

School Reopening 2020:
**Preliminary
Framework**



Reopening Schools in a Safe and Responsible Manner



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Letter from CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson and CEo LaTanya D. McDade

In March, we made the difficult decision to close our school buildings in order to keep our communities safe and slow the spread of COVID-19. In the ensuing months, our educators completely transformed how they provide instruction; our students gave up proms, athletics, and graduations; and you supported your children in more ways than ever before. Our shared sacrifices helped flatten the curve in our state and allowed us to evaluate reopening schools in the fall. Today, we are sharing a preliminary reopening framework that is aligned to the strongest guidance from public health officials and will help us prepare to reopen schools if it is safe to do so on September 8.

Our preliminary framework is rooted in science and developed in accordance with guidance released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Chicago Department of Public Health, and the Illinois State Board of Education. We've heard from families that they are eager to resume their child's education but in a manner that minimizes the health risks posed by COVID-19. To strike this fine balance, we are preparing for a scenario in which it is safe to begin the 2020–21 school year with a hybrid learning model where students will learn at school and at home. This hybrid model would allow students to follow proper social distancing guidelines by effectively cutting the number of students in a classroom in half and ensuring students can access high-quality in-person instruction from caring teachers. And because our public health situation continues to evolve, our framework is designed to adapt to changing public health conditions and easily transition to full at-home learning should COVID-19 cases begin to rise.

While we intend to bring students back if it is safe to do so, we also understand that some families will prefer to keep their children home. In recognition of the unprecedented nature of this pandemic and the need for flexibility, every parent will have the option to opt out of in-person instruction and learn from home full time.

School buildings will look different this fall

School will feel different this year. Following public health guidance, school buildings will welcome half of their normal student body into the building on any given day. Staff and students will complete daily symptom screeners before coming to school, have their temperatures taken upon entering the building, wear face coverings, and students will come to school for only a few days a week. Supporting these measures requires a considerable investment, which we are fully committed to making. To ensure the safest possible learning environments, we have purchased more than 1.2 million reusable cloth face masks to support every student and staff member, 42,000 hand sanitizer dispensers, more than 40,000 containers of disinfectant wipes, 22,000 infrared thermometers, hospital-grade disinfectant sprayers, and additional PPE for specialty roles. We're also hiring nearly 400 additional custodians to help carry out stringent cleaning and sanitizing protocols every day in every school.

Learning from home will also look different this fall

Based on guidance from ISBE, students learning at home will have a minimum of five hours of instruction or assigned work per day and attendance will be tracked. Teachers will design activities and assignments could include pre-recorded lessons, independent work to build skills, and accessing digital curriculum resources. Students will access assignments through Google Classroom as part of a wider transition to Google platforms. Additional details on new learning expectations and improvements will be provided in the final reopening framework.

Social distancing will be critical to keeping students and educators safe

Students will be assigned to pods of approximately 15 students and, along with a designated group of teachers, will stay together for the entire school year. This pod model reduces potential viral transmission, allows us to conduct rapid contact tracing, and reduces the need to disrupt learning for the school community if a case of COVID-19 is identified.

In order to ensure proper social distancing, the majority of K-10 students will split their time between learning at home and learning at school. Students will learn at school with their teacher, and they will use their time learning at home to complete assignments and access digital curriculum. Under this 2-1-2 hybrid schedule model, student pods will start and end their week learning independently at home or learning at school two days a week. On Wednesdays, both pods

will engage in three hours of real-time virtual classroom instruction together with their teacher. This model will allow students, staff, and families to maintain a stable weekly schedule while affording educators necessary time to plan for various instructional needs.

We're differentiating the amount of in-person instruction students will receive based on their age and developmental learning needs of particular. Pre-K students will go to school everyday while high school juniors and seniors will learn at home for the entire school year due to the complexity of their schedules and the inability to maintain small, stable pods when schedules differ to such a great degree. Diverse learners, students in CTE programs that need access to specific resources, and students who need additional academic and social and emotional support will be prioritized for in-person instruction based on the capacity of each school.

We will prioritize the social-emotional wellbeing of our students

Our reopening framework goes far beyond academics. It prioritizes the social-emotional needs of our students, many of whom have experienced trauma from the impact of COVID-19 on their communities and the demonstrations in our country following the murder of George Floyd. Easing our students' anxiety and building supportive learning environments will be critical to their success this coming school year.

Our reopening framework honors our commitment to equity

To follow through on the equity promise set forth in our Five-Year Vision, Success Starts Here, our reopening framework also takes into account the unique needs of our most vulnerable populations, including our English Learners and students with diverse learning needs. We are working on a plan to bring many of these students back into the classroom during all in-person instruction days, and we remain committed to providing all children with the supports and resources they will need to be successful during this challenging time.

In the coming weeks, the district will be finalizing our plans for implementing a high-quality hybrid learning model. We need your input on how best to resume school in a responsible manner. Please review the reopening framework and complete the reopening [survey](#) by July 31, 2020. Following an extensive public engagement period, we will release our final plan for the reopening of schools during the first week of August. And in late August, when we will have greater clarity on the public health situation at the time school is about to begin, we will make a final determination about whether we can welcome students back into school buildings a few days a week or have students learn-at-home full time.

Despite this new reality, we are confident in the ability of our educators, families, and partners to work together to provide all CPS students with a robust, high-quality education.

It will take all of us working together to make this school year a success and uphold necessary health and safety protocols in our schools. Everyone can help ensure schools are able to safely reopen in the fall by continuing to practice social distancing, wearing masks, and following the latest guidance from our public health officials. We hope you will unite with us in these efforts. We thank you for your input, patience, and flexibility. We value your partnership and look forward to hearing from you in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,



Janice K. Jackson, EdD
Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools



LaTanya D. McDade
Chief Education Officer
Chicago Public Schools

Executive Summary

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is committed to ensuring all students have access to high-quality instruction in a learning environment that prioritizes the health, safety, and social and emotional needs of our students and staff. To balance these objectives, CPS considered several models for the 2020–21 school year. While each scenario has its own challenges and benefits, the district developed a reopening plan that aligns with the commitments and core values outlined in our five-year vision, [Success Starts Here](#), and the guidance of the city’s public health officials. These are the guiding principles for our reopening guidance:

- The health and wellness of students and staff is our highest priority
 - The health and wellness of the CPS community remains our highest priority, and we will make every effort to provide teachers and students with pre-existing health conditions the ability to safely participate in school activities.
- All students have a high-quality learning experience
 - Students’ academic progress must be protected despite changes to the learning environment. CPS will continue to deliver a high-quality experience.

- High-need students are supported
 - As part of our commitment to equity, every student must be able to participate in learning, whether at home or in school. CPS will identify and respond to inequities and differences in opportunities among our student population.
- The needs of the whole child and staff are met
 - The physical, social, and emotional needs of our students and educators are a district priority. We acknowledge that this past year has presented our students and teachers with unprecedented challenges, and we will focus on reducing anxiety due to COVID-19 as well as building a supportive community.
- The evolving needs of the CPS community due to COVID-19 and racial injustice are addressed
 - The COVID-19 public health emergency illuminates historical inequities experienced by our students and communities of color. CPS' mission is centered on achieving educational and health equity. CPS will continue to engage and collaborate with students, parents, staff, and community partners to solicit their feedback and better understand and respond to their evolving needs in relation to impacts of COVID-19 and the demonstrations and social actions responding to racial injustice.
- Stakeholders are informed and know what to expect
 - The plan is transparent and clear to all constituents. Guidelines for the current school year are accessible and easily understood by all members of our community.

What we heard

The voices of our students, families, and staff will be critical to informing how we resume school. Over the summer, we surveyed CPS community members to better understand their thoughts, concerns, and priorities for the fall. We're thankful to the more than 54,000 CPS families who responded to the survey.

We also conducted 22 family focus groups across the city, with an emphasis on engaging families on the south, west, and southwest sides, and parents of EL students and diverse learners in order to better understand the unique challenges they may face as we plan the reopening of school.

Overwhelmingly, families want increased health protocols, clear communication of student expectations, and a lower student-teacher ratio as part of our back-to-school plan. Families also

want increased social-emotional learning supports to meet their children's growing social and emotional needs. Finally, parents want transparency. They want to understand our rationale for making decisions, and they want us to create spaces for public discussion and feedback.

Many families initially told us they had concerns with sending their children back to school absent a widely available vaccine. However, when we introduced the idea of pods of approximately 15 students and hybrid schedules, families were receptive and more open to sending their children to school buildings in the fall.

CPS also convened a group of over 100 district and school leaders to participate in our Reopening Task Force to develop proposed models for Fall 2020. The Reopening Task Force was composed of 11 priority groups focused on key educational and operational areas. We heard the need to:

- Think innovatively about in-school instruction models.
- Provide access to the full depth and breadth of curriculum as well as non-academic needs of every child.
- Create district-level guidance that still provides flexibility to schools.
- Follow health expertise on all decisions.

Surveys

CPS launched a variety of surveys to gather feedback from our community, and we will provide results in our final guidance.

1. Remote Learning Survey to School Leaders and Educators: This survey was administered to understand feedback on spring remote learning and gather information that will inform how the district prepares for any remote learning in Fall 2020.
2. Return-to-Work Survey: In order to understand the needs of our staff and their ability to return to work during the global health crisis, we collected feedback on staff availability to return to work in person in Fall 2020.
3. Student and Family Surveys: Students in grades 4–12 and all CPS families received a survey to gather feedback on remote learning, current impacts of COVID-19, and reopening.

CPS held focus group discussions with small groups of staff and families to better understand the many considerations and needs of returning to school this fall.

1. **Principal and Teacher Focus Groups:** We engaged principals and teachers in small focus groups to discuss reopening instructional models, logistics, and health protocols needed in schools.
2. **Family Focus Groups:** We conducted 21 focus groups across Chicago to gather thoughts on reopening, including return-to-school models, communication preferences, and experiences with remote learning.

What we know

Until there is a treatment or vaccine for COVID-19, the reality is that all decisions for how to move forward have various risks. In order to make sure the learning experience at CPS is safe, accessible, and seamless, the decisions outlined in this document have been developed by health and education leaders and are aligned with guidance of the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

CPS has worked in close partnership with public health officials, other districts, and our own stakeholders to develop protocols, processes, and practices to maximize student learning and public health. As a result, there are several things we know to be true for the Fall 2020 return to school:

- CPS is planning to start school with a hybrid learning model where students will learn at school and at home, with the potential to transition to a full learn-at-home model should public health require it.
- CPS will assign students into pods for in-person learning. Student pods will be small, fixed groups of approximately 15 students. Each pod will have minimal interactions with students and staff in other pods. If a case of COVID-19 is confirmed at the school, this model minimizes the potential number of exposures to the virus and allows for timely and efficient contact tracing.
- CPS will provide necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), face coverings, hand sanitizer, and cleaning support to minimize risk of viral transmission in schools.
- CPS will work closely with CDPH and IDPH to ensure all direct contacts of any confirmed COVID-19 cases are promptly notified and advised in order to reduce further spread.
- CPS will continue gathering input from stakeholders and respond to community needs throughout the fall and school year
- CPS acknowledges that the situation can change and decisions will need to be made quickly. We are prepared to transition to different models of school as necessary in response to COVID-19.

What we considered

	Learn-at-Home Full Time	Hybrid Model	Learn-at-School Full Time
What this means for students and educators	Students and staff participate in remote learning on all instructional days	In order to meet proper social distancing guidelines, a pod of approximately 15 students will alternate learning at home and at school. While at school, students will stay in their pods for all activities and will not interact with other pods. Educators will support specific pods to minimize interactions with the wider school community.	All students and staff attend in-person instruction daily
Benefits of this model	Lowest risk for COVID-19 transmission in the school community	Balances need for health and safety while allowing for in-person instruction	Most conducive to learning and provides social-emotional benefits for students
Challenges of this model	Presents challenges for learning, particularly for vulnerable student populations. While we are prepared to support students to learn at home, we believe it is critical to bring students back into their school communities based on feedback that we heard from the community and public health officials.	Creates logistical challenges for families, including access to digital devices, childcare for days when children are not in-person, or other learning considerations. However, we believe this model brings students back into their school communities in a safe and responsible manner.	Based on available science, health risks are greatest when more people are congregated, and this model does not mitigate this risk sufficiently. We do not have the space or workforce available to meet the social distancing requirements to bring all students back every day. In consultation with public health experts, we believe it is too risky to bring all students and staff back without social distancing at this time.

Our recommendation

After consulting with public health experts, other districts, and CPS educators and families, we believe a hybrid model where students learn from home and attend school a limited number of days per week is the safest way to provide in-person instruction to our students.

Given the need to implement a hybrid return to school, CPS is committed to engaging with parents, students, staff, Local School Councils, and communities to determine the best ways to bring this school model to life.

What will reopening schools look like?

The state of Illinois and the City of Chicago are currently in Phase 4 of the [Restore Illinois](#) plan which allows schools to open for in-person instruction. Contingent on guidance from state and local public health officials, CPS is developing a preliminary framework to reopen schools in September that will have students splitting their time between learning at school and learning at home.

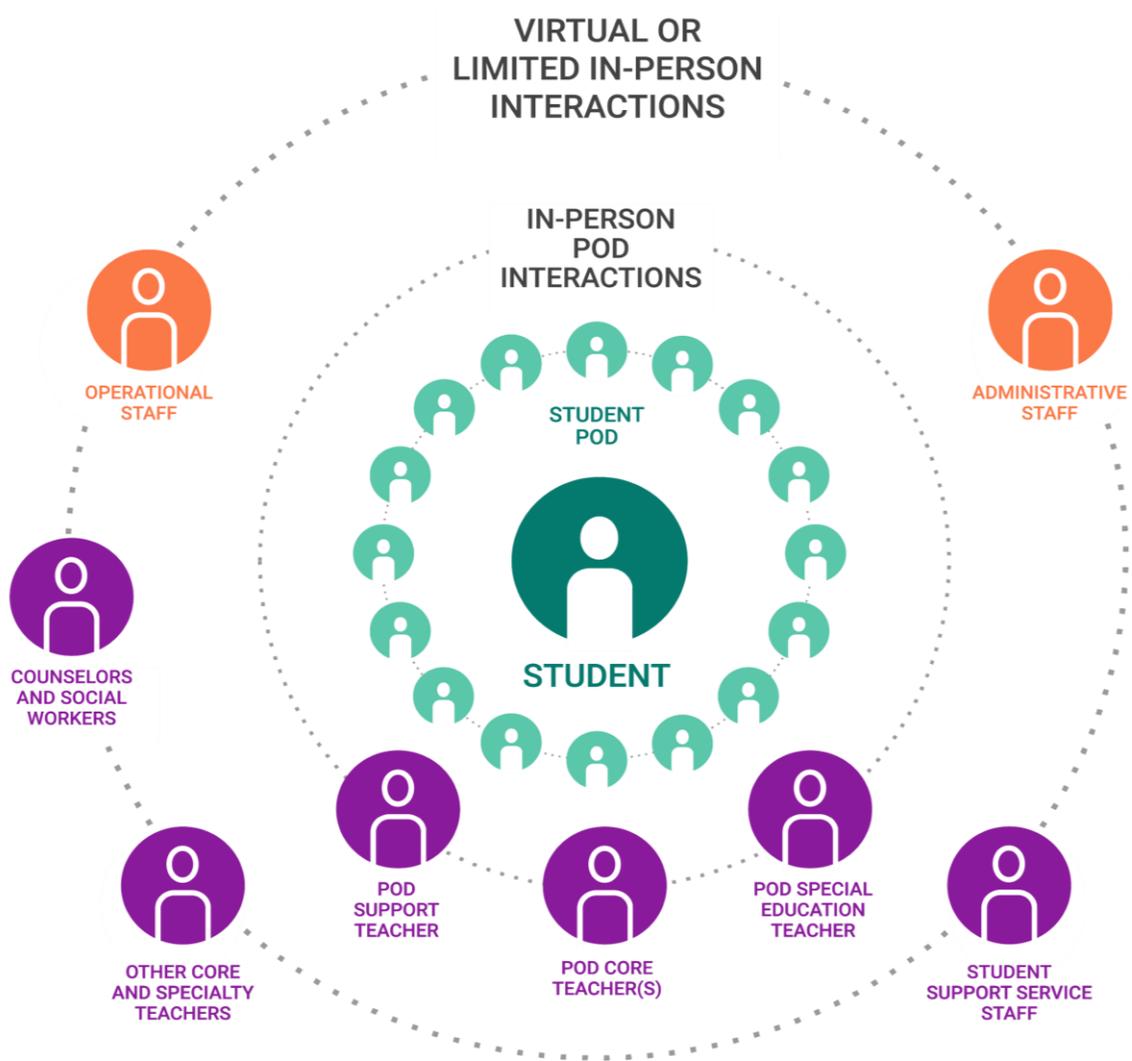
Hybrid model

A combination of learning models will allow the district to adapt alongside Illinois' public health response to COVID-19 and the diverse needs of school communities. A hybrid approach will also allow learning to continue uninterrupted should students need to learn-at-home full-time for health reasons.

In order to keep everyone safe while attending school, the following key characteristics of on-site learning will be employed:

Students will be assigned to pods

- A pod of students and staff will allow for an easily identifiable group to remain together for all in-person instruction and activities during a school day. Student pods will be kept stable with minimal interaction with other pods. Social distancing measures must be in place between students across pods.
- Assigning pods will help to minimize interactions between students and instructional staff and reduce the potential for spread of COVID-19 within the school community.
- Pods allow for rapid contact tracing and self-quarantine guidance to be quickly disseminated if a positive COVID-19 case occurs within a pod.
- If a COVID-19 case is identified, potentially only that person's pod may need to be quarantined instead of the entire school.

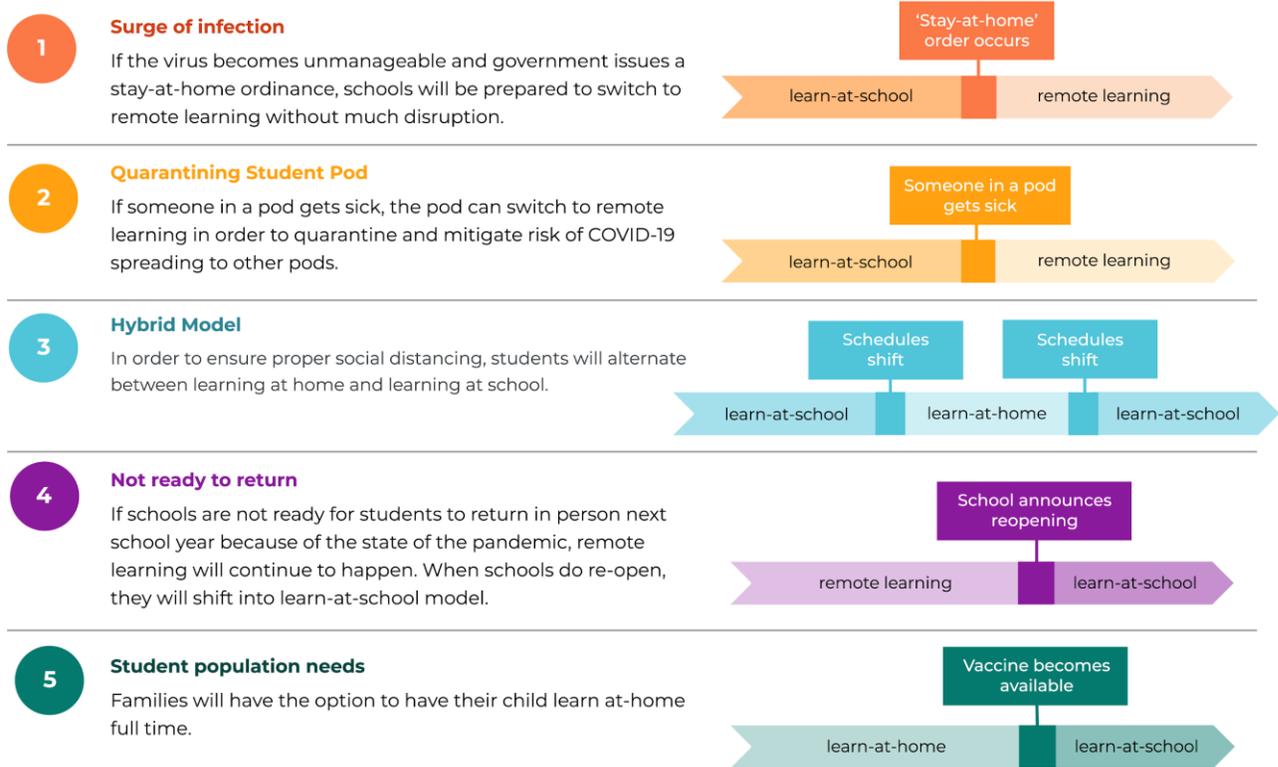


Social distancing within and among pods

- Schools should ensure six feet of physical distance between students and staff from other pods, particularly at times when intermingling could occur, such as arrival and dismissal.
- Classrooms should maintain social distancing as much as possible among students and staff in the pod.

A hybrid model supports a variety of scenarios throughout the year

Due to the unpredictable nature of COVID-19, the hybrid model will support a variety of scenarios that may take place throughout the year, including if a student or pod is quarantined and if there is a surge in the infection causing district-wide remote learning to occur, among others (see below).



Hybrid scheduling allow proper social distancing

In-person instruction is critical to the academic and social-emotional development of students. In order to ensure that students may return to school in a safe manner that meets public health guidelines, the district will implement a hybrid scheduling model which will effectively reduce our in-person K-10 student population by approximately half on any given day.

The district also recognizes that certain student populations require different levels of in-person instruction based on age and developmental learning needs. While our youngest learners will benefit from the consistency and social-emotional advantages of in-person classroom instruction, our high school juniors and seniors can benefit from being able to take their diverse, full array of course offerings that a Learn-at-Home model offers. Given the diverse scheduling needs for juniors and seniors, it is not possible to establish pods to limit interactions with other students and staff.

Hybrid scheduling can help ensure that social distancing within the pods can be maintained and mitigate viral transmission by decreasing the number of students and staff each individual has to interact with, particularly during arrival, class transitions, and dismissal.

Through a multifaceted approach that includes pod assignments, social distancing, hybrid scheduling, rigorous health and cleaning protocols (See Section “How will we keep students and staff safe?”) and the use of face coverings, the district is focused on safely bringing students and staff back for in-person instruction.

Student Population	Attendance Model
Pre-K Full day Programs	Learn-at-School
Pre-K Half-day Programs	Learn-at-School
Students in Grades K-10	Hybrid
Students in Grades 11 and 12	Learn-at-Home
Cluster Program Students	Learn-at-School

The decision to use different attendance models was not made lightly, as we know it will present logistical challenges for our families. However, after reviewing local, state, and federal public health guidelines; receiving feedback from our staff, student, and family surveys and focus groups;

and conferring with other large, urban school districts, we determined that implementing a hybrid scheduling models is the best option to provide in-person instruction this fall while adhering to public health guidance.

Students in grades 11 and 12

To maintain health protocols during at-school learning, we must minimize movement throughout the building, keep students in pods, and minimize teacher interaction across pods. Due to the complexity of course scheduling and graduation requirements, it is not possible to effectively create pods for all upperclassmen which will preclude them from learning at school this upcoming year. Schools will have flexibility with regard to how and when to bring in upperclassmen for in-person instruction or other activities in order to ensure graduation requirements are met.

Under our preliminary framework, high school juniors and seniors will participate in a full day of learning from home that includes daily real-time virtual instruction, engagement, and feedback with teachers and classmates. Upperclassmen will also receive independent work including supplemental assignments necessary to complete course and graduation requirements.

Schools may consider having models in which the following upperclassmen return in-person:

- Students who are enrolled in CTE programming and cannot access the necessary equipment from home to complete coursework
- Students who are behind on graduation requirements or need more direct academic or social-emotional support
- Students who need to attend orientations or meet-and-greets with teachers and check-ins throughout the year

Under all of these circumstances, complete adherence to health protocols is necessary. When schools develop their own school-specific guidance for return, they should work collaboratively with their staff and families to determine what is possible and safe.

A flexible framework that meets the needs of students and staff

We also understand that some families will prefer to keep their children home. In recognition of the unprecedented nature of this pandemic and the need for flexibility, every parent will have the option to have their child learn from home full time. Details for how families may apply to learn from home full time will be provided later this month.

A process for how staff with medical or caretaking needs will have their leave of absence or requests for accommodations addressed will be provided later this month.

Diverse learners and English learners: If schools have the space and staffing available, diverse learners and English learners will be prioritized to return daily instead of the proposed hybrid schedule. All scheduling decisions will be made in accordance with the diverse learner’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and English learners have access to bilingual education services.

Hybrid schedule

In a hybrid schedule, student pods will start and end their week learning independently at home or learning at school two days a week. On Wednesdays, both pods will engage in three hours of real-time virtual classroom instruction together with their teacher. This model will allow students, staff, and families to maintain a stable weekly schedule while affording educators necessary time to plan for various instructional needs.

In this model, a regular class will be divided into two pods of approximately 15 students.

- Pod A will learn at school on Mondays and Tuesdays, engage in three hours of real-time virtual classroom instruction with their teacher and students in Pod B on Wednesdays, and learn independently at home and access digital curriculum resources on Thursdays and Fridays.
- Pod B will learn independently at home and access digital curriculum resources on Mondays and Tuesdays, engage in three hours of real-time virtual classroom instruction with their teacher and students in Pod A on Wednesdays, and learn at school on Thursdays and Fridays.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
POD A					
POD B					

A Day in the Life of a CPS Student Learning at School

Given the health and safety challenges associated with reopening school during a global pandemic, students, staff, and families must be prepared for school to look and feel different next year. Although these changes may feel difficult at first, we believe they are both prudent and necessary to support the safety of our students and staff. While these changes will impact the majority of our students, we also recognize the diverse medical needs of our students, and schools will work with our Office of Diverse Learner Supports and Services department to ensure all students are properly supported.

When students attend school for in-person instruction, this is what they can expect their day to look and feel like:



1

Getting ready for school

Students will complete their required sick screen protocol at home. Students will bring their clean **cloth face covering** with them.



2

Traveling on the school bus

Students wear **cloth face coverings** while on the school bus. School bus aides will wear appropriate PPE and offer students hand sanitizer prior to boarding the bus. Students will sit by themselves or only with their sibling and be spaced to ensure proper social distancing.



3

Arrival at school

Drop-off times may be staggered, and students will enter the school building through assigned entrances alongside their pods in order to ensure proper social distancing. Upon entering the school building, students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.



4

Entering the classroom

Students will go straight to their classrooms. Students sit in **assigned spaces**, **eat meals in their room**, and **stay with their pod for the full school day**.



5

Following classroom procedures

Students and teachers will wear masks at all times, and student-teacher close contact will be limited. Only a limited set of supplies may be shared, and hand sanitizer will be used as needed.



6

Taking restroom/lunch breaks

Pods will have designated bathrooms which will be cleaned frequently throughout the day. Students will need to **wash their hands** thoroughly and use **hand sanitizer** anytime they return to their classroom space.

Students will **eat lunch in their classrooms**, or if space allows, eat lunch in the cafeteria on a staggered schedule. Lunchrooms will need to be **thoroughly cleaned and disinfected** between use.



7

Receiving student services

Related service providers, English learner teachers, diverse learner teachers, and social emotional learning specialists, among others, **will continue to provide student services**.

These staff members will **rotate across assigned pods** to provide services. If they need to see students in a pod not assigned to them, those services will be **provided remotely**, or with **social distancing**. Staff will have appropriate PPE depending on their job duties.



8

Accessing content

Students **remain in their pod** throughout the day, but additional **teachers may rotate across a few pods** to provide instruction across multiple subjects and breaks for classroom teachers.



9

Exiting the building

Students **move through hallways within their pods** and are socially distanced from all other pods.

Students leave the building through the **door assigned to their pod**.



10

Attending out-of-school time

Students can attend out-of-school time (OST) programming. Schools must either maintain classroom pods for OST programs, or form additional, fixed pods specifically for OST programs. Students participating in OST programs must maintain social distance to the extent feasible within their pods, and must either maintain six feet of distance from other OST pods at all times or remain in separate spaces from other pods. OST providers are encouraged to create **virtual adaptations** of programming wherever possible in order to minimize the need for additional pods.

A Day in the Life of a CPS Student Learning at Home

In a hybrid schedule, student pods will start or end their week learning independently at home and accessing digital curriculum resources. On Wednesdays, both pods will engage in three hours of real-time virtual classroom instruction together with their teacher. This model will allow students, staff, and families to maintain a stable weekly schedule while affording educators the necessary time to plan for various instructional needs.



1

Students will work independently and access digital curriculum resources



2

On Wednesdays, students will engage in three hours of real-time instruction with their peers and teacher via Google Meet.



3

Students will work independently and complete work at their own pace.



Full-time remote learning

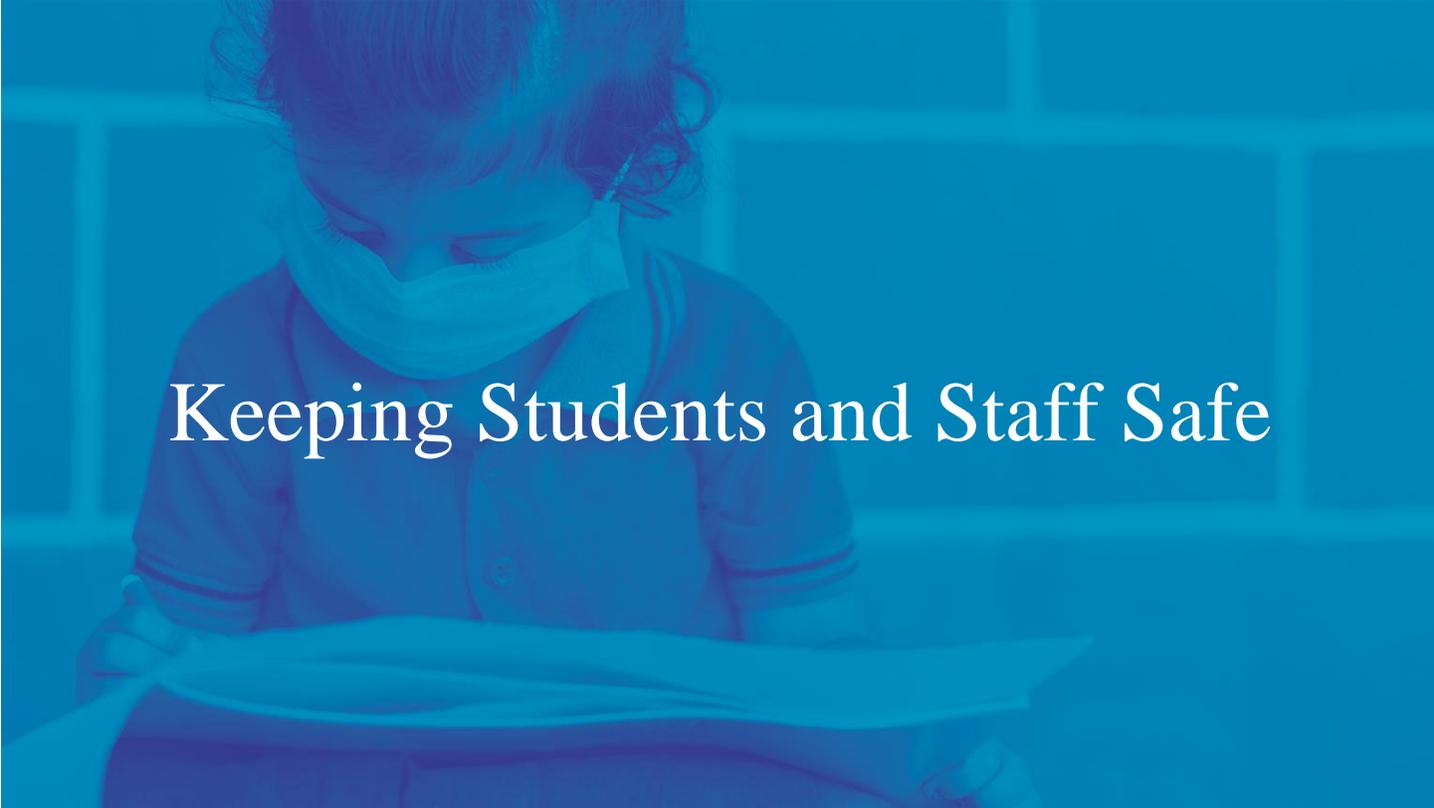
Should public health needs require a pod, a school, or the entire district to suspend in-person instruction, our plan allows for a smooth transition to full-time remote learning. During full-time remote learning, students will participate in five hours of learning that consists mostly of live instruction with their teachers and classmates supplemented by digital curriculum resources, and independent work. Students will access assignments through Google Classroom as part of a wider transition to Google platforms. Additional details on new learning expectations and improvements will be provided in the final reopening framework.

We are proud of the commitment and creativity of CPS educators to meet the needs of students in remote learning. While the CPS community stepped up to help provide meaningful learning experiences for students learning at home, we know that remote learning presented challenges for students. Students from limited-income backgrounds did not have equitable access to devices or reliable high speed internet.

We have been listening to students, parents, teachers, school leaders, and community members during remote learning, and we are working to improve the remote learning experience in the upcoming school year. CPS is taking key steps to improve remote learning for our students. We will continue to build and refine a comprehensive plan over the summer through ongoing stakeholder engagement.

CPS is committed to narrowing the digital divide for our high-need families. Earlier this summer, we launched [Chicago Connected](#), a groundbreaking program that will provide free high-speed internet to approximately 100,000 CPS students and their families. Eligible families were notified via USPS mail, emails, text messages, and robocalls and we encourage all eligible families to take advantage of this free program. We also distributed over 128,000 devices this past spring and will support students and schools this fall in utilizing devices for remote learning engagement.

We learned a lot of lessons during the spring and are working to improve remote learning for our students. In order to ensure a consistent, high-quality learning experience, we will implement common platforms, tools, and schedules. We will help schools build consistent schedules that increase live learning sessions between students and teachers. CPS will also provide teachers with ongoing professional development to support implementation of remote teaching best practices.



Keeping Students and Staff Safe

Keeping students and staff safe

In order to safely provide in-person instruction, our district must follow strict health protocols at all times. Staff and students will complete daily symptom and risk screener online before coming to school, have their temperatures taken, wear face coverings, and students will come to school for only a few days a week to ensure proper social distancing.

Supporting these measures requires a considerable investment, which we are fully committed to making. To ensure the safest possible in-person learning environments, we have purchased more than 1.2 million reusable cloth face coverings to provide to every student and staff member, 42,000 hand sanitizer dispensers, more than 40,000 containers of disinfectant wipes, 22,000 infrared thermometers, hospital-grade disinfectant sprayers, and additional PPE for specialty roles. We're also hiring nearly 400 additional custodians to help carry out stringent cleaning and sanitizing protocols every day in every school.

We must remain vigilant in order to mitigate the spread of the virus. This means that all Chicagoans need to take the following precautions:

- Do not go to school or work if you are feeling sick.
- Continue to wear face coverings whenever you are out in public.

- Maintain social distancing and limit your contact with others.
- Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer containing 60% alcohol if handwashing is not possible.

High-level overview of CPS health and safety protocols

CPS and CDPH have identified the following health protocols that all CPS schools must follow in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19:

- Daily required symptom and risk screener
- On-site care room
- Required face coverings for everyone over the age of two
- Adopting a pod model to allow for social distancing and limit contact with other students and staff
- Consistent hand washing and sanitizing protocols
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting at all of our school sites

Daily required symptom screener

All CPS students, staff, and approved visitors will be asked to complete an online symptom screener questionnaire each day they are planning on entering a CPS building. Parents or a designated family member need to complete the screener on behalf of each child, regardless of age. If any staff member, visitor, or student comes to school showing symptoms, they will be sent home. If any staff member, or visitor comes to school without taking the screener, they will be screened once they arrive at school.

Additionally, all staff, students, and visitors will be asked to undergo daily temperature checks once they arrive at school. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4°F or higher will be sent home—students will be sent to the care room immediately to wait until they are picked up by a parent or guardian within an hour.

On-site care room

Any student who arrives at school with COVID-19 symptoms or develops COVID-19 symptoms during the day will be sent immediately to a school-designated care room while the school calls the child's guardian to be picked up immediately. The child will remain in the care room until their parent or guardian arrives. Care room(s) will undergo daily enhanced routine cleaning.

Required face coverings for anyone over the age of two

In accordance with ISBE's guidance, anyone over the age of two is required to wear a face covering on school grounds. To support this effort, the district has purchased three reusable face coverings

for each student and staff member. The district will also distribute disposable masks for emergency use.

[Medical exceptions](#) to wearing a face covering can be made for employees who apply for an ADA accommodation and for students with a qualifying medical condition documented in their 504/IEP.

Adopting a student pod model to allow for social distancing and limit contact with other students and staff

To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, students and teachers will remain in fixed pods of approximately 15 students once they are in the building and throughout the full day. Teachers will rotate across a minimal number of pods in order to provide students access to all of their core content classes. Pods will stay socially-distanced from one another in the building to avoid intermingling. Students and teachers will remain socially-distanced within each classroom to the extent possible.

Handwashing and sanitizing

All students and staff will be asked to sanitize their hands upon entering the building, after restroom breaks, and when traveling to a different classroom. Hand sanitizer will be provided to every classroom and hand sanitizing stations will be set up near every classroom and high-traffic areas such as entrances and elevators.

What is involved in the district's enhanced routine cleaning and disinfecting program?

As we plan to reopen schools in September, CPS is updating our enhanced routine cleaning and disinfecting program. To protect the health of our staff and students, we will enhance nightly cleaning, increase daytime porter presence, and utilize a trained custodial response team for increased cleaning and disinfection in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 at a school. Schools will be fully cleaned and disinfected daily—including high touch areas—and spot cleaning will be performed throughout the day.

Our enhanced routine cleaning and disinfecting program is based on the latest scientific understanding of COVID-19 and guidance from the CDC and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Protocols for sick students and staff

In accordance with state and federal guidance, school community members who are sick should not return to school until they meet the following requirements, whether or not they were tested for COVID-19:

- at least 10 days have passed since COVID-19 symptoms first appeared; and,
- at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since fever has resolved (i.e. no fever without the use of fever reducing medications) and the other symptoms are improving.

For example, if you have a fever and cough for seven days, you need to stay home for three more days with no fever for a total of ten days. Or, if you have a fever and cough for eight days, you need to stay home for three more days with no fever for a total of 11 days.

Families of children with underlying medical conditions should consult their medical provider prior to attending school, and on an ongoing basis if a child has a significant change in their health condition. Students or staff returning to school after an illness related to COVID-19 should check in with the nurse or building administrator (if a nurse is unavailable) following quarantine.

Individuals who did not have close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection of the relevant space. Close contact means being within six feet of the individual with symptoms for more than 15 consecutive minutes. Those who had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should be quarantined at home and monitored for symptoms for 14 calendar days from the last time they were in close contact with the person with COVID-19.

Cleaning procedures should a student or staff member get sick

If a student or staff member gets sick, a trained custodial response team will disinfect the area in accordance with CDC guidelines using EPA-approved cleaning and disinfecting products. They will wear PPE where appropriate and close off the affected areas for 24 hours to allow for proper ventilation and viral load reduction.

What's next

Public comment period on preliminary reopening framework

CPS considered all of the information gathered from stakeholder engagement and discussions with public health officials and other large school districts while developing its preliminary reopening framework. As we move forward, all parents, students, staff, and community members are encouraged to provide feedback to the preliminary framework—your feedback will be critical in finalizing our plans for reopening:

- Take our survey: Please visit cps.edu/reopening2020survey to submit your feedback on CPS' preliminary reopening framework by July 31, 2020.
- Participate in a virtual community gathering: See schedule and registration information below to join a virtual community gathering to discuss CPS' reopening plans.

Date: Monday, July 27, 2020

Time: 9–10:30 a.m.

Language: English
Registration Link: <https://cpsreopeningconversation1.eventbrite.com>

Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2020
Time: 4–5:30 p.m.
Language: Spanish
Registration Link: <https://cpsreopeningconversation2.eventbrite.com>

Date: Wednesday, July 29, 2020
Time: 9–10:30 a.m.
Language: Spanish
Registration Link: <https://cpsreopeningconversation3.eventbrite.com>

Date: Thursday, July 30, 2020,
Time: 4–5:30 p.m.
Language: English
Registration Link: <https://cpsreopeningconversation4.eventbrite.com>

Date: Friday, July 31, 2020
Time: 9–10:30 a.m.
Language: English
Registration Link: <https://cpsreopeningconversation5.eventbrite.com>

End of July through the first day of school on September 8

We will release our final reopening guidance in early August after hearing public comment. Upon release of district-level guidance, schools will work to complete and release their school-level reopening plans in preparation for the start of school. Please note that we will continue to closely follow the guidance of local, state, and federal public health officials and our reopening plan will be contingent on public health conditions.

It will take all of us working together to make this school year a success and maintain health and safety protocols in our schools. Please help us reopen schools safely by continuing to wear masks, practice social distancing, and following the guidance of our public health officials.