



COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ENGAGEMENT DISTRICT UPDATE TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Update for October 16, 2020

Email the CCS Department of Engagement at Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us.

CCS READIES FOR SAFE TRANSITION TO BLENDED LEARNING WHILE MONITORING LATEST HEALTH UPDATES:

Columbus City Schools is getting ready to safely welcome students back to in-person learning in our school buildings. But throughout this COVID pandemic, we've come to understand that change is the one certainty we can count on, with a variety of factors potentially impacting the District's plans and decision-making from month-to-month and week-to-week.

We know that families have questions about the implementation and safe transition to our blended learning plans and the additional safety measures being put in place. That's why the District has set up a "Blended Learning Hub" with details regarding the District's plan to move to blended learning.

The CCS Blended Learning Hub can be found at www.ccsok.us/BlendedLearning.

ANALYZING LATEST NEWS ON FRANKLIN COUNTY'S "RED" STATUS

On Thursday, Governor DeWine noted the increasing COVID-19 cases around the state, including the addition of Franklin County into the "red" or level three of the Ohio Public Health Advisory Alert System. Columbus City Schools is working with Columbus Public Health to analyze the latest data and how it impacts the families within our District boundaries.

At this time, all CCS staff are continuing to follow current work schedules. More information is expected next week regarding any updates to our learning model plans as it relates to the new county alert level.

OPTIONAL ORIENTATION SESSIONS AVAILABLE FOR FAMILIES

Because we know families have questions and concerns, our updated blended learning plan now includes virtual or in-person individual orientation sessions for families with students in grades Pre-K to 8, along with some of specific additional student groups.

These virtual or in-person orientation sessions will be similar to parent-teacher conferences, giving families the opportunity to understand the new level of health protocols and safety protections we have put in place. Students and families will meet with their grade level teachers and appropriate school administrative staff to learn about student safety protocols, building and grade-level expectations, and technology assistance.

Families can schedule an in-person session after attending a virtual session. Appointments will be scheduled in 15-minute increments with 15 minutes in between meetings for disinfecting.

Orientation Schedule and Blended Learning Return by Grade Level and Student Type		
Students	Orientation Dates	Blended Classes Begin (In-Person & Remote)
Grades PreK-3; and students with complex needs in grades PreK-3	Weeks of October 19-23 and October 26-30	Week of November 2-6
Career Tech students at Downtown HS and Fort Hayes CC	Week of October 19-23	Week of October 26-30
Grades 4-5; and students with complex needs in grades 4-12	Week of October 26-30	Week of November 2-6
Grades 6-8	Week of November 2-6	Week of November 9-13
Grades 9-12	TBD	TBD (High school students will continue to learn remotely until further notice.)
<i>*CCS's blended learning plan calls for students to attend classes in person at school two days a week and continue to learn online for three days a week. Some students will start in-person classes on a Monday (Cohort A) while others will start on a Thursday (Cohort B).</i>		

Please see the schedule above for orientation dates and return to in-person learning start dates by grade level. For our elementary students, in-person classes are now set to begin the week of November 2.

Principals will send information to their families, providing information about orientation sessions and scheduling of individual in-person orientation sessions. Please encourage the families you serve to take advantage of these session, if they can.

VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS ON TRANSITION

The transition to the blended learning model is a significant step forward in our shared efforts to get back to normal and we understand the anxiety that comes with it.

Our Virtual Family Engagement Sessions this week provided some additional details on the implementation of our blended learning plans and the additional safety measures being put in place, including a review of the new protocols for transportation on our school buses.

We'll be posting the video from these session on our website at www.ccsos.us/Page/8212.

UNDERSTANDING THE A/B COHORTS AND SCHEDULING:

Over the past few days, District staff have worked to balance the division of elementary and middle school students into nearly equal “cohorts.” It is important that schools maintain a student balance across assigned days to keep class sizes at a level that allows for social distancing between students. This aligns with the District’s health and safety protocols.

Here’s what the cohorts mean for scheduling:

- **Cohort A:** Students will attend classes in-person on Monday and Tuesday and participate in remote learning on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.
- **Cohort B:** Students will attend classes on Thursday and Friday and participate in remote learning on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

All students will learn remotely from home on Wednesdays.

At this time, parents are not able to change student’s cohort assignment. Information on cohort assignments will be shared through the Parent Portal and other communications.

BRINGING CHROMEBOOKS TO SCHOOL EACH DAY:

During the Spring and Fall, the District handed out nearly all of its inventory of Chromebooks for students to use at home. As they return to the classroom, students will be expected to bring their devices on the days they attend school in the building, if the teacher requires it.

Students will have assessments and other testing coming up, and it is important that they have their devices with them. Parents are asked to encourage their students to practice bringing devices to school and back home safely and securely.

Hopefully students remember to plug-in the Chromebook each night - or bring the power cables to school - because students will need to have their Chromebook fully charged before attending school each day.

HEALTHY BREAKFAST AND LUNCH SERVED SAFELY EACH DAY

As students return to in-person learning at their schools, they will once again receive breakfast and lunch each of those in-school days at no cost. Then, when they leave after the second day of in-class learning, students will receive a meal pack for the days they are learning remotely.

- **Breakfast:** - Students will get a grab-and-go breakfast as they enter the school. From there, they will eat in a space where they can have appropriate social distancing.
- **Lunch:** - Students will choose a meal bundle from the cafeteria that they can take to a space where they can have appropriate social distancing.

Students can still bring in their own packed lunches.

Our Fuel Up Food Distribution efforts on Wednesdays will continue for families who continue to have virtual learning, including our high school students and our CCS Digital Academy.

HEALTH PROTOCOLS PRIORITIZE SAFETY & TRANSPARENCY:

The health and safety of our students and their families, all of our employees, and the greater community remains a top priority.

District leaders have been working with Columbus Public Health to inform the health and safety protocols being implemented to prepare for the return of students and staff, including requirements that everyone wear masks, social distancing steps, and physical changes to buildings and classroom spaces such as the installation of plexiglass dividers and the set-up of desks in the classroom.

Our Office of Health, Family, and Community Services has put in place a series of protocols to address COVID-19 concerns on our buses and in our schools and office buildings.

For families, the School Nurse is the point person at your students' school to help parents if they have questions and need to connect with health care providers.

WHAT IF A STUDENT TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19?

When the district returns to in-person learning, families must notify the school if their student tests positive for COVID-19. The School Nurse will notify Columbus Public Health and conduct contact tracing within the school building to determine possible exposure and inform individuals who have been exposed accordingly.

The school will notify, in writing, parents/guardians of students within the same classroom, bus ride, or school activity that there is a student with a positive test and will notify parents of the whole building through the Parent Portal messenger, parent email, text message, and phone call.

The name of the student who has tested positive - or any other identifying information - will remain confidential and will not be released. The student will need documentation from a healthcare provider or Columbus Public Health to return to school.

SHARING DATA ON COVID-19'S IMPACTS

Columbus City Schools is committed to transparency and providing accurate information regarding positive COVID-19 cases while also maintaining privacy and confidentiality for our students and staff.

Our partners at Columbus Public Health continue to share updated information and data to district leaders on a regular basis. This data is available for families and the general public to view online at www.columbus.gov/publichealth/Coronavirus-Portal.

Columbus City Schools has also created a COVID-19 Dashboard, with data on the number of positive COVID-19 cases that have been reported to the District and are associated with in-person learning or activities.

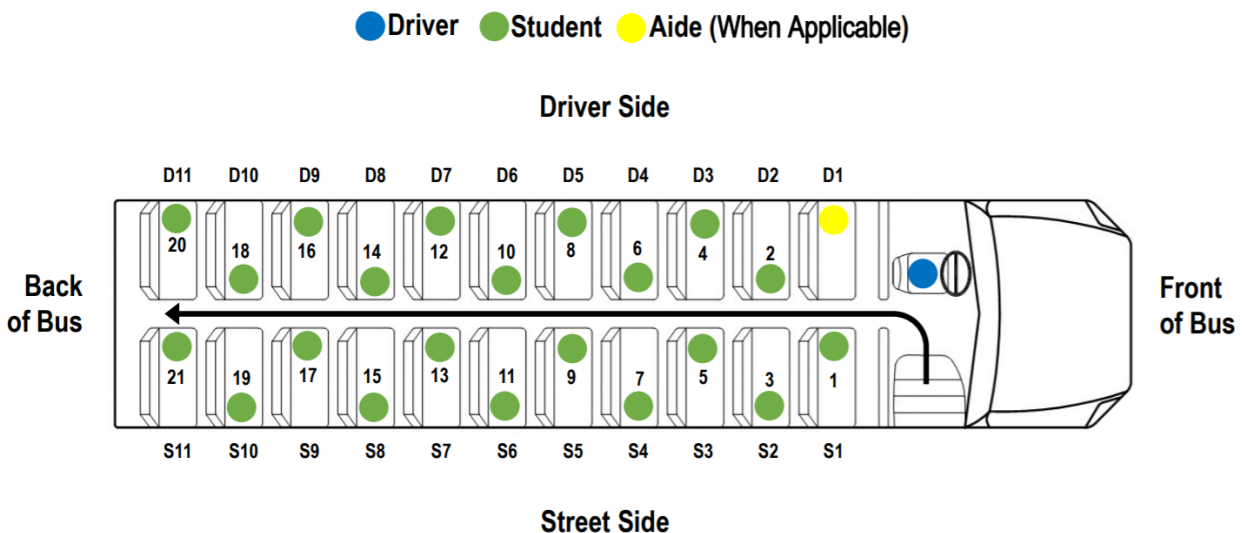
The data is updated weekly with any new reported cases. You can view the CCS COVID-19 Dashboard at www.ccsosoh.us/Page/9000.

PLANS FOR SAFETY ON BUS RIDES TO SCHOOL AND HOME:

School bus safety is a significant part of our safe transition to blended learning. The Office of Transportation has developed a series of safety tips and school bus rules to ensure the effective operation of Columbus City School buses and the maximum safety for our children.

- Students will be required to wear masks while at bus stops and on school buses.
- Social distancing of six feet apart, when possible, will be implemented on all CCS buses.
- Children will practice social distancing of six feet apart at their bus stops.
- As demonstrated on the guide below, children will enter the bus through the regular entry door and be seated starting from the rear of the bus to the front.
- Children will exit the bus through the main door, starting from the front seat to the rear seat.
- Students will sit one-child-per seat.
- The bus will contain a bottle of hand sanitizer, and a spray pump bottle containing disinfectant.
- Children will be provided a “squirt” of hand sanitizer when boarding a bus.
- Drivers will create and maintain a seating chart for students who ride their buses. This seating chart will be used when students board their buses.

Bus Seating Diagram



Every bus will be disinfected by the bus driver after each run. Drivers will spray disinfectant on common touchpoints (handrails, seats, etc.). For added safety, each bus will be disinfected again at the Bus Compound after its morning and afternoon routes have been completed.



SPOTLIGHT: COLUMBUS PUBLIC HEALTH NO-COST FLU SHOTS

Don't forget about getting a flu shot. Our partners at Columbus Public Health are providing flu shots at no cost at three locations this week. Here are the locations and times:

All-Week Drive-Through Clinic

Briggs High School
(2555 Briggs Road)

Monday (10/19), Wednesday (10/21), Friday (10/23)
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Tuesday (10/20), Thursday (10/22)
Noon - 6:00 p.m.

Fuel Up Food Distribution

Wednesday-Only 10/21

Mifflin Middle School (11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)
Linden Park Early Childhood Education Center (5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.)

Any Columbus resident 6 months and older can get a flu shot at no cost. No appointment necessary, walk ups are welcome. Please note that children under 18 will need to be accompanied by a parent to get treated.

You can skip the line by filling out your paperwork ahead of time. Just log on to:
www.columbus.gov/publichealth/programs/Seasonal-Flu-Prevention/Flu-Vaccine-at-CPH.

SHARE YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION UPDATES:

Please share this Community Update with the families and stakeholders you serve.

During this historic school year, it's important we communicate as much as possible to as many people as possible - in as many languages as possible - about the steps being taken in Columbus City Schools to support our students and engage our families.

Please share your updates with us at Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us.