

PPSD COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Concerning Reopening of Schools

This document attempts to address questions and concerns many of you have about returning to school for the 2020-2021 school year. Please know that this information is based on current CDC, AAP, MSDH, and MDE recommendations and will be updated whenever new information becomes available. All are encouraged to check this document frequently for the most up-to-date information.

Update 8/18/2020

Will masks be required?

Yes. Executive Order No. 1517 signed by Governor Tate Reeves on August 4, 2020 states,

“Every person in Mississippi shall wear a face covering, covering the nose and mouth, while inside a school building or classroom.”

When will the school year start?

The first day for students is Monday, August 17. Students Pre-K through 5th grade will begin on a traditional schedule with a staggered start. Students in grades 6-12 will begin a hybrid schedule for two weeks.

- Monday, 8/17: First Day for Students
 - Elementary – Blue Team (Last Name A-L)
 - PJHS & PHS – Blue Team In-Person, Gold Team (Distance)
 - Blended Learning Students Begin
- Tuesday, 8/18:
 - Elementary – Gold Team (Last Name M-Z)
 - PJHS & PHS – Gold Team In-Person, Blue Team (Distance)

Updated 7/14/2020

What plans are in place for students with an IEP or a 504 plan?

Students with an IEP or 504 Plan will have accommodations provided in accordance with these plans separate from this program. Contact the Special Services office at 601-932-7965 to discuss options.

Does the district have options available for students without an IEP or a 504 plan?

A blended learning option is available to students with a medically-certified health condition that, due to COVID-19, places them at an increased risk in a traditional, face-to-face setting.

A blended learning option is also available for students who reside with someone who has a medically-certified health condition that, because of COVID-19, places them at an increased risk if the student attends school in-person.

Follow the link to fill access the PPSD Blended Learning Program application. Proper medical documentation must be provided with this completed form for any request for enrollment in the PPSD Blended Learning Program to be considered. Submit applications and documentation by July 22, 2020, via email at onlinelearning@pearlk12.com or deliver to PPSD Central Office.

Will uniforms be required this year?

At the July meeting, the PPSD School Board waived the uniform requirement for the 2020-2021 school year for students in kindergarten – 5th grade. See the 2020-2021 PPSD Student Handbook for additional information.

As of 7/7/2020

When will the school year start? **See update on 8/18/2020**

~~PPSD students will begin the 2020-2021 school year on August 7 with a traditional, in-person format. Alternate hybrid and virtual learning plans are being finalized should a need for either situation arise.~~

Does each student have to prove residency?

Yes. Online registration began July 1, and all students will register online. Residency documents or “proofs” can be uploaded online to save time and avoid lines. We strongly encourage all returning students to upload proofs of residency online. Returning secondary students who prove residency on line prior to July 26 will have their schedule emailed to them beginning on July 27 and returning elementary students who upload and prove residency prior to July 26 will receive their teachers name beginning July 27.

In-person verification of residency for returning and new students will be held July 27 & 28. Click here for more information about VOR and registration. www.pearlk12.com/registration

Will the length of the school day change?

Yes, an abbreviated schedule will be implemented Monday-Friday. This schedule change will provide time each day to sanitize and disinfect the school facilities.

4K – 5 th grade	7:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
6 th – 8 th grade	8:15 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
9 th – 12 th grade	8:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Students are not allowed on PJHS or PHS campuses prior to 7:45 a.m. for any reason.

How will social distancing be implemented?

- Classrooms have been decluttered to maximize space.
- Additional classes have been added to reduce class sizes wherever possible.
- Procedures will be in place to increase separation between students in hallways, in classrooms, and in communal areas.
- Elementary students (K-5) will remain in their classroom while teachers move from classroom to classroom.
- Secondary students (6-12) will change classrooms, but PJHS and PHS will have a moving plan to optimize safety and social distancing.

Will there be guidelines on buses to support social distancing and student and staff health?

Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to provide daily transportation to and from school for their children during the 2020-2021 school year. Students will be seated on the bus maximizing the space available for social distancing. Students will be expected to wear a face mask at all times on school buses. The buses will be sanitized daily.

Will masks be required? See update on 8/18/2020

~~Yes, at certain times. Each employee and student will be provided a washable mask to be worn at all times on school buses and any time social distancing cannot be maintained.~~

~~Will my child have to wear a mask all day while in class?~~

~~No. Students will be able to take their mask off during class when social distancing is maintained.~~

Will there be health screenings for staff and students each day?

Upon arrival to work, staff will have their temperature screened each day by a school official. Teachers will screen the temperature of each student upon entering the classroom at the beginning of each day.

Each school has a designated sick room to isolate students demonstrating COVID-like symptoms until they can be picked up.

What sanitizing procedures will be in place to minimize COVID-19 transmission?

- Additional hand sanitizing stations will be available throughout the school buildings.
- Upgraded cleaning measures and sanitizing fogging machines will be used routinely throughout the day to disinfect the classrooms, restrooms, offices, buses, etc.

Will visitors be allowed in the school buildings?

- No visitors will be allowed on campus without an appointment.
- Visitors with an appointment will be required to wear a mask, have their temperature taken upon entry and asked to practice safe social distancing.
- Parents/Guardians checking students in or out will be required to wear a mask into the main office and remain in designated areas to maintain social distancing and to protect school staff.

How will mealtime change?

All schools will continue to serve breakfast and lunch each day. Each school will implement a plan to limit excessive student interactions based on the age and grades of the students (for example eating in their classrooms, fewer classes in the cafeteria at one time and spread out, etc.).

If we move to hybrid or distance learning, will the district provide computers for students?

The district is in the process of implementing a modified 1:1 initiative to make a district-owned device available to each student at some point during the school year. Instructional content and student assignments will be made available on Google Classroom for students in K-5 and on Canvas for students 6-12. The district will use WebEx for all virtual meetings. Information related to the district's modified 1:1 plan, including types of devices, device checkout procedures, rental fees, etc., will be made available at a later date.

What assistance or support will be available for parents in the 1:1 plan?

A series of online training sessions (videos and documents) will be made available later in the summer.

Will there be state testing this school year?

Yes. Students in grade 4K, K, 3-8, and high school will be required to participate in the state assessment program. Third graders must score in the third performance level or higher to be promoted to fourth grade. High school end of course tests must be passed to be eligible for graduation.

Additional information will be added as it becomes available from MDE and other governing agencies. Be sure to check the district website frequently.