

RETURN TO LEARN FAQ

8-7-20

Scheduling

- 1.) **To spread the kids out as much as possible, will you hire a 3rd teacher for the 5th graders or will you stick with 2 teachers?**

The district will continue to monitor class sizes to determine if extra staff is necessary. At this time the district feels that our staffing is adequate for the class sizes we have.

- 2.) **Are Wednesdays still early out?**

Yes, Wednesdays will remain early out days prior to years past to provide professional development for our staff.

- 3.) **Will preschoolers be fed on Wed or come home late?**

Preschool will dismiss at 11:15am on Wednesdays so they will not eat lunch at school on those days.

- 4.) **Can Wednesday be online only to allow extra cleaning of school facilities.**

The district feels that our school facilities can be cleaned appropriately during and outside of the school day to ensure that students coming the next day are in a safe environment. We believe having school every other Wednesdays with cohort groups is valuable time for face-to-face instruction while still being able to maintain social distancing guidelines.

- 5.) **Will Wednesday classes be combined with the Monday/Thursday week or the Tuesday/Friday week?**

Wednesdays will be alternated every other week. For example, in week 1, Cohort A would go to school on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday while Group B goes to school on Tuesday and Friday. In week 2, Cohort A would go to school on Monday and Thursday while Group B goes to school on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday.

- 6.) **Will HS band and chorus take turns with meeting whereby band meets on A days and choir on B days or will only the A students have band together and B students have band together and A students have choir together and B students have choir together but only meet half as often?**

High School band and chorus staff are working to create a schedule that they feel best meets the needs of their students and program. Once that schedule is complete, it will be shared with students and parents.

- 7.) **I assume the alternating days apply to every student in all grades.**

Yes, alternating days for those students attending in-person classes applies to every student in all grades.

- 8.) **How will lunches be handled?**

Students will be eating in various locations including classrooms to ensure proper social distancing can be maintained. Schedules are being created at each building to ensure separation of students getting their lunches. HS Junior and Seniors will have the option of open campus for lunch provided their parent/guardian signs the permission form.

Students who are off-site will have an opportunity to take breakfasts/lunches home with them the day they are on-site for the following off-site day/s. Families will be charged for these meals according to the rate at which the family pays for onsite breakfast and lunch. Families qualifying for reduced lunch rates will be charged the reduced amount for off site lunches and families qualifying for free lunch will receive that free for off-site days.

9.) How often are the block subjects for the MS going to change?

These blocks will change every 6 weeks.

Dates of blocks:

- i.) Session 1: August 19 - Sept. 25th
- ii.) Session 2: Sept. 28th - Nov. 6th
- iii.) Session 3: Nov. 9th - Dec. 22nd

10.) Would it be possible to create or share a standard WB visual calendar with A and B days color coded for parent reference? (I'm wondering how a holiday like Labor Day, may impact scheduling.)

A cohort calendar will be posted on the school website's Covid-19 page

11.) If a high school student has a study hall, band, or vocal music in their schedule, will they be excused from that particular block?

At the high school, all students will have a 30 minute study hall daily. Other study halls will not be offered.

At the high school, students who do not participate in band/choir do not need to report to school until 9:15 (8:45 Wednesdays). Band students will attend band for the full Period One block (9:15 - 11:45 from Aug. 20 - Sept. 18) and choir students will attend choir for the full Period Four block (9:15 - 11:45 from Nov. 23 - Dec. 22).

12.) Without marching band this season, is there an accommodation for the movement waiver? If not, how will PE work? Will it be in the block - 2.5 hours / day for 4 weeks?

We have not cancelled marching band. It will have a different format but will still meet PE waiver requirements.

Band students will attend band for the full Period One block (9:15 - 11:45 from Aug. 20 - Sept. 18).

13.) Can a student change from hybrid to online? Is there specific timing for the change? Does the online schedule match to the hybrid schedule?

Yes, this will be an option for all families, but the timing will be dependent on the building the child is in.

- i.) At the elementary, a student may opt in or out of a specific model (hybrid or online to start the year) every 4 ½ weeks. This coincides with midterm and end of quarter timeframes.
- ii.) At the middle school, a student may opt in or out of a specific model (hybrid or online to start the year) every 6 weeks. This coincides with the end of a block class.
- iii.) At the high school, a student may opt in or out of a specific model (hybrid or online to start the year) every 4 ½ weeks. This coincides with the end of a block class.

14.) What will recess, P.E. and lunch look like?

Lunch - Please see the answer to Question #8.

Elem - students will have PE each day they attend school for a two week cycle. There will be 3 cycles for each grade level. They will be assigned to art, music, or PE for each of the 3 cycles. For example, Cycle 1-2nd grade PE, Cycle 2- 2nd grade Music, Cycle 3-2nd grade Art). PE will be the only special that takes place outside of the homeroom classroom. Specials will last 40 minutes, as usual, and social distancing will be a high priority.

MS - MS students have a PE/Exploratory block when they will have PE. Students will also have PE during their Social Studies and Science classes. Time has been built in to allow this. 5th grade students will have a morning and afternoon recreation time.

HS - PE classes will be held in the assigned block depending on their class period. We will be having activities that encourage social distancing. There will be a 30 minute lunch/30 minute study hall block each day.

15.)What will specials look like? I strongly suggest specials being ALL online, since these instructors would have contact with nearly every student in the building.

In the elementary, specials will occur in a schedule that is specific to the hybrid model. Students will participate in specials in their classrooms on their on-site days in a 2-week model that has three cycles. In other words, a given grade will have art instruction for two weeks during their designated specials time, then music for two weeks, and in the final cycle PE for two weeks. This allows the specials teachers to only be in contact with 2 or 3 grade levels in a two week period as opposed to all students.

16.)For Middle School students, are all the students going to be passing in the hallways (b/w their morning and afternoon classes) at the same time or are students staying in one room and teachers are rotating? If they are in the halls together, what safety measures will be in place at that time? Thanks!

Students will pass between their morning and afternoon classes. The passing times are staggered so no more than one grade level passes at a time. Students will be in hallways for less than 15 minutes to ensure we follow CDC (Centers for Disease Control) recommendations.

Academics

17.)How are my kids going to do online learning on the days they can't go to school. You lent us a hot spot which did not work. It kept freezing up and not all three could be on at once.

Off-site learning will be different than in the spring. In the hybrid model students will not zoom into classes on their off-site days. They will have self-paced activities both on-line and off but they will not be online live with a teacher except in special circumstances.

18.)How will my middle child get her reading and math support?

For our at-risk students who receive instructional intervention, the classroom teacher and support teacher will determine if on-site or off-site intervention is most appropriate for the particular learner.

For our special education students, the IEP team (AEA staff, WB Staff, student's parents) will determine what services are appropriate for each student.

19.)Is outdoor learning an option when weather and curriculum permits?

Teachers are encouraged to hold classes outside when possible.

20.)What will be the hours of online and face to face.

On their assigned on-site days, students will attend the full day of school.

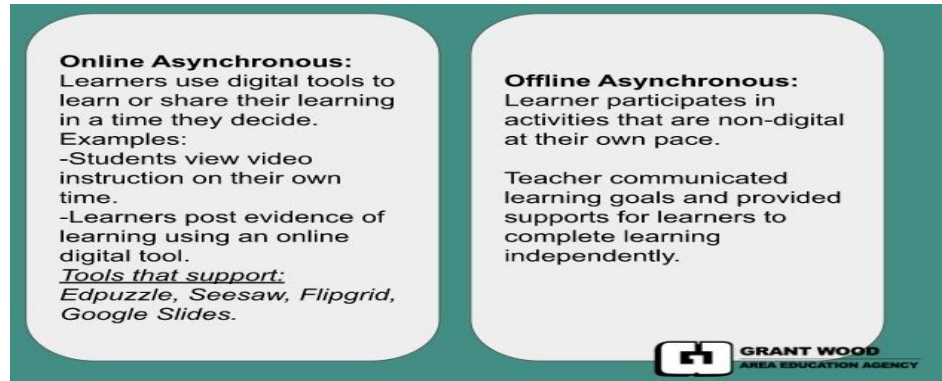
On the off-site days, students will have self-paced assignments to complete.

21.)What kinds of activities and time commitment can we expect our students to be partaking of on their "off" days?

Activities and Assignments will be provided to students by staff for them to complete on the student's off-site day.

Proposed time commitment as recommended by Grant Wood AEA:

Grade Span	Estimated Offsite Time Commitment (minutes)	Sample Activities
EK/K	90 minutes	Read, write, complete paper/pencil tasks, participate in skills development in online application
1-2	90 minutes	Read, write, complete paper/pencil tasks, participate in skills development in online application
3-5	120 minutes	Read, write, complete paper/pencil tasks, participate in skills development in online application
6-8	180 minutes	Watch a video, complete an online task, read a book, write a report, review skills through online tools (ex. IXL, Kahoot, EdPuzzle)
9-12	270 minutes	Watch a video, complete an online task, read a book, write a report, review skills through online tools (ex. IXL, Kahoot, EdPuzzle)



22.)What teacher support is available for the at home days - questions/response time etc.

Teachers will be available to students who are off-site through email outside of the school day which is similar to years past. We cannot guarantee response times.

23.)What will that online learning option look like for EK-5th grades?

The online learning option for EK-5th grades will be the program Edmentum (specifically Calvert Learning).

24.)If a student is enrolled in a course through Kirkwood, will it still run the full semester?

Yes. Students can work on it on their offsite days.
If it is on their schedule, students could choose to work off-site with parent permission, select an additional course, or work in an assigned classroom.

25.)How will students in elementary do online work without a device?

A device will be provided for any student selecting the online learning option.

26.)What will the offsite supplemental activities include for EK, K and 1st graders? Will the activities be primarily paper based or online? Will Zoom be used on a daily basis?

On off site days, students in EK-4 will be provided a combination of online application of learning and paper pencil activities. There will not be class zoom meetings as the teacher will be instructing students in person. See question 20 for details about the length of time students will spend in off site learning.

Special Education/Extra Supports

27.)My fifth grader receives extra help with reading, is that something that the resource teacher might do with her via zoom on "off" days?

For our at-risk students who receive instructional intervention, the classroom teacher and support teacher will determine if on-site or off-site intervention is most appropriate for the particular learner.

For our special education students, the IEP team will determine what services are appropriate for each student.

This might be a possibility for off-site days. Teachers and associates will be working to determine that best way to provide the additional support.

28.)Are there other special services for students that receive additional reading help?

Students who receive additional services will be provided those services on their on-site days. Depending on individual needs services may also be provided on off-site days.

29.)What about iep students? My child struggled with the online instruction at the end of last year. Online education is going to be extremely frustrating for my daughter.

The IEP team will determine what services are appropriate for each student.

Transportation

30.)Will the buses run and can social distancing be practiced with the reduced amount coming on any given day?

Bus routes will be run but will potentially be modified depending on cohorts and number of students needing to be transported. Students will be socially distanced as much as possible on the buses with families being asked to sit together. Masks will be required on buses.

Extra-Curricular Activities

31.)How will sports work with this option?

The district plans to allow extra-curricular activities this fall and will follow guidelines laid out by each activities governing association. Coaches/directors are working with our activities director to take every precaution possible to ensure these activities are safe for our students and coaches.

Return to Learn Models

32.)Can students still choose virtual? And if they do, must they stick with that all semester?

Students can select a full on-line model. Students in grades PK-5 will take classes through Edmentum and grades 6-12 will take classes through Edgenuity.

No they do not have to stick with it all semester. There will be opportunities for them to change during the semester. Please see the answer to question 13.

33.)Can we opt into fully remote learning with the online learning that takes place each day if we are from a household that has an essential worker and exposure risk is higher?

Yes, any family can choose to enter online learning at specific times in the school year.

34.)Also, will there be opportunities for kids who are participating in the online-only option to participate (remotely) to any degree in the hybrid model (Zooming into social activities, for example)?

Students who choose the online only option will be participating in a completely different program (Edmentum EK-5 & Edgenuity 6-12) and will have limited opportunities to interact with students in the hybrid model. There will be a district staff member that works with families to identify social emotional needs and respond accordingly.

35.)Would it be viable to allow some families the option to send their kids back to school full time?

As much as we want to give families a choice in regard to which return to learn model to start the school year in, we are only able to provide a hybrid model or online model to start the school. In order to maintain social distancing in our buildings, giving families a choice to send their children back full time is not a viable option to start the year.

36.)With the hybrid model, when the students are learning virtually at home, will this be expected to be done during school hours or will it be videos and activities that they can complete anytime during the day?

There are no set hours for them to work on their off-site days. Learning on off-site days will be self-paced so students can complete the work anytime on those days.

37.)If you choose online, can you still do band, vocal music, and other extracurricular activities?

High school students will be allowed to participate in our music activity period (8:10 - 9:10 a.m.) but not in the academic class block. They will not receive academic credit for participation. They are responsible for their own transportation.

Students in grades 7-8 will still be permitted to participate in band and choir at school (families will need to provide transportation). More information about scheduling will be provided by the instructors.

Students in grades 5-6 will be permitted to take band at school (families will need to provide transportation). More information about scheduling will be provided by the instructors.

On-line elementary students will not have music.

On-line students can still participate in extracurricular activities.

38.)Can any support be given for setting up home learning spaces for non-in class days? Desks? Organization? Tips for learning spaces?

It would be nice for students to have a quiet work space where students are free of distractions (as much as possible).

Health and Safety

39.)How will we help students adapt to staff wearing PPE?

Staff will be interacting with students at distances closer than 6 feet as needed for care and support while wearing PPE. As with all PPE, we will work to remind students that there are regular people underneath the mask/gear and we are here to help them as always.

40.)If one student gets sick, is the entire class and instructor quarantined for two weeks?

CCPH and JCPH will follow contact tracing guidelines to determine who would need to be quarantined. Due to us starting in the Hybrid model and being able to maintain social distancing in the classroom, it would not automatically be the entire class and instructor.

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41.)Will masks be required?

Staff and students expected in the classroom even with social distancing. (unless medically excused)

Staff and students required in the classroom when social distancing not possible (unless medically excused)

Required anytime students and staff are not in their classrooms. This includes buses, hallways, recess time, restrooms, lunchrooms, etc...

42.)Will there be temperature testing upon entry into school?

No. Fever is only one symptom of Coronavirus and there are many other factors besides a fever. We ask that families take temperatures at home and students should not attend school if they have a fever over 100.

43.) How will parents be made aware of positive cases in the cohort or will they?

We will follow protocols developed by CCPH (Cedar County Public Health), JCPH (Johnson County Public Health) and IDPH (Iowa Department of Public Health). We will share those protocols with families once they have been finalized.

44.) If a positive case is in the cohort, will we move to 100% online learning for the 14 day window or will the cohort continue to come to school?

We will follow protocols developed by CCPH, JCPH and IDPH. We will share those protocols with families once they have been finalized. Public Health will follow contact tracing guidelines to determine who would need to be quarantined. Due to us starting in the Hybrid model and being able to maintain social distancing in the classroom, it would not automatically be the entire class and instructor.

45.) If the core homeroom teacher becomes ill, will he /she be replaced with substitutes that float in and out or will a stable replacement be placed so the kids do not have a variety of teaching styles / personalities?

We will make every attempt to provide a consistent classroom environment.

46.) How are you communicating if a class room has a health concern.

We will follow communication protocols developed by CCPH, JCPH, and IDPH. We will share those protocols with families once they have been finalized.

47.) Is having a child wear a face shield sufficient or would they still need to wear a mask under the face shield?

The district will follow CDC and IDPH face covering guidelines. The CDC and IDPH recommend students wearing facemasks to help prevent the spreading of the virus. Face shields can also be worn which protects students from contracting the virus. What we've been told by CCPH and JCPH is that face masks best protect others from you while face shields best protect you from others. Students and staff would still need to wear a mask if they wanted to wear a face shield when social distancing cannot be maintained.

48.) Will the school be providing any masks for students? Is it possible for students to wear a face shield instead of masks?

The school is providing one cloth mask for each student. Disposable masks are available as needed.

Students and staff would still need to wear a mask with a face shield.

49.) How can parents work to support teachers and staff's safety?

Please help us by educating your students about how to properly wear masks, wash hands and socially distance.

50.) If teachers aren't feeling safe, can they communicate with parents to request online learning (I would be glad to keep my kids home if the teacher were in a high-risk category!).

CCPH and JCPH will provide us guidelines for when an entire class may need to go online. We will be following the public health guidelines.

51.) What kinds of changes to ventilation are being implemented to keep rooms safe?

We have increased the amount of outside air being circulated through our HVAC system.

Windows at the elementary and middle school can be opened to create more ventilation.

Fans will be allowed to bring air in from the outside.

General

52.)What exactly does the elementary fee waiver cover?

The \$50 annual registration fee for elementary students.

53.)What can the parents do to support you? What classroom needs to do you and how can we collectively help meet those needs?

Demonstrating positivity, excitement, and enthusiasm for the upcoming school year will help your child start off on the right path.

54.)We have been asked to fill out a couple COVID release forms for different things this summer our students have been involved in. Is there a way to sign one form that covers all events instead of a separate form for each event?

These forms will not be required for the school year.

55.)How will this work with school supplies? I don't want to buy everything on the list and end up not using it.

The elementary supply list is the same as the one sent home with report cards at the end of your school year (if your student is coming to school in person). The only item we added due to Covid is a plastic shoe box size container to store individual student supplies. This addition is reflected on the school website.

School supply lists were modified based on the hybrid model and are on our school website.

Due to safety mitigations,we are no longer able to have classroom sets of supplies (markers, crayons, scissors, rulers,...) so each student will need to have their own supplies.

Updated MS supply lists are available on the school website.

56.)What will school entry and dismissal look like?

More information will be coming to families from each building principal.

57.)Can you provide some information about the company that you are outsourcing the online model learning to?

EK-5 is using Edmentum - Calvert Learning - <http://calvertlearning.com/>

6-12 is using Edgenuity. <https://www.edgenuity.com/>

58.)Will visitors be required to wear masks?

To help lessen the amount of people in our buildings, visitors/volunteers will not be allowed in our buildings during school hours. During the school day visitors will be met at the door for assistance.

More information will be provided at a later date regarding out of school times which include activities/games.

59.)Will food be continued to be provided to families this year?

Hot lunch will be provided to on-site students at the regular price schedule. All students will have the opportunity for their families to indicate if they would like the student to bring home breakfast & lunch for their off site days in the hybrid schedule. Again, regular lunch fees will apply and this service will only be free for those families that qualify for free lunch.

Our Backpack program will continue for weekend food.

60.)What were the survey results (bulk data) for our return to learn survey regarding parents' preference (full in person return, hybrid, or online only)? Why were these not published somewhere available to community members for transparency?

The survey data for parents and teachers who were surveyed was.

- i.) 48% preferred an onsite model
- ii.) 42% preferred a hybrid model
- iii.) 10% preferred online

This data was presented a public board meeting on Wednesday, July 29th.

This data was one of many factors we took into consideration when making the decision to recommend a model to begin the school year.

61.)How long are we planning on staying in the hybrid model if things go well?

The district will continue to look at things monthly and utilize a variety of metrics that will include but are not limited to: Student and staff absenteeism, Cedar and Johnson county transmission rates, recommendations from the CDC, IDPH, CCPH, and JCPH.

62.)It appears that per the department of education and department of public health guidance schools are advised to go to the hybrid model "as necessary." What makes that necessary now? Does West Branch have a high COVID-19 positivity rate?

The new guidance from the IDPH and Department of Education came out after the district had chosen the Hybrid Model for the start of the school year.

The district believes that the hybrid model best meets the needs of three major components that most impact a school environments:

- i.) student/staff physical health and safety'
- ii.) student education
- iii.) student/staff social emotional well-being.

The hybrid model also provides the best chance to have face-to-face instruction without major disruptions that could lead to having to shut down classrooms, buildings, or the district as a whole.

We understand that Governor Reynolds, the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Department of Public Health came out with new guidance to help schools make decisions on instructional models based on community transmission data. While this guidance is helpful, we are unable to predict what the 14 day transmission rate will be three weeks from today. Knowing this and knowing that families need to have time to prepare for the beginning of the school year, we believe that the recommendation approved at last night's board meeting is still the best course of action to begin the school year.

Finally, we understand that not everyone will agree with the choice to start in a hybrid model. Arguments and valid points/concerns can be made for starting in a hybrid model, starting in an onsite model, or starting in an online model. Based on the work of the various committees, recommendations from the CDC, IDPH, CCPH, and JCPH, and from looking at survey data, the district felt that the hybrid model was the best model to begin the upcoming school year.

The district will continue to look at things monthly and utilize a variety of metrics that will include but are not limited to: Student and staff absenteeism, Cedar and Johnson county transmission rates, recommendations from the CDC, IDPH, CCPH, and JCPH.

Social Emotional

63.) **Can guidance set up appointments to check in with kids? This would be welcome.**

Yes, families and students can contact their building counselor to request meetings, meeting frequency, and type of supports that would best help the child.