

Please bear in mind that, these days, almost everything is subject to change. If we aim to be as prepared as possible, as soon as possible, then starting the 2020-21 year could seem less overwhelming. The unanswered questions and potential “what if’s” of starting school during a pandemic create legitimate anxiety for educators and families, and there is no consensus about the best way to navigate this crisis. We are focusing on providing teachers with relevant and updated information about evolving plans for the upcoming school year with the understanding that, as previously stated, almost everything is subject to change. Much is dependent on student numbers, and, right now, there are many registered students whose parents have not made the choice between online only and in-person/blended instruction. On top of that, overall enrollment numbers are also down (though a significant number of “late” registrations is typical).

1. **Social Distancing:** The district’s commitment to safety will not change, but it could change the logistics of what school will look like in some buildings. Social distancing isn’t optional. Final enrollment numbers are needed to determine how many students are committed to in-person learning in each of the buildings.
2. **Simultaneous In-person and Remote Instruction:** There is not a district-wide policy for teachers to teach both online and in-person classes simultaneously. Schools have options, and teachers should be working with their principals to figure out what works best for their buildings. A school may have adequate numbers of online students to support dedicated online teachers (or, at the secondary level, dedicated online-only class periods). Schools may work together to combine online students (so a teacher from one school may have online students from additional schools – the district can assist with this by sharing enrollment numbers from all schools). Teachers within a school may work together to share online students for specific subject areas, and having both online and in-person students does not necessitate trying to teach both at the same time (for example, teachers may record lessons to post for online students). That said, if a teacher wants to teach both in person and online simultaneously, that is an option as well. The main focus in this process is for teachers and administrators to be working together—none of these options is ideal, and there will be variation in what works best for different subjects and levels, but without teacher input and buy-in, successful implementation will not be possible. If teacher schedules at your building have been, or are being, determined without input from teachers, please let us know as soon as possible.
3. **Remote-Only Teachers:** Previously, the district had planned on having teachers apply for any remote-only positions in the same way that teachers apply for any other internal jobs. That process has shifted, and building principals will likely be responsible for these positions in the same way that principals have always been responsible to move teachers within their own buildings. If buildings cooperate to share remote learners, they will need to cooperate to determine staffing.
4. **CARES Act:** We have covered this before but it bears repeating—the CARES Act provides ten days (intent is two weeks of continuous work days) of coverage for a teacher’s COVID-related absences—these days are to be applied prior to the use of any benefit days. Once the ten days have been used, appropriate benefit days (personal illness or family illness) will need to be utilized. We encourage all teachers to participate in the Sick Leave Bank in order to provide a safety net for teachers who need additional personal illness days after they have exhausted their own. Workman’s Compensation does not cover illness.