



**Calvert County
Public Schools**

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October 16, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians of Students in Grades 3-5:

Now that CCPS is finalizing plans for students in pre-K through Grade 2 to return to school in a hybrid model or remain fully online, depending upon a family's choice, we are moving forward with plans for students in Grades 3-12 to have the option to (1) return to school in a hybrid model or (2) remain 100% virtual.

Although the timeline will ultimately depend upon local health metrics, the tentative dates for grade bands to return are:

- Grades 3-5: December
- Grade 6: January 19
- Grades 7 and 8: February 1
- High School: February

Like students in pre-K through Grade 2, our older students will be divided alphabetically into two groups (A-K and L-Z) for the hybrid model. One group will attend school face to face for four days each week, while the other group works virtually. Schools will work with families who have children with different last names and with families whose children are grouped together for daycare or learning groups to coordinate schedules.

We need information from parents and guardians to continue planning for a safe and effective return to school.

You were emailed a survey to select an option for your child on October 16. Please complete the survey by October 23, once for every child in your family.

While we cannot present a detailed plan until we know the number of students choosing the hybrid or fully virtual model, we can answer the following questions.

Will Friday be the asynchronous learning day for all grades?

Yes. Beginning the week of November 16, the asynchronous learning day will shift to Friday for all grades.

Will the start and end times of school change?

Yes, at least for some students. The schedule of the school day will depend in part upon how many families choose school bus transportation and how many tiers of bus runs will be needed to transport students in compliance with safety guidelines. As the CCPS Transportation Department creates the bus routes for the return to school, it will be necessary for high schools to return to the traditional start time and be the first tier of transportation. More information on the timing of this specific change will be communicated. If a fourth transportation tier is needed, some students may arrive home later.

If a family chooses the hybrid plan, will all children attend school on the same week?

Families may request to have children assigned to attend the same week. If all children in a household fall into the same cohort when students are divided alphabetically, no special request is needed.

What are the safety guidelines for school bus transportation?

Many guidelines are in place to provide safe transportation to school with adequate social distancing. In fact, among the greatest barriers to reopening school is the limited occupancy allowed on school buses. Students will sit one person per seat, unless siblings are on the bus together, and will sit every other seat in a zig-zag pattern across the aisle. Windows will be opened to allow for the circulation of fresh air, so everyone must dress for the bus to be windy and cool. Drivers/bus assistants will disinfect and clean high-touch areas of the bus after each run to each school. Everyone on board a school bus is required to wear a mask covering the mouth and nose.

What cleaning protocols will be followed in school?

CCPS is committed to reducing exposure when students and staff are in schools. More frequent cleaning and disinfection will take place. High-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, door windows, phones, desks, and tables will be disinfected frequently throughout the day and cleaned at night. Restrooms will be checked and cleaned hourly, in addition to high-use areas such as offices, libraries, labs, copy rooms, and playgrounds. All water fountains are closed; water bottle fillers may be used.

What PPE and cleaning supplies will be available in each classroom?

Hand sanitizer and wipes will be in every classroom. Masks are available if students or staff members do not have one. Barriers, which are currently on back order, will be supplied for all teachers who will be teaching face to face.

Will students have the same teacher(s) they have now?

Most students will have the same teacher; however, some may change, depending upon the number of students who choose each model of instruction (either hybrid or fully virtual). Some teachers may be teaching fully virtual, in which case their students who choose the hybrid model will be reassigned, and other students will be assigned to them.

Committees are working through what this will look like at the secondary level, where course assignments are more specialized.

What happens if someone in a school tests positive for COVID-19?

CCPS will follow guidance from the Calvert County Health Department for all positive cases. The Health Department is notified of positive cases by the testing agency, including those outside of Calvert County, and will communicate with the school system. If a staff member believes that he/she has been exposed to COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19, the person must immediately contact the direct supervisor by phone or text message. If notification of a positive student case comes from the family, the school nurse will report it to the School Health Supervisor and the Department of Human Resources. The school nurse will maintain information on all suspected COVID-19 exposure of students and staff. School principals will notify the community when a student or staff member receives a positive COVID-19 test, without revealing the person's identity.

If quarantining is necessary for staff and/or students, the school system will follow the guidelines of the Calvert County Health Department.

Will the school system conduct contact tracing in the event of a positive case?

The Calvert County Health Department will conduct all contact tracing. CCPS will notify school employees of the procedures that should be followed if they test positive or are exposed to COVID-19, but official contact tracing will be done by the Health Department.

Will parents/guardians be able to change their minds as plans are finalized and if local health metrics change this winter?

Grades 3-5: We are asking parents and guardians of students in Grades 3-5 to commit to either hybrid or fully virtual through the end of the second quarter, January 27, 2021.

Grades 6-8: We are asking parents and guardians of students in Grades 6-8 to commit to either hybrid or fully virtual when students return this winter, assuming local health metrics at that time make returning to school an option. We recognize that some families may need to change their choice because the start date for middle school students is not until January 19 for sixth graders and February 1 for seventh and eighth graders.

Grades 9-12: A follow-up survey asking for a final commitment will be sent to high school students prior to winter break. The committees working on a hybrid design for high school will use the results of this survey to explore options.