



FARRAGUTPRESS THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2020 • 1C

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Challenges of Virtual Learning

Will CTE students thrive in a virtual learning world?

ALAN SLOAN

editor@farragutpress.com

A pair of big “thank yous” goes out to JCPenney in Turkey Creek and Kohl’s in Farragut for their cooperation with farragutpress in this Back to School issue.

Specifically, both stores made available their back to school clothing lines for local models, who served as enthusiastically, as demonstrated on the pages of this Back to School issue.

The cooperation of these popular stores is especially noteworthy given the uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic, where the energy and focus of such businesses can understandably be drawn toward simply keeping their doors open.

Instead, Kohl’s and JCPenney went above and beyond with their time and effort, lending their back-to-school styles to make these young models look ready for the 2020-21 school year.

We’re sure the parents of these young models are equally grateful.

Tony Cox,
farragutpress publisher

Tony Christen,
photographer/production manager

Alan Sloan,
editor

While students enrolled in Knox County Schools’ Virtual Learning Program will be able to come on-campus for all extra-curriculum programs after school hours, issues arise for those students whose curriculum centers around CTE learning — specifically hands-on learning.

“Obviously, welding is not something you’re going to be able to duplicate in a virtual setting,” said Dr. Jon Rysewyk, KCS Chief Academic officer, during a Knox County Board of Education meeting where Robert Thomas, KCS superintendent, laid out his 2020-21 school year COVID-19-adjusted plan Wednesday, July 15.

“But there are some business classes, I know they have some health science (classes) that could be done (virtually),” Rysewyk added.

“... We know there’s some limitations to it, and it’s not ideal, but our hope is to plug them into programs that make sense virtually that may not have been their first choice, what they picked in the spring. But we’re still helping them for their graduation requirement.”

Board of Education representative Terry Hill (District 6, which includes Hardin Valley) asked about CTE students “who have to have the hands-on who are opting for virtual, if there would be any possible way to give them an option for that class” hands-on at the school, “even if it means transporting themselves?”

“Don’t close that door,” she added. “If a kid is a senior who needs that (hands-on) to get his welding certification, and he can drive to do it, I hope we’ll have some leeway in those kinds of things?”

Though saying that option would be hard to do “district-wide” due to “transportation” issues, Rysewyk added Hill’s request could be left to a given school’s principal to work out with its CTE program.

“We did tell principals, ‘We want to try to say yes,’ so if you’ve thought of ways to do those kinds of things ... that makes sense for a family in a graduation situation, I think we would try everything we could to support it,” he added.

Moreover, “Talking to Dr. (Anthony) Wise at Pellissippi (State Community College), what we understand is a major-

See **VIRTUAL** on Page 13C

First day of school is Monday, Aug. 17

All student schedules will be released Friday, Aug. 14

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Above, from left: Evelyn Unthank, Daniel Unthank and Audrey Enger; Right: Jordan Hemphill

Frequently Asked Questions:

(Information courtesy of Knox County Schools)

KCS Health And Safety '20-21

Will students be required to wear masks?

All students will be required to wear an appropriate mask while on campus when physical distancing isn't possible unless a student is unable to remove a mask without assistance or has a medical condition or other need preventing it.

Will masks be provided?

Masks will be provided to staff and students if needed.

Will teachers and other school employees be required to wear masks?

All staff will be required to wear an appropriate mask while on campus when physical distancing isn't possible or there is a medical condition preventing it.

Will temperature checks be conducted every day?

Every person who enters the school building will be required to have a tem-

perature check.

Where will temperature checks be conducted? Will students be gathered in large groups while they wait for a temperature check or will they be taken in classrooms?

Each school will have a plan in place for checking temperatures prior to students entering classrooms.

Schools also will take steps to ensure that students do not congregate in large groups while awaiting screening.

What happens if a student or employee has a fever?

All students and staff will have their temperature checked prior to the start of classes each day. Students with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater will be isolated and parents will be called to pick them up. Schools will be provided thermometers at the ratio of one per 40 students to facilitate the completion of this task.

Employees with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater will return home.

I work during the day. How will my student get home if they have a fever?

Parents should ensure their children are fever-free prior to boarding the bus or arriving at school. If a fever is detected at school, parents will be asked to make arrangements to pick up their child just as they do any other time a child becomes sick at school.

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, will their teacher or other students in that classroom be quarantined or isolated?

KCS Health Services Department will work closely with Knox County Health Department to execute contact tracing in order to determine who might need to be quarantined or isolated. There are multiple variables that must be consid-



ered such as proximity and duration of exposure that will be considered in making the determination. KCS will work with the KCHD to determine who needs to be quarantined.

See FAQ: HEALTH on Page 7C

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KCS Transportation '20-21

Will students receive a temperature check at their morning bus stop?

Temperatures will be taken when students arrive at school.

How will physical distancing be enforced on buses?

While it is possible to physically distance on a bus, it is not operationally feasible due to the extreme loss of capacity that results. Buses will operate on a normal schedule on all designated routes. If parents elect to use bus transportation, they should ensure their children are fever-free prior to boarding the bus each day. Students who have a fever or are otherwise ill should stay at home.

Weather and other conditions permitting, all windows on non-air conditioned buses will be open. Buses with air conditioning systems will not operate those systems in the recirculation mode.

Since physical distancing is not operationally feasible, what other safety precautions will be



taken on buses?

Students will be required to wear an appropriate mask while in transit, and siblings should sit together when possible.

Buses will be disinfected following morning and evening runs with a COVID-effective agent provided to contractors by the district. KCS also will pro-

See FAQ: TRANSPORTATION on Page 10C



Hayden Hasan, left, and Bentley Qualkenbush

KCS Educational Process '20-21

When does school officially start for Knox County Schools students?

The first day for students is Monday, Aug. 17.

How was this reopening plan developed?

The reopening plan was developed by KCS in consultation with the Knox County Health Department and after seeking feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders across the district. This feedback was provided through measures including an online survey completed by more than 30,000 stakeholders; focus groups of teachers, students, parents, principals and non-profit partners; and a Community Task Force of members appointed by the Board of Education.

What about details on the Virtual Learning Program?

The Virtual Learning Program will run primarily through the base school. Knox County has expanded the district's QuEST Program to supplement classes that cannot be provided by the base school.

The virtual school will combine synchronous and asynchronous learn-



ing methods, so students will have a 6.5-hour school day with some digital, personal interaction through Microsoft Teams and some group and independent work through the Canvas platform.

Depending on the grade level, students also will have homework to prepare for the next school day. Student attendance will be required daily.

- Class size will mirror that of the

See FAQ: EDUCATION on Page 8C



Kendall Hasan



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Back-to-school deals key focus of tax-free holiday July 30-Aug. 2

TAMMY CHEEK

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Farragut shoppers will have a holiday from paying state sales tax twice this year — one for back-to-school clothing and supplies and another for restaurants.

For 2020 only, the Tennessee General Assembly has approved the two sales tax holiday weekends, during which certain items may be purchased tax free, not only to help shoppers save money but also to help support the economy amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Tennessee Department of Revenue director of communications Kelly Cortesi stated in a recent press release.

“The first tax-free holiday weekend focuses on clothing and other back-to-school items,” Cortesi stated. “It begins at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, July 31, and ends Sunday, Aug. 2, at 11:59 p.m.”

“During this time, consumers may purchase clothing, school supplies, computers and other qualifying electronic devices without paying sales tax,” she added, noting certain price restrictions apply.

“For school and art supplies and clothing, the threshold for qualifying items is \$200 or less (a \$100 increase from last year). For computers and other electronics, the price threshold is \$3,000 or less (an increase from last year’s \$1,500 threshold).”

She added exempt items sold online also are eligible, but pointed out consumers must purchase any items for personal use, not business or trade, to be exempt from the sales tax.

Tax-free items, costing \$200 or less per item, include general apparel such as shirts, shoes, dresses, etc.; school and art supplies such as binders, books, backpacks, crayons, paper, pens, pencils and rulers; and art supplies such as glazes, clay, paints, drawing pads

and artist paintbrushes.

Computers for personal use with a purchase price of \$3,000 or less; as well as tablets, smart phones and electronic readers at a purchase price of \$3,000 or less; and televisions and video game consoles with a purchase price of \$3,000 or less, will be excluded from the sales tax on the first tax-free weekend.

“First, the threshold for tax-exempt items for the first holiday weekend — for clothing, school supplies and computers and electronics — has doubled,” Cortesi stated. “Secondly, consumers can also purchase video game consoles, televisions and smart phones tax-free during the first weekend, if they are priced under the \$3,000 price threshold.”

“Previously, the exemption was just for computers priced under \$1,500,” she noted.

Second holiday

The second sales tax holiday weekend, which will begin at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 7, and end at 11:59 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 9, focuses on restaurant sales.

“During this time the retail sale of food and drink by restaurants and limited service restaurants, as defined in Tenn. Code Ann. § 57-4-102, is exempt from sales tax,” Cortesi stated.

According to Tennessee Code Annotated, restaurants are defined, in part, as “establishments that serve meals and drinks to patrons and have a seating capacity of at least 40 patrons.”

Limited service restaurants are defined, in part, as “establishments that sell alcoholic beverages and food and have a seating capacity of at least 40 patrons, with a majority of revenue being derived from the sale of alcoholic beverages.”

For more information about the sales tax holiday weekends, visit www.tntax-holiday.com.



Bentley Qualkenbush and Chandler Jestice



Tegan Brown and Willa Brown



Audrey Enger



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FAQ: Health

From page 4C

If a student is quarantined or isolated, will they be able to receive online instruction while they are out of school?

Students will have access to instruction via Virtual Learning opportunities.

If a teacher tests positive for COVID-19, will students in that teacher's classroom be quarantined or isolated?

KCS Health Services Department will work closely with Knox County Health Department to execute contact tracing in order to determine who might need to be quarantined or isolated. There are multiple variables that must be considered such as proximity and duration of exposure that will be considered in making the determination.

How will schools ensure physical distancing in classrooms?

Physical distancing at the recommended distances will not always be possible in every classroom due to the differences in classroom and class sizes. The district is taking steps to otherwise mitigate the risk of an infection being shared. These include:

1. Physical distancing will be observed to the greatest extent possible in each classroom.
2. Daily temperature checks for all

students and staff.

3. Regular disinfection of high contact surfaces, common areas, restrooms and classrooms.

4. Providing hand sanitizer to all classrooms.

5. Use of masks.

How will schools ensure social distancing in common areas?

Mass gatherings such as assemblies and pep rallies should not be held unless appropriate physical distancing can be maintained.

If a COVID-19 vaccine is created, will it be a requirement for enrollment?

Vaccination requirements are determined by the state, so KCS would follow their guidance.

Will visitors be allowed on campus?

Visitor access will be restricted to essential personnel and those who have scheduled appointments for school business that cannot be conducted over the phone or by e-mail.

-Visitors will be required to wear a mask.

-Visitors will be expected to adhere to physical distancing requirements.

-Visitors will be subject to temperature checks. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or greater must reschedule.

How often will schools be cleaned?

See FAQ: HEALTH on Page 10C

Above left, from left: Kendall Hasan, Tegan Brown, Willa Brown and Ella Grace Hasan; **Above:** Daniel Unthank and Bella Hemphill



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Tate Insurance Group, locally owned by Scott Tate, makes a \$10 charitable donation in the client's name to the Emerald Youth Foundation for every referral that is given to the agency. "Our agency has been built on the support and referrals of the community and it is our way of showing appreciation for that support," Tate said.

"We wanted to give back to the people we believe in. We believe in youth sports. I'm real big into youth sports. I played college football and was fortunate to be able to be very active in youth sports. Emerald Youth Foundation does such a good job with youth, sports and education. So, we picked them to partner with."

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FAQ: Education

From page 5C

traditional classroom.
 - Classes will meet remotely through Microsoft Teams and Canvas will be the digital backpack.
 - Aspen will be the digital report card and communication tool for parents/guardians and teachers.
 - Students may need to come to the school at designated times (with physical distancing and mask protocols) for state-required assessments (AimsWeb Plus, TNReady, etc.).
 - Instruction will be a blend of direct instruction, practice, inquiry, group meetings, small group and whole-group support as dictated by the academic standards and the students' learning needs.
 - Students will earn grades that will become part of their permanent academic history. For high school credit-bearing courses, grades will contribute to the formation of the students' grade-point average.
 - Students enrolled in either the school's virtual classes or the district's QuEST Program remain enrolled in their assigned school.

QuEST has been in operation for high schools since 2017. Its mission has been to give students access to classes that they otherwise might not be able to take if their school does not offer what they need. The main way of offering KCS QuEST courses are Asynchronous-meaning online learning through Canvas.

How does this teaching happen?
 Knox County supports the learning management system called Canvas. Canvas would be used for Asynchronous or online provision.

Since its inception, QuEST has continued to grow each year. For the 2020-2021 school year, KCS plans to offer 24 Asynchronous or online courses. With the onset of COVID-19 and the need for a district virtual program to support KCS schools, the district has decided to expand QuEST offerings and to extend into elementary and middle schools for 2020-2021.

If a student enrolls in the Virtual Learning Program, will they be able to participate in extracurricular activities such as marching band or athletics?

Yes, students who enroll in the Virtual Learning Program will be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities.

What factors will be considered when moving between green, yellow and red models, and how we know what color the district/school is in?

The district will monitor daily student attendance, staff attendance, support staff attendance and consult with Knox County Health Department for all medical metrics surrounding COVID-19. Much like on inclement weather days, the district will communicate with families and media if/when there is a color change for the entire system or for individual school(s).

How can I update my contact information, so I am able to get the latest school information?

One of the most important things you can do is update your e-mail address in Aspen Family Portal. Here's how to do it:

1. After logging in to Aspen, click on your (parent) name at the top right and choose "Set Preferences" from the drop-down menu
2. In the pop-up box, click the "Security" tab at the top
3. Make sure your e-mail address is up-to-date, and add an alternate email if necessary

For all other changes, including an update to your phone number, contact your school office. If you're not getting text messages from School Messenger, you also can text the word YES to 67587.

Which classes will be provided in the Virtual Learning Program? Will Honors, Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, music, art and CTE courses be available?

Class offerings will largely be based on demand among virtual students at each school. In some cases, classes that are not available through the school may be offered district-wide through the QuEST program, but only if there is sufficient demand from students who cannot access those courses at their base school.

Most CTE elective courses include student standards requiring students to be "hands-on" with tools, specific technology and/or equipment. Many of these standards cannot be met sufficiently in the virtual environment. The KCS CTE department will work with high school administrators, counselors and the

QuEST program administrators to identify CTE elective pathways that are most transferable to a virtual en-

See FAQ: EDUCATION on Page 11C



Ella Grace Hasan and Hayden Hasan



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FAQ: Transportation

From page 5C

vide training in the proper use of the disinfectant.

Bus contractors will be responsible for implementing a pre-route driver temperature check to ensure no driver has a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater.

Will bus drivers be wearing masks?

Yes. Bus and shuttle drivers will wear an appropriate mask at all times while operating a vehicle.

My student rides the bus, and I work during the day. How will my student get home from school if the temperature check determines they have a fever?

Parents should ensure that students are fever-free prior to boarding the bus. If a fever is detected at school, parents will be asked to make arrangements to pick their child up just as they are any other time a child becomes sick at school.

What precautions will be taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at bus stops?

The expectation is that parents will ensure that physical distancing and the use of masks are observed as appropriate at bus stops.

Hand sanitizer will be made available.



Chandler Jestice, left, and Lydia Enger

FAQ: Health

From page 7C

Buildings will undergo daily sanitizing for high-touch areas such as doorknobs, handrails and countertops using a COVID-certified disinfectant. Common areas such as administrative areas, libraries, cafeterias, auditoriums, gymnasiums and hallways will be misted with a COVID-certified disinfectant daily. Classrooms will be cleaned per the district's standing protocols and as needed; they will be misted at least every other day. Restrooms will be monitored and disinfected multiple times each day.

Additionally, each classroom will be provided with hand sanitizer and disinfectant.

Buildings also will be disinfected either in part or in their entirety, as may be necessary following a positive COVID diagnosis of a student or staff member.

Custodial shifts and hours may be adjusted to support these requirements.

Is KCS relying on students to clean classrooms?

No.

Will secondary students be moving between classrooms?

This will be determined by each school's administrative team.

Where will students eat lunch?

This will be determined by each school's administrative team. Food Service personnel are prepared to support plans devised by the school administration.

Will students be allowed to use playgrounds?

Yes.

How will teachers ensure that supplies such as crayons, scissors and other items are not shared?

KCS teachers will determine what strategy they implement to ensure materials are not shared.

Will students have access to hand

sanitizer? How often will they be able to wash their hands?

Yes. The frequency of use will depend upon the specific classes and the activities in which they are engaged.

Will before- and after-school organizations still have access to school campuses?

Yes.

During drop-off, can I accompany my student inside the school building?

No, families should drop off students and pick them up using the car rider line or drop off at the front door if walking.

Will students or staff who exhibit symptoms be required to show a negative COVID-19 test to return to school?

Students or staff will not be required to produce negative test results to return to school. A student or staff member with fever and no other symptoms must be fever free without the

assistance of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours before returning to school. A student or staff member with fever and COVID-19 symptoms must remain home for 72 hours and have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation and have consulted their primary care provider.

Will KCS notify me if a student or school employee at my child's school tests positive for COVID-19?

KCS will notify families if there is an incident that results in potentially being exposed to COVID-19.

What measures are you taking to ensure the social, emotional and mental health of my child?

School counselors will be available for any students who need social, emotional and mental health support. Teachers should be made aware of parent concerns and those concerns can be addressed by the school principal or the district QuEST principal.

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FAQ: Education

From page 8C

vironment. These virtual options may include content areas such as business, health sciences, criminal justice, etc.

Art and music offerings will look very different. Fine arts teachers will be providing online courses; however, the activities will not mirror in-class activities. KCS is not equipped to replicate performances.

Will middle school students still be able to take high school classes if they enroll in the Virtual Learning Program?

In this case, high school classes will be subject to the amount of demand from middle school students. Students who enroll in the virtual learning program must remain in that option through December.

Are students who attend classes in-person also required to stay with that option through the end of the semester?

Yes. Students who enrolled in the Virtual Learning program by July 22 must commit to that program for the full semester.

Students who did not enroll in the Virtual Learning Program will attend school in-person, and must commit to in-school instruction for the full semester unless there is a medical reason they cannot attend school in person.

Can I walk my kindergartner to class on the first day of school?

We understand the first day of kindergarten is an important milestone. Schools will be given flexibility to stagger the arrival time of kindergarten students on their first staggered day in order to meet the guidelines for physical distancing and gathering restrictions. Parents will be allowed to walk students to the classroom on the student's first assigned staggered day. This will be considered a visitor with an appointment. Temperature checks will need to occur prior to adults visiting the classroom.

On the second staggered day, parents should not walk their children to class.

When does staggered kindergarten start?

Schools will be conducting staggered days for kindergarten beginning Tuesday, Aug. 18. Schools will be sending letters to parents of kindergarten students with specific dates for each child who has been enrolled. The first full day for kindergarten students will be

Monday, Aug. 31.

Will my kindergartner through sixth-grade student be assigned to a specific teacher if they're in the Virtual Learning Program?

Yes. These students in the Virtual Learning Program will be assigned to a specific teacher.

Is this opportunity available for all students?

Yes. Besides the start date of Aug. 17, are any additional changes being made to the school calendar?

At this time, no other changes to the calendar have been made.

What exceptions are there to change my child's learning option before the first semester ends?

There will be exceptions made for students who are required to quarantine or other special circumstances. For quarantine or short-term absences, whenever possible, teachers will work with the students as they do with students who are absent for any other reasons. In other cases, the Virtual Learning Program might be beneficial.

However, those students would be expected to return to face-to-face instruction once released from the quarantine.

If a student is quarantined or isolated, will they be able to receive online instruction while they are out of school?

Students will have access to instruction via Virtual Learning opportunities.

If students choose the Virtual Learning Program, will they lose their school transfer spot for the next year?

Because students will remain enrolled in their assigned school, their school transfer would continue to be in effect through the terminal grade of their assigned school.

When will I know my child's schedule for the fall?

All student schedules will be released Friday, Aug. 14.

Will my child need to be in attendance during regular school hours or can they work on a flexible schedule?

The expected school day schedule for elementary school students will be from 8 a.m. to noon for kindergarten students and from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for students in first through fifth grade. The expected school day schedule for students in sixth through 12th grade will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.,

depending on the class schedule.

Some of the classwork will be scheduled for regular meeting times through Microsoft Teams. These times will be scheduled to prevent students from having conflicts. Students will not be on the computer for the entire day. Teachers are planning instruction that blends online and independent practice and inquiry.

Will staff be trained in the new learning models?

Staff had the opportunity to complete Reimagine Canvas with Trauma-Informed Practices KCS Connect 101 and KCS Connect 102 professional development opportunities over the summer. These courses covered the vision for blended and virtual learning practices, technology training for Canvas, Aspen and Microsoft Teams, and the academic recovery plan. The Teaching and Learning Division and school principals will continue to provide professional development opportunities as they determine the needs specific to buildings and teachers.

Will Virtual Program students be able to interact with some classmates?

Students in the Virtual Learning Program will have opportunities to interact with other virtual students through the varied methods utilized during the virtual program. Teachers in the virtual program will plan for the social, pedagogical, organizational and managerial aspects of online teaching and learning.

How many students will be assigned to each virtual program teacher?

Knox County Schools is required to follow the state BEP ratios for each grade band for both virtual and face-to-face classrooms. Kindergarten to third grade is 1:20, fourth through sixth is 1:25 and seventh to 12th is 1:35.

Will students in the Virtual Learning Program have live interactions with their teacher, or will the teacher provide pre-recorded videos that can be watched at any time? In other words, will students be able to ask questions in real-time, via video or chat?

The teacher will provide answers to

See FAQ: EDUCATION on Page 12C

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FAQ: Education

From page 11C

questions in both real-time during synchronous class sessions and through written and pre-recorded video electronic means of communication when students are working asynchronously. All virtual program teachers will hold office hours through Microsoft Teams to answer individual student questions.

Will the Virtual Learning Program be available for all students, including students with disabilities?

Yes, the virtual option is available to all students. Students who require additional support will work with their IEP team to develop a plan for delivering services virtually. Additional information will be provided by our Student Supports department.

Will the virtual option be entirely online, or will students be asked to print out material?

Virtual program students will not be asked to print materials; however, they may need to write on notebook paper or use other commonly used school supplies. Students will be provided appropriate textbooks as needed.

My child does not speak English. Will they be able to utilize the virtual option?

English Language Learner services will be provided in the Virtual Learning Program as required by law.

Will virtual program students be able to receive free and reduced meals?

Students who are enrolled in virtual school may receive meals through their base school, and families should contact the School Nutrition Department to facilitate meal pickup details.

What electronic device will be provided under this initiative?

The district will provide touch-screen Chromebooks for students in grades K-2, and standard Chromebooks for students in grades 3-12.

When will students receive their device? How do students receive a device if they're utilizing the virtual option?

Chromebook registration forms are available online, and printed copies are available at schools. Once the forms are submitted, each student's base school will contact them with details about how and when the devices will be distributed.

Will there be any cost for families to participate in this program?

All devices will be provided free of charge, but families will be given the option to buy insurance for \$30.

How are parents charged for repairs if they do not have the insurance?

If repairs are needed, parents will be provided with a schedule of costs. Typical repairs range from \$30 to \$80 and will be charged as a fine if the parent did not purchase insurance. A total loss of the device will result in a charge of \$200.

Will there be parent training and workshops?

The district will provide tutorial videos and guides, and schools will provide specific training for any technologies that are school-specific.

Will there be any training for younger students who have never used a computer keyboard?

The plan calls for deployment of touch-screen Chromebooks for grades kindergarten through second, because that device has a "tablet" mode that does not require keyboard skills.

How will the district prevent students from accessing inappropriate material on their device?

The district will issue clear policies about acceptable use and parents will need to sign, indicating their agreement. There will be filtering software that will prevent students from accessing inappropriate or harmful content in most cases. However, no software is foolproof.

I'm concerned about the effects of screen time on my child. How will the district ensure that students aren't spending too much time on devices?

Technology in the classroom is a tool for a teacher to enhance their teaching. KCS does not believe traditional teaching techniques and activities should be replaced by screen time. During a "normal schedule," teachers will have the autonomy to develop their classroom model and determine what percentage of a student's learning will be online and what will be face-to-face.

KCS also believes students need to learn from an early age about usage and time management of technology in the learning environment. The district encourages teachers to talk with fami-

See FAQ: EDUCATION on Page 13C



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FAQ: Education

From page 12C

lies about the importance of managing screen time for students.

If a student already owns his or her own device, could it be used instead?

The district will not allow students to use their own device instead of one issued by the district. Allowing students to use their own devices at school raises concerns about security and appropriate usage. With district-managed devices, KCS can limit access and monitor content in a way that would not be possible on student-owned devices.

Virtual

From page 1C

ity of the classes they are going to do in-person ... are going to be a lot of CTE classes," Rysewyk said. "So there may be some opportunities for dual enrollment. ... A student could enroll with a Pellissippi teacher and maybe finish that program of study."

Late to enroll for any family whose

Will students be able to take the devices home after school?

Under normal circumstances, the district will give flexibility to school administration regarding device usage, including whether devices can go home with students.

Will students be able to use the devices for non-school activities? For social media, video games or movies?

The device is being provided to students for educational uses. Access to Internet sites should mirror access while in the school setting, which is subject to the district's Acceptable Use policy and content-filtering

child has not signed up for either in-school or the Virtual Learning Program — especially those moving to Farragut, Hardin Valley or elsewhere in Knox County after the Wednesday, July 22 deadline, but before the start of school Monday, Aug. 17 — the following was advised:

"I think if there were some special circumstances, that we can make it happen," Thomas said about allowing

restrictions.

Will students be able to download programs such as Grammarly or Photoshop to help with their assignments?

In general, software cannot be downloaded onto the Chromebook. District or school subscriptions will be available if the software is web-based.

How will families access tech support?

Technicians will respond based on tickets submitted by a school staff member. Each school will have surplus Chromebooks that can be swapped out quickly, allowing students to continue work by simply logging in to a new

device. Extended hours of Help Desk support will be available during the months of August and September.

Is there a troubleshooting document that provides assistance with common problems?

A troubleshooting document is being developed to cover basic questions.

What if my family doesn't have access to WiFi or Internet service?

In order to best use your laptop, it is very important that your home has Internet by the start of school in August. Families will receive a flyer detailing options for Internet access, including those for low-income households.

a given family to make a late choice. "I would like to be able to say, 'we'll work with you on that.'"

However, Thomas deferred to Rysewyk. The Chief Academic officer said gaining close to exact numbers on the enrollment of VLP participants is important because "schools have until Aug. 3 to build out their virtual schedules. ... We'll have to hire staff for whatever can't be covered; in three

weeks hire the staff, build the master schedule and be ready to go by (Aug.) 17. That's a pretty tight timeline for that to happen."

However, as such families "came in and registered at their base school, I think that is based on the small number that we should be able to absorb that when they enroll," Rysewyk added.





Above left: Evelyn Unthank **Above right:** Lydia Enger **Left:** Jordan and Bella Hemphill

PROFILE

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Knox County Schools Calendar 2020-2021

August

August 3 (Monday) First Day for Teachers – In-service (Building)
August 4 (Tuesday) In-service Day (PreK-12 System-wide)
August 5 (Wednesday) Administrative Day (Teacher Workday)
August 6 (Thursday) In-service Day (1/2 day–School-based); Administrative Day (1/2 day–Teacher Workday);

August 7 (Friday) Administrative Day (Teacher Workday)
August 10-14 (Mon-Fri) In-service (School-based)
August 13 (Thursday) Orientation for 6th and 9th graders
August 17 (Monday) First Day for Students (1/2 day for students)

September

September 7 (Monday) Labor Day – Holiday
September 11 (Friday) End 4½ weeks Grading Period
September 17 (Thursday) Constitution Day (Students in school)

October

October 9 (Friday) End First 9-weeks Grading Period (44 days)
October 12-16 (Mon-Fri) Fall Break

November

November 3 (Tuesday) In-service Day (PreK-12 System-wide) (Student Holiday)
November 16 (Monday) End 4½ weeks Grading Period
Nov. 25-27 (Wed-Fri) Thanksgiving Holidays

December

December 18 (Friday) 1/2 day for students
End Second 9-weeks Grading Period (41 days) End First Semester (86 days)
Winter Holidays

January

January 4 (Monday) In-service Day (1/2 day–School-based); Administrative Day (1/2 day–Teacher Workday) (Student Holiday)
January 5 (Tuesday) First Day for Students after Winter Holidays
January 18 (Monday) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Holiday

February

February 5 (Friday) End 4½ weeks Grading Period
February 15 (Monday) In-service (Building) (Student Holiday)

March

March 12 (Friday) End First 9-weeks Grading Period (Third 9-weeks Grading Period) (47 days)
March 15-19 (Mon-Fri) Spring Break

April

April 2 (Friday) Holiday
April 5 (Monday) In-service Day (PreK-12 System-wide) (Student Holiday)
April 23 (Friday) End 4½ weeks Grading Period

May

May 25 (Tuesday) Last Day for Students (1/2 day for students), End Second 9-weeks Grading Period (Fourth 9-weeks Grading Period) (45 days)
End Second Semester (92 days)
Administrative Day (Teacher Workday) – Last Day for teachers

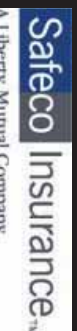
177 Instructional Days (excludes days earned through extended hours), 4 Scheduled Administrative Days,
2 Unscheduled In-service Days, 1 Unscheduled Parent-Teacher Contact Hours (formerly Teacher-Parent Conference Day),
6 Scheduled In-service Days, 10 Vacation Days,
200 Days Total
Under this calendar the Knox County Schools may cancel up to five (5) instructional days due to inclement weather before any makeup days will be required

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