



Tahlequah Public Schools

Return to LEARN Plan

TIGERS *ROAR*

Removing Obstacles Achieving Results

Updated 6/22/21

After successfully returning to learn in a traditional in-person format during the 2020-2021 school year, Tahlequah Schools will remain open for in-person learning for the 2021-2022 school year. In an effort for ALL students to remain Tigers and learn from our Tahlequah Public Schools Staff, we will be offering a limited virtual option for 9-12th grade students who meet the criteria for online learning. Each enrolled student will participate in traditional in-person learning unless the virtual application is completed and approved by TPS.

Tahlequah Public Schools will continue to monitor community health and adjust this plan accordingly. As we navigate through these ever-changing times, we are very appreciative of the patience and support of our students, staff, and families.



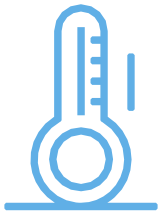
Tahlequah Public Schools (TPS) is committed to providing a quality education within a safe and caring learning environment. We at TPS are committed to removing obstacles and achieving results through Tigers ROAR.



TPS will conduct traditional in-person school operations when ZERO to LOW cases of COVID exist in the school community. Face coverings or masks are not required, however optional for any student or staff. TPS, in partnership with the Cherokee County Health Department, will activate distance learning for students when there is an established community spread. The Superintendent will make the decision to activate distance learning for classrooms, buildings, or the district.



TPS will continue traditional transportation. Buses will be sanitized daily. When possible, windows will be down for air circulation. If there is a shortage of bus drivers, due to COVID, the district may need to reduce the number of bus routes or make two runs per route.



It is essential that all families partner with us in monitoring the health of your students and families. We ask that temperatures be taken daily at home. No student with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher may enter any TPS facility. It is imperative for the health and safety of all students and staff that students remotely learn on days they have a fever or any symptoms of illness.



TPS will make every effort to promote healthy practices and protocols. Physical distancing will be implemented when possible. Our staff will monitor reportable illnesses. Oklahoma Health Department guidance will be utilized for quarantine. TPS will follow city, county, and state mandates. Requirements and recommendations are subject to change. The Social-Emotional well-being of our students is as important as their academic learning. Our counselors will be prepared and available to help our students and families.



TPS will continue to clean and prepare facilities in an effort to protect our staff and students. Frequent hand-washing and other healthy protocols will be implemented and practiced. Efforts will be made to have hand sanitizer and hand sanitizer stations available. Upon notification of a positive COVID case on campus, the area will be thoroughly cleaned.



Enrollment Options 2021-2022

Option 1: Traditional – With Distance Learning

On-Campus Instruction

- All courses/classes taken at regularly assigned school site
- In-person instruction
- Traditional academic school day in coordination with on-campus instruction
- Transition as needed between in-class and distance learning days as needed
- All TPS students must participate in required on-site state testing

Distance Learning Days

- Determined by the district, city, or state in the event of a COVID outbreak or other need
- With school approval, it can be utilized by individual families in the event of student exposure/illness resulting in quarantine
- Counts as a school day (not a traditional absence if the student completes online lessons within the allotted time)
- Online coursework with students continuing to learn material with teacher support
- Regular support and contact from TPS teachers until on-campus class can resume
- In addition to potential school closures due to COVID-19, Distance learning days may be used in the event of cancellations including, but not limited to, inclement weather or other unforeseen factors.

Option 2: 9th-12th Virtual Academy

9th-12th Virtual Academy (With Blended Options)

(Application process required & criteria must be met for acceptance)

- Grade's 9th -12th
- Requires a minimum of semester commitment
- Edmentum Course Ware (Full Virtual)
- Combines traditional classes with concurrent coursework through an accredited state university. (Virtual/Blended)
- Combines traditional classes with vocational courses taken through ICTC. (Virtual/Blended)



Tahlequah Public Schools Return to Learn FAQs

How will Communication be shared?

TPS will deliver communication through emails, text, and phone directly to parents and students. Parent and student contact information **MUST BE ACCURATE!** Each student will be provided a google email account. The district will continue to use School Messenger and social media accounts to distribute district-level information. Our district website will be updated regularly www.tahlequahschools.org. We are committed to strong communication and responsive action. If you need assistance and cannot reach your site, please reach out to the board of education office at 918-458-4100.

What about Grades & Attendance?

Students will receive instruction that is aligned to state standards. Grades will be taken regularly, and progress will be monitored for academic growth. Students will be counted absent if not in attendance. To be in attendance, a student must be in class or participating remotely with school permission. This includes students enrolled virtually.

What is Grades 9-12 Virtual Learning?

A Virtual Learning Program means the student takes all his/her courses in a virtual setting away from the school. A TPS administrator monitors the instruction. Tutoring, assistance, and assessments will be provided, but no classes require regular physical attendance. The Virtual Learning option is a minimum of a one-semester commitment. Virtual learning is offered for grades 9-12. There is an application process, and program acceptance is required.

What is Grades 9-12 Virtual Learning with Blended Options?

A Blended Learning Program “blends” traditional classes with alternative classes offered to students beginning in the 9th grade. A “Blended Learner” is enrolled in both traditional and blended courses taught either by a university or technology school. If eligible, the student may work on his/her concurrent courses at home or the tech course at Indian Capital Technology Center. At least one course is taken at school in a traditional classroom. The Blended Learning option is a minimum of a one-semester commitment. Transportation is only provided at regular route times. Transportation throughout the school day will be the responsibility of the parent or student.



What transportation will be offered for students who choose the virtual or the virtual/blended learning pathway?

None – TPS transportation will only be offered during the regular a.m. and p.m. routes for in- person students.

When will we use Distance Learning?

Distance learning will be used when school is closed due to COVID, inclement weather, or other unforeseen circumstances. Distance learning days count as a day of attendance for students who login and complete their assignment. We have seven scheduled distance learning days in the 2021-2022 school calendar.

What about 504 & Special Education Needs?

All 504 and IEP Plans will be followed. Any modification to service due to health concerns will be documented and agreed upon utilizing normal meeting processes. All IEP/504 team meetings will be held in person unless a request is made for a phone conference. For more information about IEP and or 504 plans, contact Mrs. VanZant at [918-458-4100, ext. 1014](tel:918-458-4100).

Will all athletics, electives, and fine arts classes continue to be offered at all current levels, and will there be any restrictions?

Depending on the level of community spread, all athletics and activities will continue as planned with extra measures taken to ensure the safety of students and staff. Additional measures may be implemented as needed. Procedures for Athletics, Band, and other Extracurricular Activities will follow recommendations and guidelines provided by the Oklahoma Secondary Activities Association. Specific information about practices, events, and precautions will be distributed by activities coach/sponsor and the district athletic director.

Will the school district calendar change during the school year?

It is our goal for the calendar dates to stay the same; however, the district may schedule additional distance learning days within the school dates that already exist.

What determines the level of community spread?

TPS will work with the State Departments of Health, Education, and State Epidemiologists to determine the levels for community spread.



Where will the information come from regarding the number of cases for community spread?

TPS will monitor the number of COVID cases in our community through the Oklahoma State Health Department. TPS will follow any mandates set forth from the city, county, or state.

<https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/covid-19-alert-system>

Why will temperatures not be taken upon entering the school building?

Entering the school building is not the first contact for many students. A student's first contact may be at the bus stops, early morning activities, carpools, before school daycare, parking lots, etc. Temperatures can be an indicator of a variety of illnesses and are not necessarily the first indicator of COVID. TPS has always asked that students remain home if they have a fever of 100 or higher. We need our parents to partner with us to keep all children and staff safe by self-regulating symptoms and temperature checks. We do have touchless digital thermometers and will take suspected staff and student temperatures and act accordingly.

Will we social distance in the Cafeteria & other large gathering areas?

Yes – Social Distancing will be implemented in lines, serving areas, and seating where and when possible. We will limit the number of students in the cafe at a given time when possible.

Will we have Devices to take home for distance learning?

TPS has made significant strides over the last few years to grow its ability to provide students access to machines. As a district, we have a full 1-1 technology initiative. Kindergarten through 1st grade students will utilize iPads and 2nd grade through 12th grade students will utilize Chromebooks. The one-to-one devices are a resource available to both traditional in-person and distance learning.



How can I support the school as a parent?

- Donations of hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, and additional school supplies would be helpful at each site.
- Take your child's temperature daily in times of outbreak or suspected illness prior to them leaving the house.
- Keep students quarantine as instructed by the Oklahoma Health Department if they have had any exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID.
- Prepare your home and child with internet access, supplies, and devices, for remote learning if possible and feasible.
- Complete a Free & Reduced Meal/Income Eligibility Form. This process significantly affects our State Aide and grant applications. During the 2021-2022 school year, meals will be free to all students, due to funding provided for the pandemic.
- Openly communicating any concerns directly with your child's teacher or school site principal.
- Working with the school site as they change visitor protocols and the check-in/check-out processes as warranted.

Additional Practices to be implemented:

- We are requesting that students use their own district-provided school supplies and share as little as possible.
- Students should plan to bring their own water bottles and not use water fountains in a traditional way. Water fountains will be available for bottle refills.
- To limit student exposure, we ask that you visit the school by appointment.
- Routines and procedures will be added as needs arise.



Tahlequah Public Schools

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

RETURN to LEARN Plan - PART 2: - Plan to Align with Safety Recommendations established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks: Properly fitted masks are not required but optional for any student or staff.

Modifying Facilities for Social Distancing: Facilities are marked to show the recommended 3 feet of distance in seating and standing wherever possible throughout the Tahlequah School District

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette: Students are trained and reminded in classroom about the health benefits of proper and frequent handwashing as well as respiratory etiquette of covering the mouth during coughs and sneezes. Signage is posted throughout all facilities with these reminders. Hand sanitizer is available in classrooms, offices, cafeteria, and anywhere that students or patrons may pass.

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities including Improving Ventilation: Tahlequah Schools uses industrial misting and fogging equipment to sanitize classrooms, buses, and outdoor seating as needed.

Contact Tracing Combined with Isolation and Quarantine, Collaborating with State, Local, and Tribal Health Departments: The Superintendent has been in contact with the Oklahoma State Health Department, sometimes weekly, to be informed on the status of infections, testing, vaccines, and CDC guidance for prevention habits, isolation, and quarantine to keep our students and staff as safe as possible and to maintain in-person learning for most Tahlequah students. Students and staff who are fully vaccinated are not required to quarantine if they are traced to a positive exposure.

Diagnostic/Screening Testing: Tahlequah Schools remain in close collaboration with the Cherokee County Health Department and the Cherokee Nation who also offer COVID support to our employees for screening and for vaccinations.

Vaccination Efforts for School Communities: NEO Health reserved 4 days for our Tahlequah Schools staff and other educators to receive vaccinations in March and April. In addition, the Cherokee tribe offered vaccinations for students and local educators. We have on-going collaboration with both the Cherokee County Health Department and the Cherokee Nation for COVID support. The Cherokee Nation offers on-going screening and vaccinations as well.

Appropriate accommodations for students with Disabilities with Respect for Health and Safety Policies: At times when school is moved to remote learning due to COVID, students with disabilities will be offered the option to learn in person in classrooms that have been deep cleaned and sanitized. ESSER COVID Relief funds have been used to purchase adaptive technology for student with disabilities to use when they are required to engage in remote learning due to quarantine, deep cleaning, or inclement weather.

Coordination with State and Local health officials: The Cherokee County Health Department, Oklahoma Department of Health, and Cherokee Nation Health Center continue to support Tahlequah Schools with information about outbreaks, COVID screening tests and vaccination clinics. Tahlequah Schools remain in close contact with the Oklahoma State Department of Education, the Oklahoma Department of Health, and the Oklahoma State Epidemiologist Office concerning the level of outbreaks and safety protocols enacted in our state and local area.

Appendix:

(See Policies, Forms, & Handbook Tab)

A. Policies Related to Virtual Learning - Amended and Board Approved

- 1. 6009 - Attendance**
- 2. 5200 - Online Instruction**
- 3. 4428 - Face Coverings**

B. Virtual Academy Full-time Student Contract