



BCPS Fall 2020 Preliminary Reopening Plan

SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

A Safe and Healthy Return to Learning for Every Bearcat

July 27, 2020

BELIEVE
in the
CHANGE



DEAR BCPS COMMUNITY,

We recognize that this has been a difficult time for our school community. We have been faced with many challenges and forced to think differently about the delivery of education. Despite the many unknowns and continued uncertainty that exists, we know BCPS and the Battle Creek community will emerge from these tough times stronger than ever.

Over the past few months, we have been working hard on a plan to ensure a safe and healthy return to learning. The plan that is summarized in this document was created in collaboration with families, students, volunteer staff members, and BCPS leadership and informed by Gov. Whitmer's MI Safe Schools Roadmap and guidelines from our state and local Health Departments. We want to first recognize that we do not feel there is any perfect solution for safely and effectively returning to school in the midst of an active pandemic. We also recognize that resuming school activities is crucial to our students — we know all too well that their education, their experiences, and their well-being is on the line.

With the health and safety of our students, families and staff members as a top priority, we have developed the enclosed reopening plan. Although our plan is being submitted as follows, we are keeping in mind that this situation is ever-changing and we are constantly reevaluating in an effort to make the best and safest choices for students and staff.

Planning for schooling in the middle of a pandemic has not been an easy task. I am grateful for all of the staff members who volunteered their time this summer to create a plan aimed at making sure all students thrive. We know that the 2020-2021 school year will be different, but that together, the BCPS community can achieve anything.

Regards,



Superintendent Kimberly Carter

Back to School Plans Overview

The planning in this document is anchored on the Battle Creek Public Schools Equity Imperative. At Battle Creek Public Schools, our equity imperative is rooted in our belief that all students, regardless of race, income, zip code, identities or abilities, should have the opportunity to reach their potential. This reopening plan was crafted with the success of our students in mind, and an awareness that the conditions of the pandemic have hit the hardest many families who were already experiencing other challenges.

BCPS Equity Imperative

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|--|--|
| Because We... | See the value in and respect all cultures in our community | Choose to acknowledge the individuality of our students and who they are | Believe in the infinite possibilities of our students and their future |
| We Will... | Disrupt the inequities that exist within our system | Acknowledge our own bias and privilege | Transform our inequitable practices |

This plan has been developed with the unique and individualized needs of our students and their families in mind. It offers a mix of in-person instruction, remote learning as well as in-person support as needed by appointment, and a fully virtual academy for students who need that option.

STUDENTS GRADES K-5: IN-PERSON LEARNING

- Students in kindergarten through grade 5 will attend school in person, five days a week, with additional safety precautions, including required facial coverings for students and staff, increased cleaning protocols for custodial staff and greatly reduced large group interaction and movement throughout the building.
- Elementary students will remain either within their classrooms or go outdoors for all instruction and recess time. Students will participate in art, music and gym either in-classroom or outdoors, eat lunch in classrooms and attend staggered recess times that are divided physically into smaller groups.

STUDENTS GRADES 6–12: REMOTE LEARNING

- Because of the unique challenges presented by the large groups and high levels of movement throughout the building that are typical of secondary education, we do not feel we can adequately reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread to allow for in-person schooling for grades 6-12 at this time.
- Students in grades 6-12 will participate in fully remote learning for at least the first nine weeks of the school year. Before the end of those nine weeks, we will re-evaluate to consider if a return to the classroom is a safe next step. The decision

of how to proceed will be based on Michigan's current phase of the virus, the state of community spread in the Battle Creek area, as well as staff, student and family feedback.

- Students in grades 6-12 will participate in remote learning to engage in the same classes they would have attended in person this year for Michigan Merit Curriculum credit.
- Students with special needs such as IEP needs, English-Language learning needs, and special health needs will receive individualized support. This support may include in-person schooling full time, or in-person appointment-based support where needed. Families will be contacted individually regarding these special needs options.

ALL STUDENTS K-12: VIRTUAL ACADEMY OPTION

- Any family K-12 who wishes to do so may enroll their child in an all-virtual option called the BCPS Virtual Academy. This option is for families who would prefer that their children participate in school online only for the entirety of the 2020-21 school year. This may be an appropriate option for families with health concerns.
- The Virtual Academy will include lessons and teacher mentorship, but will be largely self-guided and self-paced. This program will be best for students who are able to thrive in a self-guided learning environment, with less frequent teacher interaction.
- This offering is separate from the remote schooling model planned for grades 6–12. Students attending school remotely as part of normal BCPS curriculum will return to in-person schooling as soon as COVID-19 conditions allow. Virtual Academy students will attend school online for the full school year.
- Virtual Academy students will be assigned to a mentor teacher and have designated check-in times with that teacher each week. The majority of school work will be self-paced and self-directed. Teacher check-ins will be used to monitor progress and answer student questions.
- BC STEM and Fremont students who attend Virtual Academy in 2020-21 school year may return to their magnet school in 21-22 without re-applying.

ALL STUDENTS: SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

We made sure that our reopening plan goes far beyond academics. It prioritizes the social-emotional needs of our students, many of whom have experienced trauma from the impact of COVID-19 on their communities and the demonstrations in our country following the murder of George Floyd. Easing our students' anxiety and building supportive learning environments will be critical to their success this coming school year.

Beginning in August, we will collaborate with our community partners to offer additional mental health interventions and supports, utilize TrueSuccess and Character Strong social-emotional learning curriculum, expand small group trauma interventions and implement trauma-informed instructional practices district-wide.

STATE GUIDANCE AND REQUIREMENTS

The **MI Safe Start Plan** was developed by the Governor’s office to outline how the state will re-engage the economy carefully and deliberately to avoid a second wave of infections while also working to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. The six phase approach outlined in the plan dictates which safety protocols and levels of in person instruction will occur when schools reopen. Transitions between phases of the MI Safe Start Plan is guided by data reviewed regularly by public health experts.

| Phase Number | 1 Uncontrolled growth | 2 Persistent spread | 3 Flattening | 4 Improving | 5 Containing | 6 Post-pandemic |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| What’s happening with the disease | Increasing number of new cases every day, likely to overwhelm the health system. Strict social distancing. | Continue to see high case levels with concern about health system capacity. Strict social distancing. | Case growth is gradually declining. Continued distancing, face coverings, no gatherings. | Cases, hospitalizations and deaths are clearly declining. Continued distancing, face coverings, small gatherings. | Continued case and death rate improvements and outbreaks can be quickly contained. Continued distancing, face coverings, increased size gatherings. | Community spread not expected to return. Events and gatherings of all sizes. |

MI Safe Schools: Michigan’s 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap was released on June 30, 2020. The Governor’s office released the Roadmap as a set of state guidelines for reopening schools this fall, based on the different phases of recovery. The [document](#) outlines the health and safety protocols that are required and recommended for schools based on the status of coronavirus across the state. Michigan is currently in phase four, meaning in-person school is permitted with strict safety protocols. Based on the health and safety protocols outlined in the MI Safe Schools Roadmap, what follows is a phase-by-phase overview of the BCPS plan for school reopening. It is important to note that while the approach discussed below establishes a baseline for returning students to school buildings, there will be some exceptions based and health and other circumstantial needs of some students. Each school will also be communicating with families to share protocols and procedures that may be specific to each building.

BCPS PHASE-BY-PHASE

Reopening Roadmap At-A-Glance

Safety protocols will no longer be required in phase 6.

| | Phase 1 - 3 | Phase 4 | Phase 5 |
|---|--|---|---|
| Overview | Schools will not be open for in-person instruction; all schools will offer remote learning. | <p>Grades K-5: Will return to in-person school full time, on a regular basis (5 days a week).</p> <p>Grades 6-12: Will engage in remote learning for at least the first nine weeks; engaging in live remote lessons with their assigned teachers 5 days per week based upon each student's course schedule.</p> | All students in all schools (K-12) will return to in-person school full time, 5 days a week. |
| Special Needs Students | Schools will not be open for in-person instruction; all schools will offer remote learning. | Students with critical special needs, as determined by the school, may participate in appointment-based in-person learning, or also return to in-person school full time (regardless of the grade level). | All in-person schooling will resume for all students, including special needs students. |
| Virtual Option | All Phases: A Virtual Academy option is available for all families with students in grades K-12 who prefer for their children to attend school remotely for the full school year. | | |
| Face Coverings | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Face coverings are required for all students and staff at all times, except during meals. | Face coverings are required for all students and staff at all times, except during meals. |
| Gatherings | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Field trips and other gatherings suspended. School buildings closed to family members and guests. | Gatherings and building visitation permitted with additional safety protocols including social distancing and limitation of group size. |
| Transportation | Schools closed and no transportation provided. | Transportation provided for K-5 students, with facial coverings and use of hand sanitizer required. | Transportation provided for K-12 students with use of hand sanitizer and facial coverings highly recommended. |
| Nutrition and Food Service <i>*Grab-and-Go meal distribution subject to state and federal approval.</i> | Meals are provided for pickup at sites across the community. | <p>For K-5 students attending school in person, school meals will be served in buildings.</p> <p>Pickup sites will remain open for grab-and-go meals throughout the community.</p> | <p>School meals will be served in buildings with strict safety protocols.</p> <p>Community meal pickup will end.</p> |



Note: Battle Creek Public Schools will continue to consult with public health officials throughout each phase of the reopening plan to monitor critical health milestones and determine whether any adjustments are needed.

SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The following Operational Health and Safety Standards have been developed in line with the requirements and recommendations set forth in the [MI Safe Schools: Michigan's 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap](#). While we know it is not possible to eliminate all risk of COVID-19 spread, these safety protocols are designed to minimize the risk as much as possible.



Building Status

Safety protocols will no longer be required in phase 6.

| | Phase 1 - 3 | Phase 4 | Phase 5 |
|----------------------|--|---|---|
| BCPS Building Status | Schools are closed for in-person instruction. Building access through appointment only. | K-5 school buildings are open for in-person instruction with strict safety protocols. 6-12 school buildings are closed for in-person instruction, except by appointment for students with special needs. | Buildings are open for in-person instruction with moderate safety protocols |



Face Coverings

Safety protocols and face coverings will no longer be required in phase 6.

| | Phase 1 - 3 | Phase 4 | Phase 5 |
|----------------|--|---|---|
| Face Coverings | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Face coverings are required for all students and staff at all times, except during meals. | Face coverings are required for all students and staff at all times, except during meals. |

Face coverings help protect against the spread of COVID-19 by ensuring that while we are speaking, talking, breathing or coughing, we are not releasing droplets into the air that a nearby person may breathe. Face coverings are primarily meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected, since many people carry COVID-19 but do not have symptoms. To ensure that we can safely reopen classrooms, face coverings will be required for all individuals. Face coverings may be homemade or disposable level-one (basic) grade surgical masks.

- Homemade face coverings must be washed daily.
- Disposable face coverings must be disposed of at the end of each day.

Any staff or student that is unable to medically tolerate a face covering must not wear one. Any staff or student that is incapacitated or unable to remove the face covering without assistance, must not wear one.



Gatherings, Mealtimes and School Events

Safety protocols will no longer be required in phase 6.

| | Phase 1 - 3 | Phase 4 | Phase 5 |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Visitors and Guests | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Family members and guests are not allowed in the school building except under extenuating circumstances. | Any family member or guest entering the building should wash or sanitize hands prior to entry. |
| Classrooms | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Desks and workstations will be arranged to allow as much physical distance as possible. Students will be encouraged to distance whenever possible. Class sizes will remain unchanged. All K-5 activities will occur within groups, (cohorts) to the extent possible in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread. | Desks and workstations will be arranged to allow as much physical distance as possible. Students will be encouraged to distance whenever possible. Class sizes will remain unchanged. |
| School Mealtimes | Schools closed for in-person learning. | K-5 students will eat meals in the classroom to avoid mixing large groups of students. | K-5 students will continue to eat meals within classrooms. As 6-12 meal service does not allow for in-classroom lunches, students will eat meals in larger spaces, but with strict safety protocols and social distancing where possible. |
| Assembly Spaces | Schools closed for in-person learning. | No use of auditoriums or other gathering spaces. | All gatherings must comply with the most current executive order. Guidance is likely to include 6-foot social distancing when possible and size limitations to gatherings. |
| Recess | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Recess for K-5 will occur outdoors when possible, with small groups of students. Schedules will be staggered to limit the number of students who are at recess to 1-2 classes. Students will wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after recess. Students will be encouraged to maintain at least 6 feet of space from other children, as much as possible. Playground structures will be cleaned according to normal routine. | Recess for K-5 students will occur outdoors when possible and social distancing will be encouraged when possible. Students will wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after recess. |

| | | | |
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| Field Trips and Off-campus Events | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Off-site field trips and events are suspended. | Off-site field trips and events will resume with strict safety protocols in place including the use of face coverings. |
| Outdoor Spaces | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Student arrival and dismissal will be monitored by staff to discourage congregating and to ensure that students go straight from a vehicle or bus to their classrooms. Specific details on entry/exit processes will be included in building level plans. | Student arrival and dismissal will be monitored by staff to discourage congregating and to ensure that students go straight from a vehicle or bus to their classrooms. |
| K-5 Specials (Art, Music, PE) | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Art, music and other “specials” classes will be brought to the classrooms instead of students moving to different locations. When possible physical education classes will be held outside with social distancing. | Art, music and other “specials” classes will resume their normal routine. |
| Parent/Teacher Conferences, Open Houses and School Events | All on-site activities are suspended. Parent meetings will occur using computer-based applications or phone calls. | All on-site visitation and activities are suspended. Parent meetings will occur using computer-based applications or phone calls. | Activities will be scheduled in accordance with the capacities for indoor gatherings listed in the current executive order. |

Transportation

Safety protocols will no longer be required in phase 6.

| | Phase 1 - 3 | Phase 4 | Phase 5 |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| Face Coverings | Schools closed for in-person learning. | Face coverings required for the bus driver, staff, and all students in grades K-12 while on the bus, if medically feasible. | Face coverings required for the bus driver, staff, and all students in grades K-12 while on the bus, if medically feasible. |
| Boarding the Bus | Schools closed for in-person learning. | The use of hand sanitizer is required before entering the bus. Hand sanitizer will be supplied on the bus. | The use of hand sanitizer is required before entering the bus. Hand sanitizer will be supplied on the bus. |
| Cleaning | Schools closed for in-person learning. | All buses will be cleaned and disinfected before and after every transit route. This includes frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle. | All buses will be cleaned and disinfected before and after every transit route. This includes frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle. |



Extracurricular Activities

Safety protocols will no longer be required in phase 6.

| | Phase 1 - 3 | Phase 4 | Phase 5 |
|---|---|--|---|
| 21st Century After School Programs | Schools closed for in-person learning. | <p>21st Century After School Program resumes. The format (face-to-face or remote) will be influenced by the structure of the regular school day.</p> <p>Program will follow LARA guidelines for safe operations during COVID-19, including frequent cleaning and sanitation of games and toys, social distancing of 6 feet where possible and maintaining smaller groups of students.</p> <p>Outside partners will not be allowed to provide programming on-site.</p> <p>Field trips will be suspended in this phase.</p> | <p>21st Century After School Program continues, following LARA recommendations, including frequent cleaning and sanitation of games and toys, social distancing of 6 feet where possible and maintaining smaller groups of students</p> <p>Field trips may resume with strict safety protocols if deemed appropriate.</p> |
| Band and Vocal Music | Schools closed for in-person learning. | <p>Choir activities suspended.</p> <p>All marching band activities will be held in outdoor locations.</p> <p>Additional specific safety and cleaning protocols to be communicated by each instructor.</p> | Activities resume with physical distance recommendations in place. |
| Athletics | All athletics activities are suspended. | <p>Inter-school competitions may be held, provided that face coverings are worn if school transportation is provided.</p> <p>Spectators are allowed, provided that face coverings are used and six feet of social distancing can be maintained at all times. Added attention will be given to entry and exit points to prevent crowding.</p> <p>Each participant must use a clearly marked water bottle for individual use.</p> <p>Handshakes, fist bumps and other unnecessary contact must not occur.</p> <p>Indoor weight rooms and physical conditioning activities that require shared equipment are suspended.</p> <p>Outdoor physical conditioning activities are allowed while maintaining social distancing.</p> <p>Large scale indoor spectator events are suspended.</p> <p>Large scale outdoor spectator or stadium events are limited to 100 people, and people not part of the same household must maintain six feet of distance from one another.</p> | <p>Indoor spectator events are limited to 50 people.</p> <p>Large scale outdoor spectator or stadium events are limited to 250 people.</p> <p>Spectators not part of the same household must always maintain six feet of distance from one another.</p> <p>Every participant must confirm that they are healthy and without any symptoms prior to any event.</p> <p>Each participant must use a clearly marked water bottle for individual use.</p> <p>*Both indoor and outdoor spectator capacities are subject to change based on the current executive order.</p> |



Hygiene, Cleaning and Practicing Prevention

During at least the first nine weeks of phase 4 while students in grades 6-12 are learning remotely, district custodial and maintenance staff from across the district will be redeployed to elementary schools to assist with additional cleaning protocols so that teachers can focus on student learning to the greatest extent possible.

| Follow in All Phases | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Hand Washing | <p>All students and staff should wash hands frequently. If soap and water are not available, students and staff should use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, which will be provided. Specific protocols will be put into place for students to wash hands or use sanitizer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upon arrival to the building• When using the restroom• Before any meal• When visibly dirty• Before leaving each area of the building• After using a tissue or coughing into hands |
| Cleaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequently touched surfaces, including light switches, doors, benches and bathrooms, will undergo cleaning at least every four hours with an EPA-approved disinfectant.• Libraries, computer labs, arts and other hands-on classrooms will undergo cleaning after every class period.• In grades K-5, student desks and workstations will be wiped down every four hours.• In grades 6-12, student desks will be wiped down after every class period. |
| Supplies and Materials | <p>BCPS will provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for safe use by staff and students, paper towels, tissues and signs reinforcing proper handwashing techniques).</p> <p>Sanitizer and cleaning supplies will be provided in every classroom.</p> |
| Symptom Monitoring | <p>Staff and students will conduct daily self-examinations, including a temperature check, prior to coming to work/ school.</p> <p>Students and staff experiencing any of the symptoms listed below are not to attend school or school events.</p> <p>BCPS schools will cooperate with the local public health department regarding implementing protocols for screening students and staff.</p> <p>Students who become ill with symptoms of COVID-19 during school will be placed in an identified quarantine area with a surgical mask in place until they can be picked up. Identified school staff caring for these children will wear a surgical mask, with the exception of students with special needs requiring aerosolized procedures in which an N95 or an equivalent mask is required.</p> <p>Symptomatic students sent home from school will be kept home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to CDC guidelines.</p> |

Quarantine, Testing and Recovery

STAY HOME IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS:

- Fever 100 degrees or higher
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Excessive fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache coupled with other symptoms
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

BCPS will follow guidance from the Calhoun County Public Health Department in the event of a symptomatic student or staff member or a positive test result.

If a student or staff member display symptoms:

- The symptomatic individual will return home immediately and will remain home while they await test results.
- If negative, they must be symptom-free (without medications) for 24 hours before returning.
- Classmates, family members and teachers with close contact should continue to self-monitor for symptoms.

If a student or staff member tests positive:

- The affected individual will return home immediately (if not already home).
- They must isolate at home for at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared.
- Those with close contact to the individual must quarantine at home for 14 days from the time symptoms appeared. Close contacts, as defined by CCPHD, include anyone who was within 6 feet of a person infected with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes with or without a mask.

BCPS will follow the CCPHD's recommended tracing protocol for all positive COVID-19 cases including communication with families in the event of a positive case and actively identifying close contacts of the affected student or staff member.



Child Nutrition

Safety protocols will no longer be required in phase 6.

| | Phase 1 - 3 | Phase 4 | Phase 5 |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p>Available Meal Programs</p> <p><i>*Grab-and-Go meal distribution subject to state and federal approval.</i></p> | <p>Meals are provided for pickup at sites across the community.</p> | <p>For K-5 students attending school in person, school meals will be served in buildings, either within classrooms, or to small groups of students (cohorts).</p> <p>Grab-and-go style meals available at various locations throughout the community for students engaged in distance learning.</p> | <p>School meals served with strict safety protocols in place, including social distancing between students where possible.</p> |

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION

IDENTIFICATION, RAPID REFERRAL AND REPORTING OF STUDENT NEEDS

There is a growing body of research proving that social and emotional learning (SEL) is fundamental to academic success. We also know the COVID-19 pandemic has created different types of traumatic experiences and high levels of stress for many of our students and families. In support of student success, a process has been developed and implemented for accessing additional supports for students. Behavior Interventionists, school counselors and Communities in Schools Site Coordinators will be available to connect students and/or their families to health and basic needs services. Families in need of additional support should call their school office.

ATTENDANCE DURING DISTANCE LEARNING

For students in grades 6-12 the distance learning attendance goal is 100% participation. Students are expected to attend all live sessions conducted by the teacher and their attendance will be monitored and tracked in the Skyward student information system.

ACCESS TO A DEVICE TO SUPPORT DISTANCE LEARNING

Battle Creek Public Schools has invested in technology to ensure that students have access to a digital device to support learning at home. Devices will be distributed at the beginning of the year for all students in grades 6-12. Additionally, students in grades K-5 will have access to an assigned device in school which will be distributed should the need for at-home learning arise.

SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIALIZED NEEDS

In order to ensure that our most vulnerable students have the individualized care they need, some students in grades 6-12 who are identified at the school level as in need of additional support will be scheduled to attend learning at school in a small group setting during phase 4. Individual contact will be made with each family impacted and transportation will be provided.

VIRTUAL ACADEMY

While we understand that face-to-face instruction is most conducive to learning and to the social-emotional health of our students, we also understand that some families will prefer to keep their students home. To provide the flexibility needed to meet individual family circumstances, all BCPS families will have the option of enrolling into the BCPS Virtual Academy to learn from home full time. The Virtual Academy will include lessons and teacher mentorship, but will be largely self-guided and self-paced, unlike the remote learning that will take place for all 6-12 students to begin the school year. This program will be best for students who are able to thrive in either a self-guided or a parent- or guardian-supported learning environment, with less frequent teacher interaction. This offering is separate from the remote schooling model planned for grades 6–12 to start the school year and from the remote learning that will be required should we enter Phase 3 of the MI Safe Start Plan. Students attending school remotely as part of normal BCPS curriculum will return to in-person schooling as soon as COVID-19 conditions allow. Virtual Academy students will attend school online for the full school year. Virtual Academy students will be assigned to a mentor teacher and have designated check-in times with that teacher each week. The majority of school work will be self-paced and self-directed. Teacher check-ins will be used to monitor progress and answer student questions. BC STEM and Fremont students who attend the BCPS Virtual Academy during the 2020-21 school year may return to their magnet school in 21-22 without re-applying.