

Mecklenburg County Public Schools

Temporary Shift to All Virtual

December 7, 2020

Due to significant COVID-19 community transmission rates as reported by the Virginia Department of Health, Mecklenburg County Public Schools will switch to a fully remote teaching and learning model for all students effective Thursday, December 10th. While learning remotely, students will need to check into classes daily and complete assignments. We will continue on this model through next Friday, December 18th, which is the beginning of winter break.

Out of an abundance of caution and with anticipation of the continued spread of the virus during winter break, MCPS will remain in a remote learning mode through Friday, January 15th for all students. We do anticipate SOL testing to take place as scheduled the week of January 11th for secondary school students in an SOL course.

It is our hope and desire to return to our current model of instruction on Tuesday, January 19th.

Frequently asked questions (FAQ's)

Why is this change being made now? Mecklenburg County, like much of Virginia and the country, is experiencing a significant level of community transmission of COVID-19. Unlike previous occasions when Mecklenburg County's transmission rate exceeded the 'red' level of transmission, this time the transmission cannot be attributed to a single source – such as a nursing home or prison. To protect our employees, students, and the greater Mecklenburg community, we are taking this step to mitigate the continued spread of the virus.

How may I continue to receive meals for my child(ren)? Parents may pick up meals at designated community pick up areas beginning December 14th, but will need to communicate directly with the school as to how many meals they will need and let the school know by this Wednesday, December 9th.

Parents can pick-up meals for five days on Monday, December 14th, Monday, January 4th, and Monday, January 11th at Bluestone Middle, Parkview High, La Crosse Elementary, Chase City Elementary, and Clarksville Elementary between 4 pm and 6 pm.

Why continue with remote learning after the new year? While we do not have a crystal ball and do not know with certainty the COVID-19 transmission rate will remain high in January, we understand that with the holidays people may continue to interact with wider circles. This interaction, without due safety precautions, will continue the spread of the virus. By extending the remote learning period two weeks into the new year, it is our hope that any signs of the virus may be prevented from returning to our school community.

Will my student with a 504, IEP or who is an English Language Learner be allowed to attend during this time? Unfortunately, no. We are asking all students to access learning remotely during this time.

If all students are remotely learning until January 15th, how will secondary students take the SOLs? It is true, students will not be learning face to face during the week of January 11th.

As we have no waiver for the end of course Standards of Learning (SOL) Exams, our secondary students in certain courses must take the SOL. Students will be more than adequately socially distanced, will wear face coverings at all times, and will be using their own (division issued) Chromebook to take the exam(s). We will test the students that are required to test and continue remote learning. More specific testing information will be sent from the school.

How does this impact the planned return to face to face learning for secondary school students and the expansion of face to face learning for elementary students? At this time, even as we shift to full remote learning due to high transmission of COVID-19, we continue to plan to open up to secondary students at the semester (February 1st) for face to face learning and to extend the opportunity for additional elementary students to return.

What if my student(s) does not complete their work or check in during this time of remote learning? In order to earn credit for a course or to be promoted, students must demonstrate appropriate learning for that course/grade level. Likewise, attendance in school is mandatory – even if we are learning remotely – and students must check in daily and (for secondary students) by period.

What happens if the COVID-19 transmission rates remain high in Mecklenburg County?

With a vaccine on the horizon and people making safer choices, we have high hopes we can exit this latest wave of infections. The safety of our employees, students, and school community, however, is paramount. If the numbers remain too high, we expect we would have to extend our remote learning period until those numbers drop to safe levels.