

Maryland's Largest School District

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

Considerations for MCPS Fall 2020 Recovery

MCPS Fall 2020: Reimagine, Reopen, Recover

DRAFT



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Letter from Superintendent



Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff and Students:

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has been actively planning and preparing for the start of the 2020-2021 school year for several months. We were able to complete 75 percent of the 2019-2020 school year working and collaborating in classrooms, schools and offices. But on March 16, students stopped coming to school buildings and—to the dismay of us all—did not return before the school year ended on June

15. Now, we are confronted with re-ordering and reimagining the school experience for the 2020-2021 school year.

As you can imagine, this work has been challenging and incredibly complex. We have discussed and evaluated several possible models for reopening schools and the truth is, there is no one option that can address all of the instructional, operational and logistical challenges that our school system is faced with. We recognize that the abrupt closure of schools in the spring and the uncertainty about the fall has caused significant disruption and stress for our families. We've taken into account the many perspectives families have shared with us based on their specific needs and circumstances. Most importantly, we know all of the options we consider must be examined through the lens of equity and excellence, and ensure the health and safety of our 166,000 students and 24,000 staff members.

The re-ordering and reimagining of teaching and learning cannot become an excuse for failing to maintain excellence and continuing to increase equity for MCPS students. Our students depend on us. And while it is not what we hoped for or could have ever imagined, we will begin the 2020-21 school year in an unprecedented way—including new health protocols, physical distancing and more.

I am pleased to share with you some of our initial considerations and planning for the fall. The *MCPS Fall 2020: Reimagine, Reopen, Recover* Guide provides an overview of a few of the recovery models we are considering at this time, in light of the information and guidance we have received from the [Maryland State Department of Education](#) and from

Letter from Superintendent (Cont'd)



our county health partners. I want to reiterate that this is just a **draft guide** and we will continue to amend, adjust and improve these recommendations as we receive feedback from you—our parents, staff and students. We know that you will have many questions and concerns as you review these draft options. We want to assure you that we will work with you every step of the way to address your concerns and questions in the coming weeks.

These considerations provide an overview of the safety protocols that will be implemented when students return to school for in-person instruction and the various instructional options that MCPS is working to make available for our students. The considerations are premised on continued positive health trends and staffing models based on current data. MCPS is committed to a path that returns our students to school buildings and lessens the impact of COVID-19. However, because we are unable to predict the path of the pandemic—should present circumstances change—MCPS will revisit these considerations so the well-being of our students and staff stays firmly at the forefront of our planning.

We take the immense responsibility of educating and creating opportunities for every single student seriously. Thank you for your continued support and collaboration as we work together to build a comprehensive plan that will meet the needs of our families, students and staff.

Sincerely,

Jack R. Smith
Superintendent of Schools



Resources and Requirements

For Recovery Plan Development



State Requirements for Opening Schools

School districts must:

- Complete and post recovery plans on the district website by August 14. The State Department of Education will review all plans.
- Address equity in all components of the plan.
- Establish a recovery plan stakeholder group that is representative of its schools and community.
- Assess all students to identify and address gaps in learning.
- Follow MSDE standards and provide instruction across all key content areas.
- Follow IDEA, 504 and ADA plus all other special education protocols and laws.
- Follow MSDE, state and federal health guidelines and procedures for individuals who test positive for COVID-19.
- Follow MSDE, state and federal health safety protocols around food service, daily cleanings and other school operations.
- Follow protocols for the safe transportation of students to and from schools.
- Develop a system for tracking attendance when students are engaged in remote learning.
- Develop a communications plan to reach its stakeholders.

Resources

- [Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education](#)
- 2020 Summer Programs Surveys for Staff and Families
- Fall 2020 Recovery Surveys for Staff and Families
- Benchmarking with large school districts across the state and country

Our Guiding Principles

For Reopening Schools



Ensure the safety and wellness of students and staff



Deliver high-quality instruction to students, regardless of delivery model



Equity: Ensuring All Means All



Optimize use of resources (Spaces and Materials)



Community and stakeholder engagement in plan development

Students Return

The 2020-2021 school year will begin on Monday, August 31, 2020, for all students. Students will return to schools on a rotational schedule for in-person learning with reduced class sizes and reduced numbers of students in the buildings. Due to limited capacity, transportation resources will be prioritized to elementary and middle school students. The goal is for all grade levels to be in a school rotation by end of November. Students will return to classrooms by grade level, last name/address, and cluster in phases over the first months of the school year.

Implementation Schedule

- MCPS anticipates starting the school year in a virtual-only instructional model given the current public health conditions, to plan for the needs of our families and to provide sufficient training for staff and students on new COVID-19 protocols.
- Phases will last 2-4 weeks depending on school level and grade/age.
- Phases may be adjusted based on changing public health conditions and implementation experience.
- Details and dates will follow.

Sequencing

Students in specific special education programs and students new to a school level (Prekindergarten, Kindergarten, 6th and 9th) are the first returning to school.

Elementary School

Phase 1	Prekindergarten, Kindergarten and students in specific Special Education Programs
Phase 2	Grade 1 and Grade 2
Phase 3	Grade 3 through Grade 5

Middle School

Phase 1	Grade 6 and students in specific Special Education Programs
Phase 2	Grade 7
Phase 3	Grade 8

High School

Phase 1	Grade 9 and students in specific Special Education Programs
Phase 2	Grade 10
Phase 3	Grade 11 and Grade 12

Blended Virtual Learning—Model 1



Considerations for Instruction

- Our goal is to provide high-quality instruction and learning experiences for all MCPS students, whether in person or virtually.
- We are working diligently on plans for the fall focused on enhancing virtual learning and bringing back as many students as possible for in-person instruction on a consistent and rotating basis.

Current Recommendations

Blended Virtual Learning

- Subject to change based on public health conditions and operational experiences as the schedule is implemented.
- Families will have the option to choose a virtual-only format once the final schedule and reopening plan is released.

Rotating A/B schedule by grade level; student last name/home address; and school cluster for elementary and middle.

Monday & Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday & Friday
Group A in School	All Students Home With Virtual Learning	Group B in School
Group B at Home with Virtual Learning	Staff Professional Development	Group A at Home with Virtual Learning

- * MCPS will be prepared to move all students to virtual only instruction based on a State and/or local decision about closures as a result of an increase in COVID-19 spread.

Sample Blended Virtual Elementary School Schedule

(blended virtual learning means a combination of both in-person and virtual learning)

	Group A Monday and Tuesday	Wednesday	Group B Thursday and Friday
A.M.	Arrival/Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Asynchronous Learning and Independent Work* Individual and Collaborative Planning for Staff Grading Professional Development Individualized Student Support 	Arrival/Breakfast
	English Language Arts		English Language Arts
	Art/Music/P.E.		Art/Music/P.E.
	Lunch		Lunch
	Recess - Establish schedule throughout the day for classes of 15 to go outside for recess		Recess - Establish schedule throughout the day for classes of 15 to go outside for recess
	Restrictive access to specific areas Rotational Teacher Planning		* Note: A/B group rotation, no live instruction on Wednesdays
P.M.	Mathematics	Mathematics	
	Science/Social Studies	Science/Social Studies	
	Intervention Supports Social Emotional Well-being Community Circles Targeted Skill Recovery	Intervention Supports Social Emotional Well-being Community Circles Targeted Skill Recovery	
	Dismissal	Dismissal	
	<u>Group B at home - virtual learning</u>	<u>Group A at home - virtual learning</u>	

* ESOL services will be scheduled throughout the day

* Special Education Services will be scheduled throughout the day

* Sample schedule – the length, start time and end time of periods are subject to change

Sample Blended Virtual Middle School Schedule

	Monday (Group A)	Tuesday (Group A)	Wed.	Thursday (Group B)	Friday (Group B)
A.M.	Period 1 (85 min)		Student Asynchronous Learning and Independent Work Individual and Collaborative Planning Grading Professional Development Individualized Student Support	Period 1 (85 min)	
A.M.	Period 2 (85 min)			Period 2 (85 min)	
A.M.	Period 3 (120 min, including 35- min lunch in this room)			Period 3 (120 min, including 35-min lunch in this room)	
P.M.	Period 4 (85 min)			Period 4 (85 min)	
A.M.		Period 6 (85 min)			Period 6 (85 min)
A.M.		Period 7 (85 min)			Period 7 (85 min)
P.M.		Period 8 (120 min, including 35- min lunch in this room)			Period 8 (120 min, including 35- min lunch in this room)
P.M.		Support/ Homeroom (85 min)			Support/ Homeroom (85 min)

- * ESOL services will be scheduled throughout the day
- * Special Education Services will be scheduled throughout the day
- * Sample schedule – the length, start time and end time of periods are subject to change
- * Note: A/B group rotation, no live instruction on Wednesdays
- * Note: A/B groupings are for elementary and middle only

Sample Blended Virtual High School Schedule

Week 1	Group A	Group B	Group C
Mon.	Periods 1 - 4 in person	Periods 6 - 8 at home	Periods 1 - 4 at home
Tues.	Periods 6 - 8 at home	Periods 1 - 4 in person	Periods 6 - 8 at home
Wed.	Student/Teacher Work and Check-In Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Asynchronous Learning and Independent Work • Individual and Collaborative Planning for Staff • Grading • Professional Development • Individualized Student Support 		
Thurs.	Periods 1 - 4 at home	Periods 6 - 8 at home	Periods 1 - 4 in person
Fri.	Periods 6 - 8 in person <i>plus homeroom support period</i>	Periods 1 - 4 at home	Periods 6 - 8 at home
Week 2	Group A	Group B	Group C
Mon.	Periods 1 - 4 at home	Periods 6 - 8 in person <i>plus homeroom support period</i>	Periods 1 - 4 at home
Tues.	Periods 6 - 8 at home	Periods 1 - 4 at home	Periods 6 - 8 in person <i>plus homeroom support period</i>
Wed.	Student/Teacher Work and Check-In Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Asynchronous Learning and Independent Work • Individual and Collaborative Planning for Staff • Grading • Professional Development • Individualized Student Support 		
Thurs.	Periods 1 - 4 in person	Periods 6 - 8 at home	Periods 1 - 4 at home
Fri.	Periods 6-8 at home	Periods 1-4 in person	Periods 6-8 at home

- * ESOL services will be scheduled throughout the day
- * Special Education Services will be scheduled throughout the day
- * Sample schedule – the length, start time and end time of periods are subject to change

Sample Blended Virtual High School Schedule (Continued)

Week 3	Group A	Group B	Group C
Mon.	Periods 1 - 4 at home	Periods 6 - 8 at home	Periods 1 - 4 in person
Tues.	Periods 6 - 8 in person <i>plus homeroom support period</i>	Periods 1 - 4 at home	Periods 6 - 8 at home
Wed.	Student/Teacher Work and Check-In Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Asynchronous Learning and Independent Work • Individual and Collaborative Planning for Staff • Grading • Professional Development • Individualized Student Support 		
Thurs.	Periods 1 - 4 at home	Periods 6 - 8 in person <i>plus homeroom support period</i>	Periods 1 - 4 at home
Fri.	Periods 6 - 8 at home	Periods 1 - 4 at home	Periods 6 - 8 in person <i>plus homeroom support period</i>

- * ESOL services will be scheduled throughout the day
- * Special Education Services will be scheduled throughout the day
- * Sample schedule – the length, start time and end time of periods are subject to change

Virtual Only Learning—Model 2



Virtual Learning

MCPS will offer comprehensive virtual learning opportunities for students and families who do not wish to participate in in-person instruction when the school year begins.



More Teacher-Led Instruction

Virtual learning will feature more live, teacher-led instruction.



Some Asynchronous Learning

Virtual learning will also include some asynchronous (independent) learning. There will be options for students to access instruction at a time that best meets their needs.

***MCPS will be prepared to move all students to virtual only instruction based on a State and/or local decision about closures as a result of an increase in COVID-19 spread.**

Sample Schedules

Elementary Virtual Only Sample Schedule

Time	Monday and Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday and Friday
A.M.	Class Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Asynchronous Learning • Individualized Student Support • Individual and Collaborative Planning • Grading • Professional Development 	Class Meeting
	Mathematics		Mathematics
	English/Language Arts		English/Language Arts
	Lunch		Lunch
P.M.	Social Emotional Lessons, Small Groups, Interventions or Supports		Social Emotional Lessons, Small Groups, Interventions or Supports
	Science or Social Studies		Science or Social Studies
	Art, Music or P.E.		Art, Music or P.E.

- * Students will receive live instruction during a portion of the instructional blocks. Students will also be engaged through small group instruction, discussion groups and asynchronous instruction.
- * This is only a sample schedule. Times and class sequence will be adjusted at the school level.
- * ESOL and Special Education Services will be scheduled throughout the day.

Middle and High School Virtual Only Sample Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Periods 1 - 4	Periods 5 - 8 (Period 5 is Lunch)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Asynchronous Learning • Individualized Student Support • Individual and Collaborative Planning • Grading • Professional Development 	Periods 1 - 4	Periods 5 - 8 (Period 5 is Lunch)
A.M. <i>Period 1</i>	A.M. <i>Period 6</i>		A.M. <i>Period 1</i>	A.M. <i>Period 6</i>
A.M. <i>Period 2</i>	A.M. <i>Period 7</i>		A.M. <i>Period 2</i>	A.M. <i>Period 7</i>
Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch
P.M. <i>Period 3</i>	P.M. <i>Period 8</i>		P.M. <i>Period 3</i>	P.M. <i>Period 8</i>
P.M. <i>Period 4</i>	P.M. <i>Home Room</i>		P.M. <i>Period 4</i>	P.M. <i>Homeroom/ Support Period</i>

- * Students will receive live instruction during a portion of the instructional blocks. Students will also be engaged through small group instruction, discussion groups and asynchronous instruction.
- * This is only a sample schedule. Times and class sequence will be adjusted at the school level.
- * ESOL and Special Education services will be scheduled throughout the day.

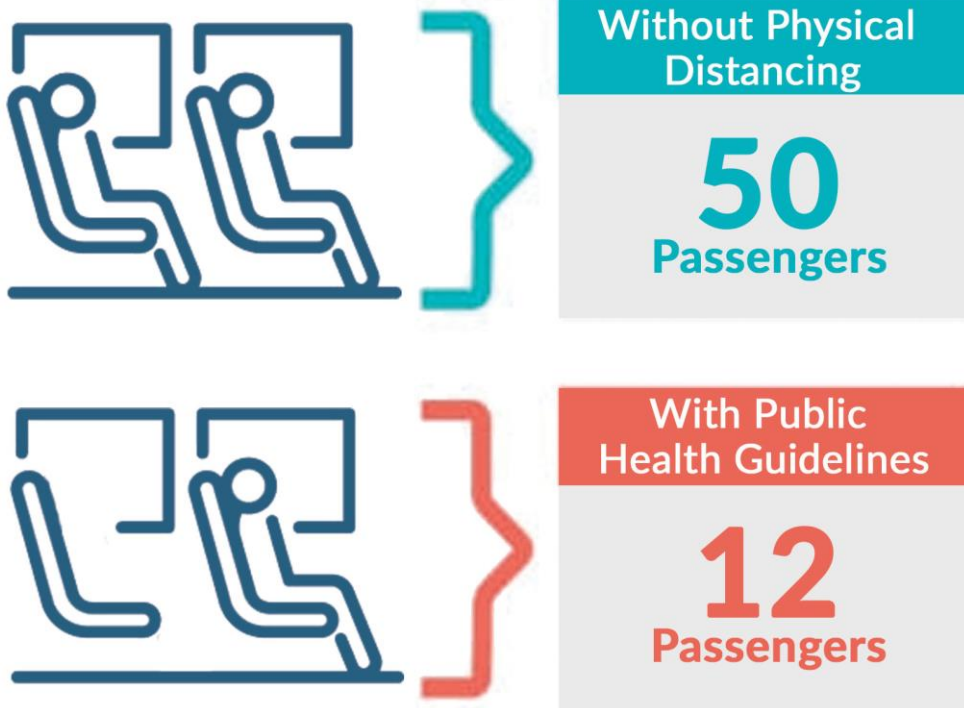
Operational Considerations



Transporting Students To and From School Safely

- MCPS will limit capacity to 12 passengers on an MCPS general education bus, in accordance with current public health guidelines.
- In light of capacity limitations, families will need to opt in to request school bus transportation. While we will make every effort to transport students who need school bus transportation to school, the transportation capacity is very limited due to public health guidelines. Available school bus capacity will be prioritized for elementary and middle school students.
- The Department of Transportation will hold training sessions for staff to review COVID-19 protocols, including bus cleaning.

Bus Seating Capacity



Robust Health and Safety Considerations

MCPS will implement the following health and safety practices across all schools and offices:



Health Questionnaire

Health questionnaire for staff and students



Face Coverings

Face coverings will be required and provided as needed to staff and students.



Limited Access

Access to schools will be limited to students and staff as much as possible.



Hand Sanitizer

Hand sanitizer will be provided, with hand sanitizing stations at building entrances, and in classrooms and shared spaces.



Physical Distancing

There will be increased spacing in the building and in classrooms with fewer students in spaces. Classroom layouts and arrival and dismissal processes will be modified to maintain physical distancing.



Training

Students and staff will receive training on COVID-19 prevention practices, including social distancing and face covering use. Signage and ongoing communication will supplement and reinforce training.



Hand-Washing

Hand-washing will be encouraged throughout the day and required before and after meals.



No Supply Sharing

MCPS will increase ordering of all school supplies to eliminate sharing, particularly at the elementary level.



Ongoing Support

School administrators will be provided ongoing support to ensure effective systemwide implementation of health and safety practices.



MCPS Issued Devices

MCPS will continue to provide Chromebooks and other devices to students as needs are identified.



Storage Space

Increased ordering of containers to provide storage space for students in classrooms.



Cleaning

Frequent cleaning of all MCPS schools, facilities and buses.

Food Services



Encourage Bringing Lunch

Students will be encouraged to bring their own meals as feasible, or they will be served individually plated meals in classrooms instead of in a communal dining hall or cafeteria.



Enforce Hand-Washing

We will enforce strict hand-washing with soap and water after meals.



Disinfect Surfaces

We will disinfect surfaces regularly.



No Sharing Food

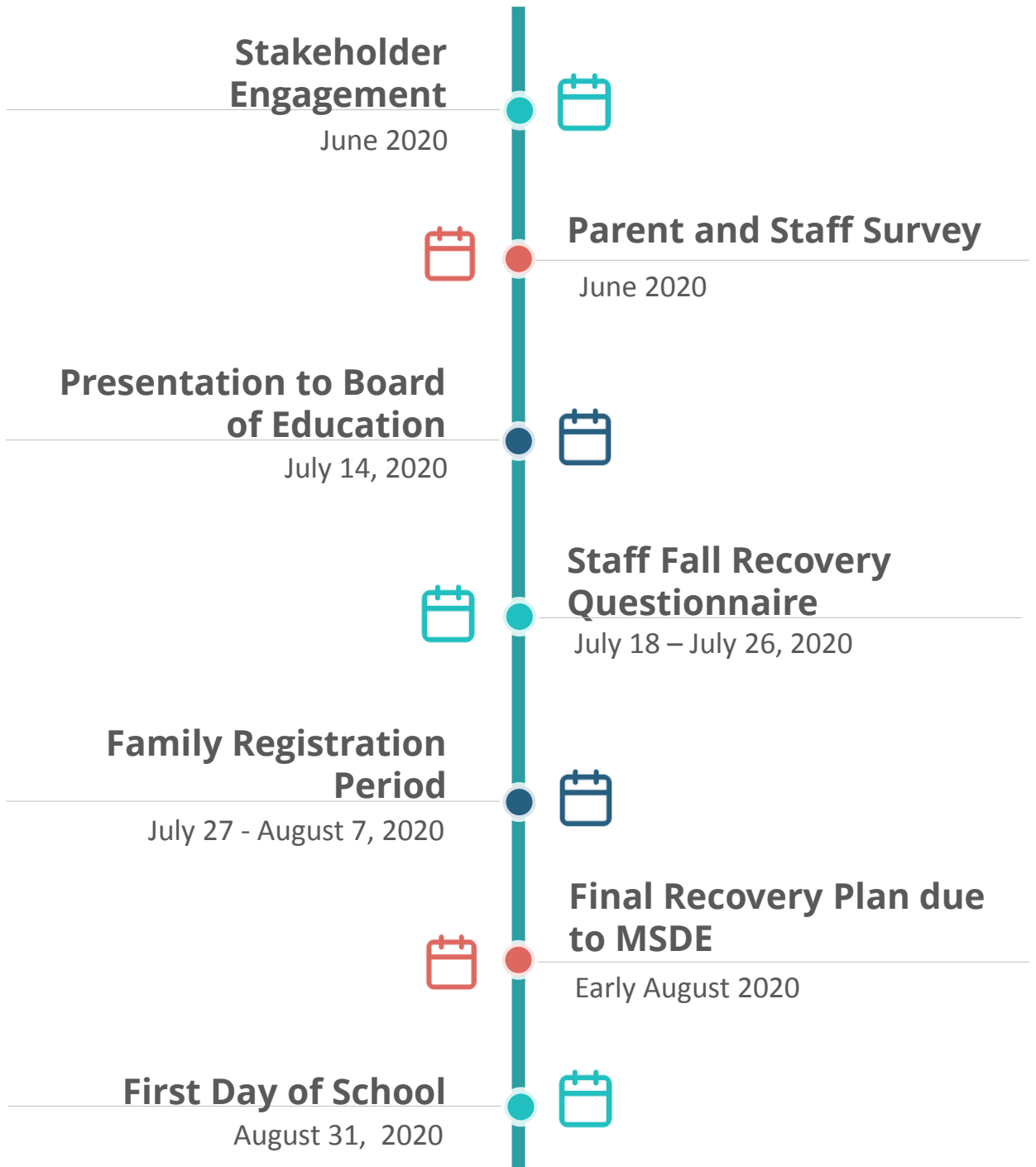
We will continue to practice the “do not share” food policy among students.



Review Food Allergy Plans

Before school resumes, teachers and school leaders will review food allergy and 504 plans for all children with food allergies.

Recovery Plan Timeline



Frequently Asked Questions



How will you keep my child safe in your buildings?

Our conversations and preparation for the 2020-2021 school year have been rooted in health and safety, which is our top priority in getting ready to welcome students, educators, administrators and support staff back into our buildings. While our return to school will look different given the new health and safety measures in place, our commitment to ensuring all students have a safe, welcoming and fun environment to learn and thrive remains the same. We will be sensitive to the health needs of our staff and families and will offer alternative options for those who are unable to return to our buildings.

We are prioritizing health and safety measures such as hand sanitizer and hand washing, face coverings, and physical distancing to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.



What happens if there is an outbreak of COVID-19 at a particular school? How or why will you decide whether to close a classroom or school?

We will contact the Department of Health and Human Services and follow their guidance on closure, testing and self-quarantine. MCPS will be prepared to move into a fully virtual learning plan based on a state and/or local decision about closures as a result of an increase in COVID-19 spread.



How will you enforce mask-wearing among students?

All adults and students will be required to wear face coverings in accordance with county guidance.



How can I share with MCPS that I only want my child in a remote setting?

Families will be able to select an instructional model preference for the fall during the registration period. The selected preference will be for the entire semester. However, if a family needs to change its selection, there will be a process for doing so.

* An extensive FAQs about our fall recovery planning will be posted on the MCPS website in the coming weeks.

Submit Feedback



Feedback

Submit your feedback on the Draft MCPS Fall 2020 Recovery Plan. Your feedback is important and will help inform our planning.

Go to www.mcpssubmitfeedback.org to provide feedback.

