



Northgate Secondary Building

589 Union Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15202

412-732-3300 | northgatesd.net

October 20, 2020

Dear Northgate Families,

We are excited about returning to school. Please review the following procedures to help us ensure a safe return to school.

Hybrid Groupings

Cohort A - Last names A-L will attend school on Mondays and Thursdays unless you have been contacted by the school.

Cohort B - Last names M-Z will attend school Tuesdays and Fridays unless you have been contacted by the school.

All students will follow their regular class schedule online on Wednesdays.

Attendance

When students are face to face, including Wednesdays, attendance will be taken during homeroom. On days that students are asynchronous, they must complete their attendance by going to <http://bit.ly/NorthgateAttendance> and filling out the attendance form.

Safety in School

AHN has provided feedback that wearing a mask is the best defense against COVID, and they need to be worn at all times when we are in the buildings with the exception of breakfast and lunch. During meal times, students will be at a minimum 6 feet apart from each other and special cleaning protocols are in place for those spaces. AHN expressed that COVID-19 transmission is less likely to occur by touching surfaces. However, a detailed plan is in place to clean all areas of the buildings, especially high touch areas.

- Teachers will be educating students on COVID symptoms in homerooms so that students are aware that they should report to the school nurse should they not feel well.
- Students will be required to wear masks while at school with the exception of when they are eating. Time will be built into the day for students to take a walk outside for a mask break.
- Students will not share materials.
- Students will not engage in any singing at this time.
- Band instruction will be held virtually.
- Outside visitors will not be allowed into the buildings.

A number of schools have already successfully returned to in-person learning. As anticipated, there have been cases of COVID-19 in the schools but they have been able to quickly manage them. The key is communication. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the school nurse. It is also imperative that families immediately communicate any possible exposure to COVID-19 or a confirmed case in the family. We will work directly with you and, if necessary, the county health department to determine the best course of action.

Safety Protocols

We have created safety precautions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, and we are working with the Allegheny County Health Department to ensure that we follow all guidelines and recommendations in order to keep our students safe. Below is an outline of our current safety protocols.

Social Distancing: Class sizes are reduced so that students can be seated six feet apart.

Masks: Masks are required at all times in the building unless students are seated and eating in the cafeteria.

Hand Washing: Students will be asked to sanitize on their way in and out of the building and in and out of classrooms. There will be sanitizing wipes available for students to use before they are seated at their desks.

Entrances: The building will be open at 8:20 am. Students who wish to participate in the school's breakfast program will report directly to the cafeteria and remain there until the bell rings. Grades 7-9 will enter through the front door and go directly into the gym to sit at socially distanced markings. Grades 10-12 enter through the front door and go directly into the auditorium to sit at socially distanced markings. Students will be dismissed to homeroom using different stairwells, and students should move through the halls following the directional arrows.

Beattie students will be dropped off on the hill near the loading dock and enter through the cafeteria doors. Students who are not attending Northgate classes in person on a specific day will need to walk home. Students must stay in the cafeteria until the bell rings for 4th period. Students who drive will need to park in the student lot, walk down the hill, and enter the cafeteria door. All food must be consumed in the cafeteria. Attendance will be taken in the cafeteria.

Hallways:

There will be signage and floor markings to encourage proper distancing in the hallways as well as a specific direction to walk when changing classes. The hallways will be one way to avoid any close contact. Stairwells will be divided in half and used in single file.

Lunches:

At the start of 5th period, 7th graders will proceed down the art room stairwell and choose a seat on the art room side of the cafeteria. 8th graders will proceed to the cafeteria via the elevator stairwell and choose a seat on the driveway side of the cafeteria. Students will be dismissed to the cafeteria lines in small groups to allow for social distancing. Ten minutes before the end of the period, students will proceed up their designated stairwells to the auditorium and sit in the center with social distancing. This will allow for cafeteria staff to clean prior to the next lunch.

High school lunch periods will operate in the same manner as the middle school lunch periods.

Bathrooms:

Bathrooms will have a maximum capacity of three.

Dismissal:

During dismissal, students in grades 7-9 will exit using the doors nearest the art room on the lower level or the main entrance depending on the location of their 9th period class. Students in grades 10-12 will exit using the doors across from the guidance department on the second level.

Gatherings:

There will be no assemblies for more than one grade level at a time, no field trips, and no large group gatherings.

When to Keep Your Student Home

Please use the following guide to determine if your child should stay home.

- Temperature: If your child's temperature is 100.4 degrees or higher stay home until fever-free for 24 hours.
- Is your child taking any medication to treat or reduce a fever such as Ibuprofen (i.e. Advil, Motrin) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol)? If yes, stay home.
- Is your child experiencing any of the following?

Group A 1 or more symptoms	Group B 2 or more symptoms
Cough Shortness of breath Difficulty breathing New olfactory disorder New taste disorder	Fever (measured or subjective) Chills Rigors Myalgia Headache Sore throat Nausea or vomiting Diarrhea Fatigue Congestion or runny nose

Stay home if your child has:

- Has one or more symptoms in Group A OR
- Has two or more symptoms in Group B OR
- Is taking fever-reducing medication.

When a Student Gets Sick at School

If your student is exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they will be sent to the school nurse immediately. The school nurse will evaluate the student and notify the parents/guardians to pick up the student ASAP. The student is then isolated. Parents and guardians will be advised to seek medical attention.

What if we have a case in the school?

If we have a case in school, the affected student/staff will be removed immediately. We will then work with the Allegheny County Health department to contact trace and make decisions about who should be quarantined. Parents will be notified via robo call and a written letter about the situation. Please keep in mind, we have to maintain student/staff confidentiality but we will provide all of the information necessary to individuals who may be impacted.

Students Remaining Online

In an effort to continue to offer our students a high-quality education with as little disruption as possible, we have adjusted our plans for students at the secondary level who choose to remain online as of November 5.

Students who opt to stay online starting November 5, will remain on their current teachers' rosters. They will not switch teachers or Edgenuity courses. The teachers will provide a schedule of assignments/lessons for students to complete using Edgenuity, or an equivalent. Students will work independently to keep pace with their classes. They will be welcome to attend live instruction virtually on Wednesdays, and they will have access to office hours in the morning and afternoons. These students will be expected to complete lessons on pace with their cohort. Grades will be managed by each course teacher, and PowerSchool will continue to be the official record of attendance and grades.

In order to continue to offer our students opportunities to connect with adults and maintain positive relationships inside the school, 7th and 8th grade Advisory lessons will be held daily by Mrs. Gallagher and Mrs. Smith, and they will also continue to offer virtual lunch on Wednesdays. The guidance office is planning a series of virtual drop-in lessons centering on college and career exploration.

Students with IEPs will continue to receive support and adaptations from their Special Education teachers, and they will be able to meet with those teachers during office hours as well. Students with one on one support from a paraprofessional will continue to receive that support virtually on a daily basis.

We hope that this plan helps to meet the needs of our online students as we aim to continue to offer a high-quality education to all of our students. Starting on November 5, our online students can expect a calendar of assignments to follow from each of their instructors. If you are choosing to stay online starting November 5th, you should have received a confirmation email. If you did not receive this email, please contact your building principal.

NOLA Students

Students who have been enrolled in NOLA will continue their studies as they have been previously. These students should continue to log their attendance via their own Google Classroom link as they have always done. There will not be a change in instruction for these students; however, they are welcome to participate in 7th and 8th grade Advisory lessons, virtual lunches, and guidance drop-in lessons. These opportunities will be posted on the NOLA Google Classroom.

This is a challenging time, and we thank you for your patience, understanding, and flexibility as we make responsible decisions to keep our community safe. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with questions. You can also access the latest information on our website www.northgatesd.net by clicking on the Reopening Plans link. We are very excited to welcome back our students, and we want this to be a positive experience for all of our families.

Thank you,

Mr. Bryan Kyle, Secondary Building Principal
412-732-3300 Ext. 1001 or bkyle@northgatesd.net

and

Mrs. Nicole Smith, Assistant Secondary Building Principal
412-732-3300 ext. 1002 or nsmith@northgatesd.net