Frequently Asked Questions
2020-2021 Return-to-School Process

GENERAL INFORMATION

What instructional models will the district offer?
There are three instructional models for both the elementary and secondary levels.

Elementary Option #1 Hybrid
Elementary students will be grouped into two cohorts.

Cohort Group #1:
• Will attend school in person on Monday and Thursday of each week.
• Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday will be a blend of synchronous (live) and asynchronous (self-paced) online instruction provided primarily by the same Fox Chapel Area teachers students work with during face-to-face days.

Cohort Group #2:
• Will attend school in person on Tuesday and Friday of each week.
• Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday will be a blend of synchronous and asynchronous online instruction provided primarily by the same Fox Chapel Area teachers students work with during face-to-face days.

The two cohorts of students at the elementary level are being split by full classes, so different classes will be meeting in person on different days.

The division for elementary cohorts will be respectful to families who have students in other buildings as much as possible and will be balanced according to a host of student indicators. Cohort assignments will also afford elementary siblings to be able to attend school on the same days.

Elementary Option #2 FCA Virtual: Blended Learning (Fully Online)
FCA Virtual: Blended Learning – synchronous and asynchronous instruction using Fox Chapel Area teachers and curricula (must be available during the school day for online instruction).

Elementary Option #3 FCA Virtual: Completely Asynchronous Learning (Fully Online)
FCA Virtual: Completely Asynchronous Learning – includes options for students to schedule meetings with Fox Chapel Area educators.

Secondary Option #1 Hybrid
Hybrid instruction includes a mix of in-person and online instruction. Students will be grouped
into cohorts and assigned to report to school on designated days.

Cohort Group #1 (Last Names A-L):
• Will attend school in person on Monday and Thursday of each week.
• Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday will be a blend of synchronous (live) and asynchronous (self-paced) online instruction provided by Fox Chapel Area teachers.

Cohort Group #2 (Last Names M-Z):
• Will attend school in person on Tuesday and Friday of each week.
• Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday will be a blend of synchronous and asynchronous online instruction provided by Fox Chapel Area teachers.

Families with multiple last names will default to the oldest student in the household’s last name in an effort to keep siblings in all schools attending in-person instruction on the same days.

Middle school and high school students will be able to receive synchronous instruction from their teachers on the days they are not in the building.

If a student in the hybrid model would need to be quarantined, he or she would continue to follow his/her schedule in the online environment during the quarantine period.

Secondary Option #2 FCA Virtual: Blended Learning (Fully Online)
FCA Virtual: Blended Learning (synchronous and asynchronous) with curricula provided by Fox Chapel Area teachers.

Secondary Option #3 Fox Chapel Area Online (Fully Online)
Fox Chapel Area Online (FCAO) asynchronous curricula facilitated by Fox Chapel Area educators. FCAO includes a combination of Edgenuity curricula and Fox Chapel Area teacher-designed curricula in Schoology.

Are students able to transition between instructional models?
Should it become necessary, students will be able to change instructional models. We do ask that any transition only occur after a nine-week grading period is over, if possible.

Under what circumstances would the district change its instructional delivery model?
The district will make informed decisions about what instructional options are appropriate given the current conditions in our community. These decisions will be predicated on the district’s ability to adhere to protocols outlined in our Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan, available at www.fcasd.edu/coronavirus. This plan was informed by guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Pennsylvania Departments of Health and Education, and the Allegheny County Health Department, and changes in the instructional delivery model may occur based on future guidance.
The following examples illustrate circumstances in which the district would alter the plan for all students or an individual school building:

1. Community spread of the illness in classrooms, individual school buildings, and/or across the district;
2. Inability to procure hand sanitizer and dispensers or other cleaning or sanitation supplies;
3. Staffing needs such as teacher, bus driver, food service, and custodial staff shortages due to sickness or quarantine;
4. Guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Allegheny County Department of Health, and/or the Pennsylvania Department of Education; and
5. Large numbers of families opting for online instruction due to changing conditions.

**Will special area classes be offered at the elementary level in a fully online environment?**
Yes, special area classes will be offered.

**What about interventions and enrichments?**
All schools will facilitate district programming, including special classes, social/emotional learning, academic interventions, English learners, special education, and gifted programming, in both the hybrid and fully online environments.

**What if I need a device for my child’s learning?**
Devices (iPads and Chromebooks) will be offered to all Fox Chapel Area students. They will come preloaded with all the software and apps that students will need. More information on device distribution will be sent the week of Aug. 17.

**DAILY PROCEDURES**

**Will the district offer bus service?**
The district will offer bus service for all students, as it has done in the past.

**Are students to wear face coverings on buses?**
Students must wear face coverings on buses, as well as at their bus stops.

**Will bus drivers be required to wear face coverings?**
Bus drivers and aides will be asked to wear a mask or face shield when students are entering and exiting the school vehicle, and to the extent feasible when the bus is in motion.

**Will students be socially distanced on buses?**
Students will be spaced out on buses to the maximum extent feasible. Siblings will be encouraged to sit together, and seat assignments may be provided to students.

**How will buses be cleaned and sanitized?**
Drivers will be assigned to spray all high-touch surfaces with disinfectant between runs.

**Are students and staff required to wear face coverings in school?**
All students are required to wear face coverings on district property. Any student who cannot wear a mask or face shield due to a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability is not required to wear a face covering. Exceptions to the face covering requirement will be documented in a student’s IEP, 504, or another individual student health plan. Students are not required to wear face coverings when eating or drinking.

**What if my student forgets his or her mask?**
Extra masks for students who forget or need a mask will be available.

**How will students be instructed about proper hand washing and hygiene techniques?**
Hand washing/sanitizing will occur frequently, including upon entry to the building, before and after meals or snacks, and after any transition from one building space to another. Instruction will be provided to students on hand washing, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette on a regular basis.

**Will water fountains be in use?**
Water fountains in each building will be turned off and covered. Each building will have touchless water filling stations installed as they become available. Students are encouraged to bring water from home.

**How will cafeterias be utilized?**
Elementary and middle school students will be seated by cohorts, and students are not permitted to mix with other cohorts. High school students will be required to distance to the maximum extent feasible.

Students will provide their last name and PIN verbally to the cashier instead of entering it on the PIN pad to eliminate the high-touch area. Cash payments are discouraged.

Alternative scheduling will be considered to decrease the number of students in lunch periods. In fact, both the middle and high schools have added additional lunch periods in an effort to decrease the number of students eating at one time.

Students will use disposable flatware, trays, and drink cartons to the extent feasible. Where feasible, “grab and go” meals will be encouraged.

**How will classroom materials be safely handled?**
Sharing of high-touch materials will be limited to extent possible (art supplies, math manipulatives, science equipment, etc.), and the use of supplies and equipment will be limited to one group of children at a time and cleaned and disinfected between uses.

The district will do its best to procure additional manipulative materials for instruction.

Collaborative projects, experiments, and inquiries will be adjusted to limit student physical interaction but maintain student engagement and learning.

The use of communal spaces, such as science labs, will be restricted to assigned times and cleaned and disinfected after use.

**Will recess and physical education classes still occur?**
Recess will still occur while maintaining proper social distancing and hand washing procedures by providing individual activities that are enjoyable and encourage physical activity.

Recess times may be staggered throughout the day, and specific areas may be assigned to cohorts to minimize exposure to students in other classes.

Activities in the gym will maintain social distancing when possible, requiring curricular adjustments to limit student contact and the sharing of equipment.

Physical education teachers will utilize activities that focus on student wellness, such as mindfulness, stress release, and fitness that accommodate social distancing to the extent feasible.

Physical education classes will be outdoors when possible.

**Will visitors be allowed?**
Non-essential visitation will not be permitted. Essential visitors, such as outside student service providers, maintenance, and safety personnel, will adhere to health and safety procedures, including screenings, mask requirements, and limited access to the building.

**What if my child forgets something at home? Can I bring it to school?**
Dropping off of lunches and other school materials is discouraged. When necessary, items dropped off during the school day will be left in the school lobby, and district personnel will sanitize and distribute them to the student.

**Can community members access Fox Chapel Area School District campuses during the school day?**
All district facilities, including outdoor spaces and tracks, may be temporarily closed to all non-school personnel during the school day and during athletic practices and games. This is to further minimize risk to students and staff while they are on school grounds. The district will be utilizing outdoor spaces for instruction, lunches, and other school activities as weather permits.
Will before- and after-school child care be allowed?
Current before- and after-school child care services held at district buildings can continue. All child care providers will adhere to district procedures and protocols.

Can I schedule a face-to-face meeting with my child’s teacher?
Meetings with parents and families will be conducted virtually to the extent feasible.

SAFETY & HEALTH

How will school buses and buildings be cleaned and sanitized?
Cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and objects within the school and on school buses will occur daily by custodial staff. Spaces, including classroom and common areas; offices; Restrooms; door handles; and school buses, will be cleaned and sanitized. Teachers will have access to cleaning supplies that can be used as needed.

How will staff and students be screened for COVID-19 symptoms?
Symptom screening should be done by all parents/guardians and staff each morning before the school day. Students and staff members will adhere to the guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Health below. Anyone exhibiting 1 or more symptoms in Group A or 2 or more Group B symptoms should not report to school or work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 or more symptoms</td>
<td>2 or more symptoms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fever (100.4 or higher)</td>
<td>Sore throat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>Runny nose/congestion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shortness of breath</td>
<td>Chills</td>
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<td>Difficulty breathing</td>
<td>New lack of smell or taste</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Muscle pain</td>
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<td>Nausea or Vomiting</td>
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<td>Headache</td>
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<td>Diarrhea</td>
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Parents/guardians should not send children with symptoms of COVID-19 on a bus or bring them to school. Students exhibiting symptoms at school will immediately be quarantined, screened, and sent home.

School staff will visually screen students upon entry and throughout the day for symptoms of COVID-19 and refer students to the nursing staff when symptoms are suspected.
Temperature screenings will be conducted randomly and for students exhibiting symptoms upon entry to the building and throughout the day.

**What if my child is showing COVID-19 symptoms before the start of a school day?**
When a student is being kept home for possible COVID-19 symptoms and/or exposure, parents will be required to report the absence to the school building the morning of the absence.

**What if a student starts to show COVID-19 symptoms during the day?**
Each building will have a designated isolation/quarantine space in or near the nurse’s office for students to await pick up by a parent/guardian when exhibiting symptoms. Alternative rooms will be designated if multiple students require isolation at the same time.

**What happens if a student or staff member has a close exposure to COVID-19 or is diagnosed with COVID-19?**
Students and staff members who are ill with COVID-19, or have been in close contact with a person who is ill, should follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for isolation and quarantine.

Students and staff may return to school after following the timeline outlined by the CDC and the Allegheny County Health Department. The school nurse and/or principal must be notified prior to return to ensure that appropriate criteria have been met. Staff and students may be asked to provide written documentation from a physician clearing them to return to school after testing positive or suspecting COVID-19 based on symptoms.

**How will social distancing be encouraged in school buildings?**
Social distancing throughout instructional and non-instructional settings will be 6 feet to the maximum extent feasible.

The following additional strategies will be used to engage in social distancing:
- Orienting desks to face the same direction
- Seating students on only one side of tables or group desks
- Use of alternate building spaces to allow for further distancing
- Use of outdoor areas to increase social distancing during suitable weather in accordance with current safety guidelines
- Limit physical interaction by restricting partner or group work when feasible
- Establish distance between the teacher’s desk/board and students’ desks
- Removal of unused desks and furniture in classrooms to maximize social distancing (to the extent feasible)

**Will movement in buildings be limited?**
Movement will be limited throughout the building and mixing between groups will be restricted to the maximum extent possible by keeping the same student and staff groupings together throughout the school day as much as possible.
Transition times will be staggered to reduce hallway traffic throughout the day.

**Will windows be open to allow for better airflow?**
To avoid creating indoor air quality issues, it is best to keep the windows closed and allow the HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) systems to operate automatically. Our HVAC systems have air filters that filter contaminants from outside air and operate fully when windows are closed. On average, two full air changes occur per hour in our classrooms, as 30% new air is constantly circulated through our HVAC systems.