

Middle School FAQ

- 1- What is the plan for phasing in middle school students?
 - a. The central office staff and principals are currently working on logistical details for phasing in students at the middle school level. The phased-in approach will begin with Grade 6 students only.

The tentative start date for Grade 6 students will be Monday, November 16, 2020.

Students in Grade 6 will report to school Monday through Thursday on an A-B-A-B schedule. A student's last name will determine which days he/she will attend. Students with last names that begin A-L will attend school on Mondays and Wednesdays, and students with last names that begin M-Z will attend school on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Friday will be a virtual day.

- 2- When will Grades 7-8 be phased-in to the hybrid schedule?
 - a. A definitive date has not been set for Grades 7-8 at this time. It is our intention to phase in Grades 7-8 during the months of November and December. However, please keep in mind that hybrid learning structures are subject to change based on health metrics and on guidance provided by the Maryland Department of Health and the Allegany County Health Department. Any changes will be communicated to parents through the ACPS website and Blackboard notification system.
- 3- How will it be handled if children within a household have different last names?
 - a. If a parent has middle school children with two different last names that would cause them to attend on different days, the parent should call the principal to arrange whether the siblings will attend on an A Day or B Day. It may not be possible for children within the same household at the elementary and the middle level to attend school on the same days. However, the principal will make this adjustment, if possible.
- 4- What will the daily hybrid schedule look like for middle school students?
 - a. Students will rotate through all of their classes each day. Principals will coordinate the class changes to ensure social distancing in the hallways. Middle schools will be dismissed daily at 12:30 p.m. The arrival and dismissal times will vary for the middle school because of bus schedules. Students will receive a copy of their schedule from their principal once we get closer to the start date for each grade level.
- 5- How will safety measures be handled for the classes?
 - a. The ACPS Recovery Plan outlines the safety and health measures that will be taken. The plan is located on the ACPS website.
- 6- How will hands-on classes like PE, art, music, and technology be handled?
 - a. Safety measures will be followed per the guidance that the MSDE has provided to instructional supervisors. Social distancing protocols will be in place.

7- Will the students have a “live” teacher?

- a. Yes. We will be using concurrent teaching at the middle school level. The teacher will teach the in-person students while simultaneously teaching the students who are attending the school virtually. However, in some cases, a teacher may need to telework, and a substitute teacher or proctor may facilitate the in-person class while the teacher provides the lesson to the students through the Schoology platform.

8- How will breakfast and lunch be handled?

- a. We are still working out the details, but in-person students will have breakfast in the classroom during the first period. Lunch will either be provided in the classroom during the last period or the meal will be given to the student to take with them. We are still finalizing those details to determine the best method for providing the meals for in-person students.

Meal services will still be provided for pickup for students attending school virtually per the current distribution schedule at each school.

9- How will I receive information from the school?

- a. Parents will be provided with a parent letter, COVID symptom checklist, and mask requirements and guidelines. This information will be provided to each grade level after the official announcement of the start date for that grade level is announced. Principals will provide information through Schoology and other communication avenues.

10- Why do I have to complete an opt-out letter now instead of waiting until I hear about my child’s grade level?

- a. Determining how many students will be opting out of in-person learning is critical to determining staffing needs for the hybrid schedule. Some of our teachers will need to telework, and we will need to provide a substitute or proctor to monitor the class.

11- How will bus transportation work?

- a. Only one student is permitted on a seat; however, siblings may sit together. Parents are encouraged to transport their child (ren) to and from school. Principals will help parents understand pickup and drop off times for the students.

12- How will Fridays (Virtual Day) be handled?

- a. Students will log in to Schoology and attend their classes. The students will follow their hybrid schedule on the virtual day.

13- Will students be required to wear a mask?

- a. Yes. The principals will provide more information on the requirements. Information is also posted on the ACPS website.

- 14- Will there be an orientation for Grade 6?
- a. The Central Office staff are meeting with middle school principals next week to discuss the Grade 6 orientation procedure. More information will be forthcoming.
- 15- What happens if I opt-out of in-person learning but decide that I want my child to attend the hybrid schedule?
- a. A parent who has opted out of in-person/hybrid learning can select to “opt in” at the end of nine-week marking period, with a start date activation for the next marking period.
- 16- What happens if the health metrics change and schools must be closed?
- a. If that should occur, the district will return to a fully virtual format. Please keep in mind that hybrid learning structures are subject to change based on health metrics and guidance provided by the Allegany County Health Department. Any changes will be communicated to parents through the ACPS website and messaging system.

Additional FAQs will be added to the document as the need arises. Thank you for your patience and support as we finalize details for the Grade 6 transition.