

A FAMILY GUIDE FOR 2020-21 RETURN TO SCHOOL

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is partnering with families to ensure we keep students and staff safe and healthy as we return to school buildings for learning. Working together, we will follow recommended health guidance that focuses on student health, safety, and emotional well-being.

The information in this guide will help families know what to expect as your children return to school. The guide includes steps families will need to take at home in preparation for the return to school. Please take time to review the information. We recommend talking to your children about how school will be different when they return. Ask them what questions they might have and share how we are all working together to prepare for a safe return. Have your children practice wearing a mask during the day. Discuss the importance of hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes.

Schools will notify families which student groups are returning to school if they selected in-person learning. In-person schedules for student groups will vary. An individual student's schedule, including days of the week and times for in-person attendance, will be communicated directly from the school. Families who selected virtual learning for the school year will be able to remain in virtual learning. Both students participating in virtual learning and in-person learning will receive the highest quality instruction from FCPS teachers.

For details, see the student groups chart on page 2, and the concurrent instruction chart on page 3, or visit www.fcps.edu and search for "Instruction Update for Small Groups."

COVID-19 remains a fluid situation. Our core focus remains the health and safety of students and staff. FCPS is following the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov) guidance for reopening

We are now at Operational Level 2.



schools for in-person learning. Mitigating strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Washing hands often
- Avoiding close contact
- Covering mouth and nose with a mask when around others
- Covering coughs and sneezes
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Monitoring health daily

FCPS will continue to monitor health data and our ability to consistently implement mitigation strategies to contain transmission of the virus within our schools prior to offering in-person instruction for additional student groups.

This document is subject to updates. If and when the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic change, this guidance may also change.

STUDENT GROUPS



GROUP	RETURN DATE (TENTATIVE)	STUDENTS
①	October 5, COHORT	Specialized high school career preparatory programs.
②	October 19 OPERATIONAL LEVEL 2 COHORT LEARNING	Preschool Autism Classrooms (PAC). Early Childhood Class-based (ECCB). Specialized high school career preparatory programs.
③	October 26 OPERATIONAL LEVEL 2 COHORT LEARNING	Elementary Comprehensive Services Sites (CSS). Key Center. Kilmer Center. Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE). Recently-Arrived English Learners (ELs) in Grades 3-12. Specialized high school career preparatory programs. Adapted Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Autism Classrooms (EAC), including students accessing the general education curriculum. Intellectual Disabilities (ID) K-12 Classrooms. Intellectual Disabilities Severe (IDS) K-12 Classrooms. Students receiving Noncategorical Elementary (NCE) services who are instructed with the adapted curriculum in a special education classroom.
④	October 26 OPERATIONAL LEVEL 2 COHORT LEARNING	Burke School - Elementary Program only. Specialized high school career preparatory programs.
⑤	To be determined OPERATIONAL LEVEL 2 COHORT LEARNING	Early Head Start - Infants and toddlers. PreK - Three and four year olds. Kindergarten. Intensive Support Needs: Students instructed with modified curriculum for at least 50 percent of their core courses and instructed in special education settings 50 percent or more of their instructional day. Specialized Center-Based Programs: Special Education Vision Program at Robinson. Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing (DHH) Programs at Canterbury Woods ES, Frost MS, and Woodson HS – Students with 50 percent or more of core content areas in Special Education settings.
⑥	November 30 OPERATIONAL LEVEL 2 COHORT LEARNING	Grades 1-2. Specialized Career Centers – Special Education Davis and Pulley Centers with target learner profile.
⑦	January 12 Tentative Date OPERATIONAL LEVEL 3 HYBRID LEARNING	Elementary School Grades 3-6 (including 6th graders who attend middle schools). Secondary Public Day Programs – Special Education at Burke MS, Cedar Lane, and Quander Road. Davis and Pulley Center students with target learner profile.
⑧	January 26 Tentative Date OPERATIONAL LEVEL 3 HYBRID LEARNING	Middle and High School Grades 7-12. Middle and High School students at Davis and Pulley Career Centers.

CONCURRENT INSTRUCTION

As additional grade levels return to school, we will employ concurrent instruction for in-person students, a model in which students receive two days of teacher-led instruction in the school building and two days of teacher-led instruction at home. The concurrent instruction model is currently being piloted in several schools.

Concurrent instruction maximizes teacher-led instruction (two days in person, two days virtual) by allowing in-person students to “log into” class on at-home days. Teacher-led concurrent instruction is the best instructional model for our in-person students.

ES Concurrent Instructional Schedule				
	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A	In-School	In-School	Online	Online
Group B	Online	Online	In-School	In-School
Group C <i>(full time online)</i>	Online	Online	Online	Online

Elementary school concurrent schedule: Two days of instruction in the school and two days of virtual instruction at home – both led by the teacher.

Mondays: Teachers will use for planning. Students will have independent work day.

MS/HS Concurrent Instructional Schedule				
	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A	Periods 1,3,5,7 In-School	Periods 2,4,6,8 In-School	Periods 1,3,5,7 Online	Periods 2,4,6,8 Online
Group B	Periods 1,3,5,7 Online	Periods 2,4,6,8 Online	Periods 1,3,5,7 In-School	Periods 2,4,6,8 In-School
Group C <i>(full time online)</i>	Periods 1,3,5,7 Online	Periods 2,4,6,8 Online	Periods 1,3,5,7 Online	Periods 2,4,6,8 Online

Middle and High school concurrent schedule: Two days of instruction in the school and two days of virtual instruction at home – both led by the teacher.

Mondays: Teachers will use for planning. Students will have independent work day.

Full-Time Virtual

Students who prefer to continue full-time virtual learning will receive four days of teacher-led instruction while learning from home.

Temperature Checks



For students returning in Cohort 2, FCPS will be doing daily temperature checks as outlined below. Please be aware that these protocols may change based on public health guidance. As more students return, daily temperature checks for all students may need to be reconsidered.

Bus Stop - FCPS is currently taking temperatures at the bus stop. Parents and guardians of elementary students in grades PreK-6 and students identified as **Must Be Met** will be required to accompany their child at the bus stop each day. **Must Be Met** students include those students whose IEP indicates they must be accompanied to the bus stop in both the morning and afternoon. Students demonstrating a temperature greater than or equal to 100.4° Fahrenheit will not be able to board the bus and will be sent home with the parent/guardian.

School Entry - Temperatures will be taken for all students entering the building. Any student demonstrating a temperature greater than or equal to 100.4° Fahrenheit will be escorted or sent to the predetermined isolation room for further screening. For any student being sent home, parents/guardians or approved designee are to pick up their student within one hour.

During School - Temperatures will be taken throughout the day for any student who:

- **Arrives late to school**
- **Takes off their face mask** during the day, after arriving at school, and refuses to put it back on. This requirement does not apply when students are eating and drinking, sleeping, or during exercise, under the supervision of school staff.

At any time, if the temperature of the student is greater than or equal to 100.4° Fahrenheit, the student will be taken to an isolation room for further screening. Students will be escorted by adults who will maintain six feet of social distancing. School Health Room staff will then follow the Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) established protocols.

Cleaning Protocols



FCPS cleaning personnel clean and sanitize the school building regularly. Custodians use effective disinfectant and sanitizing products every day. The following steps are performed to maximize our sanitizing efforts:

Sanitizing and disinfecting restrooms more frequently, including thoroughly disinfecting and sanitizing all surfaces, doors, toilets, and handles, and ensuring that all supplies are always fully stocked.

Increased cleaning to high-touch surfaces/points such as door handles, glass, elevator buttons, doors, tables, chairs, and light switches. Daytime custodians have been instructed to continuously disinfect and sanitize all touch points throughout the day.

FCPS has updated health and safety guidance for air ventilation in schools. A comprehensive review of school ventilation systems was performed to ensure facilities are operated in accordance with CDC and American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers guidance and the manufacturer's recommendations. Assessments and improvements include:

- Ensured all schools and offices have sufficient air ventilation
- Purchased initial allocation of MERV 13 filters (based on availability) and upgrading school HVAC systems where possible
- Purchased HEPA filters and air purifiers for use in select areas
- Continued review of the use of UV-C lighting in classrooms and ventilation systems and its best application
- Third-party health and safety verification for all buildings

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Lunch



Students will eat meals in classrooms in small groups whenever possible. FCPS will offer grab and go lunches for all students. If students use the cafeteria, seating will be assigned. Masks will be required when students wait in the cafeteria line, but not required when eating. For students participating in virtual learning, grab and go meals are still available to all FCPS students at school sites and on bus routes.

Restrooms

FCPS cleaning personnel will be sanitizing and disinfecting restrooms more frequently. Their cleaning protocol will include thoroughly disinfecting and sanitizing all surfaces, doors, toilets, and handles, and ensuring that all supplies are always fully stocked.

Library



School librarians will provide library services and instruction for students virtually, in their classrooms, or in the library following social distancing and safety guidelines. Library staff will assist students in PreK through grade 2 with book checkout. Students in grades 3 through 12 will use self-checkout stations that limit contact. Schools have the option to provide curbside checkout to students not attending school in person. Books that are returned to the library will have a 7-day isolation period before they are available again to students. School staff will communicate how virtual students can check out books.

School Health Room

Support to students in the health room will continue to be provided by the School Health Aide. FCPS personnel will staff the isolation room.

Students with Individualized Health or Action Plans who require specialized care, medication administration and emergency care will be seen in the health room. Parents will be required to bring in medications needed to support their student during the school day prior to or on the first day of school.

Recess

Shared equipment, such as playground equipment, balls, ropes, and other items will not be used during recess. School staff will encourage students to play games or activities that minimize close physical contact and allow for social distancing unless otherwise directed by an FCPS staff member. Face coverings may be temporarily removed during recess, while under the supervision of school staff, as long as social distancing can be maintained at a distance of 10 feet or more at all times. Students will wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds before returning to class.

Health Screening Commitment Form

Parents/guardians who chose in-school instruction for their child will be required to complete a [Parent/Guardian Health Screening Commitment form](#) as students are phased back into in-person learning. The document indicates the parental/guardian's agreement and commitment to completing a daily health screening prior to sending the student to school and also to keep ill students at home. These health screenings will be done on an honor basis and will not be required to be submitted to the school each day.

Bus Transportation



Schools will be sending bus transportation information to parents before the start of in-person learning. Seating capacity will be reduced to allow for social distancing. Temperature checks will be done at the bus stop. As more students return, daily temperature checks for all students may need to be reconsidered.

- Parents and guardians of elementary students in grades PreK-6 and students identified as **Must Be Met** will be required to accompany their child at the bus stop each day. **Must Be Met** students include those students whose IEP indicates they must be accompanied to the bus stop (and school if they walk or parent transports) in both the morning and afternoon.
- Students demonstrating a temperature greater than or equal to 100.4° Fahrenheit will not be able to board the bus and will be sent home with the parent/guardian.
- A student not accompanied by a parent/guardian registering a temperature will not be able to board the bus, however school staff will contact the parent to meet the student at the bus stop.
- Students are reminded to wear a face coverings when riding the school bus.

- Students will be required to sit in seats as marked on the school bus.
- Bus stop information will be available at the school and in [ParentVUE](#).
- **Here Comes the Bus** app is available and provides school bus arrival information.
- As students return to the school building for face to face instruction, schools will operate on the 2020-21 bell schedule (check your school website for the bell schedule) until such time it is necessary to transition to the hybrid bell schedule (anticipated by second semester). We do not expect changes to the bell schedules for students in Group 5 or Group 6 as they return to school throughout November. As larger groups of students return for in-person learning, we do anticipate changes to the bell schedule, as shared during the [School Board Work Session on June 15, 2020](#). We do not know the exact date when bell schedules will change as it is dependent on how many families select in-person learning for students. The bell schedule adjustment will also be necessary due to social distancing requirements which limit capacity on school buses. A bell schedule change will impact both in-person learning as well as students who are doing full-time virtual learning. Schools will update families as decisions are made.

School Arrival and Dismissal

Each school has an updated arrival and dismissal process. Bus transportation students will not arrive and depart from the same areas as walking students, carpool-kiss and ride and before/after school private providers. Students who arrive by car or walk to school will have their temperature checked upon arrival. Students who arrive by private before care providers will have their temperature checked upon arrival. Some schools have two arrival and departure areas, check with your school to see their practice for arrival and dismissal.

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Face Coverings/Masks



All students who are two years of age and older are required to wear face coverings (cloth or disposable) while on school property (including inside FCPS facilities, during FCPS-provided transportation and school sponsored activities). Face coverings will be provided to students unable to provide their own. Any student requesting an exemption to wearing a face covering due to a medical exemption will provide the school a written statement from his or her physician confirming that not wearing a face covering is medically necessary. As a matter of public health, an exemption from the face covering requirement may alter or preclude access to face-to-face instructional programming.

Regulation 2109

Social Distancing at School



Social distancing should be maintained as much as possible. In limited cases, exceptions may occur when a student requires support for activities of daily living that may make staff unable to maintain a distance of six feet or caring for infants. In all other cases, six feet of social distancing should be maintained as much as possible.

- Six foot separation wherever possible; limited mixing among student groups.
- Social distancing on buses in accordance with health and safety protocols.
- Desks/seats will be separated by up to a six feet distance, facing same direction.
- Students will eat meals in classrooms whenever possible. Each school will determine their best meal distribution process.
- Student traffic patterns in hallways will be set up to maintain social distancing, including during arrival and dismissal.
- Students transitioning to after school care will also follow traffic patterns in the hallways to maintain social distance.

Please discuss the importance of maintaining social distance with your child. It is important for children to understand that common interactions (holding hands, hugs, high-fives, sitting close to other students) are not allowed when social distancing. School officials also will do their best to remind students of the need to maintain social distancing. That said, parents should recognize that maintaining social distancing will be challenging for many students and that mishaps are likely to occur among students when school officials are not present.

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Handwashing



Students will wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing; before eating, and upon entering classrooms. There will be breaks provided during the day for handwashing. Automatic hand sanitizer dispensing stands have been placed at school entrances and 1-gallon pump containers of hand sanitizer are available in all classrooms.

School Supplies and Communal Classroom Items



Students will be required to label and maintain their own personal set of required classroom supplies, keep them in their backpack and take them to and from school each day.

Electronic devices, toys, books, games or learning aids are not to be shared unless they can be cleaned or disinfected.

Students should bring their own water bottle for use during the day. Water fountains can be used to refill water bottles if practical, but students and staff should not be drinking directly from any water fixtures; individual water bottles should be used instead.

Whenever possible, and when developmentally appropriate, supplies/school materials should be placed directly into backpacks by students.

Student Laptop

Students returning for in-person school should plan to bring their FCPS-assigned laptops with them to school and take that laptop home each day to support digital learning activities in school as assigned by their teacher. Extra laptops may not be available in all classrooms. The laptop should be fully charged each morning to ensure it is ready to use when the students get into the classroom. This helps limit the number of shared surfaces among students. Parents should not spray disinfectant spray on the device or apply hand sanitizer directly on the device as it may damage the electronics. Parents may use an alcohol wipe or disinfectant wipe to gently wipe down the laptop and keyboard if necessary.

Visitors to FCPS Facilities

When possible (unless an emergency) visitors must schedule appointments prior to visiting a school by contacting the main office. All visitors will be required to complete a health screening questionnaire and must submit to a temperature check prior to entering the building. All visitors are required to wear a face covering (cloth or disposable) while on school property and inside FCPS facilities. Visitors who do not have face coverings will be provided a disposable mask upon entering a school. Visitor access should be limited to essential activities.

IF SICK AT SCHOOL

Becoming Ill While at School



Students demonstrating fever greater than or equal to 100.4 Fahrenheit, new chills, new cough, new sore throat, new muscle aches, new loss of taste or smell, nausea, or diarrhea will be sent home from school. Parents/guardians will be notified and are expected to pick up their child within one hour of notification. Parents are to check in with the front office.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, FCPS follows protocols provided by the FCHD. Each case will be handled individually in accordance with the FCHD established communicable disease and contact tracing protocols. FCPS will follow health department guidelines for communicating information to parents/guardians. For more information visit www.vdh.virginia.gov.

Student Illness at Home

If a student becomes ill at home, the student should stay home from school. Parents need to contact the school and report the reason for their child's absence. Parents will need to follow established procedures when contacting the school regarding student illness. Parents/guardians will be required to complete and return the **Permission to Return to School/Child Care Form** when the student returns. The form will be completed by the health care provider and will indicate to the school when the student may safely return.

Returning to School After Illness

Families will receive guidance from the FCHD Public Health Nurses (PHNs) and School Health Aides (SHAs), identified as the school health team as to when their student can return to in-person learning.

Students who are showing signs of COVID Like Illness may not return to school until:

- Student has tested negative for COVID-19 **OR**
- A healthcare provider has seen the student and documented a reason for the symptoms other than COVID-19 **OR**
- **All** of these are true:
 - 1) at least 10 days since the start of symptoms **AND**
 - 2) fever free off anti-fever medicines for 24 hours **AND**
 - 3) symptoms are getting better

Students who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, may not return until:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started **AND**
- The student has had no fever or anti-fever medicines (ex: Tylenol, Ibuprofen) for 24 hours **AND**
- The student's symptoms are getting better

Students who have been exposed to COVID-19:

If someone in the household has been diagnosed with COVID-19, or the student is exposed, the student must remain home for 14 days after their last exposure to the household member.

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IF SICK AT SCHOOL (CONTINUED)

Response to COVID Case in a Classroom

With one confirmed case of COVID, the classroom will transition to 100% virtual learning for up to 14 days from the date of onset. FCHD Public Health Nurses (PHNs) and School Health Aides (SHAs), identified as the school health team, will support the contact tracing process in our schools during this time. School staff, students and additional staff, such as transportation staff and related services providers, that are identified by the PHN will be transitioned to distance learning or teleworking as part of this cohort. These individuals will receive notification, as directed by the FCHD. The community will also be notified that a COVID case has occurred in a cohort and the contact tracing process has been initiated.

Upon the conclusion of contact tracing, cleaning and disinfecting, students and staff in the cohort will be notified as to when they will return to in-person learning. The length of time for this process may be shorter than 14 days based on results of contact investigation and tracing by the FCHD. The community will also be notified that the contact tracing has been completed and of any further recommendations.

Response to Two or More COVID Cases in a School

As related to school closure, FCPS will work closely with the FCHD to make the determination as to whether or not an entire school will be required to transition to distance learning based on contact tracing. Should multiple linked cases occur, the community will receive immediate communication of an outbreak and all students would be transitioned to distance learning for a period of time. A follow up communication will go out to the community when in-person learning may resume, as recommended by the FCHD.

RESOURCES

Mental Health and Wellness

All children and youth face challenges from time to time managing emotions such as feeling depressed, anxious, or worried. As students prepare to return to in-person learning, these emotions may be heightened. School counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers are available to support all students as they transition back to their school buildings. Every school in FCPS has at least one counselor, psychologist, and social worker. These professionals can provide guidance for families and support for students who may be struggling with anxiety, mood, behavior, or peer or family interactions. They can also connect students and families with available community resources.

Contact information for your child's school counselor, school social worker, and school psychologist can be found by visiting your school's website.

If you or someone you care about is experiencing a mental health crisis, or if you believe there may be a mental health emergency, call 911. Additional resources are available at www.fcps.edu and search [Mental Health Emergency Services](#).

Helpful Links



Many resources have been developed to support students and families with learning this year. Visit www.fcps.edu and search:

["Instruction Update for Small Groups"](#)

["Mental Health Resources and Emergency Services Information"](#)

["Parent/Guardian Health Screening Commitment form"](#)

["Return to School"](#)

["Student Health and Safety Guidance Document"](#)

Plus

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[Permission to Return to School/Child Care Form](#)

[Virginia Department of Health](#)