

**MEMORANDUM**

February 25, 2021

TO: Education & Culture Committee  
Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Nicole Rodriguez-Hernandez, Legislative Analyst  
Craig Howard, Deputy Director  
Vivian Yao, Legislative Analyst

SUBJECT: Montgomery County Public Schools Return to In-Person Learning

PURPOSE: Receive update and have discussion, no action required

**Expected Participants:**

Montgomery County Public Schools

- Dr. Jack R. Smith, Superintendent
- Dr. Monifa B. McKnight, Deputy Superintendent
- Mr. Derek G. Turner, Chief of Engagement, Innovation, and Operations
- Mr. Seth P. Adams, Director, Department of Facilities Management

Department of Health and Human Services

- Dr. Travis Gayles, County Health Officer and Chief of Public Health Services

Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

- Dr. Earl Stoddard, Director

The Committee will hold a worksession to receive a briefing on Montgomery County Public School's (MCPS) return to in-person learning and recovery of education plan. Specifically, the goals of this joint committee are:

- 1) Receive an update from MPCPS on their reopening plans, including an understanding of the key data and information used by the Board of Education as part of their decision-making;
- 2) Review and discuss how community spread and State and County public health orders impact school reopening efforts;
- 3) Discuss future considerations and support for new issues related to implementing the hybrid instruction model; and
- 4) Discuss how the Council can support the Board of Education and MCPS in their continued efforts to safely reopen schools, including any needs at the State level.

On February 9, the Board of Education approved a resolution to begin the return to in-person learning on March 1 with a phased return for all interested students through April. Council staff asked MCPS to provide a summary of their plan as presented to the Board of Education, as well as provide additional information on the following:

- Health metrics and CDC reopening guidelines;
- COVID-19 testing and response protocol;
- Contact tracing models and communication;
- COVID-19 vaccination process and staffing;
- Transportation arrangements;
- Instruction models for in-person & virtual learning; and
- School-aged childcare and Educational and Enrichment Equity Hubs.

This staff report provides: A) a timeline of the Board’s decision-making process for the return to in-person learning; and B) a summary of the relevant information presented to the Board. The report has been revised to include additional information presented to the Board on February 23 ©103-164 and MCPS’ February 25 presentation to the Joint Committee ©167-176.

#### **A. The Board’s Return to In-Person Learning Decision**

As the COVID-19 health pandemic continues, County health officials are working with County leaders, including the County Executive and County Council, to establish health guidelines for the health and safety of our County. However, it is important to note that while County leaders and elected officials work closely with MCPS, it is the Montgomery County Board of Education who serves as the elected body that provides leadership and oversight for MCPS including setting goals, establishing policies, and committing resources for the school community. The Board’s responsibilities include the decisions surrounding the reopening of schools.

The MCPS school community began the 2020-2021 school year via remote and virtual instruction through the first semester due to the COVID-19 health pandemic. At the end of September, MCPS officials began formal deliberations on the framework for the safe return to in-person learning with the district’s three employee unions and additional stakeholders. On February 9, the Board approved the phased-in return schedule for all students, including the definitive March 1 return to in-person learning for the first priority group. The Board’s decision-making timeline and important dates are further outlined in the table below.

Date & Circle Page	Action Summary
<p align="center"><b>August 25, 2020</b> ©1-3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board approved a virtual-only first semester for the 2020-2021 school year. The resolution notes students would only return to in-person learning after first semester as State and local health officials determine that it is safe for students.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>September 24, 2020</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As agreed on previously, MCPS officials provided the district's three employee unions the required 45-day notice for the return to in-person learning to begin the formal planning process for reopening school buildings.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>November 6, 2020</b> ©4-64</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BOE reviewed MCPS' framework for the return to in-person learning for January 2021</li> <li>MCPS presented a health metrics grid (aligned with CDC/State guidelines) and framework for the phased-return to in-person learning by priority group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14-day raw average of new cases</li> <li>14-day average new case rate (MD model)</li> <li>14-day average new case rate (CDC model)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Tentative student/staff return: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>January 12, 2021</u>: special education students; career and technical education students; and select special populations</li> <li><u>February 1, 2021</u>: larger groups of students</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>November 10, 2021</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board tentatively approved the framework for a phased-in return to in-person instruction.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>November 11, 2020- December 10, 2020</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MCPS distributed the Parent Preference Survey to families to identify their preference to either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in a partial, in-person instructional experience or</li> <li>Remain in a fully virtual learning experience through second semester</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>December 15, 2020</b> ©65-68</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board approved resolutions to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish the health metrics framework for the safe return of students: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14-day case rate at or below 15 cases per 100,000 residents and</li> <li>14-day positivity rate below 5%</li> </ol> </li> <li>Delay the return of the first group of students to February 1, 2021 (with reevaluation on January 12, 2021); and</li> <li>Commit to the safe return to in-person learning, prioritizing vulnerable populations.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>January 5, 2021</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governor Hogan amended the State's COVID-19 vaccination priority plan to include education employees (K-12 teachers, support staff, and daycare) in Phase 1B.</li> </ul>

<p align="center"><b>January 12, 2021</b> ©69</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board approved a resolution to delay the return to in-person instruction from February 1 to March 15, 2021 on the condition that the approved health metrics were met, <b>or</b> health guidance is adjusted as a result of the COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>January 18, 2021</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The State began vaccination of Phase 1B, which includes education staff.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>January 19, 2021</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MCPS notified employees<sup>1</sup> they are coordinating with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services to provide all MCPS employees with access to the COVID-19 vaccine.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>January 21, 2021</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governor Hogan and State Superintendent Dr. Karen Salmon called on all Maryland school systems to return to hybrid instruction no later than March 1. State health officials released additional school reopening guidance<sup>2</sup> based on scientific evidence, recent studies, and the effects of school closures on student learning.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>February 9, 2021</b> ©101-102</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board approved a resolution to begin the return to in-person learning on March 1 for the first priority group, with the phased in-return of all interested students (by priority group) through March and April.</li> <li>The resolution stated the amended return date was due to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The release of the updated State health guidance on reopening schools; and</li> <li>The downward trending COVID-19 case and test rates, the Board</li> </ol> </li> <li>The established health metrics approved by the Board will be used as guidelines for decision-making on the phased return of larger groups of students.</li> </ul>

**B. MCPS’ Spring 2021: Recovery of Education Plan Summary (Reopening)**

On February 9, the Board of Education approved the phased-in return of students by priority group and reviewed various aspects of the return to in-person learning. On February 23, the Board received additional information. A summary of the presentations to the Board is provided below. The full presentations can be found on ©70-100 and ©103-164. Additional information on COVID-19 safety protocols (previously presented to the Board) is also included.

**1. Phases for Return**

The Board of Education and MCPS established a phased-in return process that prioritizes safety and student needs as set by their predetermined priority groups. Based on the Parent Preference Survey, MCPS notes approximately 63,000 students will return to in-person learning, however

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<sup>1</sup> <https://news.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/staff-bulletin/a-message-regarding-covid-19-vaccinations-for-staff/>  
<sup>2</sup> <https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/MD-School-Reopening-Guidance-1.23.21.pdf>

change requests from families have continued since the closing of the survey and final numbers are not set at this time.

**March 1.** Specific special education programs and technical programs will return to in person learning. The special education programs include: 1) Autism K-12 program; 2) Extensions program; 3) School Community-based; and 4) Special Schools. These students will have in-person learning all week, except for Wednesdays.

The technical programs include: 1) automotive; 2) construction; 3) cosmetology; 4) healthcare professions; and 5) restaurant management. The instruction model depends on the specific school which can be found on ©74.

**March 15-Group 1.1.** The students returning include: 1) discrete and special populations; 2) additional career and technical education (CTE) programs; METS (multidisciplinary education, training, and support); 3) CREA (career readiness education academy); 4) alternative programs; and grades K-3.

The specific discrete and special education programs included in Group 1.1. can be found on ©82.

**April 6-Group 1.2.** The students included in this group are: 1) remaining discrete programs, special populations, and CTE students; and 2) pre-kindergarten; grades 4-6; and grade 12.

The specific discrete and special education programs can be found on ©83.

**April 19- Group 2.1.** This group includes grades 8, 9, and 11.

**April 26-Group 2.2.** The final group includes grades 7 and 10.

## **2. COVID-19 Safety Protocols ©4-64.**

Prior to the February 9 Board discussion, MCPS presented the core protocols for safety, or the COVID 5-Pillars, to the Board on November 6, 2020. MCPS presented additional information on February 23. A summary of the information is provided below.

### **Core Protocols for Safety.** Specifically:

1. Limited capacity in schools and facilities (including per classroom);
2. Health screening protocol (health attestations) for those who access buildings;
3. Face covering requirements;
4. Hand sanitizer availability; and
5. Six feet physical distancing and signage for reinforcement.

### **COVID 5-Pillars of Public Health Training.**

1. Health and Safety Module training;
2. Personal health and safety reminders;
3. Workplace expectations: personal protection equipment (PPE), physical distancing, hand washing and sanitizing, personal health monitoring, and safe and clean building environments;
4. Public-facing training presentation for all employees, families, and the community; and
5. COVID-19 focused employee portal.

**COVID-19 Surveillance Testing.** MCPS will implement regular, voluntary asymptomatic testing (rapid-antigen) of students and staff on March 15. Staff and parents will be notified of a positive result and contact tracing protocols will be activated, including quarantine of those in close contact with the positive individual.

School health staff will return to all open schools and will work with MCPS on COVID-19 protocols.

**PPE.** All staff members will receive PPE supplies including face masks, hand sanitizers and sanitizing wipes, and gloves. Staff in special needs programs will receive face shields, goggles, gowns, and shoe covers, as necessary.

**Building Preparation.** MCPS has implemented extensive HVAC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning,) updates to meet new COVID-19 guidelines. In addition to portable air filters and air cleaners, MCPS is upgrading the air filters in the mechanical systems of all MCPS schools.

MCPS notes upgrades in individual spaces will be accelerated to meet Board approved phase-in approaches for in-person learning, including special education discrete programs. The work status for each school can be found at:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/default.aspx?id=674571>

MCPS building service and maintenance have also been flushing the water in the schools regularly. Water fountains will not be available for use. Water bottle filling stations will be.

### **3. Calendar Adjustments.**

MCPS notes school staff will have 3 days for staff preparation prior to returning to in-person learning. The preparation time will be dedicated to: 1) school team planning; 2) classroom preparations; and 3) updated trainings, including health and safety trainings.

The March 1 cohort will have Feb 22-24 to prepare students receiving regular instruction through substitute or other coverage. The March 15 cohort will have March 8-10 to prepare, no school for students on March 8 and asynchronous instruction on the remaining days.

#### **4. Communication to Families.**

The communication timeline differs based on the cohort return date. Important dates are highlighted below:

- March 1 cohort
  - February 25: last day to request change in virtual or in-person instruction for students
  
- March 15 cohort
  - February 26: last day to request change in virtual or in-person instruction for students
  - March 1-12: blackout period-no changes to instruction model selection allowed to finalize planning

The selection process change request is further explained on ©98-99. MCPS also notes all schools will hold virtual orientation or other opportunities for staff and students prior to their return date. Specific outreach efforts were outlined on February 23 ©130.

#### **5. Initial Schedules & Instructional Experiences.**

MCPS has determined the initial schedules for elementary and secondary schools. It is important to note that while classroom instruction will differ from what occurred pre-pandemic, all in-person students will experience multiple instructional approaches and interact with teachers and other staff. Specific instructional models are school dependent. MCPS is committed to maintain and improving the virtual experience as well. Staffing availability can be found on ©163. The updated February 23 schedules for the various grade levels can be found on ©120.

**Elementary Schools.** Every public elementary school has been categorized into one of the following categories based on the need of the student populations: 1) Title I Schools (31); 2) Focus Schools (38); and 3) Non-focus Schools (66).

The rotation schedule differs based on the school category with higher-needs schools rotating less. Some students may be in school every week, while others will be in-school based on the A/B rotation (Group A attends one week, Group B attends the other week, virtual Wednesdays). Specifically:

- Title I Schools: All students will be in school 4 days every week (virtual Wednesdays)
  
- Focus Schools: Grades K-3 will be in school 4 days a week (virtual Wednesdays) and pre-kindergarten and grades 4-5 will be in on the A/B rotation

- Non-Focus Schools: Grades K-2 will be in school 4 days a week every week (virtual Wednesdays) and pre-kindergarten and grades 3-5 will be in on the A/B rotation

**Secondary Schools.** All grade levels will start with the A/B rotation

## **6. Transportation.**

As schools will have students in both virtual and in-person instruction and buses will require additional time to meet capacity restrictions, all students will begin instruction at the same time.

Updated bus schedules can be found on ©119.

## **7. Health & Wellness Efforts.**

The MCPS school community will have access to multiple resources and programs for the wellbeing of all (students, staff, and families):

- Social emotional learning professional development and practices;
- School counseling services and school psychologists;
- Student Well-Being teams;
- Strategies to assist chronically absent students;
- Pupil Personnel Workers;
- Online resources (e.g. MCPS Way making, Parent Academy, Mindful Moments);
- Community Chats; and
- Additional innovative supports (e.g. restorative justice)

## **8. Food & Nutrition Services.**

On February 23, MCPS stated the following on their food service program:

- Food service will resume for students in-person in schools with various seating/takeaway options to maintain distance
- Meal service is offered all weekdays except Wednesdays; double meals will be served on Tuesday; weekend meals will be provided Fridays
- Virtual students can still pick-up “grab and go” food through cluster hub sites
- Bulk pick-up will be distributed at White Oak Middle School and Seneca Valley High School for multiple meals



## **9. Seniors and Graduation Requirements.**

On February 23, the Board approved a resolution ©165 that allows the Superintendent to align graduation requirements for the Class of 2021 with the State's requirements as they are less stringent than MCPS' graduation requirements. In 2020, the Board adjusted the requirements for the Class of 2020 to align with the State's requirements and this resolution would extend the same adjustments for the Class of 2021, if necessary.

MCPS is also taking additional measures to assist seniors not on track to graduate. Specifically, :

- Centralized tracking—graduation validation process;
- School-based teams and individualized follow-up plans for students;
- Individualized supports (e.g. virtual senior/parent meetings & outreach);
- Academic interventions (e.g. tutoring, resource classes);
- Flexible options to earn and recover course credit;
- Reduced class schedule;
- Wellness and attendance teams;
- In-person enhancements/supports (if the student returns to in-person learning).

## **10. Extracurricular Activities & Summer Programming.**

**Extracurricular Activities.** While MCPS students have been engaged in approximately 1,658 virtual extracurricular activities during remote learning, the return to in-person learning will allow for in-person activities as well. The school community will still be expected to participate in COVID-19 protocols. As MCPS wants to focus on the transition to in-person learning and students will be phased-in through April, the extracurricular activities period is scheduled for April 6-May 28 (8 weeks). Activities will occur during lunch and after school.

**Summer Programming.** MCPS will implement summer programs to accelerate learning with a focus on mathematics, literacy, and preparation for the next grade level. High school students will be able to take credit courses in all subject areas required for graduation. Elementary and Middle school students will be able to attend local school and cluster programs in math, literacy, and enrichment.

Traditional summer programs will also be offered: Extended School Year (ESY); Summer RISE, Summer UP, Montgomery Can Code, and ESO-SAIL (extended learning opportunities-summer adventures in learning).

This report contains:

August 25 Board Resolution

November 6 Presentation

December 15 Board Resolutions

January 12 Board Resolution

February 9 Board Presentation

February 9 Board Resolution

February 23 Board Presentation

February 23 Board Resolution

MCPS Presentation to the Joint Committee

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Office of the Superintendent of Schools  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Rockville, Maryland

August 25, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools  
Subject: Opening Schools in Recovery of Education

WHEREAS, on August 6, 2020, the Montgomery County Public Schools Board of Education approved the reopening of the 2020–2021 school year as virtual-only instructional model and the cancellation of fall and winter sports, through the first semester, or until state and local health officials determine that students safely can return to in-person instruction after the first semester; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools established several Recovery Plan Design Teams that brought together more than 320 diverse team members from our schools, central office, association partners, and community stakeholder groups; and

WHEREAS, the guiding principles for the 2020–2021 Recovery Plan are to ensure the safety and wellness of students and staff, provide a robust and dynamic virtual learning experience for first semester, ensure equity and all means all, optimize resources, and facilitate community and stakeholder engagement in plan development; and

WHEREAS, the 2020–2021 virtual-only school experience for students will include live instruction, opportunities for targeted support and independent work, special education services that meet state and federal laws and regulations, and language support services to English Language Learners; and

WHEREAS, The approved Traditional 2020–2021 School Year Calendar aligns to the instructional model through the first marking period, and the Innovative 2020–2021 School Year Calendar will be adjusted to align marking periods with the Traditional Calendar; and

WHEREAS, Staff will review both the Traditional and Innovative School Year Calendars to ensure that the instructional calendars continue to align with and support the virtual learning experience in the second marking period; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools will continue to provide access to school meals across the district and will continue to expand the scope of meal services throughout areas of the county in order to support food security for our students; and

WHEREAS, The last price increase for school meals occurred during Fiscal Year 2015 for elementary and secondary lunches, due to the COVID-19 pandemic meal service, the prices will be maintained at the current levels for breakfast and the price of secondary lunches will be reduced to the current elementary price; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools is committed to the physical, social and psychological needs of our students, families and staff as we navigate through a global pandemic while conducting virtual-only instruction, and are providing comprehensive, culturally responsible supports and resources through our Be Well 365 programs; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools recognized the need to provide professional learning to ensure our students, families, and staff are successful in a virtual-only environment, a series of courses are available on a wide range of topics including technology, culturally responsive teaching, curriculum and instruction, social-emotional well-being, accessibility tools for instruction and home, health and safety, and communication and collaboration; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools has reimaged our athletics, fine arts, student leadership and extracurricular activities and will extend virtual experiences to all students; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools will provide students and staff the technology needed to fully engage in virtual-only learning; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Board of Education approve the current 2020–2021 Montgomery County Public Schools Recovery Plan which provides expanded program opportunities, flexibility for our schools, and ensures equity and access while following the guidelines set forth by local, state and federal health officials, the Maryland State Department of Education and the United States Department of Education; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Education approve an amended Innovative School Year Calendar for School Year 2020–2021, to align the marking periods with the Traditional School Year Calendar, as provided in the attachment; and be it further

Resolved, That breakfast prices for elementary and secondary students will be \$1.30, and students who are eligible for reduced-price meals will receive breakfast at no cost; and be it further

Resolved, That lunch prices will be \$2.55 for elementary students, \$2.55 for secondary students, and 20 cents for all reduced-price eligible students; and be it further

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools continues working with county health officials to reassess conditions, at the end of the first quarter, in an effort to determine the safest and most appropriate model of instruction for the second semester of the 2020–2021 school year and to provide a recommendation to the Board of Education no later than November 10, 2020.

JRS:JSW:kde

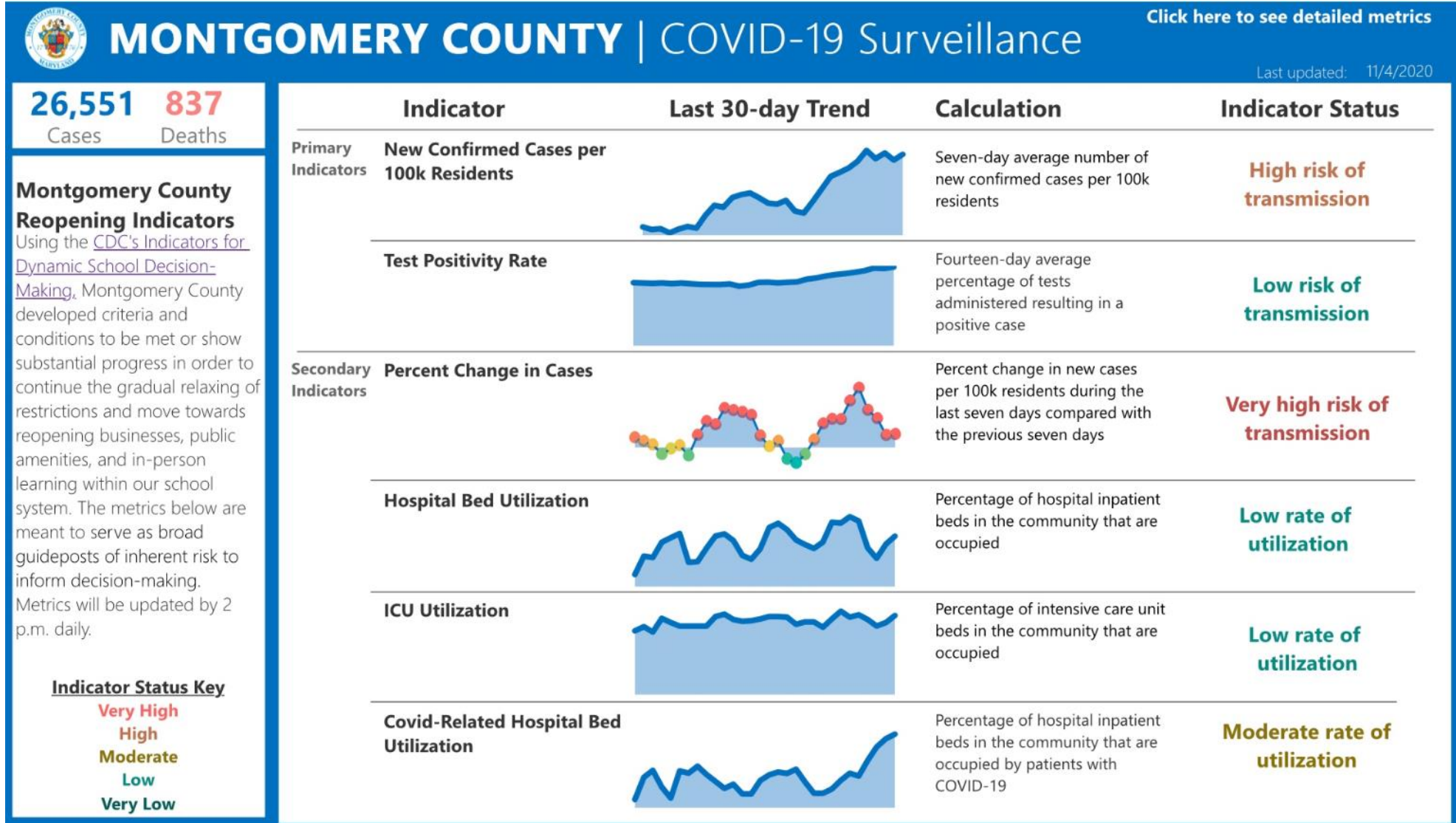
Attachment

# Opening Schools in Recovery of Education

Montgomery County Board of Education  
November 6, 2020


Montgomery County Public Schools is committed to the **safety** of our students and staff members **and** the continued **academic progress** of our students.

# County Health Metrics





# County Health Metrics (By Zip Code)

 <b>MONTGOMERY COUNTY   COVID-19 Surveillance</b> <span style="float: right;">Last Updated: Wednesday, November 4, 2020</span>										
Place Name	Zip Code	Cumulative cases	Cumulative cases per 100k residents	Number of cases in the last 14 days	Average daily cases per 100k residents (last 14 days)	Notable change in average daily cases per 100k residents*	Population	Percent Black or African American alone Population	Percent Hispanic or Latino Population	Percent Non-Hispanic Non-White Population
Ashton	20861	32	0.9K	6	25.7	↑	1,665	16%	4%	31%
Aspen Hill/Layhill	20906	2902	4.0K	247	25.1	↑	70,174	24%	33%	74%
Wheaton	20902	2203	3.9K	152	20.7	↑	52,484	17%	36%	66%
Damascus	20872	258	1.8K	35	19.3	↑	12,940	10%	12%	35%
Hillandale	20903	1421	5.3K	70	19.1	↑	26,206	28%	48%	89%
Montgomery Village/Airpark	20879	817	3.0K	73	18.7	↑	27,871	24%	29%	72%
Poolesville	20837	71	0.9K	16	18.4	↑	6,225	8%	10%	23%
Laytonsville	20882	251	1.8K	34	18.1	↑	13,450	7%	12%	29%
Montgomery Village	20886	1189	3.3K	85	17.8	↑	34,100	21%	33%	70%
Colesville	20904	1992	3.2K	122	15.3	↑	57,035	45%	15%	77%
Cloverly/Stonegate	20905	415	2.1K	38	15.0	↑	18,123	26%	13%	60%
Four Corners/White Oak	20901	1077	2.7K	75	14.8	↑	36,154	25%	22%	57%
Brookeville	20833	112	1.3K	16	14.7	↑	7,750	9%	12%	33%
Gaithersburg	20877	1563	3.9K	80	14.7	↑	38,885	18%	42%	77%
Rockville/Norbeck	20853	892	2.7K	64	14.7	↑	31,178	12%	25%	51%
North Bethesda	20852	791	1.6K	87	13.2	↑	46,904	10%	14%	48%
Clarksburg	20871	310	1.4K	36	12.9	↑	20,008	19%	11%	66%
Sandy Spring	20860	104	3.3K	5	12.7	↑	2,805	28%	13%	52%
Burtonsville	20866	394	2.4K	26	11.5	↑	16,171	48%	11%	79%
Silver Spring	20910	919	2.0K	66	11.0	↑	42,868	31%	14%	55%
Rockville/Twinbrook	20851	457	2.9K	23	10.9	↓	15,106	9%	38%	67%
Cabin John	20818	20	0.2K	3	10.6	↑	2,019	2%	3%	23%
Germantown	20876	613	2.1K	41	10.1	↑	28,919	21%	23%	71%
Derwood/Redland	20855	296	1.9K	20	10.0	↑	14,302	6%	10%	42%
Takoma Park	20912	766	2.8K	35	9.5	↑	26,239	37%	20%	64%
Kensington	20895	403	1.9K	26	9.5	↑	19,637	5%	13%	30%
Darnestown	20874	1313	2.0K	73	8.5	↓	61,045	22%	25%	64%
Chevy Chase/Somerset	20815	405	1.2K	36	8.4	↑	30,512	5%	7%	21%

# Staff Testing Positive/MCPS Dashboard

## MCPS Employee COVID-19 Case Information

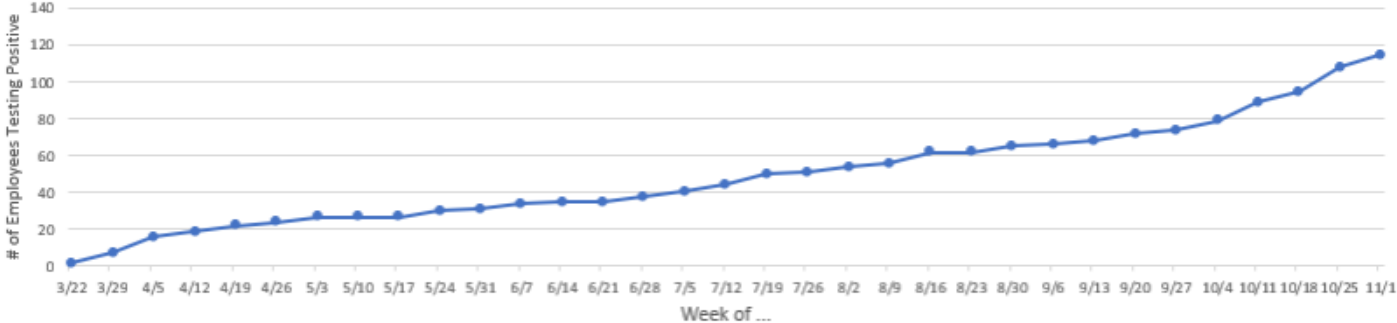
MCPS Employees who have been out of Work due to Testing Positive for COVID-19

**115**

MCPS Employees who are currently Quarantined

**25**

Cumulative Total of MCPS Employees Testing Positive for COVID-19



\*28963 Total Employees including substitutes

# Health Metric Matrix for a Safe Phased-in Return to In-Person Instruction

<b>14-Day Raw Average of New Cases</b>		<b>&lt; 52</b>	<b>52-105</b>	<b>105 -157</b>	<b>&gt; 157</b>
<b>14-Day Average New Case Rate* (MD Calculation Model)</b>		<b>&lt; 5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>10-15</b>	<b>&gt; 15</b>
<b>14-Day Average New Case Rate* (CDC Calculation Model)</b>		<b>&lt; 70</b>	<b>70 - 140</b>	<b>140 - 209</b>	<b>&gt; 209</b>
<b>14-Day Average Test Positivity Rate &lt;5%</b>	<b>Student Special Populations</b>	<b>Expanded in-person</b>	<b>Limited in-person</b>	<b>Consider minimal in-person</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>In-person</b>	<b>Consider in-person</b>	<b>Virtual</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Group 2</b>	<b>In-person following Group 1</b>	<b>Virtual **</b>	<b>Virtual</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Group 3</b>	<b>In-person following Group 2</b>	<b>Virtual **</b>	<b>Virtual</b>	<b>Virtual</b>

\* Per 100,000 Residents. The models are calculated using a population estimate of 1.05 million residents in Montgomery County

\*\* If numbers are trending toward 5 then consideration for hybrid in-person can be accelerated

**Reassess if new case rate increases by 2 per 100k or if positivity rate increases by 1.5% within 2 weeks**

# Proposed Timeline for a Safe Return to In-person Instruction

**If** the health metrics are met, **then** we will begin a phased-in return to in-person instruction on:

- **Tuesday, January 12, 2021, begin special populations phase-in**
- **Monday, February 1, 2021, begin group phase-in**

# Planning for In-person Services

- Foundation for decision-making will continue to focus on consultation with local public health officials and monitoring health metrics
- Position the system to respond to changing community health conditions:
  - Core Safety Protocols
  - Positive Case Response
  - Building Preparation

# Health and Safety

## Core Protocols for Safety

- **Limited capacity** in schools and facilities
- **Health screening protocol** for those who access buildings
- **Face coverings** must be worn and provided as needed
- **Hand sanitizer** will be readily available, especially at entrances
- **Six feet physical distancing** will be implemented, and signage should be in place to reinforce this practice

# Health and Safety (continued)

## COVID 5-Pillars of Public Health Training

- **Health and Safety Module training** is being developed for all staff members
- Personal **health and safety reminders**
- Set **workplace expectations:**
  - Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
  - Physical distancing
  - Hand washing and sanitizing
  - Personal health monitoring
  - Safe and clean building environments
- Public-facing training presentation for all employees, families, and the community. Planned release date is Wednesday, November 11, 2020.

# COVID-Focused Employee Portal

On November 11, MCPS will launch a **COVID 19 focused employee portal**. The portal will host:

- Training and safety resources
- Information on/ ability to apply for accommodations and leave aligned with state law, federal law, and CDC guidelines



# Health and Safety: PPE Distribution

**PPE supplies have been provided** for all staff members and classrooms and will be replenished on a quarterly scheduled basis and as needed.

Includes:

- **Cloth masks provided** for teachers and students
- **Supplies** of disposable masks for each school
- **Hand sanitizer** at the **entrance doors**, in **each classroom**, and other areas
- **Sanitizing wipes** available in each school
- **Gloves** available in each school
- **Face shields, goggles, gowns**, and **shoe covers** for special needs programs as necessary

# Positive COVID Case Response

## Existing Process

If there is a confirmed positive case in an MCPS facility now with staff members in the building:

- **Notify Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)** for report and consultation
- Conduct **contact tracing** internally regarding MCPS staff members' interactions
- Notify other employees as needed per public health guidelines; **protect employee privacy**
- **Determine extent** of area or if facility closure is required
- **Clean and disinfect** as needed

# Positive COVID Case Response (continued)

## Training and Information

Support for employees to understand the process when an employee has symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19.

Resource materials available November 11:

- Process maps for employees and supervisors
- Public-facing materials
- Supervisor training
- Follow-up Q&A sessions
- Template communications

# Building Preparation: School Setup

Shared with school administrators information and guidance on preparing their buildings.

- Between now and January, schools will:
  - Convene a small planning team
  - Plan the placement of signs, order signs, and arrange classrooms
- Schools were given the [COVID 5-PILLARS READINESS CHECKLIST](#) to assist; additional resource materials in development.
- Office of Teaching, Learning, and Schools and the Office of Operations identified 10 schools to set up completely as physically distanced models starting November 9. These schools will serve as regional models for other schools to visit and learn from.

# Building Preparation: Signage

- Durable physical-distancing products for inside and outside each school will be ordered through the EGPS Print Shop. An information sheet/order form for the physical-distancing floor decals has been provided to all schools.
- Allocations have been provided to all schools based on school type, square footage, and FARMS participation.



# Building Preparation: Air Quality

## Existing Conditions and Reopening Guidance

- MCPS Heating, Air Conditioning, and Ventilation (HVAC) systems have been **designed to meet the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, Air Conditioning Engineers** (ASHRAE) standards
- **New COVID guidelines** emphasize increased air exchanges, increased outdoor ventilation, and increased filter efficiency
- ASHRAE standards state: “A **good supply of outside air** to dilute indoor contaminants is a first line of defense”
- Approach to achieve guidelines is to upgrade unit filtration; clean air handling systems; and adjust system operational controls
- Where needed, **portable air cleaners** will be placed to supplement ventilation and filtration

# Building Preparation: Air Quality (continued)

## Have completed:

- **System evaluations** of all filtration and ventilation components
- Review and **testing of various air cleaners** for both effectiveness and acoustical impacts

## Next steps:

- **Form teams** from maintenance, building services, construction, and transportation to focus on individual school buildings and school clusters
- Communication with **school building service managers** to identify supplemental cleaning requirements as well as areas of focus and processes for building work orders related to air quality
- **Initiate mitigation work** at schools identified for model school setup to minimize disruptions (start November 9)

# Building Preparation: Air Quality (continued)

## What to Expect

- Teams will schedule schools by cluster, with intended completion rate of **25 schools per week**
- The **schedule and status of individual schools** will be updated every two weeks on the MCPS Department of Facilities Management (DFM) webpage
- Individual schools should expect **central services teams** to complete cleaning and system maintenance; work can take several days to complete and will vary by school size and type of system
- The system operations will be monitored following the work, and survey forms will be sent to **principals and school administrators** to monitor system performance as well as identify any areas of building concern
- Changes in building and system operations may result in **lower than usual building temperatures going forward**



# Discussion

# What We Have Learned

Regardless of the instructional experience, the **priority must be on each students social/emotional well-being** through:

- Rebuilding relationships
- Establishing a sense of community
- Supports for experiences with systemic racism and other societal issues as they transition to in-person schooling

To support the different instructional experiences, the **staffing needs** must be considered through:

- Either current or supplemental allocations
- Support student supervision
- Facilitate participation and discussion
- Support technology use
- Team teaching (adaption or adoption as some teachers may provide in-person contact while others handle the remote instruction across the same class of students)

# What We Have Learned (continued)

Embrace the understanding of **differentiating instructional models** based on:

- Student needs
- Staffing
- Content being delivered
- Individual school communities

There is no one-size-fits-all strategy for determining the optimal model for learning in the COVID-19 crisis.

When **implementing these instructional models** within a hybrid structure, students will:

- Experience a mix of learning experiences at home and at school.

When they meet in person, a **key responsibility** of the teacher is:

- Assessing student understanding of remote content to provide further instruction or targeted support.

# What We Have Learned (continued)

- We want to prioritize models that keep students learning in their **home school**, from their **current teacher**, and/or with their **current classmates**.
- We have studied multiple options for **school usage** to control for operational challenges to ensure student and staff safety.
  - Parent preferences for in-person will drive the model(s)

# Phasing of In-Person Instructional Experiences

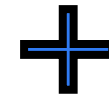
## WHAT

- Providing direct instruction and/or instructional support for student learning on grade-level content.
- Providing in-person experiences, some academic and some social/emotional, for students.



## WHERE

- Individual schools that have been selected to support small groups of students
- Schools identified based on questionnaire results
- Occurs Every Week
- Occurs Week A/Week B



## HOW

- Simultaneous Model
- Support/Tutoring Model
- Direct Instructional Model
- Innovative Utilization of Staffing
- Social Emotional Foundation to support transition to student re-entry

## WHO

- A phasing in of student groups for in-person instructional experiences
- Identification of staff members to support implementation of in-person experiences
- Driven by parent preferences

# Phased In-person Engagement:

December: Assessment Centers

January: Discrete Special Education Phase-in  
(special education students at all levels)  
CTE Program Students

February: Begin Semester 2 Phase-in

# Special Education Assessment Centers: **December Launch**

## Locations

- Hallie Wells Middle School
- Sligo Middle School
- Julius West Middle School

## Schedules (by appointment)

- Monday through Friday
- During the school day
- After-school options
- Weekends

# Phase-in Schedule: **Special Education**

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
K–12 Autism Program	Select Pre-K Programs	Asperger’s Program
Extensions Program	Learning for Independence	Elementary Learning Centers
School Community-based	Bridge Program	Social Emotional Special Education Services
Special Schools		



# Addressing the Needs of Special Populations

- **Differentiated provision of PPE** to address the unique needs of students with disabilities
- **Provision of PPE kits** and corresponding professional development designed to provide the equipment and training needed to support the safety of staff members and students
- **Creating stable classroom cohorts** designed to limit the number of students and staff members moving between classrooms

# Special Education: Professional Development

- **Strategies for preventing challenging behaviors** for students with severe disabilities
- **De-escalation training** for students with severe disabilities
- **CPI Nonviolent Crisis Intervention**—physical intervention training
- **Classroom environment and set-up** to support learning and promote physical distancing
- Training on **personal care and hygiene support** from specialists, as appropriate

# Proposed CTE January Startup

- Construction
- Automotive
- Cosmetology
- Restaurant Management
- Student-built House Construction
- Internship Experiences Resume

# Recommended Group Phasing Sequence Semester 2

Level	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Elementary	Kindergarten/Grade 1 Specific Special Education Programs*	Prekindergarten Grade 2 Grade 3	Grade 4 Grade 5
Middle	Grade 6 Specific Special Education Programs*	Grade 7	Grade 8
High School	Grade 9 Specific Special Education Programs* CTE Students Continued* (Grade 12 priority students)	Grade 10	Grade 11 Grade 12

# Recruitment for Support of Schools during Recovery

- December graduates
- Retirees
- Substitutes who hold a Bachelor's degree
- Marketing to prospective employees outside of Maryland to support virtual instruction
- Current paraeducators—only if impact to current program support is minimal

# Parent Preference Survey

Determine choice of parents for student to return to in-person engagement

- **Global registration** to determine locations/numbers of parents who want to remain virtual regardless of MCPS offerings
- Include questions that will give information on interest for participation in **in-person and virtual instruction.**
- Change to virtual only can be made at any time; change to in-person would need to be based on availability

# Parent Preference Survey (continued)

- Window for parent responses

**November 11–December 3**

- Parent/guardians will respond online
  - Support responses with direct mailing, telephone calls, text messages in multiple languages
- Responses from families will determine:
  - Transportation
  - School locations
  - Instructional Delivery

# Parent/Guardian Questions

We want to consider a variety of scheduling options given we do not yet know what the state of the health metrics will be for the proposed January special population and CTE phase in and second semester of the 2020-2021 school year.

Questions will address two areas of focus:

- 1) Instructional Delivery Preference
  - a) partial in-person instruction.
  - b) fully virtual learning experience.
  
- 2) Transportation needs for an in-person experience



# Transportation

**Initial operating assumptions** based on **one student** in every other bus seat:

- In line with CDC recommendations
- Results in physical distance of approximately six feet
- Consistent with messaging of six feet physical distance in buildings
- Limits capacity of bus to **11 students**, or just under 25% of normal practical capacity
- **Reduced capacity** could limit ability to provide transportation to all students at all levels



Vast majority of districts using **one student in each bus seat**:

- Every district in Maryland and Fairfax County using this method (or loading buses more densely)
- Potential conflicting **messaging** between physical distancing on bus and in buildings
- Limits **capacity of bus at 22 students**, just under 50% of normal practical capacity
- **Increased ability** to provide transportation to all students at all levels

# Transportation (continued)

Core safety practices will be implemented in any operational model  
Cleaning, masks, hand sanitizer—

- Each bus will be **disinfected** with a high-power sprayer following each day of use
- **High-touch areas** of the bus will be disinfected by bus staff between loads of students
- **Hand sanitizer** will be available for bus staff and students
- Bus staff and students will be required to wear **face coverings**
- Face coverings used by students with special needs will be case-by-case, in collaboration with school/program staff
- Bus staff will conduct **health self-assessment** each day before reporting to work

# School Health Availability

- **Required** to provide school health services for in-person learning
- Working with **DHHS** around staff availability, supplies and equipment, and service requirements such as isolation rooms
- **Exploring multiple models** and approaches to ensure we have required school health services in all school sites

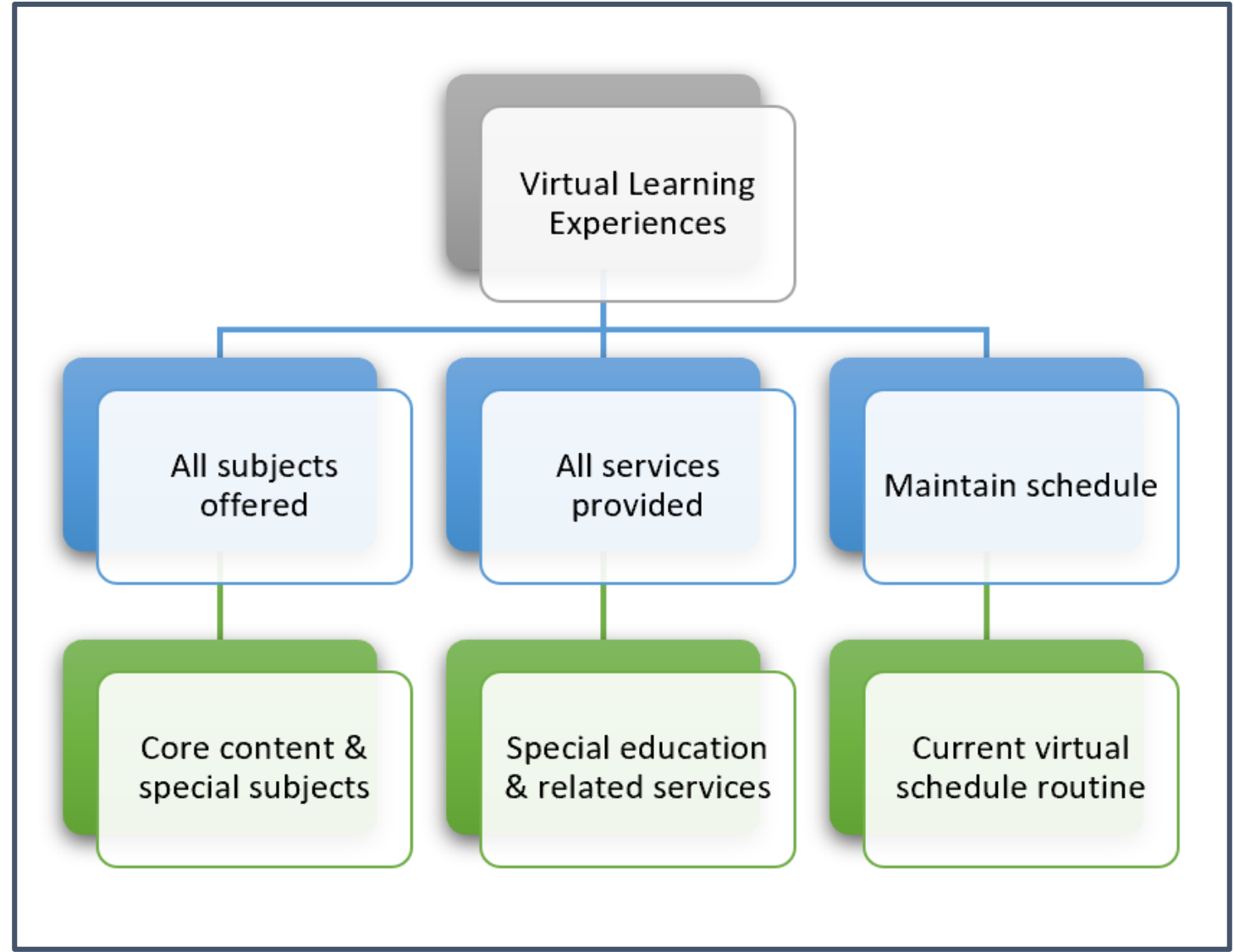
# Determine School Locations

- Will be **determined by the results** of the parent preference survey
- Analyze and determine **how many school locations** we need to open to serve the students who are in an in-person model
- Examples implemented in peer districts include opening every school location, specific locations based on demand, and a regional hub model

# Discussion

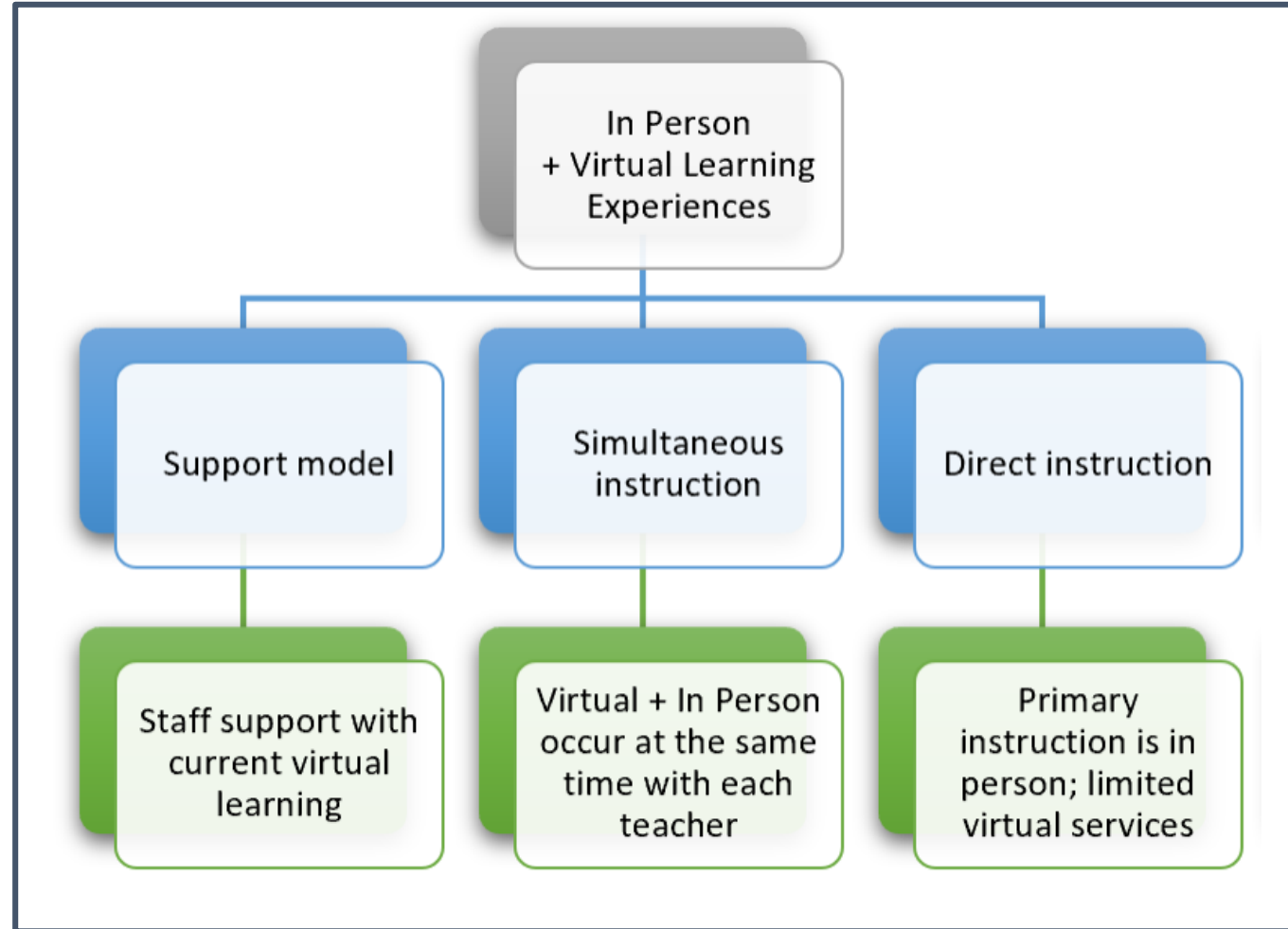
# Virtual Learning Experience

- Maintain current schedule and routine
- Prioritize maintaining teacher assignment, considering potential teacher or staffing adjustments
- Maintain athletic/club/activity affiliations



# In-Person + Virtual Learning Experience

- Supports virtual schedule experience
- Provides opportunities for real time interaction & support
- Efforts made to maintain teacher/student assignments
- Maintain athletic/club/activity affiliations



# Designing School-based Instructional Model

Support Model, Simultaneous Model, or Direct Instructional Model can be selected by individual schools based on:

- Grade Level/Student Needs
- Content Being Delivered
- Staffing Implications
- Professional Development
- Teacher Collaboration/Coteaching



# Support Model: Details

- **Staff working on-site** provide support for student engagement in remote learning
- Students **stay enrolled in their virtual** classrooms
- **On-site cohorts** of students could vary in size up to 15 students in a group
- **Some programs may be able to provide direct instruction** (*i.e., special education, self-contained programs, primary grades, etc.*)
- **Model could be run simultaneous** with some direct instruction and some support instruction, depending on the student needs and staff availability
- The schedule for a cohort of students **can be designed to be daily, partial weeks, or full weeks** on a rotation, depending on the student demand, student needs, and staff availability

# Small Group Support Model: **Advantages**

- Provides opportunity for **targeted instructional support** for specific student groups
- Opportunity to more fully **implement Individualized Education Programs**
- **Lessens the limitations** imposed by full virtual for students receiving specialized instruction
- Opportunity for implementation of **Related Services Supports**
- Promotes **strategic and targeted planning** and differentiation to meet the unique needs of all students

# Small Group Support Model: **Advantages** (continued)

- **Equitable** experience for all students

*Currently parents with means are using private resources to provide adult in-person support to virtual classrooms.*

- Can keep students in **cohort groups** that engage together for the in-person experience.
- Students **stay enrolled in their current remote**, virtual classrooms

- *Students have the same teachers throughout the year*
- *In case of a change in metrics or exposure, and in-person engagement needs to shut down, students can stay with their virtual instruction teachers, just on a fully remote model for the time needed.*
- *Schools do not need to change their master schedules*
- *Students who need access to Wi-Fi and adult support to complete virtual classroom instruction have that opportunity.*
- *Teachers can continue to focus on building a strong virtual delivery of instruction*

# Small Group Support Model: **Considerations**

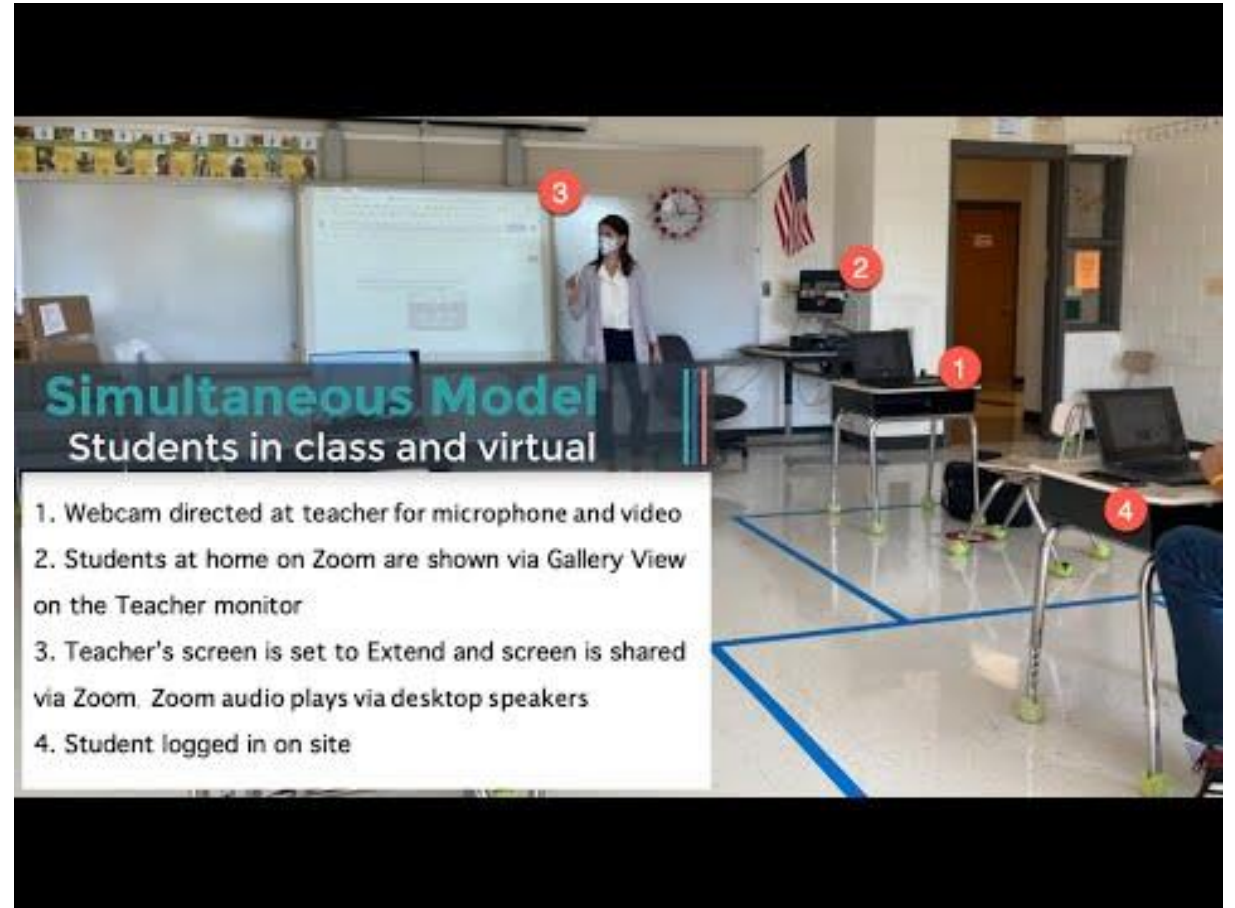
- **Relies on the virtual classroom** delivery of instruction as the anchor activity, and this may not work for all students.
- **Students will need to remain relatively stationary** and with the same groups of students while at the school location to maintain health and safety protocols.
- **Transportation** for students that meets the health and safety guidelines will need to be considered.
- **Need to reallocate current staff or hire** additional staff to support the in-person cohorts of students.

# Support Model: Resources

- **Staff who match the instructional needs** of the students who are participating in the in-person instructional engagement. *(i.e., may be a paraprofessional, teacher, special ed teacher, ESOL teacher, etc.)*
- **School locations that match the geographic needs** for the students invited to in-person engagement.
- **Transportation** for students, consider the health and safety guidelines and limited number of students on a bus
- **Cleaning protocols** for the school locations and use of building service team members to do the regular cleaning
- **Administrative and security staff** to support the in person school locations when students and staff are on site.
- **Enhanced PPE needs** (face shields, goggles, surgical mask, gloves) for staff serving students in discrete programs

# Simultaneous Model Video

- Teacher interacts with **both** in-person and virtual students simultaneously.
- **Virtual students join a Zoom** session to view a shared desktop screen and a camera directed toward the teacher.
- **In-person students are seated** in appropriately spaced desks with their devices.



# Simultaneous Model: Advantages

- Allows schools to **maintain their master schedule** and teacher assignments.
- Students can **stay connected to their classroom teacher**, whether in person or remote.
- **Flexibility to assign some teachers** as fully remote teachers and others in-person for direct instruction, depending on student demand, staff availability and program. *(Ie, primary grades, self contained special education, CTE, etc.)*
- **Provides in person direct instruction** for students for whom remote learning is not meeting their instructional needs.
- Provides important in person **engagement and interaction** to support the social emotional health of students.
- Can be done **using a combination of existing technologies and low cost solutions**
- Students can be paired virtually and at home for engagement and relationship building.
- Students may **engage with fellow remote students only**, between remote and in person, or a mix.

# Simultaneous Model: Considerations

- Will **require teachers to consider the modes** for engaging students in person and virtually
- Will require intentional **planning** by teachers for the types of engagement for students who are **remote and in person.**
- Will require implementation and adjustment as we go.
- Professional development for technology and planning.



# Simultaneous Model: Resources

## Human Resources

- **Onsite Teacher**
- Teacher/staff **support for students on Zoom** to help manage the chat and engagement
- Teacher (virtual) supporting virtual students (**Team Teaching**)
- Teacher support based on students receiving **special services**
- **Technical Support**
  - Onsite Support - ITSS

## Equipment

- Equipment that allows the teacher to be **mobile** (ie, wireless mouse)
- **Audio/Video** equipment to capture onsite teacher
- Equipment for **students at home**
  - Reliable internet
  - Devices

# Simultaneous Model: Resources

## Training

- Technology **how tos**
- Teacher **best practices**
- Parent/Community **training**

## Troubleshooting

- Technology **reference materials** and live aid for both parents/community and staff
- **Help Desk Specialists**
  - Parent/Community line (avg 250 phone calls per day)\*
  - Staff line (avg 280 phone calls per day)\*

\*10/12/20-10/30/20

# Discussion

# Frequently Asked Health Questions

# Health Metric Matrix for a Safe Phased-in Return to In-Person Instruction

<b>14-Day Raw Average of New Cases</b>		<b>&lt; 52</b>	<b>52-105</b>	<b>105 -157</b>	<b>&gt; 157</b>
<b>14-Day Average New Case Rate* (MD Calculation Model)</b>		<b>&lt; 5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>10-15</b>	<b>&gt; 15</b>
<b>14-Day Average New Case Rate* (CDC Calculation Model)</b>		<b>&lt; 70</b>	<b>70 - 140</b>	<b>140 - 209</b>	<b>&gt; 209</b>
<b>14-Day Average Test Positivity Rate &lt;5%</b>	<b>Student Special Populations</b>	<b>Expanded in-person</b>	<b>Limited in-person</b>	<b>Consider minimal in-person</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>In-person</b>	<b>Consider in-person</b>	<b>Virtual</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Group 2</b>	<b>In-person following Group 1</b>	<b>Virtual **</b>	<b>Virtual</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
	<b>Group 3</b>	<b>In-person following Group 2</b>	<b>Virtual **</b>	<b>Virtual</b>	<b>Virtual</b>

\* Per 100,000 Residents. The models are calculated using a population estimate of 1.05 million residents in Montgomery County

\*\* If numbers are trending toward 5 then consideration for hybrid in-person can be accelerated

***Reassess if new case rate increases by 2 per 100k or if positivity rate increases by 1.5% within 2 weeks***

# Positive COVID Case Response

## Future Process

If there is a confirmed positive case in an MCPS facility when students return to in-person learning:

- **Report** case directly to DHHS Public Health
- Schools **notify Central Office** of a suspected or positive staff or student COVID case
- **DHHS will determine** extent of area or if facility closure is required
- **Clean and disinfect** as needed

# Looking Ahead



# Looking Ahead (continued)

Phase 2 of Small Group Return to In-Person Instruction

**Jan. 19**

**Jan. 28**

Group 1 Return to In-Person Experience

**Feb. 1**

Group 2 Return to In-Person Experience

Group 3 Return to In-Person Experience

**Second Semester**

Phase 3 of Small Group Return to In-Person Instruction (January 25)

Board of Education Meeting



# [www.MCPSSubmitFeedback.org](http://www.MCPSSubmitFeedback.org)

Name \*

First

Last

Email \*

You are? (Check All That Apply)\* \*

- MCPS Student
- MCPS Parent/Guardian
- MCPS Staff member
- Montgomery County, MD, Community Member

Your Question? \*

Submit

# Discussion

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
Rockville, Maryland

December 15, 2020

MEMORANDUM

From/To: Members of the Board of Education

Subject: Delay of Return to In-Person Learning

WHEREAS, The Board of Education is committed to the health and safety of the Montgomery County Public Schools students, staff, and community; and

WHEREAS, On November 10, 2020, the superintendent of schools proposed a framework for a safe return to in-person learning that would begin for special student populations on January 12, 2021, if health metrics are met; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education has adopted a health metrics framework that was developed in collaboration with local health officials, and is aligned with the Maryland guidelines framework, that provides guidance for a safe return to in-person instruction; and

WHEREAS, Current and forecasted COVID-19 health metrics do not indicate that Montgomery County will reach the health metrics established by the Board of Education; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, The Board of Education delay the return of students for in-person instruction until February 1, 2021, on the condition that established health metrics are met; and be it further

RESOLVED, The Board of Education will meet on January 12, 2021, to determine if health metrics can be met by February 1, 2021, for a safe return to in-person learning.

BOE:boe

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Rockville, Maryland

December 15, 2020

MEMORANDUM

From/To: Members of the Board of Education

Subject: Final Action—Return to In-Person Learning

WHEREAS, Montgomery County and the nation continue to experience an ongoing public health crisis that has required the Montgomery County Public Schools to deliver virtual-only instruction since the closure of school buildings on March 16, 2020; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education is committed to the safe return to in-person learning for all students, in particular prioritizing the most vulnerable student populations and the youngest learners; and

WHEREAS, On November 10, 2020, the Board of Education tentatively approved the framework for a phased-in return to in-person instruction, in conjunction with virtual learning opportunities as appropriate; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education has adopted a health metrics framework that was developed in collaboration with local health officials, and is aligned with the Maryland guidelines framework, that provides guidance for a safe return to in-person instruction; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools employees have the ability to request an accommodation or leave under applicable state and federal law, and aligned with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for individuals with certain underlying medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, Parents of Montgomery County Public Schools students were given the opportunity to choose between having their children remain in exclusively virtual learning environment or having them engage in a combination of in-person and virtual instruction, both allowing for participation in in-person athletics and extracurricular activities; and

WHEREAS, In-person athletics and extracurricular activities may begin when the first student group returns for in-person instruction in buildings; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools intends to provide an opportunity for a partial in-person experience to all families and students who requested a return to in-person; and

WHEREAS, The request for return to partial in-person experience varies in number across all schools at all levels, with some schools having higher numbers of students requesting to return than available capacity and other schools having lower numbers of students than their available capacity; and

WHEREAS, Individualized students support, including but not limited to tutoring, counseling, and special education assessments, can be provided in buildings by appointment to secondary students and students at all levels, independent of the adopted health metrics framework, but in alignment with safety guidelines; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools is implementing safety measures in alignment with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, including, but not limited to face coverings, frequent handwashing and physical distancing, and has committed resources to ensure air quality in buildings meet the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers standards; and

WHEREAS, The safety measures will limit the overall capacity that can be accommodated in any given classroom and school building; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That given the Board of Education’s commitment to the safe return to in-person learning for all students, in particular the most vulnerable student populations, and to the safe return of staff, the Board of Education tentatively approve the framework for a phased-in return to in-person instruction, in conjunction with virtual learning opportunities as appropriate, beginning with students in special education programs, elementary school students, and students in identified career technology programs; and be it further

RESOLVED, The Board of Education authorize the temporary reassignment of students to nearby schools for the remainder of the 2020–2021 school year, if needed, when in-person instruction begins. This will be done to alleviate capacity pressures caused by the public health restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide the opportunity for partial, in-person experiences for all students and families that requested that option.

BOE:boe

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
Rockville, Maryland

December 15, 2020

MEMORANDUM

From/To: Members of the Board of Education

Subject: Health Metrics Framework for a Safe Return to In-Person Learning

WHEREAS, The Board of Education is committed to the safe return to in-person learning for all students, in particular the most vulnerable student populations; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools, in consultation with Montgomery County health officials, has developed a health metrics framework, aligned with current Maryland guidelines, that allow for the safe return of students when the county has a 14-day case rate at or below 15 cases per 100,000 residents and a 14-day test positivity rate below 5%; and

WHEREAS, The health metric framework has been revised to allow for the return of a greater number of students to in-person experiences when the new case rate decreases to 15 cases per 100,000 resident; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, The Board of Education adopt the health metric framework for a safe return to in-person instruction.

BOE:boe

Office of the Superintendent of Schools  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Rockville, Maryland

January 12, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools  
Subject: Delay of Return to In-Person Learning

WHEREAS, The Board of Education is committed to the health and safety of the Montgomery County Public Schools students, staff, and community; and

WHEREAS, On December 15, 2020, the Board of Education adopted a framework for a safe return to in-person learning that would begin on February 1, 2021, if health metrics are met; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education has adopted a health metrics framework that was developed in collaboration with local health officials and is aligned with the state of Maryland framework that provides guidance for a safe return to in-person instruction; and

WHEREAS, A COVID-19 vaccine now is available and local and state health officials have prioritized frontline school staff to receive the first dose as soon as the end of January 2021; and

WHEREAS, Current COVID-19 health metrics have remained at a level exceeding the threshold health metrics established by the Board of Education and in alignment with the state of Maryland for safe return to in-person instruction and public health forecasts do not indicate that Montgomery County will reach this threshold within the next several weeks; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Board of Education delay the return of students for in-person instruction until March 15, 2021, on the condition that established health metrics are met in advance of that date or health guidance is adjusted as a result of COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration; and be it further

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools will review and recommend adjustments to the school year 2020–2021 calendar needed to maintain a robust virtual learning program and provide for continuity in the transition to in-person instruction when conditions allow; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Education confirm no later than February 23, 2021, whether a safe return to in-person learning can begin on March 15, 2021.

JRS:DGT:fmy

# Opening Schools in Recovery of Education

Montgomery County Board of Education  
February 9, 2021



# County Health Metrics

# March 1

# Specific Programs

# Specific Special Education Programs

## March 1 Return

Specific Special Education Programs	Weekly Schedule
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Autism K–12 Program</li><li>● Extensions Program</li><li>● School Community-based</li><li>● Special Schools</li></ul>	<p><b>In-person learning:</b> Monday Tuesday Thursday Friday</p> <p><b>Virtual learning:</b> Wednesday</p>

# Technical Programs: **March 1 Return**

Schools	Programs	Models
<p><b>Thomas Edison High School of Technology</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Automotive</li> <li>● Construction</li> <li>● Cosmetology</li> <li>● Healthcare Professions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Morning students on "A" Day</li> <li>● Afternoon students on "B" Day</li> <li>● Both weeks March 1-12</li> <li>● Virtual classes with home school on alternating days</li> <li>● Virtual learning on Wednesdays</li> <li>● Blend of instructional models</li> </ul>
<p><b>Seneca Valley, Gaithersburg, Damascus, Paint Branch</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Restaurant Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attending both weeks March 1-12</li> <li>● Attend program classes in-person at designated class periods, with blend of models</li> </ul>

# March 15 Return

# Glossary of Terms

- **Phase** - The timeline on which students will begin the in-person experience
- **Rotation** - How frequently students will be in buildings
- **Model/Instructional Approaches** - The various ways a student will engage with educators during the day

# Glossary of Terms – Elementary

- **Title I:** – High FARMS rates and receive federal funding to support learning opportunities and student achievement. In Fiscal Year 2021, MCPS identified Title I schools as those with 62.73 percent FARMS or greater.
- **Focus:** FARMS rates at or more than 35 percent for 2 or more years
- **Non-Focus:** FARMS rates less than 35 percent for 3 or more years

# Variables that Impact the Student Experience

Key considerations that impact the development of in-person learning experiences and why each school may look different:

- **Student survey response**
- **Number of staff** necessary to accommodate virtual and in-person learning
- **Room and space capacity limits** necessary to implement health and safety protocols
- **Prioritizing** student-teacher relationships



# Phases for Return (Optimal Dates)

Group 1.1 (March 15)	Group 1.2 (No later than April 6)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Discrete Programs and Special Populations</li><li>● CTE Programs</li><li>● METS</li><li>● CREA</li><li>● Alternative Programs</li><li>● Grades K-3</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Discrete Programs and Special Populations</li><li>● Additional CTE Programs</li><li>● Grades 4-5</li><li>● Pre-kindergarten</li><li>● Grade 6</li><li>● Grade 12</li></ul>
Group 2.1 (No later than April 19)	Group 2.2 (No later than April 26)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Grade 8</li><li>● Grade 9</li><li>● Grade 11</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Grade 7</li><li>● Grade 10</li></ul>

# Initial Schedules Starting March 15:

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Title I Schools (31)	Focus Schools (38)	Non-Focus Schools (66)
K-Grade 3: 4 days <b>every week</b> (1.1)  PK, Grades 4-5: 4 days <b>every week</b> (1.2)	K-Grade 3: 4 days <b>every week</b> (1.1)  PK, Grades 4-5: <b>A/B Rotation</b> (1.2)	K-Grade 2: 4 days <b>every week</b> (1.1)  Grade 3 (1.1): <b>A/B Rotation</b>  PK, Grades 4, 5: <b>A/B Rotation</b> (1.2)

**A/B Rotation** is when students are divided into two groups. Group A attends in person one week while group B attends virtually. The next week the groups switch. Differences in frequency by school type is in direct relationship to available staff and rate of return.

# Rotation Frequency

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS

MIDDLE	HIGH
<p>All grade levels will start with <b><u>A/B Rotation</u></b> as a weekly rotation.  <b>(Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday)</b></p> <p>Students attend all four days within their rotation week.</p>	
<p>Grade 6 (Phase 1.2)            Grade 8 (Phase 2.1)            Grade 7 (Phase 2.2)</p>	<p>Grade 12 (Phase 1.2)            Grade 9 and 11 (Phase 2.1)            Grade 10 (Phase 2.2)</p>
<p><b>Phase 1.2 – April 6      Phase 2.1 – April 19      Phase 2.2 - April 26</b></p> <p><b>Dates represent the optimal start dates for return for each phase.</b></p>	

# Special Education Programs

## March 15 Return

### All Grade Levels

- Bridge
- Learning For Independence I (LFI)
- Learning Center (SBLC)
- Pre-K (Special Education Programs)

### Grades K–5, Grades 6 and 12:

- Asperger's
- Autism Resource Services
- GTLD (Discrete Program)
- Social-Emotional Special Education Services (SESES)
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHOH Discrete Program)
- Physical Disabilities Classes
- Home School Model (HSM)
- Learning and Academic Disabilities (LAD)
- Hours-based (HBS) LAD
- Resource

### Discrete Programs

4 days per week, every week.  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,  
Friday; Wednesdays remain  
virtual for all students

*\*NOTE\* Students who receive special education services who are not in a discrete program or grade level group scheduled to attend four days a week may be scheduled to attend additional days as determined by the student's progress on their IEP goals.*

# Special Education Programs Phase 1.2

## Grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

- Asperger's
- Autism Resource Services
- GTLD (Discrete Program)
- Social-Emotional Special Education Services (SESES)
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHOH Discrete Program)
- Physical Disabilities Classes
- Home School Model (HSM)
- Learning and Academic Disabilities (LAD)
- Hours-based (HBS) LAD
- Resource

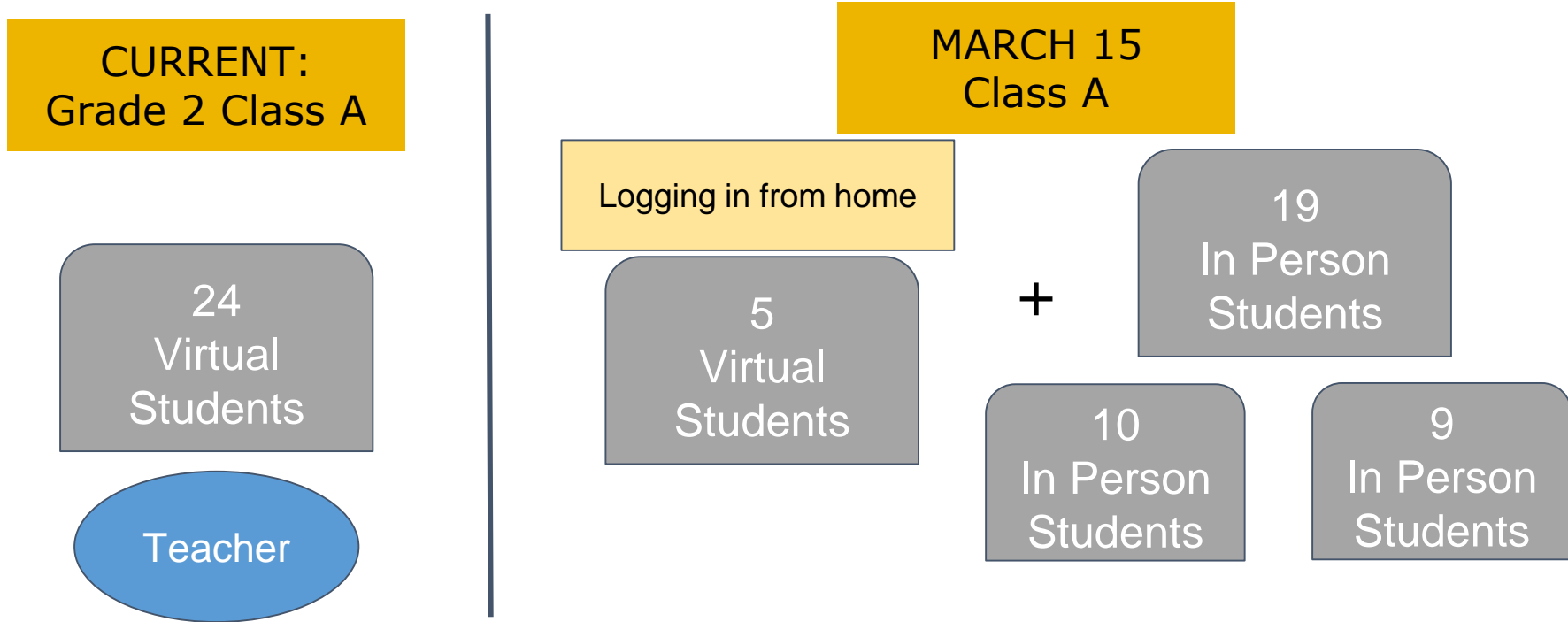
### Discrete Programs

4 days per week, every week.  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday; Wednesdays remain virtual for all students

*\*NOTE\* Students who receive special education services who are not in a discrete program or grade level group scheduled to attend four days a week may be scheduled to attend additional days as determined by the student's progress on their IEP goals.*

# Instructional Experiences

# The Challenges of Integrating Virtual and In Person



# Instructional Approaches

In addition to some direct instruction, students will be engaged in the following opportunities:

- ❑ Academic interventions or small group instruction in English Language Arts/Math
- ❑ Re-teaching and review of concepts
- ❑ Structured class discussions or peer to peer collaborative learning opportunities
- ❑ Opportunities for students to attend recess, lunch, and other activities
- ❑ Social-emotional learning or wellbeing activities (i.e. classroom community building)



# Misconceptions

- *Misconception #1:* A student will only interact with paraeducators when in the building.
  - **FACT – Students in person will interact with teachers as well as other staff members**
- *Misconception #2:* Principals are “choosing” only one instructional approach within a school building.
  - **FACT – Students will experience multiple instructional approaches in a day**
- *Misconception #3:* In-person learning is just “babysitting”
  - **FACT – While it is not the traditional brick and mortar experience, students will benefit from in-person learning with a variety of staff and engagement with their peers**

# Instructional Experiences

# Phased Approach

# Discussion

# Calendar Update

# Calendar Adjustments

All staff require dedicated time prior to the return to in-person instruction

- **Training** on health and safety, student social-emotional learning, curriculum implementation
- **School Team Planning** to integrate virtual and in-person instruction and schedules
- **Classroom** and individual preparations



- ★ We will offer **3 days of** staff preparation
- ★ **Spring Break** will remain as scheduled
- ★ **Last day** of school remains June 16

# Calendar Adjustments: 3 Days for Staff Preparation

## March 1 Launch

February 22–24

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

**Selected** Schools

- For staff with students returning in-person March 1
- **Regular schedule** for students
- Staff released from instruction with **substitute or other coverage**

## March 15 Launch

March 8–10

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

**All** Schools

- **March 8** No School for Students/Professional Day (*unused make-up day; no need to extend year*)
- **March 9–10** Asynchronous instruction for students

# Transportation and Bell Times Schedules

- Virtual and partial in-person schedules must be aligned; current start and end times will remain the foundation of transportation and bell times schedule
- First period for middle and high schools will begin at 9:00 a.m. Support periods for secondary students will move to the morning to accommodate time between arrival and the start of first period
- Transportation for March 1 and March 15, 2021, will be shared with families
- Transportation times for general education students will be similar to the traditional school year and will be posted on the MCPS webpage by March 1, 2021

**Tiered Transportation Schedule**

Grade Level	Morning	Afternoon
High School	7:45	2:30
Middle School	8:15	3:00
Elementary Tier 1	9:00	3:25
Elementary Tier 2	9:25	3:50



# Discussion

# Communication to Families: March 1 Launch

February 10–12, 2021	Schools begin to share initial planning ideas with students and families
February 16–19, 2021	Schools inform families via electronic letter about the virtual or in-person experience, teacher, and schedule for student groups starting March 1
February 25, 2021	Last day for families to contact school to request changes from their original selection
All schools will hold virtual orientation or other opportunities for staff and students to engage in prior to March 1.	

# Communication to Families:

## March 15 Launch

February 10–19, 2021	Schools begin to share initial planning ideas with families through meetings and other multimedia platforms
February 23, 2021	Schools inform families via electronic letter about the virtual or in-person experience, teacher, and schedule for student groups for Phase 1
February 26, 2021	Last day for families to contact school to request changes from their original selection
March 1–12, 2021	Blackout period—no changes to selection permitted to allow schools to finalize planning

All schools will hold virtual orientation or other opportunities for staff and students to engage in prior to March 15.

# Change to Selection Process and Limitations

Individual student changes in choice of instructional models will **impact the number of students in classrooms, staffing requirements, access to, and availability of services** that include instructional materials, transportation, and food service planning.

- ★ Decisions regarding changing from virtual to in-person will be **reviewed and considered, but may not always be able to be accommodated.**
- ★ Schools have developed plans based on initial family preference selection. **Prior to the blackout period**, families may contact their schools to discuss their selection or request changes. Outreach efforts to families who did not respond are still in process.
- ★ Once we reach the blackout period and following the return to in-person, a **change in model selection requires formal request and review.**

# Change in Selection Process

## In-Person to Virtual

- Family submits request to school principal.
- Principal (or designee) will notify parents/guardians of any changes to specific classes, teachers, and schedules that may result from changes in instructional model.
- Principal will make changes to class lists and inform families of start date.

## Virtual to In-Person

- Family submits request to school principal.
- Requests will be reviewed and considered based on **safety guidelines and space availability**.
- If there is no space, schools will place students on a **waitlist** for open spots.
- Will work on a **case-by-case basis** regarding alternate options if urgent circumstances exist.

# Discussion / Action

Office of the Superintendent of Schools  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Rockville, Maryland

February 9, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Return to In-Person Learning

WHEREAS, The Board of Education is committed to the safe return to in-person learning for all students, in particular prioritizing the most vulnerable student populations; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education voted on January 12, 2021, (Resolution No. 5-21) to delay the return of students for in-person instruction until March 15, 2021, on the condition that established health metrics are met in advance of that date or health guidance is adjusted as a result of COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration and to confirm no later than February 23, 2021, whether a safe return to in-person learning can begin on March 15, 2021; and

WHEREAS, On January 21, 2021, Governor Lawrence B. Hogan, Jr. and State Superintendent of Schools Karen B. Salmon announced that schools must begin to reopen for in-person instruction by March 1; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 cases and test positivity rates are trending downward in Montgomery County; access to the vaccine is increasing; and research now suggest, with proper mitigation strategies schools safely can be reopened; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools is implementing safety measures in alignment with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, including, but not limited to face coverings, frequent handwashing and physical distancing, and has committed resources to ensure air quality in buildings meet the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers standards; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools has identified specific discrete programs serving the most vulnerable populations of students in special education programs and career readiness programs that require in-person experiences to acquire certification or licensure for a March 1, 2021, return to in-person instruction; and

WHEREAS, Parents of Montgomery County Public Schools students were provided the opportunity to choose between having their children remain in an exclusively virtual learning environment or having them engage in a combination of in-person and virtual instruction; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools employees have the ability to request an accommodation or leave under applicable state and federal law, and aligned with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for individuals with certain underlying medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools will provide dedicated time for employees to prepare their spaces and engage in additional professional development in advance of the return of students; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, The Board of Education hereby amend the resolution adopted on January 12, 2021, (Resolution No. 5-21) that delayed the return to in-person instruction on March 15, 2021, to approve the March 1, 2021, return to in-person instruction for students in specific discrete programs serving the most vulnerable populations of special education students and career readiness programs that require in-person experiences to acquire certification or licensure, recommended by the superintendent of schools; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education hereby approve the phased-in return of students to in-person instruction as recommended by the superintendent of schools by March 15, 2021, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education amend the 2020-2021 Traditional and Innovative Instructional School Year Calendars to make March 8, 2021, a non-instructional professional development day to provide employees time to prepare their spaces and engage in additional professional development in advance of the return of students to buildings.

JRS:DGT:fmy

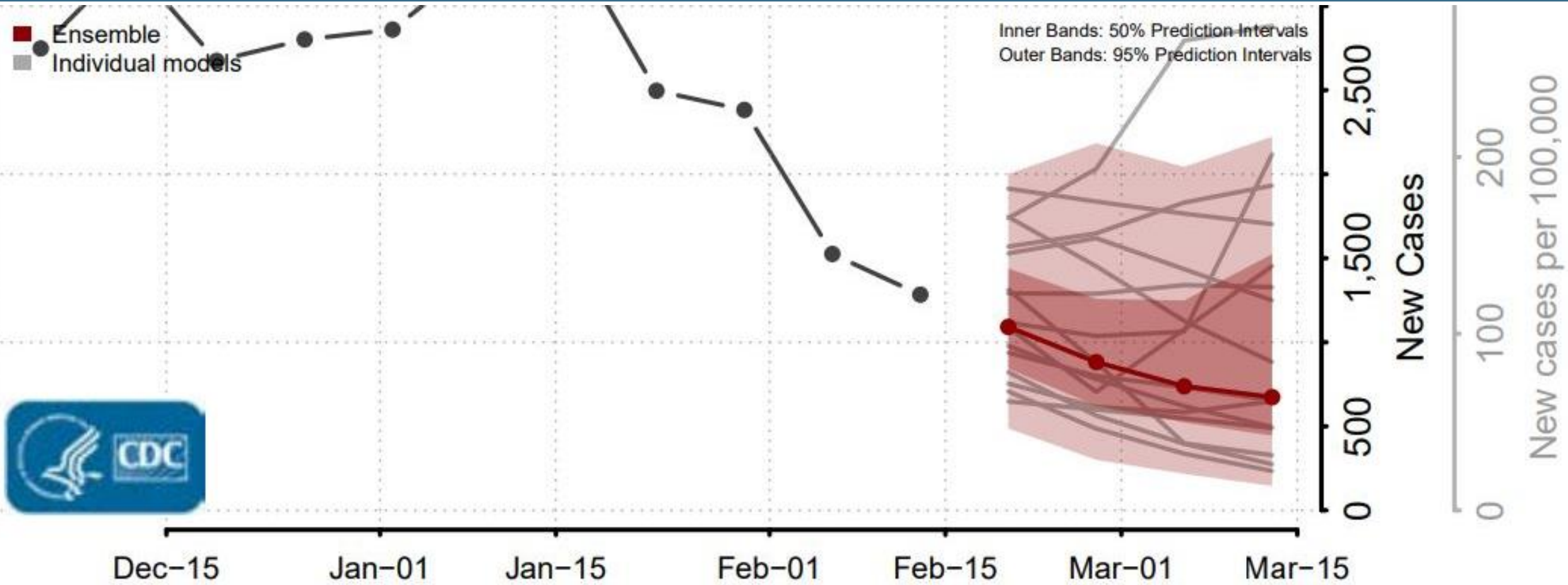


# Opening Schools in Recovery of Education

Montgomery County Board of Education  
February 23, 2021

# County Metrics

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/coronavirus/dashboard/>



# CDC COVID-19 New Case Forecast for Montgomery County

This graph represents the number of new cases per 100,000 forecasted by 30 groups and compiled by the CDC

# Health & Safety

# Mitigating the Spread of COVID-19

- Face Coverings
- Physical Distancing
- Frequent Handwashing
- Vaccinations
- Health Attestations
- Building Airflow
- COVID-19 Testing Protocols
- Additional School Health Staff

# Vaccination Update

- 5,427 vaccines have been administered or scheduled thus far.
- We still await confirmation from DHHS on the county vaccine rollout for all MCPS staff.
- At this time the county clinics continue to focus on health care providers and residents age 75 or older.
- Board of Education and superintendent's letter to the Governor seeking support for vaccine access.
- We are seeking other medical agencies for partnership (MedStar Health, Holy Cross, and Adventist)

# Health Attestation

**Students and staff will be asked weekly to attest to the following:**

They have not had any of the following symptoms: Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, chills or shaking chills, muscle aches...

They are not waiting for a COVID-19 test result, been diagnosed with COVID-19, or been instructed by any health care provider or the health department to isolate or quarantine.

That, in the last 14 days, they have not had close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspected of having COVID-19.

- 
- MCPS has purchased digital thermometers for all families to ensure the device is not a barrier to an accurate response. Students should take their temperature daily
  - Attestation can be done through multiple languages; developing central system to manage

# HVAC and Safety Systems

In 2020, ASHRAE published approaches for mitigating airborne transmission of infectious aerosols. MCPS is following ASHRAE suggested modifications for HVAC systems in non-healthcare facilities:

1. Increase ventilation,
2. Improve central air and other HVAC filtration to MERV-13 or the highest level achievable, and
3. Add portable air cleaners with HEPA or high-MERV filters as needed.





# HVAC and Safety Systems

- Facilities Management staff has identified the equipment needs specific to each school, and is prioritizing work in alignment with re-opening timelines.
- Air cleaner units are not required in every space in a building or at every school.
- Air cleaners are intended to support existing air handling infrastructure where filter upgrades and operational changes alone do not meet all necessary air quality standards.
- Air cleaners are intended to support air handling in spaces used by larger groups of people.

# Water Systems

- Our building service staff and maintenance teams have been flushing the water in the schools regularly, even while students and teaching staff have not been present.
- As a proactive measure, we will implement a school reopening flushing strategy before schools return to in-person instruction. This strategy will be in accordance with recommendations from the Maryland Department of the Environment.
- As an added safety measure, hallway and classroom water fountains (bubblers) will not be available for drinking. Facilities that do not have water bottle filling stations will be provided with a centrally-located bottled water dispenser.

# COVID-19 Surveillance Testing

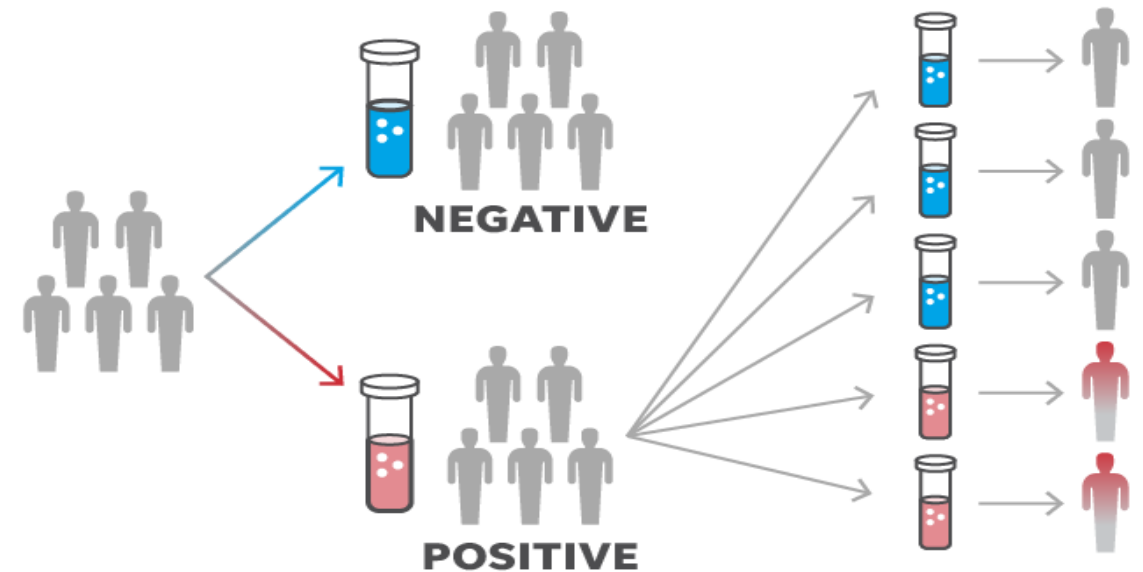
- Regular, **voluntary** asymptomatic testing of students and staff beginning March 15 (opt-out)
- Informed by practices developed by the Rockefeller Foundation's research and the CDC on school reopening
- Surveillance testing will be complemented by state-provided rapid-antigen tests
- Notification of staff and parents will occur with a positive result, contact tracing protocols will be activated
- Protocols will still require quarantine of those in "close contact" with a COVID-positive individual

## How pooled testing works

**1** People are broken up into groups and a group is tested together.

**2** A combined sample from the group either tests negative or positive.

**3** If positive, people are tested individually to find the positive cases.



SOURCE USA TODAY research  
Karl Gelles/USA TODAY

# Testing Video

# School Health Staff

- The County Department of Health and Human Services, School Health Services (SHS), has notified nurses and health technicians they will be returning to our schools.
- Each school will have at least one health technician or nurse per school.
- School health technicians and nurses assigned to schools beginning in-person learning on Monday, March 1 began to report on Monday, February 22.
- SHS and MCPS worked together to develop protocols for addressing illness, COVID or COVID-like situations as well as routine school health concerns.

# School Health Staff (continued)

- Increased demand for public health services due to the ongoing pandemic—including contact tracing, COVID-19 testing, and vaccinations
- Increased responsibilities and need for school health services as students return to in-person learning in the current public health conditions
- MCPS recommends securing the ability to draw on contract health services
- Montgomery County SHS staff continue to be the primary and predominant health service entity for schools
- Contract services intended only to supplement when additional services are needed
  - May include covering triage rooms, substitute coverage, other health service assistance if the need for school health services presents challenges in staffing
  - May be needed for expanded summer program
- Contract authorization before Board for consideration today

# DISCUSSION

# Readiness for In Person Experiences



# Bus Schedule and Transportation Adjustments

- Virtual and partial-in person schedules must be aligned
- Different start and end times will remain the foundation of transportation and bell times
- First class for middle and high schools will begin at 9:00 a.m.; time between arrival and first class now is student support
- Transportation for March 1 and March 15, 2021, will be shared with families, including students in special education programs
- Transportation times for general education students will be similar to the traditional school year and will be posted on the MCPS webpage by March 1, 2021

	Morning	Afternoon
High School	7:45	2:30
Middle School	8:15	3:00
Elementary Tier 1	9:00	3:25
Elementary Tier 2	9:25	3:50

# TIER 1: Elementary Virtual & In Person Schedule

- Virtual schedule adjustment to allow for bus dismissal
- 10 minutes later in afternoon

Time	In-Person	Virtual
8:40 – 9:00	Bus Arrival, Teacher Planning	Student Preparation, Planning
9:00 – 11:30	<b>AM Instructional Block</b>	
11:30 – 1:00	Lunch and Student Support	Lunch and Wellness Break
1:00 – 3:15	<b>PM Instructional Block</b>	
3:15 – 3:25	Student Support	Student Wrap-Up
3:25 – 3:45	Bus Dismissal, Teacher Planning	

# Tier 2 Elementary: Virtual & In Person Schedule

- Virtual schedule adjustment to allow for bus arrival and dismissal
- 25 minutes later in morning and afternoon

Time	In-Person	Virtual
9:05– 9:25	Bus Arrival, Teacher Planning	Student Preparation, Planning
<b>9:25 – 11:55</b>	<b>AM Instructional Block</b>	
11:55 – 1:25	Lunch and Student Support	Lunch and Wellness Break
<b>1:25 – 3:40</b>	<b>PM Instructional Block</b>	
3:40 – 3:50	Student Support	Student Wrap-Up
3:50 – 4:10	Bus Dismissal, Teacher Planning	

# MIDDLE SCHOOL: Virtual & In Person Schedule

- Support periods for secondary students will move to the morning to accommodate the time between arrival and the start of first period.
- First period for middle and high schools will begin at 9:00 a.m.

Time	In-Person	Virtual
7:55-8:15	Bus Arrival, Teacher Planning	Student Preparation, Planning
8:15-9:00	Breakfast, Student Support Period A.M. (moved from afternoon), Transition to Period 1	
<b>9:00-10:00</b>	<b>Period 1/5</b>	
10:00-10:15	Transition	Break
<b>10:15-11:15</b>	<b>Period 2/6</b>	
11:15 – 12:30	Lunch and Student Support	Lunch and Wellness Break
<b>12:30-1:30</b>	<b>Period 3/7</b>	
1:30-1:40	Transition	Break
<b>1:40-2:40</b>	<b>Period 4/8</b>	
2:45-3:00	Student Support Period P.M.	
3:00-3:10	Bus Dismissal	Student Closure

# HIGH SCHOOL: Virtual & In Person Schedule

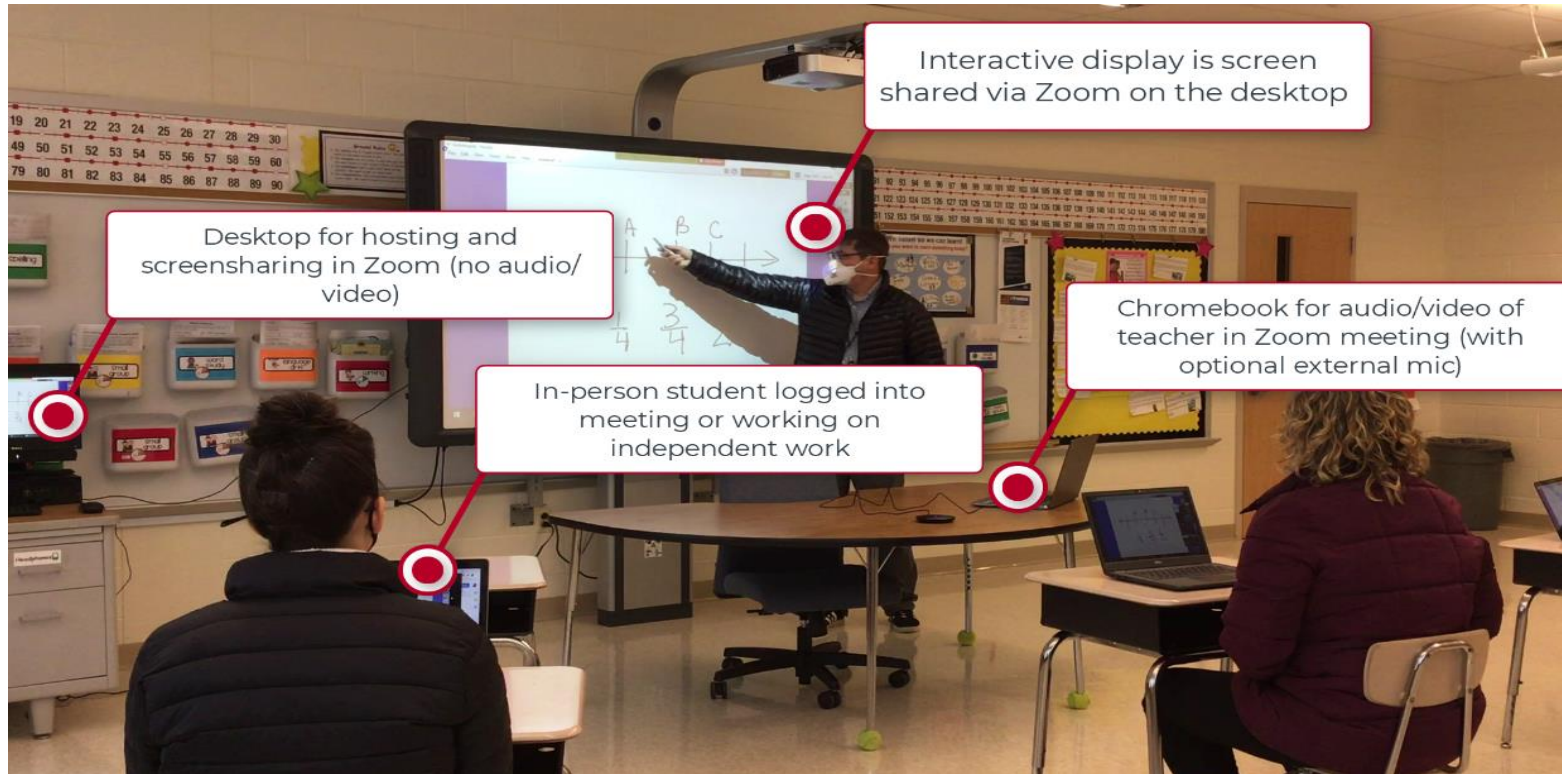
- Support periods for secondary students will move to the morning to accommodate the time between arrival and the start of first period.
- First period for middle and high schools will begin at 9:00 a.m.
- No open lunch for high schools

Time	In-Person	Virtual
7:25 – 7:45	Bus Arrival, Teacher Planning	Student Preparation, Planning
7:45 – 9:00	Breakfast, Student Support Period (moved from afternoon), Transition to Period 1	
9:00 – 10:00	Period 1/5	
10:00 – 10:15	Transition	Break
10:15 – 11:15	Period 2/6	
11:15 – 12:20*	Lunch and Student Support	Lunch and Wellness Break
12:20 – 1:20	Period 3/7	
1:20 – 1:30	Transition	Break
1:30 – 2:30	Period 4/8	
2:30 – 2:40	Bus Dismissal	Student Closure

# Technology Readiness for Return to In Person Learning

Technology Configuration	Classroom Essentials: Interactive Board, desktop, Chromebook, document camera, student headsets <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the desktop for Zoom and screen-sharing with the board</li><li>• Use the teacher Chromebook to join the Zoom for camera and audio</li><li>• Document cameras have cameras and microphones.</li></ul>
Technology Support	Extra chromebooks in charging carts, hotspots, charging stations, {some} interactive boards on carts
<p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#"><u>Return to School Technology Classroom Technology Setup Technology Readiness Checklist</u></a></p>	

# Technology Readiness for Return to In-Person Learning (continued)



[Classroom Technology Setup \[Return to School 2021\]](#)

[Technology Readiness Checklist \[Return to School 2021\]](#)

# Technology Readiness for Return to In Person Learning (continued)

- The document camera can connect to the desktop computer or the Chromebook.
- The document camera also can be used to model written processes, show books and other materials
- Chromebook is used to manage Nearpod, students in Zoom, and other technologies



# Technology Readiness for Return to In Person Learning: **Professional Learning**

## Topics

- Setting up your Classroom for Return to In-Person Learning
- Nearpod
- Digital Centers
- Zoom
- Document Cameras
- myMCPS Classroom Assignments and Discussions for Return to In-Person Learning
- Kami Assignments
- Open Support Office Hours

**\*\*Dates/times to attend professional development shared on February 19th\*\***

# DISCUSSION

# Student and Family Experience

# Outreach

## Parents

- Weekly Calls and Newsletter
- Direct Connections (Text, Talking Points, Google Hangouts)
- Social Media Groups
- Home Visits and Care Packages
- Increase in PTSA meeting

## Students

- Postcards – “We miss you!”
- Advisory visits / SGA town halls
- Counseling office hours
- Direct Emails and Calls
- myMCPS classroom messages
- Student Well-Being Team

# District Supports for Seniors Not On Track

**Graduation Validation Process:** Centralized tracking of students not on track for graduation.

- School-based teams use a district-wide database to identify students not on track and create individualized follow up for each senior to ensure supports are in place for coursework completion, testing, and SSL hours.
- District Graduation Validation Team meets regularly with school-based teams to ensure consistency in approach across schools and provide support to schools.

# Seniors Not On Track

- Monitoring Graduation Requirements
- Individualized support and communication
  - Virtual Senior parent/student Meetings
  - Student and parent outreach by teachers, counselors, administrators (letters, emails, phone calls, texts)
  - Senior Contracts
- Academic Intervention
  - Wednesday check-ins
  - CARES Act Tutoring
  - Resource classes

# Seniors Not On Track (continued)

- Flexible Options to Earn and Recover Course Credit
  - Edmentum (night school)
  - APEX, Online Pathways To Graduation (OPTG)
  - Summer School
- Reduction of courses in student schedules for second semester
- Wellness Teams
- Attendance Teams

# Seniors Not On Track (continued)

Potential in-person enhancements and supports

- Monitoring work production and completion
- Review of timeline and plan for meeting graduation requirements
- Subject specific support for students who have not been accessing remote instruction successfully
- In-person support and tutoring through CARES Act
- Program support for ESOL and special education students
- One-on-one meetings with counselors/PPWs to address social emotional needs.



# DISCUSSION

# Maintaining and Improving Virtual Experience

- Professional learning MAP
- Lesson Study and Coaching for middle school mathematics
- Professional learning and enhancement of small group instruction and enrichment within ELA
- Tiered Enrichment Strategies for Honing the Lesson in Eureka Math
- SupportEd partnership
- Continued professional learning within StudySync
- Using a Holistic Rubric to Grade Secondary Mathematics
- Co-Teaching Professional development
- Ongoing office hours, RT and CS meetings provide just in time professional learning and coaching for the virtual learning environment

# Extracurricular Activities

## Current State:

- 1,658 virtual extracurricular activities
- Programs vary in number and variety by school
- Extracurricular Activity Think Tank Team continues to meet and plan for the return to in-person extracurricular activities

## Considerations for the Return to In-Person:

- Allows for schools to transition to in-person instruction first
- Continuity of extracurricular activity and student engagement experience
- Preferential meeting space is available outside
- Limiting the number of students participating dependent on the meeting space
- Maintaining proper COVID-19 protocols: social distancing, activity appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), and cleaning
- Following student sign-in protocols, using a dedicated entrance/exit, path for travel during activity, and restrooms
- Providing transportation home

# Extracurricular Activities Continued

## Dates & Times

### **April 6 - May 28, 2021 (8 weeks)**

Extracurricular activity meets 1 time a week in-person on Tuesdays or Thursdays

- 2:45 - 4:15 PM (High schools)
- 3:15 - 4:15 PM (Middle schools)

Extracurricular activities that have been meeting at lunch may continue

## Activity Considerations

April: Select extracurricular activities with Principal permission

One time event or multiple meetings and practices

Outdoor experiences

Facility availability

Safety modifications

May: Add indoor experiences in selected areas

# Summer Programs 2021

- Planning for robust, districtwide summer programs for elementary, middle and high school students
- Focused on helping students accelerate learning, with a focus on mathematics, literacy, and preparing for the next grade level.
- **High School:** High school credit courses in all subject areas required for graduation, for both repeat and original credit
- **Elementary and Middle Schools:** Local school and cluster programs in math, literacy, and enrichment
- Traditional programs: Extended School Year (ESY), ELO SAIL, Summer RISE, Summer UP, and other enrichment opportunities and camps (Montgomery Can Code)

# Summer Programs 2021 (continued)

- Programs spanning from late June through early August
- Length of each program (3-6 weeks) may differ depending on the program and grade level
- Planning for in-person, blended, and virtual
- Student registration and staff hiring to begin in April

# Update on Adjustments to Grading and Reporting, Addressing Workload (Secondary)

- Options for abbreviated schedules
- Options to take courses Credit/No Credit (Pass/Fail)
- Extension of deadline to withdraw from a course without notation on the transcript, from 25th day of semester to beginning of Marking Period 4
- Retroactive options include Semester 1 of 2020-2021
  - Withdrawing from a course after 25th day
  - Changing letter grade to Credit/No Credit
- Communication: MCPS QuickNotes, MCPS website + local school communications, school counselors, and well-being teams

# Graduation Requirements, Class of 2021

- Local requirements vs. COMAR requirements
  - **MCPS**: One additional Mathematics credit, additional .5 Physical Education credit, additional Elective credit
  - Adjustments made for Class of 2020 last year
- **Recommendation for the graduating Class of 2021:**
  - Adopting the current credit requirements for a Maryland High School Diploma listed in COMAR 13A.03.02.04
  - Three mathematics credits to include one credit in algebra/data analysis and one credit in geometry
  - One-half credit in physical education
  - 21 total credits



# DISCUSSION/ACTION

# Wellness and Outreach

# Social and Emotional Learning



# Direct Services to Students

## School Counseling Services

- Academic Advising
- College and Career Planning
- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling (in-person only)
- Appointments

## School Psychologists

- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling (in-person only)
- SEL Lessons
- Special Education and 504 evaluations (hybrid in-person and virtual by appointment only)

# SEL Professional Development

15,000+  
Staff  
Members  
Completed

## All Staff

- Trauma-Informed Teaching, Part One and Two
- De-escalation Strategies and Preparing for In Person Instruction

## Administrators

- Social Emotional Learning with a Focus on Leadership

Teachers, special educators, paraeducators, school counselors, social workers, school psychologists, ETC's, PCC's, PPW's, administrators

- Student Mental Health: Knowing when to refer for help
- Implementing the Return to School Psychoeducational Lesson

# **Support and Outreach for Parents, Caregivers, and Staff**

# Student Well-Being Teams

- SWBT Framework was designed with the intent to create consistency in SWBT implementation across all schools
- Team members include: School Counselor, ETC, PCC, PPW, School Psychologist
- **SWBT best practices**



### STUDENT WELL-BEING TEAMS

Student Well-being Teams (SWBTs) are collaborative, multi-disciplinary teams whose charge is to support students and families by reducing barriers to learning. As  
Montgomery County Public Schools

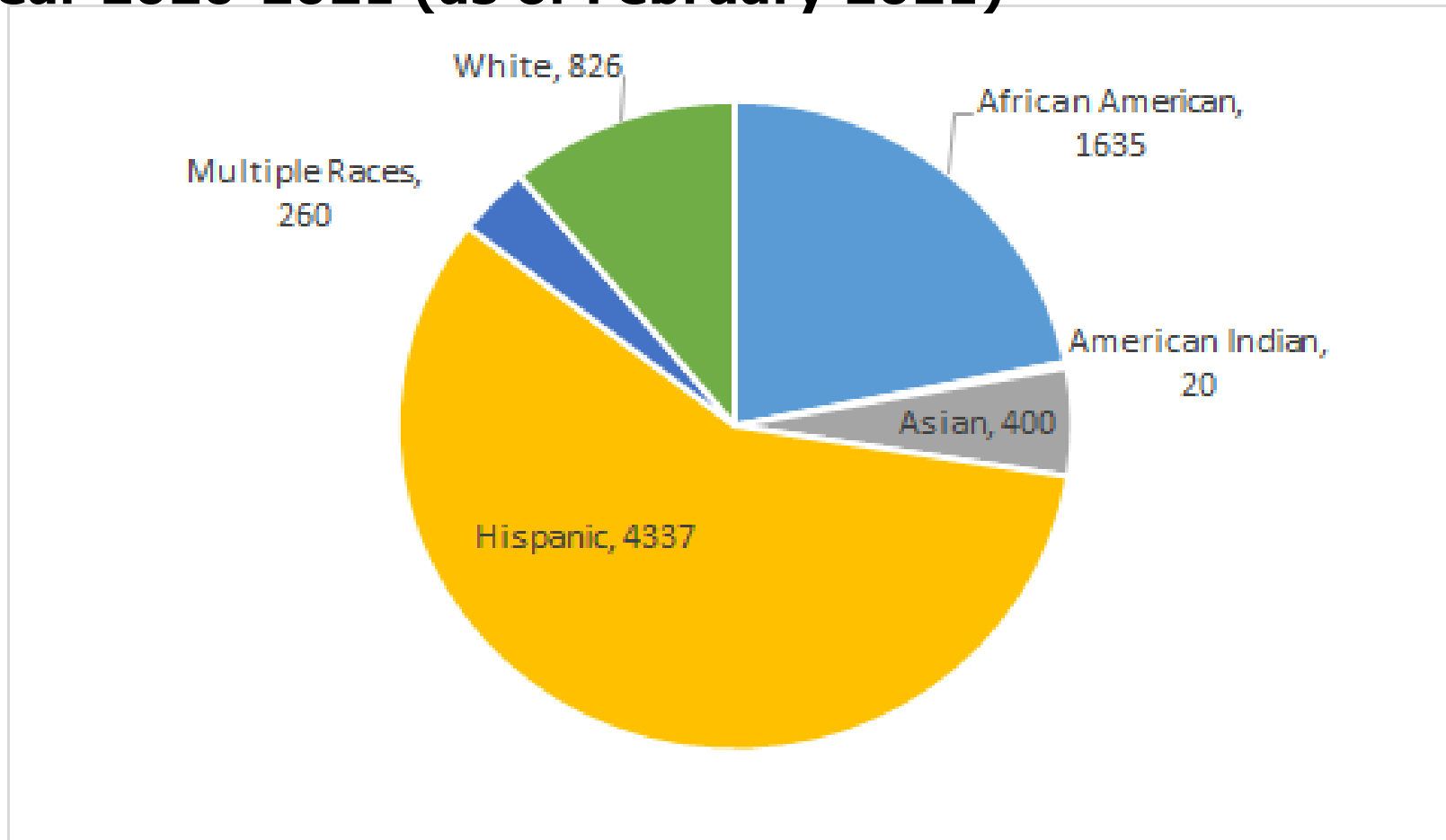
### SWBT PROCESSES

#### Referrals

When students and teachers return to school buildings, teachers will continue to have primary responsibility to reach out initially to parents, guardians, and students, when appropriate, to determine what supports students may need to become more actively engaged in learning. If this initial outreach does not result in an improvement in engagement, or the student demonstrates behaviors suggestive of a possible mental health

# Students Supported by Student Well-Being Teams

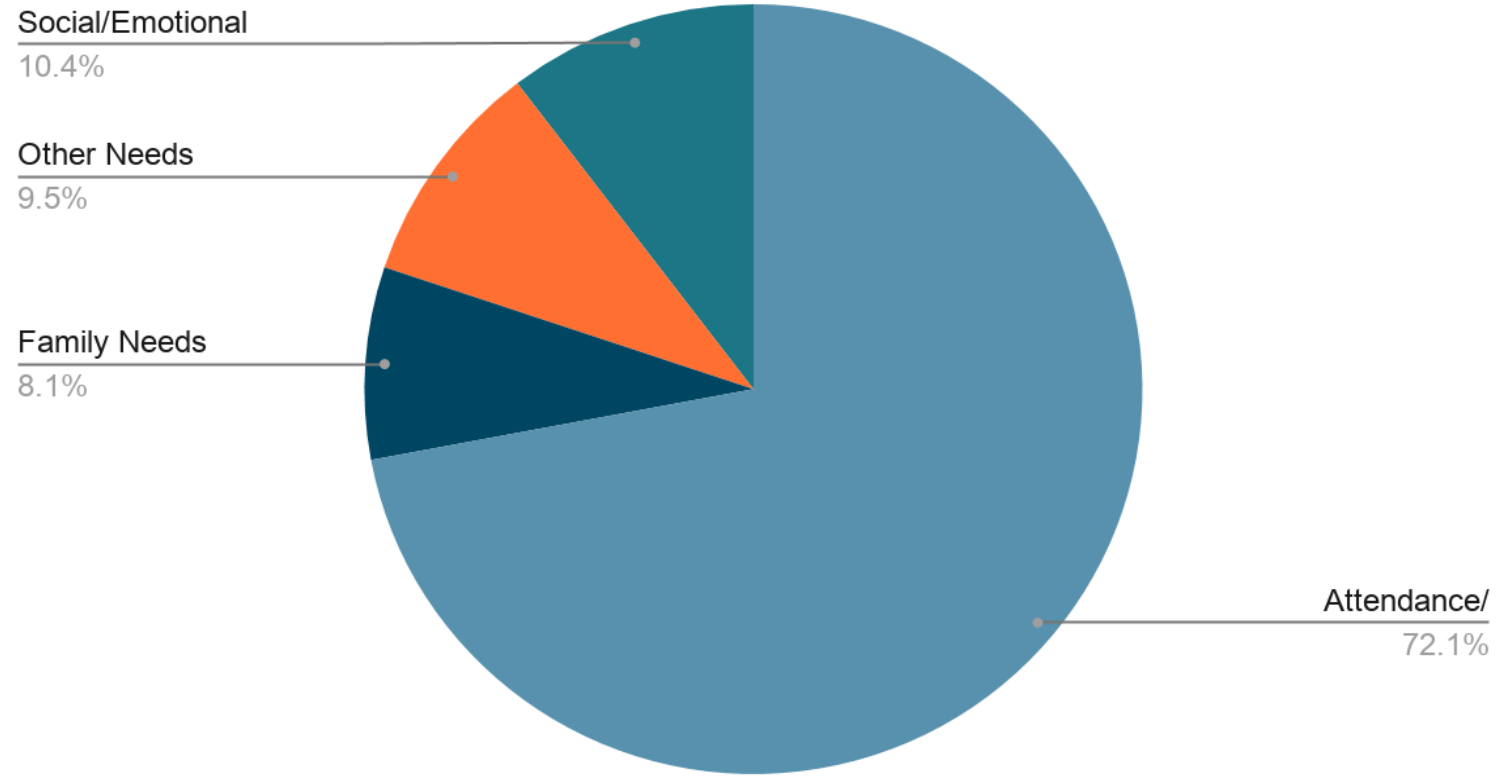
School Year 2020-2021 (as of February 2021)





# Issues Being Addressed by Student Well-Being Teams

Issues Addressed by SWBT (Feb. '21)



# Chronically Absent Students

## Strategies commonly implemented to encourage school attendance

- Regular text, phone, and email contacts (not merely ConnectEd calls)
- Morning wake-up calls
- Daily check-ins with counselor or special education case manager
- Technology support, including:
  - Deliver of needed devices
  - Individual support sessions around the use of technology and accessing Zoom lessons
- Connection to community resources that address the barriers to regular attendance
- Collaboration problem solving meetings
- Home visits to encourage better attendance
- Referrals to Equity Hubs
- Delivery of print academic materials

# The work of Pupil Personnel Workers

**5144**

**school & community resources**

interactions with students/families to offer resources

**1837**

**residency**

interactions with school staff to investigate/prove the residency of families

**2903**

**mental health**

discussions with students, families, and staff about social/emotional concerns

**9039**

**attendance**

discussions with students and families

**3368**

**collaborative problem solving**

meetings to discuss the well-being of students and families

**1620**

**graduation**

discussions with students and families about alternatives to graduation or current virtual options

# Online Resources for Community



## Mindful Moments

**36 Videos 6,467 Views**

### Top 4 topics

- Managing Stress During Distancing
- Student Concerns about Stress Management
- Suicide Awareness
- Impact of Racism on Mental Health (part 1)

**46 Sessions 723 Attendees**

### Top 4 topics

- Preparing for Virtual Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Helping Families with Technology\*
- Tips for Virtual Learning Success\*
- How to Maintain Positive Parent-Child Relationships During Covid -19

\*(Multilingual Chat)

### English

**81 Videos 12,746 Views**

### Spanish

**14 videos 375 views**

**To come....14 videos in Amharic**

(as of 1/22/2021)

# CommUNITY Chat

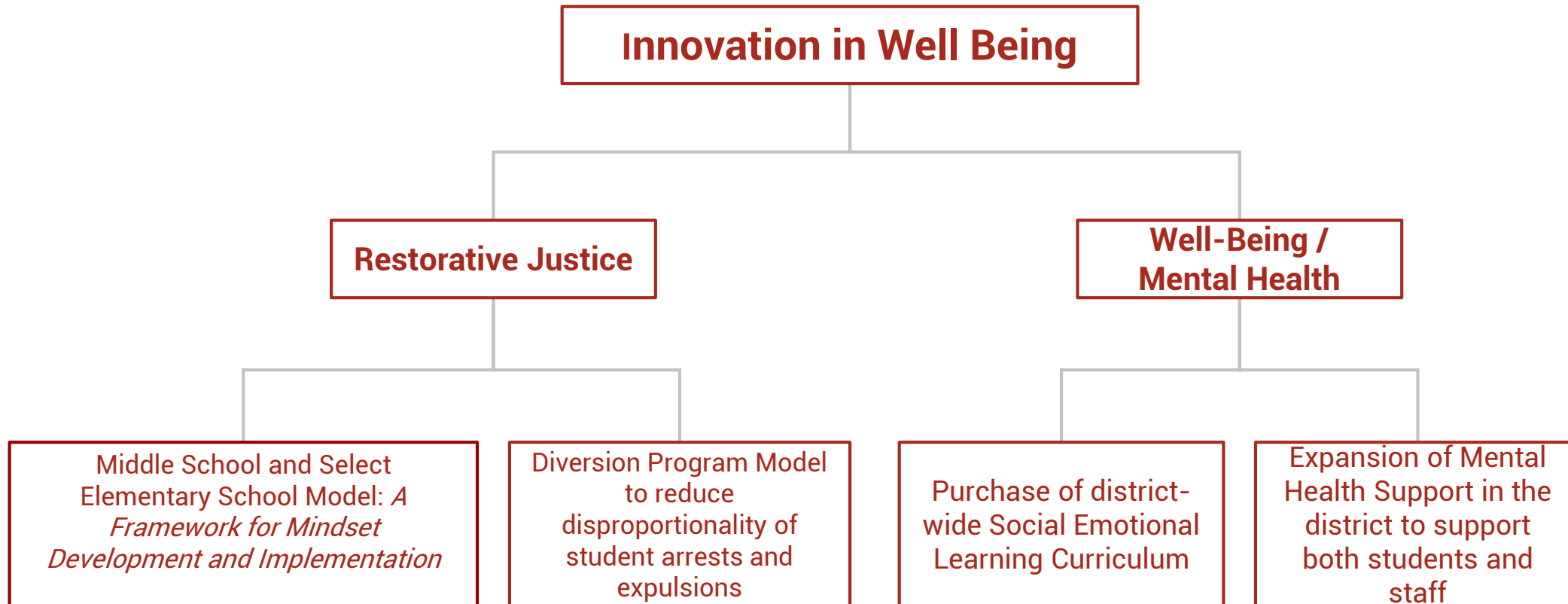
## Next Chat: February 24, 6-7 pm

Presented in English, Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese

Parents/guardians are invited to share their experience with remote learning, accessing technology, community resources, and connecting with MCPS staff throughout the pandemic.

Presented by MCPS staff. Recommended for families of elementary, middle, and high school students.

# SFSE: Innovative Supports to Meet the Moment



# Food and Nutrition Services

## Resuming food service for students in-person in schools

- Breakfast, lunch, supper, and snack at all levels
  - Breakfast at entry/hallway
  - Supper and snack served on exit for students to take with them
  - Multiple options for lunch service, in classrooms, in cafeteria with rotations, and throughout the school

# Food and Nutrition Services (continued)

## Food Service schedule:

- Meal service Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
- Double meals served on Tuesday
- Friday: Meals for Saturday and Sunday at exit



# Food and Nutrition Services (continued)

## Continuing to provide food service for students in virtual instruction:

- “Grab and Go” model in place through cluster hub sites
  - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
  - Tuesday: Double Meal Day
  - Wednesday: No Service Day
  - Friday: Triple Meal Day

# Food and Nutrition Services (continued)

## Bulk Pick Up Addition:

- Early morning bulk box distribution added at White Oak Middle School and Seneca Valley High School
  - DFNS will distribute boxes twice per week on Tuesdays, (three day meal box), and Fridays (four day meal box)
  - Breakfast, Lunch, Snack, and Supper included

# DISCUSSION

# STAFFING

# Staffing and Staffing Availability

1.0 Teacher Allocation (139 new hires as of February 19)—Schools made varied decisions on how to use their allocations

- schools hired a full-time teacher
- increased the allocation of a part-time teacher
- converted the allocation into a general paraeducator position
- opted to hire a long-term substitute rather than hire a teacher or paraeducator

Classroom Monitors (as of 2/19/2021)

- 46 classroom monitors ready to be deployed to schools
- 135 hired and currently in the background check phase
- 367 in process of completing application and/or interviewing phase

CTE and Specific Special Education Programs

- Working with our substitute teacher office to support sub coverage for pre-service

# DISCUSSION

Office of the Superintendent of Schools  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Rockville, Maryland

February 23, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Adjustments to Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2021

**Background**

As a result of conditions associated with the global COVID-19 pandemic, Board of Education resolutions and procedures in the outlined Recovery of Education Guide may call for temporary adjustments to stated policies and procedures for the duration of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and those adjustments supersede existing policies and regulations. In 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board adjusted graduation requirements for the Class of 2020 to align with the graduation requirements imposed by the Maryland State Board of Education and by the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), as MCPS requirements are more stringent than those of COMAR. This resolution is brought forward to extend the same adjustments to graduation requirements for the Class of 2021.

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Board of Education Policy BFA, *Policysetting*, allows the Board to temporarily suspend all or part of any individual policy when there is change in law or exigent circumstances; and

WHEREAS, Board of Education resolutions and procedures in the Recovery of Education Guide may call for temporary adjustments to stated policies and procedures for the duration of Montgomery County Public Schools response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and those adjustments supersede existing policies and regulations; and

WHEREAS, Board of Education Policy IED, *Framework and Structure of High School Education*, and Montgomery County Public Schools Regulation, ISB-RA, *High School Graduation Requirements*, require that high school students complete 22 credits in order to graduate; a requirement that is more stringent than the high school graduation requirements imposed by the Maryland State Board of Education and by the Code of Maryland Regulations, 13A.03.02.03; and

WHEREAS, The Maryland State Board of Education convened on April 14, 2020, and granted certain waivers from the Code of Maryland Regulations and confirmed that Code of Maryland Regulations, 13A.03.02.01 allows for local superintendents to waive additional graduation requirements required in their school system beyond the 21 credits required by the state; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools may adjust graduation requirements for the Class of 2021 to align with the graduation requirements imposed by the Maryland State Board of Education and by Code of Maryland Regulations, 13A.03.02.03, which includes three mathematics credits (which include at least one in algebra/data analysis, and one in geometry); and one-half credit in physical education, for a total of 21 credits.

JRS:MBM:JSW:NTH:llh



# **The Safe Return to In-Person Learning for Montgomery County Public Schools**

Joint Education and Culture/Health and Human  
Committee Meeting  
February 25, 2021

# Vaccination Update

- 5,851 vaccines have been administered or scheduled thus far through JHU partnership.
- We still await confirmation from DHHS on the county vaccine rollout for all MCPS staff.
- At this time the county clinics continue to focus on health care providers and residents over 75 years of age.
- We are contacting other medical agencies for possible partnership (MedStar Health, Holy Cross, and Adventist).

# March 1

Specific Special Education Students  
Specific Career and Technical  
Program Students

# Specific Special Education Programs

## March 1 Return

Specific Special Education Programs	Weekly Schedule
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Autism K–12 Program</li><li>● Extensions Program</li><li>● School Community-based</li><li>● Special Schools</li></ul>	<p><b>In-person learning:</b> Monday Tuesday Thursday Friday</p> <p><b>Virtual learning:</b> Wednesday</p>

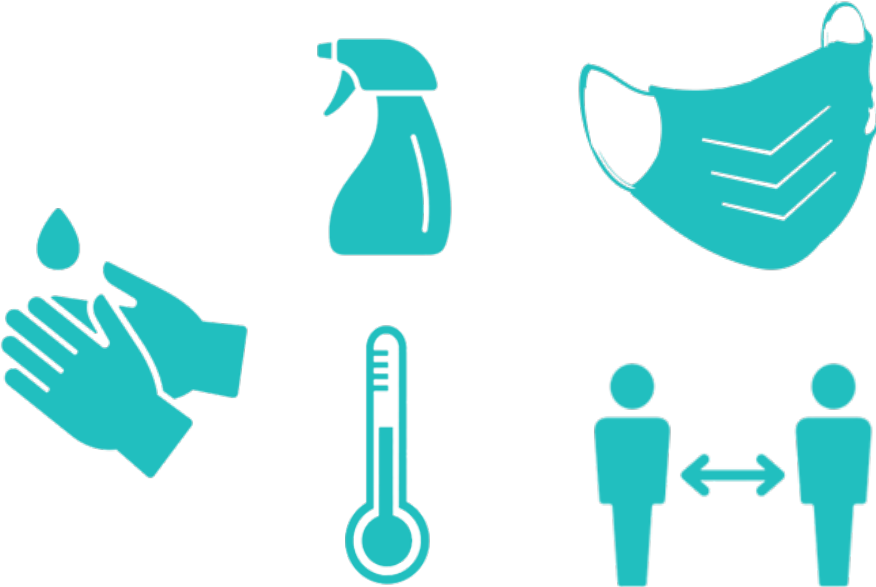
# Technical Programs: March 1 Return

Schools	Programs	Models
<p><b>Thomas Edison High School of Technology</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Automotive</li> <li>● Construction</li> <li>● Cosmetology</li> <li>● Healthcare Professions</li> <li>● Restaurant Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Morning students on "A" Day</li> <li>● Afternoon students on "B" Day</li> <li>● Both weeks March 1-12</li> <li>● Virtual classes with home school on alternating days</li> <li>● Virtual learning on Wednesdays</li> <li>● Blend of instructional models</li> </ul>
<p><b>Seneca Valley, Gaithersburg, Damascus, Paint Branch</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attending both weeks March 1-12</li> <li>● Attend program classes in-person at designated class periods, with blend of models</li> </ul>

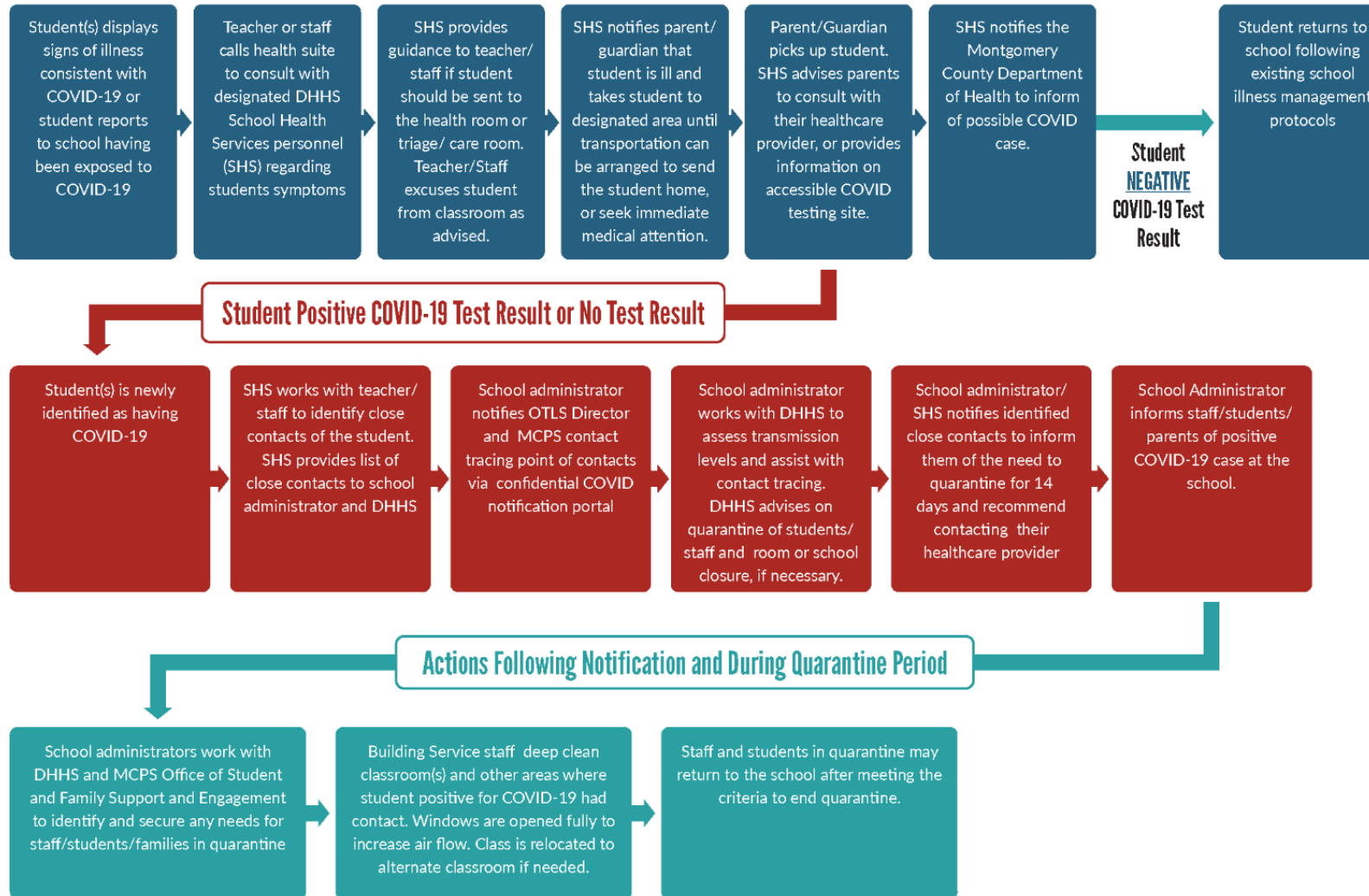
# Phases for Return (Optimal Dates)

Group 1.1 (March 15)	Group 1.2 (No later than April 6)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Discrete Programs and Special Populations</li><li>● CTE Programs</li><li>● METS</li><li>● CREA</li><li>● Alternative Programs</li><li>● Grades K-3</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Discrete Programs and Special Populations</li><li>● Additional CTE Programs</li><li>● Grades 4-5</li><li>● Pre-kindergarten</li><li>● Grade 6</li><li>● Grade 12</li></ul>
Group 2.1 (No later than April 19)	Group 2.2 (No later than April 26)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Grade 8</li><li>● Grade 9</li><li>● Grade 11</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Grade 7</li><li>● Grade 10</li></ul>

# Mitigating the Spread of COVID-19



# What to do if a STUDENT becomes sick at school or reports a new COVID-19 exposure

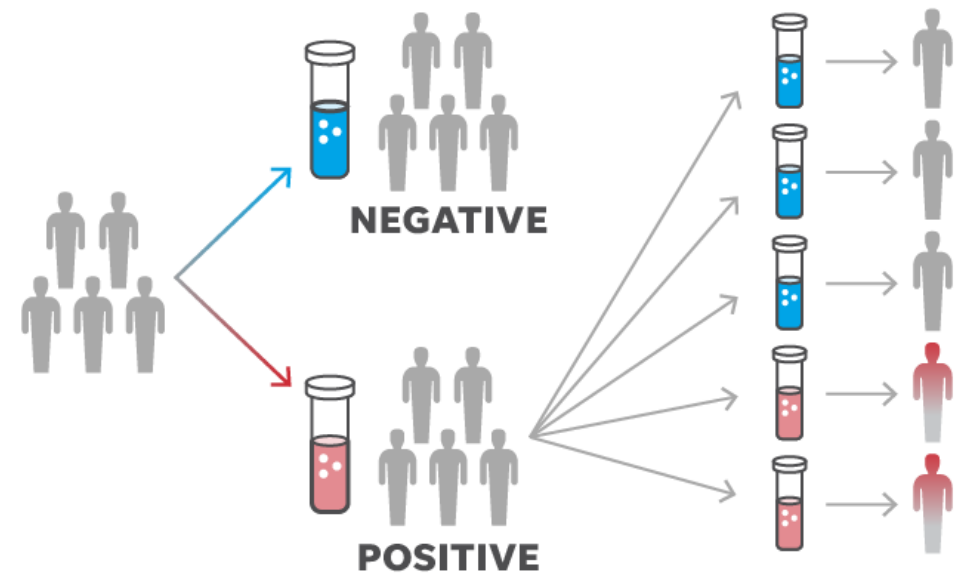




# COVID-19 Surveillance Testing

## How pooled testing works

- 1** People are broken up into groups and a group is tested together.
- 2** A combined sample from the group either tests negative or positive.
- 3** If positive, people are tested individually to find the positive cases.



SOURCE USA TODAY research  
Karl Gelles/USA TODAY

# School-aged Childcare/Educational Enrichment Equity Hubs

- Providers may resume before- and after-care services, as space permits, in the schools where they are licensed, as well as full-day asynchronous support in the form of school-aged childcare on Wednesdays.
- Community Use of Public Facilities is communicating directly with providers around this transition and next steps.
- Providers will in turn share this information with the families enrolled in their programs.
- The Office of Student/Family Support & Engagement will work to provide supports to families that may have enrolled in the equity hubs and may still need services as part of the transition.
- Both principals and providers are being encouraged to work together for solutions as school reopens, and providers are asked to both submit a safety plan for each site offering and are required to clean their space.
- Providers will maintain cohorts as feasible in their programs, and MCPS will maintain cohorts to the extent possible during the day.