



# WILLOUGHBY-EASTLAKE Board of Education

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July 22, 2020

Dear Willoughby-Eastlake Families,

On July 18, 2020, a letter was sent extending the deadline to enroll your student in online school to Friday, July 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. If you plan to enroll your child in this program please complete the registration here: [Online Registration - WE](#)

During the past week, the district has received input from families, staff members and the community. After reviewing the input, we sought additional counsel from the Lake County General Health District. After careful consideration of all information, it has been determined that all students in grades K-12, returning for the 2020-2021 school year, will be required to wear masks both in school and on the bus. In addition to this, the district will begin taking the temperatures of persons entering buildings, including students.

Finally, the letter on July 18<sup>th</sup> had addressed the fact that we were considering aligning with the State of Ohio recommendations found in their color coding system. The risk level guidance, explained in the [Ohio COVID-19 Risk Level Guidelines For the Public](#), that “red,” or level 3, is a public emergency and describes COVID-19 as, “Very high exposure and spread. Limit activities as much as possible. Follow all current health orders” and further states, “decrease in-person interactions with others, consider necessary travel only and limit attending gatherings of any number.”

In the letter below you will see that Ron Graham, the Lake County Health Commissioner states, *“In the event the risk level is elevated to red or purple, we would recommend that a school district offers alternative modalities which include blended or remote learning options and modified schedules. In addition, the local health departments, will provide consultation regarding steps to mitigate the increased risk associated with the red and purple levels and recommend the districts follow the governor’s risk level in consultation and assessment on an ongoing case by case basis.”* The health department also recommends *“that school districts utilize the State of Ohio’s color coded risk assessment system in making decisions related to school closures.”*

At this time, Willoughby-Eastlake would like to make all families aware that if the governor’s coded risk assessment remains as it is currently defined, and Lake County were to be designated as a “red/Level 3” county, all school buildings would close to students and all students would be taught remotely. If the county were to be designated as red/Level 3 during the next four weeks, all changes to the district reopening schedule will be announced to families prior to August 21, 2020.

Please understand, the changes to the education of your children are being made with careful consideration to the recommendations of the [Ohio Department of Education](#), the [Lake County General Health District](#), the [CDC](#), the [Ohio Health Department](#) and the [State of Ohio](#). The district fully understands the stress that this has placed on our families and takes that seriously. The safety and well-being of the Willoughby-Eastlake community is at the forefront of all decisions.

I would again like to thank you for your time, your patience and understanding.

Willoughby-Eastlake will continue to stand together with our community and together we will remain strong.

Sincerely,  
*Steve Thompson*  
Superintendent, Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools

Lake County  
General Health District



Lake County  
General Health District  
5966 Heisley Road  
Mentor, Ohio 44060



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Ron H. Graham, MPH, Health Commissioner  
[www.lcghd.org](http://www.lcghd.org)

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July 22, 2020

Lake County Superintendents,

The Lake County Health Department appreciates the hard work and dedication demonstrated by our schools during this very difficult time. The challenges of opening school during a pandemic are many. We support the school districts in terms of their school reopening plans. We have spent the past several months working on these plans with the respective school districts.

We realize that the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases is likely to rise. The health department recommends that school districts utilize the State of Ohio's color coded risk assessment system in making decisions related to school closures.

It is our understanding that the baseline operating plans are currently designed for when the county is in the yellow or orange risk level. In the event the risk level is elevated to red or purple, we would recommend that a school district offers alternative modalities which include blended or remote learning options and modified schedules. In addition, the local health departments will provide consultation regarding steps to mitigate the increased risk associated with the red and purple levels and recommend the districts follow the governor's risk level in consultation and assessment on an ongoing case by case basis.

As the circumstances evolve in this rapidly changing environment we remain committed to our partnership with the schools as we work together to promote the physical, emotional, and educational health of our students.

Sincerely,

Ron H. Graham, MPH  
Health Commissioner