Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

If I choose to opt out of in-person learning for the year, how will instruction continue for my child?

- Parents will have the option to continue with virtual learning for the entire school year. We are committed to continue providing high quality instruction whether your child is on-campus or at home. As local health officials update the district, we will communicate this information to our families.

When do we have to let you know if we are opting for virtual or in person (on campus) learning? If I choose continuing online for the whole fall semester can I later at some point change my mind?

- Families may opt for virtual instruction for the entire semester or entire year, or may decide before each six-week cycle. All parents are asked to complete the 2020-2021 Parent Introduction to Virtual Learning Online Course by Sept. 4, before virtual classes begin on September 8th. The course became available on Aug. 3.

How will I know if all of my required paperwork for the upcoming school year is complete?

- If we require additional information or have questions, you will receive a call or email from Ms. Cortez, our registrar.
- Parents can complete enrollment online for new students (including students who were not active at the end of the 2019-2020 school year). Using this new system, parents will also have the capability to upload required documentation (birth certificate, copy of utility bill, etc.) When we get the link from HISD we will share it with you.
- On August 31st the Parent Portal will be active, and parents can create profiles with their school provided student access IDs. Then parents will complete the annual update forms using the Parent Portal. (Student Assistance Questionnaire, Socio-Economic Information Form, Privacy Code Form, etc.)
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Will the After School Program operate this school year?

- Our After School Program will be operational for the upcoming school year once students return to campus. At that time, if you have questions regarding payment, logistics, and programming, please email lhancock@houstonisd.org.

What if I have a credit from last school year with the After School Program?

- Please contact Ms. Hancock at lhancock@houstonisd.org.

Will breakfast and lunch be available for students?

- Curbside meals will continue to be available for students enrolled in virtual learning. For specifics regarding HISD Nutrition Services, please visit https://www.houstonisd.org/nutritionservices.

What steps is Wharton taking to address implicit bias and systemic racism issues?

- Our campus takes the work of equity and diversity very seriously. We are continuing this work by addressing these issues during our staff professional development and throughout the year. The district also offers training courses, required and non-required, for staff to engage in and bring back to their respective campuses. As a campus, we will continue to hold our students and staff accountable to ensure that Wharton is a safe and equitable place of learning for all.

What are the methods of communication for parents during the virtual setting?

- Microsoft Teams will be the primary method for live conferences and meetings with parents and students. In addition to this, teachers may also utilize Class Dojo as well as email communication. Weekly school newsletters will be sent through Membership Toolkit. In an effort to reduce the amount of paper sent home to families, Wharton utilizes this web based communication tool to ensure families receive timely emails, updates and reminders. Most school notices will be emailed to parents on Fridays. Please sign up (even if you are already receiving the newsletter and emails--this is a new list) to receive communications through Membership Toolkit here.
- www.houstonisd.org/whartondla. All school calendars, newsletters and new information are also posted on the school website. Please check it for updates and scheduled events. Also, follow us on TWITTER @WhartonDual and on FACEBOOK at Wharton K8 Dual Language Academy.
Are there workshops and other means of support for parents?

- The district launched a virtual parent course on August 3, 2020. You may access it here: Parent Introduction to Virtual Learning. In addition, Ms. Day & the PTO will host bimonthly informative parent sessions (Coffee with the Principal). Mark your calendars for the following dates: August 26th, September 16th, September 30th, October 14th and October 29th at 10:00 AM. These will be recorded so parents have the option to watch at their convenience.

- Family Resources for Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
  Let’s Stay Connected Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
  https://www.houstonisd.org/sel
  Weekly webinars that address issues concerning COVID-19 for families.
  24 Hour Hotline 713.556.1340 (English and Spanish)

Can you tell us what will take place on Meet the Teacher night?

- Meet the Teacher will occur virtually this year. We recognize that building strong relationships is a critical first step to successful learning. Teachers and assistants will reach out to students prior to beginning remote learning to begin building that important relationship.

Will we have enough teachers who return this year?

- Yes. We are 100% fully staffed!

How will we work to build a sense of community between students and their teachers and between students and their classmates?

- Regular check-ins with students and parents will guide the steps needed to maximize learning and promote student well being.
- Our virtual schedule is drastically different from the spring. Students will have more opportunities to engage with their teachers and classmates.
- Parent and student get-to-know-you questionnaires will be sent out so parents and students have the opportunity to let their teacher know more about themselves.

When is Pre-K tuition due?
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- PK tuition is due on the 1st of each month. CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION

What is the reopening plan for the 2020-2021 school year?

- All students will begin the 2020-2021 school year virtually on September 8, 2020. Virtual instruction for all students will continue for six weeks through Friday, October 16, 2020.
- On Monday, October 19, 2020, face-to-face instruction for all students is scheduled to begin. This date is subject to change based on COVID-19 conditions across the city of Houston and recommendations from local, state, and federal health officials.

What is the timeline?

- September 8, 2020: First day of school (virtual only)
- October 19, 2020: Face-to-face instruction begins*
- September 8 – December 18: First semester of remote learning for students/parents who choose online-only instruction.

*Parents will have the option to choose remote instruction or in person learning on campus before each six-week cycle.

Virtual Instruction

How do I access virtual learning for my child?

- HISD launched a virtual parent training August 3, 2020. It is self-guided and available to families 24/7. This training outlines everything you need to know to get started in Microsoft Teams, the HUB and the Parent Portal. Parent Introduction to Virtual Learning

What are your suggestions for parents wanting to work with their children, but have full-time jobs?

- Our campus has a blended model of synchronous (whole class) and asynchronous (small group) learning. This model in a virtual setting allows all students to participate regardless of family or physical barriers. More explanation is given in the campus Instructional Continuity Plan that will be released once approved from our district area office.
Will we pick up materials and books from the school?

- We plan to distribute materials and books utilizing social distancing protocols. This distribution may take place September 2-3, 2020. More information about this will be sent out closer to the date.

Will there be daily live instruction?

- Yes. Teachers will provide live support and intervention. Students will complete self-paced and personalized activities via the HUB and through HISD @ H.O.M.E. with computers, laptops, tablets, iPads, and smartphones. Students will have the opportunity to complete the assigned work at their own pace with guidance and will also have access to an instructional support schedule from their classroom teacher.

Will there be a combination of whole group and small group instruction?

- Yes, the plan will be outlined in Wharton’s Instructional Continuity Plan.

For virtual learners, will the teacher and curriculum stay the same as in person learning?

- Yes, the curriculum is the same.

What is Wharton doing to exceed the minimum HISD standard for remote/virtual learning?

- Wharton continues to implement the dual language model along with the IB Primary Years Programme framework to deliver virtual instruction.

Will the specialist classes (art, PE, music, etc.) help in providing fun, interactive experiences for students?

- Yes. Specialist classes will continue to be part of students’ weekly instruction. The schedule and delivery of classes is outlined in the campus Instructional Continuity Plan and will also be shared by teachers.
What are the virtual class schedules? Will each teacher set their own schedule?

- A campus-wide schedule will be presented during the August 14th Community Meeting. Specific class schedules will be shared at Meet the Teacher.

How much autonomy will teachers have to insert their own teaching styles and personalities into online learning?

- Teachers have full autonomy to insert their own teaching styles and personalities into online learning. Each teacher is committed to the success of every student.

What happens if my child needs a substitute?

- Our faculty and staff will work together to support each other in the event a teacher needs to be absent during virtual instruction. Teachers will record lessons and communicate with students through the HUB.

We are planning to hire a tutor to support our child in Spanish, what resources can be shared with parents to support the tutors?

- Through your child’s HUB account you have access to all of the resources that your child and teacher will be using. Another resource is HISD@HOME.

What is the instructional plan for Wharton for virtual learning?

- We are currently working with stakeholders to finalize our Instructional Continuity Plan for remote learning following the district guidelines. We will share our plan once it has been finalized.

Will the school offer technology or wifi/hotspots for those who have limited resources?

- We are working with the district to provide technology (iPad/Chromebook) and hotspots for
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those who may need it. Please email Ms. Julia Hernandez if you need assistance at jhernan3@houstonisd.org.

What are the requirements for each grade level?

- Students are expected to complete assigned learning activities each day, showing proof of participation in daily virtual instruction by satisfactorily engaging with assigned learning activities and completing assignments in the HUB. Realizing that multiple opportunities may be necessary for students to become successful and master important content, teachers will measure student progress based on completed and submitted assignments. Parents and students should not hesitate to contact the teacher if additional support is needed for the student to be successful.

What are the grading requirements for virtual instruction?

- Students enrolled in remote instruction follow the same grading guidelines as in-person instruction. Teachers receive support and guidance on effective grading practices to ensure that grading guidelines are followed in both instructional models. Teachers will be expected to measure student progress by grading at least two assignments per week. Teachers will post grades on a weekly basis.

Additional information on grades:

- Grades will be taken during each grading cycle of the 2020-2021 school year.
- All cycle grades will be used in the calculation of the final average for any class.
- Final exams will be administered for all high school credit courses. (8th grade Algebra 1)
- Teachers will be recording grades, which will be available for parents and students to access through the HISD Connect Parent Portal (log-in information will be provided by your teacher).

What is the attendance policy for virtual instruction?

- Students who are engaged in daily learning as defined below will be considered “present” and will not be marked absent.
  - Participation in the HUB, the HISD Learning Management System (LMS) and completion of independent reading and work assignments.
  - Interaction with the teacher via Microsoft Teams as part of live or small group instruction.
  - Submission of assignment(s) via the HUB.
  - When unable to submit via the HUB, students can submit assignments via emails,
Students who have not met at least one of the three requirements above by the 3:30 p.m. will be marked absent.

- Absences can be resolved if the student engages in daily learning assigned by their teachers by 11:59 p.m. that same day. Parents and students will receive absence notifications via School Messenger after 6:00 p.m. each day and will be reminded of the opportunity to resolve that day’s absence if the student engages in learning before 11:59 p.m. of the same day. Any absences recorded, but resolved by the student before 11:59 p.m. on the same day, will be reconciled by HISD based on login records of the HUB or with teacher verification. If a student is engaged in remote learning and completes the entire week’s worth of learning activities on Monday and does not log in for the remainder of the week, he/she will be marked “present” on Monday only and counted “absent” for Tuesday-Friday. State law TEC §25.092 and Houston ISD Policy still require students to attend at least 90% of their classes to receive credit and be promoted. Remote attendance will count in the same manner as on-campus (face-to-face) attendance in satisfying this requirement.

Would it be possible for kindergarten to not start until in-person instruction resumes?

- No. Attendance is tied to funding. All students enrolled must follow the district plan.

Will the teacher interact with a child 1:1 via phone or Zoom?

- We will not be using Zoom. All class meetings will be on Microsoft TEAMS. There is a TEAMS app for smartphones as well as tablets and computers. Small group time is built in the virtual schedule to assist students through Microsoft Teams. Teachers will not have 1:1 lessons. Teachers will hold whole class instructional meetings and small group instruction on Microsoft TEAMS.

Can students skip live instruction?

- We recommend that students attend all scheduled instructional meetings. Daily work submission, teacher communication or attendance during live instruction is required daily for attendance. If a student must miss a live class meeting on TEAMS, they will be able to view the recording at a later time.

Will Wharton provide training or support for technology?

- Yes. We will provide videos/training sessions to support families with technology. Dates and times for these sessions will be sent out at a later date. Stay informed through our newsletter. If your child needs a device or hot spot, please contact Ms. Hernandez at jhernan3@houstonisd.org.
Will tuition still be collected for students who do not qualify for tuition-free PK during virtual instruction?

- Yes. In order for campuses to be able to fund our PK teachers/staff, any PK student who is enrolled in HISD who DOES NOT qualify for tuition free PK will be required to pay tuition during virtual and face to face instruction.

Do we need to buy school supplies for this school year?

- At this time, please do not burden yourselves financially with purchasing school supplies while we are participating in virtual instruction. We have posted in our newsletter a suggested list of materials that you might want to have on hand for your child during virtual instruction, but these are not required.

If I choose to homeschool my child during virtual learning and withdraw her/him from Wharton, can we have access to the teacher’s lesson plans, planning guides, curriculum documents?

- We will not be able to provide these documents to parents who withdraw from the district.

If I choose to withdraw my child during virtual instruction, will I be able to re-enroll at Wharton when schools reopen?

- No. Magnet students will have to reapply. Zoned students will be enrolled if space is available. If space at Wharton is not available, you will be referred to our hub school. Our hub school has not been assigned yet. In the past it has been either MacGregor ES or Crocket ES.