



Dr. Brian Otott
Superintendent

Engage. Inspire. Prepare.

September 18, 2020

Hello PCSD Community,

In Paulding County, we are truly a community of families, neighborhoods, churches, youth organizations, schools, and so much more. When COVID-19 arrived, we came together to support our students' educational needs by offering parents an opportunity to choose either a virtual or in-person instructional model. As the table below shows, parents have availed themselves of both options.

Now, seven weeks into the school year and heading into our Fall Break, I want to thank our staff and families for making this possible. Without the support of our 3,600 staff members we would not have been able to start our school year on August 3rd, and we would not have been able to move forward with two separate instructional models. I would like to thank each of them for their time, effort, and dedication to the students of Paulding County. I would also like to thank our parents and students. We asked for your grace, patience and flexibility and we cannot thank you enough for your support. We will need that grace, patience, and flexibility to continue to ensure we can engage in the critical work of meeting the academic, social-emotional, nutritional, and other needs of our nearly 30,000 students.

We have monitored our in-person instruction very closely, followed guidelines from the Department of Public Health at every turn, and we have strongly encouraged students and staff to wear masks. As we monitor our community and school level data, I would like to again reinforce the importance of mask use. Many of you may be asking why masks are so important? Mask use has been shown to reduce the spread of COVID-19. By wearing a mask, you are not only looking out for your health, but also the health of everyone in the school community. Check our web site (www.paulding.k12.ga.us) for a new district video that shows how to wear a mask properly and how masks can reduce the spray of respiratory droplets.

	ENROLLMENT	IN-PERSON	%	VIRTUAL	%
Abney ES	1,232	856	69%	376	31%
Allgood ES	820	481	59%	339	41%
Baggett ES	599	376	63%	223	37%
Burnt Hickory ES	1,023	846	83%	177	17%
Dallas ES	429	271	63%	158	37%
Dugan ES	606	407	67%	199	33%
Hiram ES	738	379	51%	359	49%
Hutchens ES	633	422	67%	211	33%
McGarity ES	569	358	63%	211	37%
Nebo ES	601	432	72%	169	28%
New Georgia ES	345	277	80%	68	20%
Northside ES	577	395	68%	182	32%
Panther ES	500	344	69%	156	31%
Poole ES	419	289	69%	130	31%
Ragsdale ES	547	434	79%	113	21%
Roberts ES	576	432	75%	144	25%
Russom ES	844	635	75%	209	25%
Shelton ES	1,201	905	75%	296	25%
Union ES	447	372	83%	75	17%
Austin MS	804	533	66%	271	34%
Dobbins MS	608	342	56%	266	44%
East Paulding MS	884	616	70%	268	30%
Herschel Jones MS	815	453	56%	362	44%
Moses MS	774	481	62%	293	38%
McClure MS	1,471	1108	75%	363	25%
Ritch MS	694	338	49%	356	51%
Scoggins MS	748	543	73%	205	27%
South Paulding MS	478	348	73%	130	27%
East Paulding HS	1,763	1180	67%	583	33%
Hiram HS	1,452	775	53%	677	47%
North Paulding HS	2,691	2006	75%	685	25%
Paulding County HS	1,910	1217	64%	693	36%
South Paulding HS	1,890	1390	74%	500	26%
TOTAL	29,688	20,241	68%	9,447	32%

When cases of COVID-19 have been reported in our schools, we have responded quickly to identify close contacts and begin appropriate quarantines. We have also tried to be as transparent as possible by notifying each school community when confirmed cases are reported, and by publishing a table that shows a snapshot of new COVID cases

reported at each school for each week of the school year. That information is available here: <https://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/Page/44861>

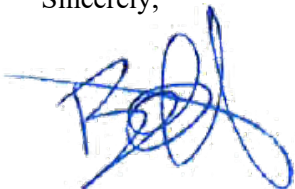
At some of our larger schools we noticed higher numbers of positive COVID cases that resulted in hundreds of close contacts being quarantined. In some cases, the extensive quarantines impacted the number of teachers available to instruct classes. To address these issues before they had a chance to grow any further, we implemented hybrid schedules at East Paulding HS, North Paulding HS, Paulding County HS, South Paulding HS, and McClure Middle School. Under the hybrid schedule, half of the in-person students receive instruction at school on Mondays and Wednesdays while the other half receives instruction digitally at home. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the schedule flips. On Fridays, all instruction at these schools is digital. The hybrid schedule results in a 50-percent reduction in students being in the school buildings at any given time, reducing crowding in our classrooms, gyms, and hallways.

Determining when a school needs to transition to or return from a hybrid schedule is not a hard metric. That decision is the result of careful monitoring and consulting with school administration and our team at the District Office. The five schools that have converted to a hybrid schedule are some of the most populated schools in the district, and they are schools where the challenges that arose with the in-person model needed to be addressed promptly. We hope to return these schools to a normal in-person schedule soon. When a decision is made, we will communicate the re-entry process to those school communities.

Our entire focus has been to bring our students back to school safely. We have missed our students greatly and are thrilled to be working with them virtually and in person again! The ride so far has had a few bumps as expected, but all things considered, I believe our school year at the seven-week mark has been a substantial success. We certainly could not have done it without our dedicated staff and your support and patience. We are striving to keep an in-person model available for our students, so once again I want to stress to you the importance of face coverings for our entire school community. Paulding County is AMAZING and one way we can keep each other healthy is wearing masks. We will continue to monitor our protocols and adjust as needed to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff.

We will continue to update you on our progress throughout this school year. Once again, thank you for your support and enjoy your Fall Break!

Sincerely,



Brian Otott
Superintendent

SIDE NOTE:

The Paulding Boys and Girls Club is a great friend to the school district and a tremendous resource for children in our community, especially those in need. At this time, the Club is in serious danger of closing its doors forever. This would be a terrible loss for our community and many children would be left without a healthy and stimulating outlet that is such an important part of their daily lives. Please consider offering your support to help the Paulding Boys and Girls Club stay open by making a donation here: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/agafsw-save-our-club>