

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OKALOOSA COUNTY

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
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December 4, 2020

Dear *mySchool Online* Parent/Guardian,

I hope that you and your family are doing well as we move into the final weeks of the first semester of a challenging 2020-2021 school year. The purpose of this letter is to share with you the ongoing educational options that are available to your child as we move into the second semester. Please review the information carefully and contact your school with additional questions.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis announced Emergency Order No. 2020-EO-07 on November 30th requiring all Florida schools to remain open for in-person instruction through the Spring 2021 semester. Additionally, school districts will continue to offer innovative learning platforms as an option for families. As you know, in Okaloosa County that learning platform is *mySchool Online*. The Emergency Order guarantees that parents throughout Florida will continue to have options for their child's education for the remainder of this school year.

In an effort to support struggling students, the Emergency Order went a step further and stated that students enrolled in innovative learning platforms (*mySchool Online*) who are not making adequate progress must return to school for in-person learning for the second semester unless they acknowledge in writing that they wish to keep their child in the program despite their poor performance. Poor academic performance can lead to grade retention, inability to earn course credits, or failure to graduate, which we will all work to prevent.

mySchool Online parents whose students are not making adequate progress will receive an individual letter and follow up call from the school beginning next week to discuss re-enrolling their student for in-person learning. The letter will also explain to parents what they must do if they wish for their academically at-risk child to stay enrolled in *mySchool Online*.

Second semester does not begin until Tuesday, January 26th; however, we encourage families to finalize plans by Friday, December 18th to give schools time to position teachers and other resources where needed.

Review of 2nd Semester Options for *mySchool Online* (MSO) students

1. Any MSO student may return to the brick and mortar school for any reason. Simply contact the school and let them know you would like to return. For the vast majority of students, in-person learning is the most successful academic environment.
2. MSO students who are not making adequate progress will be individually contacted to discuss a return to the brick and mortar school per the Emergency Order. A parent opt-out is available as stated above.
3. A student who is doing well in MSO may continue with MSO into the second semester. Some teacher changes may occur as schools adjust schedules based on decisions families make. At the secondary level, students will likely have to select new electives for second semester. Your school will assist with that process.

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Frequently Asked Questions

When do I notify the school if my child is returning to the building for the 2nd semester?

If you plan to send your child back to a brick-and-mortar school second semester, please contact your child's school by Friday, December 18th. Early contact with your child's school will expedite scheduling second-semester courses and changing teacher assignments.

Where can I find information about COVID-19 cases in my child's school or other COVID-19 related information?

A COVID-19 dashboard is available on our website showing weekly cases by school and overall district totals from the beginning of the year: Visit <https://www.okaloosaschools.com/articles/2020/covid-dashboard> to review this information. The Department of Health provides information to the school district one week in arrears. This website is updated as soon as information is received, which typically occurs Monday of each week.

Parents may be interested to know that the Department of Health has recently reported that 90% of all COVID cases among students and staff were the result of exposure *outside* of the school setting. Transmission within school buildings remains low.

Are there any changes to mask requirements?

No. Masks are strongly encouraged everywhere social distancing cannot be maintained. Masks are required on buses.

Are there any changes to quarantine requirements as a result of recent changes in CDC guidelines?

Not yet. The Florida Surgeon General and Florida Department of Health are currently reviewing the new CDC guidelines. The school district will be notified by the Okaloosa Department of Health if/when it is able to adjust quarantine requirements.

Where can I find out about a bus stop for my child?

Contact your child's school for bus route information.

What if I have more questions?

Please contact your child's school with specific questions you may have about returning. They will be more than happy to assist you.

We are committed to providing you with all of the information that you need to make an informed decision about returning to in-person learning in January, and we remain committed to supporting our students and families in any way that we can. This has been a challenging year to say the least, but together, we will get through this!

Thank you so much!

Marcus Chambers