

Frequently Asked Questions About Coatesville's Increase in In-Person Learning

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The Coatesville Area School District is planning to return students to additional in-person learning, following the Chester County Health Department's updated guidance. When Chester County transmission rates fall below 100 per 100,000 and county PCR rates are below 10% for three consecutive weeks, physical distancing of 6 feet but no less than 3 feet between students is recommended. A distance of 6 feet between staff and students, and between adults, is still recommended, even when student distancing is reduced.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL QUESTIONS

Q. How many days a week will students be able to attend in-person school?

A. In grades Kindergarten through 7, students will be able to attend school five/four days a week. Every other week includes a virtual Wednesday, which the District is maintaining because some of these days are already planned for critical professional development.

In grades 8 - 12, students will attend school two/three days a week, in an A/B model. Every other Wednesday will be a virtual Wednesday. Space limitations at our Intermediate and Senior High Schools will require us to divide students into two cohort groups. A/B cohorts will be developed once parents commit to either an in-person or fully virtual model, and we know how best to evenly divide the groups.

Q. When is the earliest date that students will return to school five days a week?

A. If transmission rates in Chester County reach low enough thresholds for three consecutive weeks, **the earliest date increased in-person instruction would begin is March 15.**

Q. What happens if County transmission rates increase once we have resumed this new model of in-person learning?

A. The Chester County Health Department has told school districts it will not require them to revert to a previous model. If levels would increase dramatically after we have increased in-person learning, we would consider moving to a fully virtual model, and then back out to our new, increased model. This is something we will have to monitor.

Q. Will contact tracing still be based on a close contact being defined as someone being within 6 feet of a presumed positive person for 15 minutes?

A. Yes.

Q. Will schools still close periodically and move to virtual learning if the Health Department deems there is an "outbreak" that crosses classes?

A. Yes. We will continue this important mitigation effort.

Q. If I am not comfortable sending my child back to school at reduced distancing, what are my options?

A. Parents may elect to keep their child in full-time remote learning. In some instances, at some grades, classes may only have a few students, or even no students, learning remotely each day.

Q. Will students still access remote instruction the way they do currently?

A. Yes.

Q. How much distancing will be provided between students?

A. To the greatest extent possible we will work to maintain 6 feet of distancing, but will never provide less than 3 feet of distancing between students. Distancing will vary from classroom to classroom, and school to school, based on the size of classroom spaces (which are variable), the number of students in each class, and the number of students who choose the in-person option.

Q. Will staff and students need to continue wearing face masks/coverings?

A. Yes, staff and students must continue to wear face masks/coverings [in accordance with the PA Department of Health's Universal Face Coverings Order](#). All students must continue to wear masks all of the time except when eating lunch, or on a mask break. Gaiters and vent masks are not permitted. (Gaiters may be worn over-top of a mask, but students must have a mask on, as well.) Staff may remove face masks when eating lunch or working in isolation at a workstation when taking a mask break.

Q. How will cafeterias be set up to maintain social distancing?

A. Students will be seated 6 feet apart. Additional spaces such as auxiliary gyms and auditoriums may be used if needed.

Q. How will social distancing be maintained in the hallways during class transitions?

A. Secondary schedules will still permit expanded time for transitions from classroom between periods. Transitions will be staggered to ensure three feet of social distancing between students.

Q. If child is sick or has to quarantine, but I have selected the in-person option, can my child learn remotely?

A. Yes. Students who are sick or who need to quarantine will be able to log in and complete their work remotely.

Q. If I selected the in-person option for my child, are they expected to attend school in-person?

A. Yes. The expectation is that children who have selected the in-person option will attend in person unless they are sick or quarantining.

Q. Are there still limits in place on sports and extracurricular activities?

A. Yes. We have been following Governor Wolf's orders regarding large gatherings and will continue to do so.

Q. If parents elect to keep their child remote can they still participate in after-school activities?

A. Yes. Remote students may still participate in after-school activities as long as they are not experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, been exposed to COVID-19, or are awaiting test results for COVID-19. Please refer to our [daily COVID-19 screening checklist](#)

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Q. Will you have enough bus transportation?

A. We are working closely with Krapf Bus to secure and ensure transportation for all students, however, there is a local and nationwide bus driver shortage. If parents are able to drive their child to school, that would be helpful.

Q. Are there any changes to safety protocols on school buses?

A. All transportation safety protocols will continue as they have been.

- All buses will operate with a maximum of two (2) students to a seat.
- Drivers and students will be required to wear a face covering while on the bus at all times.
- Face masks will be available with the driver for any student who forgets their mask.
- Students will be assigned seats on the bus.
- Family members riding the same bus will be seated together.
- Students will load the bus from back to front to avoid passing in the aisles.
- Students will get off the bus from front to back to avoid passing in the aisles.
- Bus windows will be open to allow fresh air to circulate (weather permitting).
- Commonly touched surfaces within the entryway of the driver and passenger areas will be cleaned after each run.
- CASD has provided a electrostatic mister and solution to Krapf so they are able to sanitize CASD busses.

Q. Will there be any changes to drop off and pick-up procedures at the elementary schools?

A. Each building will communicate any necessary changes based on individual factors. However, there is an expectation that the car line will be longer as more students will be attending.

RAPID TESTING

Q. Is the District participating in Rapid Testing?

Yes. Limited amount of rapid testing will be available. We are partnering with the Chester County Health Department and Project: ACE-IT (Assisting Childhood Education through Increased Testing) program. Project ACE-IT is a collaboration between the Policy Lab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), Chester County Health Department, Chester County Intermediate Unit, and School Districts. This program provides schools with point-of-care rapid testing as a mitigation strategy in the fight against COVID-19.

Q. What COVID-19 tests are being used in this program and why?

This program uses the Abbott BinaxNOW™ COVID-19 Ag Card antigen test kits. The BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card is a rapid, point-of-care antigen test administered using a nasal swab in the front area of the nostril and provides COVID-19 results in 15 minutes. These tests have accuracy rates of 97%-98% in symptomatic individuals. Unexpected antigen test results –symptomatic people who receive a negative result – must be followed up with confirmatory PCR (molecular) test done at an offsite testing facility, OR a student/staff member will be required to quarantine for 10 days if no PCR test is done. PCR tests are NOT offered at the school.

Q. Who will be tested and when?

A. In-school testing will be available to in-person staff and students (with guardian consent) who come to school feeling healthy but begin to feel symptomatic during the school day. The school nurse will administer the test. Our school nurses have been trained and certified by CHOP's ACE-IT Program. The results will be sent by text, email, or phone call within 24 hours of test. This program is *entirely optional*, although we hope you choose to have the test to keep our schools as healthy and safe as possible.

Q. If a student or staff member feels sick, can they come to the school to be tested?

No, staff and students who are not feeling well and have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should not come to school to get tested. Schools will only test those who come to campus feeling completely well and then begin to feel unwell during the school day. Those who think they may be sick before

coming to school should *stay home*, contact their pediatrician or primary care provider, and arrange for a COVID-19 test outside of the school.

Q. Will parents need to give permission for their child to be tested at school?

A. Yes. Parental permission is required for any child under age 18 to be tested at school.

Q. What should I do when I receive my child's test results?

If your child tests positive for the virus, they will be moved to a room away from other students and staff until they can be picked up. We ask that you keep your child home until the infection period has ended (typically, after symptoms improve and at least 10 days from the date symptoms first appear) and your child is no longer contagious. If your child tests negative but has symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have concerns about your child's exposure to COVID-19, you must call your child's doctor, a licensed medical authority, or your local health department to set up a PCR (molecular test) to confirm the negative result or have your student quarantine for 10 days. In order for your child to return to school, their symptoms need to be improving and they also need to be fever free (with no use of medication) for 24 hours.