



NEWS RELEASE

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BCPS to begin phased-in hybrid school reopening on Mar. 1

*Families may continue full virtual instruction
Most employees to return on Feb. 16*

Towson, MD – Baltimore County Public Schools released today a phased-in reopening timeline for students whose families chose hybrid learning, as well as for all employees. Hybrid learning includes two in-person learning days and three virtual learning days per week.

Families who chose hybrid learning will receive their child's group assignment of Cohort A or Cohort B prior to their child's return date, which varies by student group. Families also have the option to continue full virtual instruction.

"We have heard loud and clear that some families are ready for in-person learning," said BCPS Superintendent Dr. Darryl L. Williams. "While school operations will look different as we implement the CDC's recommended practices for health and safety, I look forward to greeting students and staff as they return. I also commend staff across the organization for their hard work to prepare for reopening, despite not only the challenges of COVID-19, but also the ongoing and long-term effects of the ransomware attack on our systems."

The timelines and schedule changes are outlined below.

Phased-in Hybrid Learning Timeline for Students

The week of Mar. 1 (Phases I and II):

- Students in Public Separate Day Schools: Battle Monument, Maiden Choice, Ridge Ruxton, and White Oak schools (Phase I)
- Students in Preschool – Grade 2: including students in 3-year-old programs; 4-year-old programs; PreKindergarten; Kindergarten; Grades 1 and 2; and Grade 3 students in a Grades 2/3 class in a special education regional program (Phase II)

The week of Mar. 15 (Phase III):

- Students in Grades 3-12 whose Individualized Education Program includes a least restrictive environment that is primarily outside of the general education classroom setting
 - Communication and Learning Support (CLS)
 - Functional Academic Learning Support (FALS)
 - Learning Support for Students who are Deaf and Hard-of Hearing (DHH)
 - Social Emotional Learning Support (SEL)
 - Social Communication Learning Support (SCLS)
- Students in select Career and Technical Education programs that require hands-on learning experiences (schools will contact families)
 - Academy of Health Professions
 - Apprenticeship Maryland
 - Automotive Service Technology
 - Aviation Technology
 - Baking and Pastry Arts (ACF)
 - Carpentry, Electrical, Plumbing, HVAC, Building and Construction Trades
 - Construction Design and Management
 - Cosmetology Careers
 - Culinary Arts (American Culinary Federation – ACF)
 - Diesel Truck and Power Systems Technology
 - Engineering Careers
 - Food and Beverage Management (ProStart)
 - Graphic/Print Communications Technology
 - Information Technology: Networking
 - Interactive Media Production
 - Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH)
 - Project Lead The Way: Biomedical Sciences
 - Project Lead The Way: Engineering

The week of Mar. 22 (partial Phase IV)

- Remaining students in Grades 6 and 9

The week of Apr. 6 (remaining students in Phase IV)

- Remaining students in Grades 3 – 5; 7 – 8; and 10 – 12

Social Distancing Through Cohorts for Hybrid Learning

Students whose families chose hybrid learning will be assigned to Cohort A or B based on their address. Students whose families chose to continue fully virtual learning or who did not respond to the questionnaire will be assigned to Cohort C.

Students assigned to Cohort A will come to school on Monday and Tuesday. Students assigned to Cohort B will come to school on Thursday and Friday. On the other three days, students in Cohorts A and B will continue virtual learning. Wednesday will continue to be a day of independent (asynchronous) virtual instruction for all students, with scheduled small groups.

Return Timeline for BCPS Employees

Most employees will return to schools and offices on Feb. 16, with the following exceptions:

- To prepare for the first practice for fall athletics on Feb. 13, athletic directors will return on Feb. 1. High school coaches have a meeting on Feb. 10.
- Elementary Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO) 10-month staff will return on Feb. 22.
- Secondary Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO) 10-month staff will return on Mar. 8.
- Elementary Education Support Professionals of Baltimore County (ESPBC) 10-month staff will return on Feb. 22.
- Secondary Education Support Professionals of Baltimore County (ESPBC) 10-month staff will return on March 8.
- Wednesdays will continue to be asynchronous with opportunities for small group instruction. Staff will have the option to work remotely.

Schedule Changes for Elementary Schools

- Mar. 1: All elementary schools return to using 2019-2020 start times for all students.
- Mar. 1 – 12: Students in Preschool through Grade 2 will have a 2-hour early dismissal, based on 2019-2020 dismissal times.
- Mar. 15: All elementary schools (Preschool – Grade 5) return to a full-day schedule following 2019-2020 dismissal times.

Schedule Changes for Middle and High Schools

- Mar. 15: All middle and high schools return to 2019-2020 arrival and dismissal times.
- The number of periods in a student schedule will remain the same as the first semester. Times for classes will be adjusted to fit into a typical 6.5-hour student day, and individual times for virtual and in-person classes will be shared with students and families.

Resources for Families and Staff

Schools and offices will be required to follow five safety practices recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: consistent and correct use of face coverings; social distancing to the extent possible; frequent hand washing and covering of coughs and sneezes; cleaning and disinfecting; and contact tracing led by the Office of Health Services in collaboration with the local health department.

Any individual school-based plans for implementing strategies will be shared with families prior to student return.

For more information, the [BCPS website](#) provides the following resources for families and staff:

- The [Student Hybrid Reopening Timeline](#)
- The [BCPS Reopening Plan](#), which includes health and safety details as well as a reopening plan for each phase
- The BCPS [Parent University InfoCenter](#), allowing users to find reopening information by topic
- The BCPS [COVID-19 Info webpage](#), which provides videos, summaries, and frequently asked questions

The BCPS Reopening Design Team and the COVID-19 Task Force are continuing to gather feedback via reopening@bcps.org.

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[Baltimore County Public Schools](#), the nation's 25th largest school system, is focused on raising the bar and closing gaps to prepare our students for the future. Thanks to innovative and talented leaders, teachers, staff, and students, BCPS celebrates [many honors](#).