

MCPS Elementary Schools

Second-semester opportunity for students to return for face to face learning

November 13, 2020

We are in the process of planning for elementary school students who are currently learning remotely the opportunity to return to school for the second semester. The second semester begins Monday, February 1st, 2021. For our planning work, we need to know how many current remote learning students would like to return to a Monday through Thursday face to face model - with all students learning remotely on Fridays. (This is the same model we are currently using in our elementary schools.)

We also understand our secondary school model may impact the decision of parents of elementary-age students due to potential child care issues. You should know we are working on plans to bring our secondary students who wish to return to face to face learning back to school at the semester as well, but that option will mean secondary students are on an 'A week/ B week' rotation.

Beginning the week of November 16th, school personnel will be calling homes of our current remote learning students to ask two questions:

1. Will you send your elementary age student(s) back to school for face to face learning?
2. Will you need MCPS transportation for your student(s)?

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this change being made now? We have some capacity to add students safely to our elementary schools. The semester break is the logical time to make such a change.

Will my student have the same teacher? Generally, yes. Our return to school model for elementary school distributed our remote learning students across the teachers in that school/grade level. If/When a student returns to school, they will have the same teacher they have been interacting with remotely.

What is 'A Week/B Week' Rotation? Students are divided to reduce the number of students in school at any time. While one group attends class Monday through Thursday, the other accesses instruction remotely from home. This is noted here simply due to the fact that some secondary students are caring for younger siblings while all are learning remotely. If the details can be worked out and your secondary student returns to face to face learning, they will be at home every other week.

Will my student have to wear a face-covering? Any student being transported by MCPS or in school at MCPS will be expected to wear a properly fitting cloth face-covering provided by the family.

How come we don't immediately implement this change? We need to know how many plan to return and whether or not they need MCPS transportation to determine if we can safely expand our elementary school program. New transportation routes must be built, drivers assigned, and, potentially, some spaces in our schools modified in order to accommodate the additional students.

Could this model change? If we have too great a number of students seeking to return, we may have to re-visit our planning to return additional elementary-age students. We should know by the first week of

December if this plan is possible or not. If it is not, we will revise our plan and reach out once more with another option to safely return students.

Do I have to send my student back for face to face instruction? No. At this time, it remains the option of the parent/guardian to continue to access learning remotely. We must stress parents must be involved to a high degree in remote learning of elementary-age students in order for those students to learn and grow academically. Failure to make sufficient progress may result in the retention of the student.