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Back to School During Covid

Ayali Thomas & Norah Sheldon

Going back to school at a time like this can be scary and confusing, so we have gathered together information that might help and put you at ease.

When you get back to school, many things will be different. One major change is not being able to gather. This allows for proper social distancing and is designed to keep everyone safe. Both breakfast and lunch are grab and go and are eaten in the classroom. Inside your classroom, you are still expected to stay six feet away at all times and have as little contact as possible with your teacher. Teachers are required to clean the room in between classes after students leave. Students must also clean off their desks when leaving class.

The school has been directed to follow all CDC and state mandates such as social distancing, mandatory mask wearing in the building, washing of hands, as well as staggered dismissal procedures. Also it is recommended that the restroom is to be used only between classes, and they are cleaned afterwards to ensure the students' safety. The school is making sure the students coming back feel safe and comfortable. Teachers are required to clean in between classes. Throughout the day you will have custodians cleaning high touch areas (door knobs, handrails) along with the bathrooms as well. In addition, the classrooms are cleaned and sanitized each night.

Dr. Ford believes that the teachers feel safe in the building, but it is hard to say for sure if everyone feels the same. There are floor signs throughout the building to ensure six feet of distance between students and teachers. These strict guidelines help ensure the safety of all of the students and staff at Woodside High School.

What's It Like To Be Virtual or Hybrid?

Janiah Scott & Melissa Downs

Although we're finally seeing teachers and students return to the building, things are far from being back to normal again. We interviewed Janiah Scott, a hybrid-learning student and junior, as well as Jadayah Parker, a virtual-learning student and fellow junior about their experiences.

Motivation

Janiah decided to go hybrid because it was difficult to find motivation at home. It was easy to get distracted; going back to a school environment helped her stay focused. Jadayah decided to stay virtual because it felt easier to continue learning the way she'd been since the beginning of the school year. She also feels more comfortable being at home, where she knows her environment is safe.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Janiah prefers hybrid because it feels more hands-on and less exhausting than sitting in a Zoom meeting. She hasn't run into many disadvantages, but she feels that the school should be more strict about social distancing since students are able to be within less than 6-feet apart. Jadayah prefers virtual because she does not have to wake up as early as hybrid students and feels like she's able to get ready much quicker. The only disadvantages to her is the lack of structure and how easy it can be to get distracted while at home. Jadayah believes a way that virtual could improve is by having asynchronous Fridays and combining their homework with classwork.

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Both of them would like the option to stay virtual even after schools go back to the way they normally operate. Before schools closed, they enjoyed being able to socialize with their classmates and be around their friends. While hybrid students still have opportunities to talk with one another, it just doesn't feel the same. They're unable to be near each other or eat lunch together, and everything feels isolated. The pandemic has brought a lot of changes to our regular learning structure. However, there are many things we can take away from this experience that we can hopefully continue to utilize in the future.

Sports Update

Anthony Valentin & Rebecca Meze

After Covid-19 hit, all schools across the country were forced to shut down. Citizens were advised to stay indoors and stay six feet apart, and all learning took place online. The pandemic shut down all public events, causing concerts, proms, and even sporting events to be cancelled. However, this school year Newport News is allowing schools to reopen sports for students and hold games once more. We've gone and interviewed our school's own sports department coach, Coach Macklin, to ask about his thoughts on it.

Coach Macklin has been involved in sports for the majority of his life due to him playing them from a young age. Once he was out of college, he began teaching others how to play various sports including (but not limited to) baseball and basketball. However, the sport he'd end up teaching the most was football. He works hard with the students engaging in extracurricular sports, and when asked how he would describe them he said he believed they were "strong and resilient". When asked why, he said it was because the athletes have gone through a lot due to losing the spring season last year and the winter season this year. They've lived through a pandemic and are still going strong and playing their sport with pride.

When asked about how Covid-19 has affected Woodside's sports department, Coach Macklin answered that there will be no JV or Spring season this year. Sadly, this will likely mean that many excited players will not be able to show off their prowess and win Woodside yet another award for their hard work and skill. This does, however, mean that players will be able to work in more controlled environments such as the gym or schoolyard, potentially leading to less injuries throughout the year.

During Covid-19, and as we've learned even afterwards, it's important to keep everything clean and tidy for as long as possible. That's why before and after every practice, all equipment is wiped down with disinfectant, every player must have a mask on them at all times (even if not worn), and the school requires an updated physical as to not put anyone at risk. Concerning anyone who is extra wary of Covid-19, don't worry. The school's faculty and staff makes sure to keep both our players and their belongings at least 6 feet apart at all times while they're not playing and are required to wear a

mask off the field. In attempts to keep everyone safe, the school makes sure to keep extra gloves, masks, and wet wipes on campus for students and teachers. At Woodside, we make sure that before players step on campus they've answered the daily ten question quiz on how they are feeling physically. If a student has not completed the symptom check they cannot step onto campus and practice. Students are also required to wear masks at all times. The only exception is when students are participating in athletic activities. Once they've stopped their physical activities, players are required to put their masks back on.

Battling Covid-19 has been a challenge for all of us. But, with a little bit of teamwork, our sports department has found a compromise to allow our students to do what they enjoy while still keeping them safe. It's as Coach Macklin said: we are strong, resilient, and we will get through this.

Grades Virtually vs. In-Person

Jadayah Parker & Andrew Valera

Virtual learning has been difficult for some, easier for others, and a new experience for us all, one of the major changes being work. Whether it's a difference in the amount of work or the time to do it, one thing that hasn't really been discussed are the grades received from work. How has virtual learning affected grades this year? Well, we've asked Mr. Reed, the lead history teacher, for his thoughts and observations on grades throughout the year.

Since students have started learning virtually, there's been a rise in both higher and lower grades. According to Mr. Reed, there's been fewer B's and C's but more A's and F's than normal. It could be assumed there's more A's due to the extended due dates and more F's due to a lack of effort, but there's more to it than that. There are lots of factors that could determine the outcomes of students' grades. Whether it's feeling like there's not enough time to catch up with friends or having to watch younger siblings, there are a lot of new setbacks that can impact a student's grades. In regards to isolation and distractions at home, Mr. Reed recommends prioritizing assignments to help stay organized and focused. Look at due dates, make to-do lists, and don't be afraid to work ahead.

When it comes to teachers, grading has also been difficult. A lot of teachers aren't accustomed to virtual teaching; they've had to make adjustments to how they teach and grade. Virtual learning can sometimes feel like it's not as effective at helping students retain information as in-person learning. In addition, the extended due-dates cause teachers to have to constantly grade late work and missing assignments. Virtual learning has been difficult to get used to and stressful at times for not only the students but for the teachers as well.

Depending on who you ask, it seems as though virtual learning has had both a positive and negative impact on grades. Grades are only a small part of learning, but they can mean a lot, so it's important to try to get the best that you can. Reach for the moon so that even if you fail, you'll land among the stars.

Scientists Recommend Wearing This To Help Prevent The Spread of Covid

Erik “Justice for Hong Kong” Davis

Over the past year, a majority of people around the world have been wearing masks and staying six feet apart (or one meter if you use the inferior method of measurement.). However, cases of Covid-19 have been rising. Scientists have been trying to figure out new methods in preventing the spread of the virus and they believe they might have found the perfect method of keeping people at least six feet away. The solution? Wearing Crocs.

“We’ve run studies and we have learned that most people stay well over six feet away from a person wearing Crocs and we believe that this will slow down the spread of the virus,” Matt Folley says.

“We have also noticed that people who wear Crocs also avoid other people who wear Crocs, brain waves show that it triggers a fight or flight response in people regardless of age, race, gender, class, and religion. It’s all for a simple reason, no one wants to associate with the person who wears crocs in public,” Parker Norman added.

Now from personal expense, I can confirm that this is true. One time I accidentally touched a person who was wearing Crocs and I immediately went home and took a three-hour-long shower, because safety matters.

“Wait let me get this right, you guys were wearing them?” Crocs creator Scott Seamans said in a horrified voice.

“Like wearing them, wearing them? They were meant to be a gag gift like ‘oh look at the hideous shoes I got you ha ha ha’ you-you aren’t supposed to wear them,” Scott added.

“If it’s going to help slow the spread of Covid so be it but, like have you guys always been wearing them? That’s so weird, so so weird,” Scott added.

For this next segment, we tried to talk to a person who was wearing crocs to get their opinion on the subject matter but no one at Woodside Press could handle being near a person wearing them so... I guess just imagine what they would say?

Here look you can even add a quote:

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