



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

**Update for October 2, 2020**

Email the CCS Department of Engagement at [Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us).

### **SUPERINTENDENT ANNOUNCES PHASED-IN PLAN TO SAFELY RETURN STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS WITH BLENDED MODEL:**

Columbus City Schools, working closely with Columbus Public Health, is ready to safely welcome students back to in-person learning back in our school buildings.

Starting the week of October 19, CCS will employ a phased-in schedule, based on grade level, starting with students in Pre-Kindergarten through Third Grade.

CCS's blended learning plan calls for students to attend in-person classes two days each week and to learn remotely from home three days per week. Students have been divided into two groups: Cohort A will go into school on Mondays and Tuesdays; Cohort B will go into school on Thursdays and Friday. All students will learn remotely from home on Wednesdays.

Here's what the current plan calls for:

- On Monday, October 19, and Tuesday, October 20, Pre-K - 3rd Grade students in Cohort A will start back for two days of in-person learning each week.
- On Thursday, October 22, and Friday, October 23, Pre-K - 3rd Grade students in Cohort B will start back for two days of in-person learning each week.

In addition, Pre-K - 3rd Grade students who have been identified by Office of Special Education with complex needs and whose families have opted for four days per week of in-person instruction will return on October 19. The families of students who qualify have been notified.

Also starting the week of October 19, high school students enrolled in our Career Technical Education programs at Columbus Downtown High School and Fort Hayes Career Center will return to in-person learning. Cohort A students will come on Mondays and Tuesdays; Cohort B students will come on Thursdays and Fridays.

Each following week, the District will phase-in additional students to return to in-person learning, with 4th and 5th Grade starting back the week of October 26 (Cohort A on Mondays and Tuesdays; Cohort B on Thursdays and Fridays) and 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade starting back the week of November 2 (again, Cohort A on Mondays and Tuesdays; Cohort B on Thursdays and Fridays).

In accordance with the District's initial plans, the majority of CCS high school students will continue with completely remote learning until after the first quarter. At this point, no date has been identified for a return to in-person learning for high school students.



**BLENDDED LEARNING** **HOME ROOM TO CLASSROOM**  
**START DATES**

**Pre-K ▶ 3**  
Cohort A: OCTOBER 19, 2020  
Cohort B: OCTOBER 22, 2020

**4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**  
Cohort A: OCTOBER 26, 2020  
Cohort B: OCTOBER 29, 2020

**6<sup>th</sup> ▶ 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**  
Cohort A: NOVEMBER 2, 2020  
Cohort B: NOVEMBER 5, 2020

#RiseUpCCS

### HOW DO I KNOW IF MY STUDENT IS COHORT A OR COHORT B?

Back in September, families had an opportunity to share their preference for having students in-class on Mondays and Tuesdays or Thursdays and Fridays. We used the Parent Portal to collect the information.

For families who were unable to select a preference, don't worry: the District made sure to assign your student to one of the cohorts so that no one missed this opportunity to return to the classroom.

Families can look in the Parent Portal to determine which cohort their students are in. Check the "Schedule" tab.

Additional information and reminders about student cohort assignment are set to be sent home, through automated phone calls, emails, text messages, and direct mail.

### MORE SAFETY MEASURE PUT IN PLACE OVER NEXT TWO WEEKS:

Please note that some elementary schools may be adjusting the start times and end times to the school day to provide additional flexibility for transporting students (since bus routes will be changing to accommodate safe social-distancing rules).

CCS school nurses have returned to their school buildings to work with our city's health experts for the implementation of district-wide COVID-19 safety protocols.

As teachers and staff return to buildings, we'll be providing additional COVID-19 safety training.

Beginning next week, updates on our blended learning plan will be shared, including schedules, health, and safety protocols - such as everyone wearing a mask while in our CCS buildings - answers to frequently asked questions, and more.



### **DEDICATING TWO VIRTUAL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS TO ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS:**

We know that families and staff still have questions about the implementation of our blended learning plans and the additional safety measures being put in place.

Our Virtual Family Engagement Sessions on Tuesday (October 6) and Thursday (October 8) will be dedicated to sharing more information and insight on the blended learning models, our phased-in approach, transportation and business, and specific needs for in-person Pre-K.

The F.A.C.E 2 Face Virtual Family Engagement Sessions start at 6:00 p.m. on Zoom. You need to RSVP to get the link. To sign up, go to [www.ccsch.us/rsvp](http://www.ccsch.us/rsvp).

### **FINDING LEARNING EXTENSION CENTERS NEAR YOU:**

We are making it easier for Columbus City Schools families to find our community's Learning Extension Centers - safe, free, adult-supervised spaces where students are supported while learning virtually during the day.

The updated list of Learning Extension Centers on our website includes more centers that have recently opened and maps to make it easier to determine which centers are closest to homes or schools.

Check out our updated Learning Extension Center information at [www.ccsch.us/Page/8685](http://www.ccsch.us/Page/8685).

At these Learning Extension Centers, students have access to the internet, learning devices, and school supplies to assist them in remote learning (if they need more than the Chromebook the District is supplying). Most locations are also providing food.

Four of our LEC partners - Impact Community Action, Broad Street Presbyterian Church, Community Development for All People, and the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department - recently shared information about their programs during our Virtual Family Engagement Session. You can re-watch the session at <https://youtu.be/TURroOyp2Co>.

### **PREVIOUS VIRTUAL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS:**

Large numbers of families, staff, community partners continue to join in on our F.A.C.E. 2 Face Virtual Family Engagement Sessions each Tuesday and Thursday night on Zoom.

In addition to talking about Learning Extension Centers, we also shared some great information with Help for High School Families - including updates on testing (ACT, PSAT, AP, and IB), access to high school-level learning apps, and tips for parents to keep older students focused on remote learning during the day.

Our list of Virtual Family Engagement Session is at <https://bit.ly/CCSFamilyEngagementSessions>.



## **HELP FOR KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE ON ZOOM:**

During this time of virtual learning, physical classrooms have been replaced with “Zoom Rooms.” Students and staff are in and out of these online meeting spaces several times throughout the day. Our Technology team has provided some tips for students to think about when on Zoom:

- **Safety Tip #1 - Don't Share Personal Information**  
You wouldn't tell a stranger your address or your phone number. This doesn't change when you're online. It's best to assume any personal information you share online could get into the wrong hands. Therefore, it's smarter to not share at all. Remember this rule and you'll be better off: be careful what you say online.
- **Safety Tip #2 - Disable Your Microphone and Video**  
Unless your teacher asks you to have your microphone or video on, disable them. Your teacher may even mute you upon arrival. But if not, it's best practice to disable those settings for your own safety and privacy. If a teacher calls on you and you need to quickly respond, you can easily unmute yourself.
- **Safety Tip #3 - Don't Share Zoom Meeting Information Online**  
Never put the Zoom meeting information in a public forum. Sharing a Zoom meeting's password on social media is like giving out extra copies of your house key to strangers. What's the point of a password if you share it with people who shouldn't know this information? If you need to share this information with another student, redirect them to your teacher. Do not share meeting information with another student.
- **Safety Tip #4 - Be Mindful of Your Surroundings**  
Being in a classroom in your school is very different from being in a classroom virtually. One of the most obvious differences: people can see inside your home. Think about the items that are behind you or on the walls. And put away any confidential information lying around. You also want to think about what people can hear online. Be mindful of other people in your house and if your classmates and teachers can hear them.
- **Safety Tip #5 - Respect the Security Set by Your Teacher**  
Being in a classroom in your school is very different from being in a classroom virtually. Yet, one thing that does not change is that you have to respect the rules of the teacher for the classroom. Students are participants. Participants who aren't hosting a meeting cannot take control of the screen, share their screens, or rename themselves. By default, when a host removes a participant from the meeting, that person cannot rejoin. So if you were kicked out of the meeting for some reason, respect that and email the teacher after the meeting..
- **Safety Tip #6 - Report Unsafe Activity**  
If you see something, say something. If your child's privacy is compromised, report the suspicious activity. You can call the IT Help Desk at 614-365-8425.



### **CCS FAMILY AMBASSADORS' TIPS FOR PARENTS:**

Sally Kuzemchak, our Family Ambassador at Columbus Alternative High School (CAHS) has these tips for parents:

**KEEPING SCHEDULES:** Help your child establish some kind of schedule and calendar. Have your student write or type out their schedule, so you both know and have it. Posting it in the kitchen has been helpful in our house. Adding links to an online schedule (in Google sheets for instance) to Google classrooms or Zooms is helpful too, so students can just click once to go to their next class.

**REMEMBERING ASSIGNMENTS:** As for assignments, there's a lot to keep track of, and students who were able to juggle it all in their heads before may really struggle now. See what makes the most sense to your student: maybe they would prefer something online or in an app on their phone. Or maybe they're a more visual person and would do well with posting a calendar or list on the wall or white board by their workspace.

**ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE:** Elementary and middle school students need help navigating the online virtual world, but high schoolers are preparing to move on to college and/or the workplace. They need to practice good online communication skills on their own. Make sure they know email etiquette - using a greeting, explaining their needs or questions clearly, thanking the teacher, and closing with their name. Be sure they understand how to check messages, send messages, and reply/reply all.

### **ENCOURAGE YOUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT TO BE A SUPERINTENDENT'S STUDENT AMBASSADOR:**

Even though we are working and learning remotely, Superintendent Dixon is excited about finding a new corps of high school students to serve as her Student Ambassadors.

The Program is specifically designed for leadership development and is an opportunity for the ambassadors to practice leadership through school, District and civic engagement, and volunteerism.

Student ambassadors are selected to positively represent the District as they help tell the positive stories of Columbus City Schools. They are the liaisons of their high school to the Superintendent's office. Those selected to be student ambassadors will meet regularly with the Superintendent as her internal student leadership team.

We're looking for students in 10th - 12th Grades with strong work ethic and responsibility; good behavioral and academic standing; good attendance; enthusiastic and positive attitudes; willingness to develop and improve marketing and communication skills; and a sincere desire to help foster the District's positive image.

To apply, students should go to <https://forms.gle/fjENMjj4WmW4Cu6Y9>.



### **SPOTLIGHT: COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN LIBRARIES ARE OPEN**

Good news from our partners at the Columbus Metropolitan Library, who have re-opened all 23 locations across the city for customer browsing.

Columbus City Schools families can come in to see what's on the library shelves and choose their own books, audiobooks, DVDs and more. At the same time, the libraries continue to offer curbside pickup and other limited services like access to computers, printers and copiers.

Library staff are ready to help students, teachers and parents during this challenging school year with the Online K-12 Homework Help. In-person Job Help is also available at a few locations plus valuable online job and career resources.

Staff are limiting the number of customers in each building to ensure effective social distancing. Staff will let you know if you need to wait to enter.

Face coverings are required to enter. Disposable face masks are available to customers. And the library asks that if you're experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, please wait and come another time.

More information can be found at [www.columbuslibrary.org](http://www.columbuslibrary.org).

### **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](mailto:Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us).**