

Jeffery J. Johnson
Principal

Kathryn Conradson
Asst. Principal



Anne Busbin
Counselor

Richland Parents and Families,

We hope each of you are enjoying your summer. We miss your children immensely and are working diligently to make sure that we provide a quality school experience for each of them regardless of the model that works best for your family. We know that you are faced with many important decisions regarding your child's educational experience for the 2020-2021 school year and would like to provide some further details specific to Richland Elementary and our plans for the fall. Please know that every school in Auburn is unique in layout, enrollment, family needs and choices, student needs etc. The information below will hopefully allow you to feel more informed when making your decision as it relates to students enrolled and attending Richland. We have used many of the same talking points that were provided earlier to parents from the District Office but have added more detailed information specific to Richland. This document is intentionally lengthy in an effort to answer as many questions as we can to inform your decision about the upcoming school year.

Classroom Procedures and Instruction

Quality instruction will continue to be provided for all students at Richland. Within each classroom setting, teachers will administer whole group, small group, and individual instructional opportunities to meet student needs. Small groups of students will be pulled strategically to minimize student crossover. Areas where students are receiving instruction in groups (not at their individual desk or table) will be sanitized following each group. Additionally, students will use hand washing or hand sanitizing prior to and following the group interaction.

Students will utilize their own classroom supplies as much as possible without sharing. Backpacks, lunch boxes, and water bottles will remain in an individual location for each student instead of grouping these items together in one common location. Students will have access to books from classroom libraries. When those books are returned, the classroom teacher will place them in temporary book isolation before the next student use. All student food consumption will be at the individual student's desk.

Classroom Teachers will continue to provide a sanitized and disinfected environment each day for when students return to school. Each teacher will be given an EPA approved cleaner to clean classroom surfaces each day prior to leaving. High-touch surfaces such as door handles, sink and faucet handles, and any shared equipment will be disinfected at least daily, and as often as possible, to maintain sanitary conditions. Regular hand washing as well as other routine cleaning practices will be encouraged. Custodians will also be following behind teachers' cleaning efforts to ensure everything is properly sanitized and disinfected. Cleaning and disinfecting chemicals will be kept in a locked cabinet away from children access.

All homeroom classrooms are furnished with an adjacent bathroom and sink for handwashing. Teachers will also receive hand sanitizer for student use throughout the school day.

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Use of Face Coverings

At Richland, all faculty and staff will wear masks or face shields during the school day. We are aware that wearing masks for 7 ½ hours for students may be extremely difficult and impede some specific learning opportunities. We are requiring that each student have a face mask available with them at school each day. This will allow the teacher to require masks during portions of the school day when physical distancing is not possible and instruction requires collaboration and student interaction. Some examples: transitions, partner reading, small group guided reading, etc.

**If possible, please do not send students to school with masks they have to tie as this would be difficult for them to put on.*

Physical Distancing

At Richland, we will make every effort to arrange classroom furniture in a manner to allow more space for distancing. Students will remain with their homeroom class of students, minimizing the crossover with other students and adults. Outdoor spaces will be utilized as much as possible. We will also allow and encourage classroom movement for student benefit, utilizing classroom specific spaces on campus. Students that are pulled for intervention services, EL services, or special education services will be pulled by those specific instructors, using strategies to minimize crossover with other students and adults.

Hand Washing and Sanitizing

At Richland, hand washing will be of utmost importance. Students will receive a hand washing lesson from our school nurse on the first day of school. Students will be encouraged to wash hands frequently following all bathroom trips, transitions, and interactions with school materials.

We will also provide hand sanitizing stations located throughout the main hallways for adult and student use during transitions. There will be a hand sanitizer station placed in the front office specifically for any adult entering the front office. A station will be located at the entry point of the cafeteria line to be utilized for breakfast and lunch pick up. A hand sanitizer station will be located and utilized by students upon entry and exit of the PE space for the day. All classrooms are being provided hand sanitizer for individual student use prior to any snacks or meals and other necessary times.

Health Procedures

Our school nurse will be available to check temperatures (contactless) throughout the day and monitor symptoms. All school nurses are receiving training that is specific to COVID-19. Students exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will be brought by the school nurse to a quarantine location. Parents will be contacted following assessment by the nurse. Students who are injured or who take medication on campus will receive assistance from the nurse in a location that is separate from the quarantine location. Should a student be diagnosed with COVID-19, the Alabama Health Department requires that all students and staff who have been in close contact with the diagnosed student must be quarantined for 10-14 days. A note from a healthcare provider will be required to return to school whether diagnosed or exposed. Close contact is defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more. Students will continue to receive academic learning opportunities and support during quarantine. See “Remote Learning” for more information.

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Special Areas (Art, Music, Guidance, Library/Media, Computer)

At Richland, special area teachers will teach lessons in student classrooms instead of their own spaces (for example, music room or art room). Students will be able to check out library books from the library with temporary book isolation taking place upon return of books. Individual headphones will be used by students. iPads and keyboards will be sanitized between class usages. Students will use hand washing or hand sanitizing protocols when they transition to different parts of the building. *As health and safety guidance changes, these protocols may also change.*

Physical Education (PE)

At Richland, required PE will take place each day. Class homerooms will remain distanced as practically as possible. Outside PE and non-equipment games will be utilized as much as possible. Students will use hand sanitizer upon entry into the PE space (indoor/outdoor) and as they leave PE class each day. All PE equipment will be sanitized between class rotations.

Playgrounds

At Richland, classrooms will hold recess, by homeroom, on a regular basis. Handwashing and sanitizing protocols will be used before and after playground use. Recess equipment will be sanitized in between class rotations as much as possible.

Attendance

If a student is required to quarantine based on the guidance of public health officials, the absence will be excused and a blended model of learning will take place to support the students. All other student absences will continue to be subject to the attendance policies as outlined in the Auburn City Schools Parent Student Handbook.

Arrival

At Richland, students will be able to enter the building at 7:20. Students will report directly to their classroom instead of being held in common areas like previous school years. At 7:50, students will be counted tardy. Labels with student name and teacher name will be sent home for students to wear during the first week of school. Richland faculty and staff will be located around the building to escort and help students find their classrooms.

Dismissal

At Richland, car riders will be dismissed from the main entrance and bus/van riders will be dismissed from the rear entrance. Students will be housed in predetermined locations where social distance practices will be followed. If you need to check a student out you will need to complete a Change of Transportation Form and submit it to your child's homeroom teacher.

Check outs will not be permitted after 2:00 pm

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Visitors

At Richland, visitors will not be allowed beyond the foyer of the building and are required to wear a face mask. Mrs. Gullatte, school secretary, will continue to welcome parents and support any needs that arise.

Breakfast

At Richland, breakfast will be served utilizing social distancing for lines and seating. No transaction of money or data entry via keypad will occur at the point of sale. Students will take their breakfast to their classrooms to eat and discard their trash.

Lunch

At Richland, students will eat in the classroom with their homeroom class. No transaction of money or data entry via keypad will occur at the point of sale. Teachers and Child Nutrition Staff will work together to ensure efficient communication of lunch choices and distribution. Lunches will be pre-made in covered trays that will allow for easy transport and prevent the spread of germs.

Remote Learning

Students enrolled in remote learning will follow all district guidelines previously provided in terms of devices requirements, time of instruction, and orientation meetings.

At Richland, students participating in remote learning will be placed in a grade specific homeroom class with a Richland Elementary teacher. This homeroom will be similar in size to the traditional learning environment and will be with other students zoned for Richland Elementary.

Remote learning will utilize the Schoology platform to communicate activities, instruction, and assessments. The State of Alabama has purchased a standards-based curriculum for all remote learning. Instruction will be a combination of WebEx (face-to-face) instruction provided by the Richland teacher, other instructional videos, independent practice activities, etc. The Schoology platform will serve as the vehicle to get all instructional components to the student and family at home. Remote learning teachers will continue to communicate with parents via email, Schoology, telephone, etc. We will continue to utilize professional response times within 24 hours of the initial contact during the work week to address questions and concerns.

Attendance will be determined by student participation in daily/weekly instruction and completion of assignments and assessments. Remote learning and traditional learning will be aligned with lessons and pacing as much as possible. This will allow grade level planning and provision of quality instruction if students are quarantined or become sick.

Remote learning students will have a structured schedule to assist with day-to-day expectations and assignment completion. This will include weekly art, music, media, computer and counseling instruction along with daily PE lessons.

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Special Education

Every child with a disability is entitled to services based on their Individualized Education Plan. In the traditional model, students will be supported in settings outlined in the IEP (inclusion, individual, small group, whole group, etc.). In the remote model, students will also be supported by Special Education teachers based on the IEP, but an amendment to the original plan may be written to accommodate for remote learning.

Buses

Students should be screened for symptoms in the morning by the parent or guardian prior to boarding the bus. Drivers will use facial coverings. Students should wear face coverings on buses. Windows will remain open on buses as weather allows. Hand sanitizer will be applied upon entry to the school bus.

Classroom Teacher Assignments

At Richland, students participating in both traditional and remote learning will receive a phone call by their teacher welcoming them to their class for the 2020-2021 school year. During this call, students and parents will receive information about Meet the Teacher and will receive information on signing up for a virtual meeting via WebEx.

Meet the Teacher

Meet the Teacher will be held virtually this year via WebEx for both traditional and remote learning students. Student packet pick up and medication drop off will be scheduled for Wednesday, August 5th. Your homeroom teacher will contact you on Tuesday, August 4th with your scheduled pick up time.

Special Events

At Richland, our theme for the 2020-2021 school year is Your Champion Story Begins... We still believe that we are better when together whether that is face to face or through remote options. We will continue to provide ALL students a school experience including book fairs, special programs, performances, etc. During the first semester, prior to winter break, these special events will be provided via live recordings and utilize remote technology. The safety circumstances will be reassessed and a decision will be made for second semester in January.

After School Program

After school programs will operate as scheduled with proper distancing and cohort groups utilized as feasible. After school schedules and student interactions are being prepared to minimize student crossover and meet social distancing guidelines. Similar measures that take place during the school day will occur during after school hours.

Student check out from the After School Program will not begin until 3:10 pm due to school dismissal (car and bus lines) and to minimize contact with the car and bus students. If you need to check a student out prior to this time, you will need to complete a Change of Transportation Form and submit it to your child's homeroom teacher. Then you can pick the student up in our carline. After School students will not be called to the main office for carline pickup if you have not completed a Change of Transportation Form.

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Clubs

Richland will not have fall clubs this year in order to have ample time each afternoon for cleaning and sanitation procedures as well as minimize student interactions and support social distancing.

Classroom Celebrations

No outside food or snacks may be brought into the classroom for group consumption. This includes treats brought in for student birthdays. Additionally, class parties involving food will be suspended for this year. However, we will still find ways to celebrate each other, and enjoy our time together!

Behavior Celebrations

Richland will continue to have behavior celebrations in conjunction with our school wide positive behavior support model. These will be held in classrooms each nine weeks to minimize student crossover and support social distancing. There will also be a behavior celebration planned each nine weeks for remote learning students.

Please know that while this is uncharted territory for everyone, at Richland we are doing our very best to balance quality education and instruction, individual needs of students, and health and safety. We will continue to adjust plans and protocols as needed and as suggested by the Alabama Department of Public Health in order to best serve our students and families. If you have any specific questions, please reach out via email or phone call to Mr. Johnson or Mrs. Conradson. We are happy to help and support in any way we can.

Sincerely,

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