



# Williamston Community Schools Reopening Fall 2020

Williamston Board Of Education Meeting  
Tuesday, July 28, 2020

# A Summary of our Planning Thus Far

## June

- Initial surveys sent to parents and staff
- District Reopening Work Group comprised of teachers and administrators is formed for the purpose of discussing considerations related to various reopening plans
- District administrators join the Education Reimagined Regional Planning Team
- District administrators and department heads meet regularly to analyze potential reopening needs/considerations (transportation, facilities, technology, finance)

## July

- Analysis of MI Safe Schools Roadmap
  - Requirements and recommendations
  - Financial implications
- Additional surveying of stakeholder groups
- Development and presentation of 3 initial options (In Person, Hybrid, Remote)
- Additional team discussion in follow up to Board questions
- Finance Subcommittee meeting to share additional information and receive committee questions/feedback

# Guiding Principles for our Recommendation

- Health and safety of students and staff
- Maintaining quality instruction for all students
- Compliance with MI Safe Schools Roadmap
- Consideration of stakeholder Feedback
- Ability to respond to needs during highly uncertain times
- Financial Cost

# Community and Teacher Feedback

## Families:

**45.8%** of families prefer **in person** w/  
virtual option

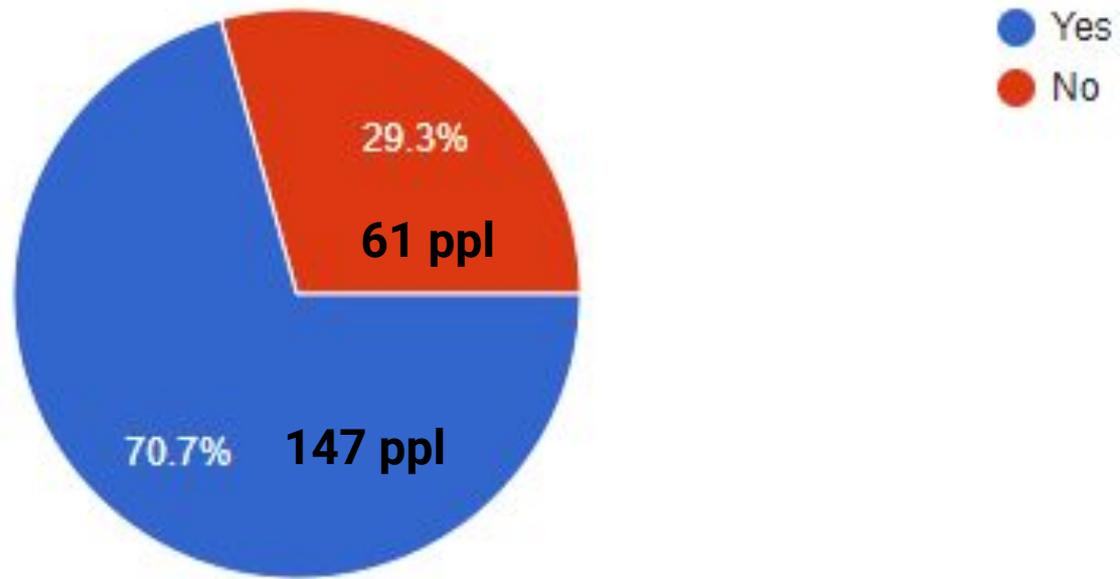
**54.2%** of families prefer a **partially or  
fully remote** option

## Teachers:

**32%** of teachers prefer **in person**  
instruction

**68%** of teachers prefer a **partially or  
fully remote** option

208 responses



Survey of District Employees Regarding Underlying Health Conditions

# Initial Reopening Options Presented

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>OPTION A</u></b> In Person OR Virtual Academy</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>OPTION B</u></b> Hybrid: In Person AND Remote Learning</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>OPTION C</u></b> 100% Remote Learning</p>
<p>Families will choose between 5 full days of in person instruction OR enrolling their student in a virtual learning academy on a semester by semester basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students attending in person classes, led by WCS teachers, will be subject to all required safety protocols.</li> <li>• Virtual Academy learning may include the use of a third party vendor such as Michigan Virtual (MV).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students engage in a combination of in person and remote learning led by WCS teachers.</li> <li>• All in person classes will be subject to all required safety protocols.</li> <li>• All students will be assigned to a cohort which will follow a schedule of in person and online learning.</li> <li>• Possible schedule example:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Cohort A</b> - In person M,T and Remote W,TH,F</li> <li>○ <b>Cohort B</b> - Remote M,T,W and In person TH,F</li> <li>○ Deep cleaning of buildings on Wednesdays</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Technology needs will be addressed</li> </ul>	<p>All students will engage in remote instruction <b>which will be different from the Continuous Learning Plan in the spring</b>. There will be increased time engaged in guided teacher instruction and learning activities, as well as a level of rigor on par with that of our in person learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remote learning will consist of online instruction provided by WCS teachers</li> <li>• Flexible schedules for work completion</li> <li>• Teacher feedback and grades</li> <li>• Technology needs will be addressed</li> </ul>

	Pros	Cons
<b>Option A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides families choice of In Person or Virtual Academy.</li> <li>• Consistent academic schedule.</li> <li>• Ability to provide instructional feedback in real time.</li> <li>• Staff can monitor social/emotional health of students and provide supports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional safety costs for in person instruction will put district in major deficit if no additional federal funding.</li> <li>• Strict protocols may take away from instruction and learning experience.</li> <li>• Increased concerns with safety and health.</li> <li>• Availability of guests teachers to cover classrooms when teachers are absent/quarantined from school.</li> <li>• Teachers may choose not to return to work.</li> </ul>
<b>Option B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater social distancing and safety of all in buildings.</li> <li>• Provides families choice of Hybrid or Virtual Academy.</li> <li>• Allows for some in person instruction.</li> <li>• Staff can monitor social/emotional health of students and provide supports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an inconsistent schedule for students and families.</li> <li>• Additional safety costs for in person instruction will put district in major deficit if no additional federal funding.</li> <li>• Availability of guests teachers to cover classrooms when teachers are absent/quarantined from school.</li> <li>• Teachers may choose not to return to work.</li> <li>• Concern teachers may have to do two full time jobs (teach in person and teach remotely).</li> </ul>
<b>Option C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritizes health and safety of staff and students during a global health pandemic.</li> <li>• All students receive instruction from WCS teachers.</li> <li>• Allows for staff to solely focus on robust online instruction for all WCS students.</li> <li>• Allows for no educational interruption if our region moves backward to Phase 3.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No family choice in fall school return option.</li> <li>• Limited opportunities for building positive relationships and monitor social/emotional well being.</li> <li>• Technology availability (Chromebooks and internet access for all students).</li> <li>• Added difficulty for families that rely on schools for childcare.</li> </ul>

# Additional Realities (Follow up and Analysis)

- Some aspects of the originally proposed options are not economically feasible for our district. These include:
  - The costs to pay third-party providers to offer a remote “Academy” option for families who do not want to return students to in-person instruction (full or hybrid)
  - Additional staff costs for extended time/staffing needs to implement or manage required components of the Roadmap
  - Additional food service costs
- Many families have indicated they would prefer remote instruction be provided by WCS teachers rather than third-party providers.

# Acknowledgements

1. We continue to hear from stakeholders with strong feelings on all sides of this issue. We respect the informed opinions of all, and regret that there is no single option that can address everyone's concerns.
2. We believe that full time in-person instruction is the premiere experience that our district can offer, but also believe that the current COVID crisis impels us to plan for an alternative model for safely returning students to school.
3. We understand that not fully reopening at the start of the school year will create challenges for some of our families and believe that we must do all that we can to build in opportunities for support to the degree possible.

# Our Recommendation for the Start of the 2020-2021 School Year

**To begin the 2020-2021 school year with primary instruction provided online through October 16. A recommendation will be made to the Board on October 5 for the next steps in a thoughtfully phased reopening process.**

**Opportunities to safely engage small groups of students in buildings within this period of time may include:**

- Supervised work time with access to technology
- Tiered supports
- Beginning of year assessments
- Small group work
- In person interaction/relationship building with teachers and support staff
- Other - TBD

# Rationale for the Recommendation

- Grants time for staff to focus on best practices for providing robust remote instruction
- Fully allows for direct instruction provided by WCS teachers
- Allows students, families, and staff to prepare for a consistent and uninterrupted mode of instruction during uncertain times
- Provides additional time to assess and plan for the feasibility of returning students to the building via a hybrid instruction model (ex: funding, expenses and legal considerations)
- Maintains a focus on health and safety while monitoring data and observing what happens with school reopenings in our region, state and country

# Next Steps

- Communication with all families, students and staff
- Building level and instructional planning
- Plans for special populations
- Staff professional development
- Family and student training
- Social and Emotional support planning
- Plans for the start of the school year
- Address technology needs
- Finalize and submit Preparedness Response Plan to the Board by August 15