmoreland Central School District, following the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the unprecedented nature of the current situation, we are striving to maintain focus on the Westmoreland District Mission:

*The Westmoreland Central School District will work collaboratively with the entire community to maintain a safe and nurturing learning environment where high expectations are the norm and risk-taking, rigor, creativity, independence, and innovation are valued and fostered.*

In pursuit of this mission during this new instructional model we believe:

- Remote learning and the education of the whole child is a shared, collaborative, community-based responsibility
- We must be inclusive, provide multiple pathways to success, and strive to meet the unique needs of all learners
- Remote instruction should be authentic, challenging, substantially equivalent to in person learning and rigorous, and elicit critical thinking, problem solving, communication, emotional intelligence, growth mindset, and wellness

“Continuity of Learning” is the phrase used to describe our hybrid models of education and the continuation of learning in the event of a prolonged school closure. Within that mandate, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) requires that school districts establish plans that not only ensure health and safety but also *remote learning*, to the extent feasible and appropriate. NYSED clarifies that schools must consider the needs of all students and strive to provide continuity of learning that is equitable and available to all students. We will continue to review and coordinate our guidelines to remain consistent with those of NYSED.

### **On Grounds & Remote Instructional Model(s):**

**K-6 Students:** All of our students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade will report to school every day. The students will be broken into two cohorts of approximately 10-16 students, Group A and Group B, depending on size of classrooms and approximate square footage. These students will have the opportunity to be provided with synchronized instruction for Math, ELA, Social studies and science content with grade level teachers. All K-6 students will also have some opportunity for asynchronous and synchronized specials which include Art, Music, Coding and Physical Education.

**7-12 Students:** All of our seventh through twelfth grade students will report to school in a hybrid model every other day. Fifty percent of students, with last names beginning in A-K, will attend on Day 1 and the other 50% of students, with last names L-Z will report on Day 2. All students that are at home and being taught virtually, must log in synchronized and follow their daily school schedule.

## **Learning Materials and Content**

The Westmoreland central School District uses multiple types of learning materials, software, and other means to relay content in the event of a school closure. These learning materials include but are not limited to:

- Discovery Learning
- iXL Math
- RazKids
- Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES Library Media Services
- Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES Regionally Developed Digital Curriculum
- Kahn Academy
- Google Expeditions
- CodeAcademy
- Physical copies of texts

These materials are made available to students and families through one of two learning management systems adopted by the District; Agilix Buzz or Google Classroom. Agilix Buzz is provided and supported through Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES as well as used to disseminate the regionally developed digital curriculum.

## **Communication Tools**

The Westmoreland Central School District uses many means of student and guardian contact to ensure a consistent and open line of communication. Various modalities have been used to ensure all stakeholders have contact with the District and feel confident about reaching out for assistance.

Community meetings will be held intermittently by August 21, 2020 utilizing a virtual meeting software, such as Google Meet, and will include in-person discussions, at locations in the community, of our re-opening plan. Currently administration, teacher, non-instructional, operations and maintenance, administrative assistant, business department, and IT department meetings were held to discuss the re-opening plan.

Building administration will hold intermittent parent meetings utilizing a virtual meeting software, such as Google Meet. Information on school procedures and expectations, as well as family resources will be relayed during these meetings prior to the start of school.

Teachers consistently communicate with students and families through personal email and phone calls, but also hold daily virtual classes through Google Meet to relay content and check in on the well-being of our students. Some instruction occurring during these virtual synchronous classes may be recorded and made available to accommodate for families who may not have support during the day, such as essential workers. For many families with essential workers, teachers are providing scheduled synchronous meetings to accommodate for unique schedules.

## **Teacher/Student Interface**

Westmoreland recognizes the importance of continuity in a child's education. In order to minimize any educational impact during an extended school closure the District utilizes both synchronous and asynchronous virtual instruction.

Synchronous instruction occurs daily through virtual class meetings. Some instruction occurring during these virtual synchronous classes may be recorded and made available to accommodate for families who may not have support during the day, such as essential workers.

In addition, teachers hold scheduled virtual support sessions in which they make themselves available for any type of assistance.

Asynchronous learning occurs through one of two District adopted LMSs; Agilix Buzz and Google Classroom. Communication with students occurs consistently through feedback provided on the LMS or via email.

Student attendance and participation are tracked through student participation logs by individual teachers. Students are expected to participate in learning every weekday. In accordance with District's Grading Policy and in order to receive grades and credit, students must attend regularly and complete the course requirements. The District recognizes that participation in remote instruction may include student work or activity outside of normal school hours and is not solely represented by attendance in synchronous virtual classes. Evidence of learning may include discussion boards, work submitted online, performance tasks, and other online assessments.

In Instruction at Westmoreland Central School District, we realize that the transition to remote learning will not be simple or easy. Teachers will need to consider how to best communicate, give instruction and provide feedback; how to design lessons and assignments that are authentic and meaningful; and how to ensure students continue to collaborate and communicate with others. The guidelines provided below are intended to help teachers across all schools reflect on challenges they may confront in our shift to remote learning.

- Keep to the prioritized curriculum
- Ensure all learning is aligned to NYS CCLS/Next Generation Learning Standards and aligned with the WCS Board of Education adopted curricula
- Create and facilitate meaningful learning experiences
- Ensure equity for all students for both in-person instruction and remote instruction

Examples of remote learning the District supports to ensure continuity:

- Asynchronous instructional videos (Kahn Academy, iXL Math, Discovery Learning)
- Synchronous and scheduled virtual classes/discussions with both small and large groups (Google Meet)
- Synchronous and scheduled virtual supports for struggling students or those with IEPs (Google Meet, Zoom)

- Digital texts (Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES Library Media Services, RazKids, OPALS)
- Physical copies of texts (class novels, books for young readers)
- Virtual field trips (Discovery Learning, Google Expeditions)
- Discussion boards and other virtual activities developed through a LMS

Teachers are provided continued professional development on technology use and modification of instruction for online delivery. This professional development occurred through the summer of 2020 with a 15 hour in- service program developed and instructed by our District's Instructional Technology Coach as well as through individually or small group meetings by request from teachers. The program will be offered for all WCS teachers and staff again in the Fall 2020 as well as many more opportunities for remote and blended instruction.

### **Technology Access**

The Westmoreland Central School District supports student equity and access to technology through a 1:1 Chromebook initiative in all grades, K-12, with some students at the lower grade levels given iPads.

The District has made information available to families about internet resources from commercial providers. The District has purchased a number of MiFi devices and has distributed them to any family in need of internet services.

All grade levels are utilizing Google Meet as the main means to communicate with students about planned instruction. Grades are communicated using SchoolTool student management system and its' parent portal allows updated information regarding student performance immediately available to guardians. Teachers also make use of Google Apps for Education and the Agilix Buzz learning management system to enhance remote instruction and track student progress and participation.