



MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

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Mary E. McLoughlin, Superintendent

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Dear Parents,

We continue to move forward with our plans for September and appreciate the feedback we have received from many of you. As we enter September 2020, it is a time for innovation and creativity to meet the needs of this unique moment in time. As a learning community, we are well prepared for the instructional challenges due to the investments in infrastructure, devices, learning platforms, and professional development over the last 5 years.

The guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education continues to be updated on a regular basis. As we receive new guidance, we adjust our plans for the reopening of schools accordingly. I want to communicate with you, as of today, what our plans include. However, please understand that these plans are subject to change based upon the evolving guidance we receive from the Department of Education.

There are a few updates to our proposed plan that I would like to share with you this week:

- Parents will be able to select between two choices: a fully online option **OR** participating in a Hybrid Model of Instruction. In the Hybrid Model, our students will be divided into two cohorts alphabetically with one cohort being present in school at a time. This will allow for appropriate social distancing in our classrooms and buildings.
- If a family elects the fully online option for a student, they will be asked to commit to that option in four week blocks of time.
- Students electing hybrid instruction in grades K-6 will be divided into 2 cohorts. One cohort will attend instruction in the school building on Monday and Tuesday while the other will attend instruction in the school building on Wednesday and Thursday. All students will learn virtually on Fridays.
- Students electing the Hybrid Model in grades 7-12 will be divided into 2 cohorts. Each cohort will attend instruction in the school building for 2 days in a row and then learn virtually for 2 days in a row creating a 4-day cycle (2 days in school and 2 days virtually).
- Please see the attached sample schedules to visually understand how the cohort rotations will work and to read a description of our instructional model.
- At this time, athletics and our Marching Band will be following NJSIAA guidelines. Coaches and advisors will continue to communicate updates to their members.
- We are still examining our model for co-curricular activities and will provide more information as we finalize our reopening plans.
- We will be releasing class placements for our K-4 students as soon as we possibly can. We understand that arranging child care will be challenging and would like to give families as much time as possible to make arrangements.

- All students will be required to wear a mask at all times. If your child has a medically documented condition, a physician's note will be required before an exemption to this requirement can be made. We encourage you to assist your child in building up their endurance for wearing a mask prior to the start of school. For more information and ideas, please view [Helping Your Child Wear a Mask](#). We will make every effort to provide students with opportunities for socially distanced mask breaks.
- Our buildings have been sanitized and rigorous cleaning schedules have been created for the school year. This includes the cleaning and replacement of air filters for all of our buildings.
- Our maintenance department is verifying that all HVAC systems are appropriately functioning to allow for inside air to be refreshed with outside air.
- Plans are being designed for each building to reduce capacity in the hallways and common areas. This will include new hallway and stairway patterns to help maintain safe movement.
- Teachers may utilize outdoor spaces for instruction, weather permitting. Please dress your child in layers.
- Increased handwashing practices and sanitation stations will be available to our students and staff.
- Our PreK program schedule is still being developed, but families will be contacted in August when the program is finalized.
- Our Director of Special Services will be sending a second letter to families who receive special education services providing specific details about additional programming or schedule modifications that apply to those students.

Please be cognizant of your travel plans during the summer and whether or not you are traveling to an area that will require your child to quarantine for 2 weeks upon return. If you travel to a location that requires quarantine when you return, your children will not be able to start school (in person) until the quarantine period has ended. They will, however, be able to fully participate in remote learning. In the very near future, I will be communicating procedures with you for how you may elect the fully online option.

All students will be required to wear a mask on school buses. Students will have assigned seats, loading the bus from back to front and exiting the bus from front to back. We will do our best to socially distance ourselves on the buses, but cannot guarantee a distance of 6 feet between each student. In order to plan our transportation routes, we will be asking you to indicate if your child will be riding a bus to school.

We strive to provide you with the most up-to-date information. Please understand that while this letter outlines the plan we are strongly recommending at this time, it is subject to change. As a reminder, the New Jersey Department of Education continues to update their guidance and must approve our plan prior to the start of the school year. Additionally, if the health conditions in our township, county or state change, the health department may provide guidance that alters our plans as well.

Sincerely,



Mary E. McLoughlin
Superintendent of Schools

Hybrid Learning Model

In order to accommodate this unique situation our teachers will be adopting a Hybrid Model of Instruction. ¹The foundation of the Hybrid Model of Instruction is a pedagogical practice called *the flipped classroom*. In *the flipped classroom*, new content is presented mostly through prerecorded presentations and/or high quality, commercially produced content videos. In addition to the video lessons, students will be provided a list of required assignments which will include independent reading, writing, problem solving, virtual experiments, and group work through digital tools. These activities will mirror the same learning activities that have traditionally been part of normal classroom instruction. Additionally, online reading and math platforms will be used to enhance skill development for our K-6 grade students.

Synchronous time with the teacher, either in-person or virtually through a video platform, is highly valued as time for teachers to deepen student understanding, reteach misunderstood content, and to personalize instruction for students.

Although this is a paradigm shift away from traditional classroom instruction, *the flipped classroom* model is not new. Proponents of this model cite the ability for teachers to personalize instruction at a much greater level as a significant instructional benefit.

UMS and MHS Four Day Rotation

Description	Day 1 (Cohort 1)	Day 2 (Cohort 1)	Day 3 (Cohort 2)	Day 4 (Cohort 2)
4-hour Early Dismissal School Day	A1	B1	A1	B1
	A2	B2	A2	B2
	Possible Break			
	A3	B3	A3	B3
	A4	B4	A4	B4
40 Minutes	School Dismissal – Teacher Lunch			
Afternoon School Session (60-75 Minutes)	<i>Teachers will host “office hours”, Q&A Sessions, and Reteaching Sessions for Cohort 2 and Online-Only Cohort(3)*.</i>	<i>Teachers will host “office hours”, Q&A Sessions, and Reteaching Sessions for Cohort 2 and Online-Only Cohort(3)*.</i>	<i>Teachers will host “office hours”, Q&A Sessions, and Reteaching Sessions for Cohort 1 and Online-Only Cohort(3)*.</i>	<i>Teachers will host “office hours”, Q&A Sessions, and Reteaching Sessions for Cohort 1 and Online-Only Cohort(3)*.</i>

*The Online-Only cohort **may** participate in afternoon sessions on all four days as scheduled by the various classes and teachers.

¹Sheninger, Eric. *Moving to a Hybrid Learning Model*, 21 June 2020, esheninger.blogspot.com/2020/06/moving-to-hybrid-learning-model.html.

“Hybrid Learning Environments: The Instructional Trajectory.” IDE Corp., 5 July 2020, www.idecorp.com/hybrid-learning-environments-the-instructional-trajectory/.

LMS Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4-hour Early Dismissal School Day	A1	B1	A1	B1	All students work independently on weekly learning plans and digital learning software.
	A2	B2	A2	B2	
	A3	B3	A3	B3	
	Possible Break				
	A4	B4	A4	B4	
	A5	B5	A5	B5	
	A6	B6	A6	B6	
	40 Minutes	School Dismissal - Teacher Lunch			
Afternoon School Session (60-75 Minutes)	<i>Teachers will host "office hours", Q&A Sessions, and Reteaching Sessions for GOLD Cohort and Online-Only Cohort*.</i>	<i>Teachers will host "office hours", Q&A Sessions, and Reteaching Sessions for GOLD Cohort and Online-Only Cohort*.</i>	<i>Teachers will host "office hours", Q&A Sessions, and Reteaching Sessions for GREEN Cohort and Online-Only Cohort*.</i>	<i>Teachers will host "office hours", Q&A Sessions, and Reteaching Sessions for GREEN Cohort and Online-Only Cohort*.</i>	<i>Small group Google Meet Session hosted by teachers as needed.</i>

*The Online-Only cohort **may** participate in afternoon sessions on all four days as scheduled by the various classes and teachers.

OHES and VES Schedule

	Monday (Cohort 1 – in school)	Tuesday (Cohort 1 – in school)	Wednesday (Cohort 2 – in school)	Thursday (Cohort 2 – in school)	Friday (ALL Students Are Online)
4-hour Early Dismissal School Day 9:30-1:30 (See Kindergarten note below)	Classroom Instruction	Classroom Instruction	Classroom Instruction	Classroom Instruction	All students work independently on weekly learning plans and digital learning software.
Possible Break & Snack					
Classroom Instruction	Classroom Instruction	Classroom Instruction	Classroom Instruction	Classroom Instruction	
1:30-2:15	School Dismissal - Teacher Lunch				Student Lunch
Asynchronous	Green students extend learning day through digital learning software and independent reading.	Green students extend learning day through digital learning software and independent reading.	GOLD students extend learning day through digital learning software and independent reading.	GOLD students extend learning day through digital learning software and independent reading.	Small group Google Meet Session hosted by teachers as needed.
Afternoon School Session (60-75 Minutes)	<i>Teachers will host Google Meet Q&A Sessions and Reteaching Sessions for GOLD Cohort and Online-Only Cohort*.</i>	<i>Teachers will host Google Meet Q&A Sessions and Reteaching Sessions for GOLD Cohort and Online-Only Cohort*.</i>	<i>Teachers will host Google Meet Q&A Sessions and Reteaching Sessions for GREEN Cohort and Online-Only Cohort*.</i>	<i>Teachers will host Google Meet Q&A Sessions and Reteaching Sessions for GREEN Cohort and Online-Only Cohort*.</i>	

*The Online-Only cohort **may** participate in afternoon sessions on all four days as scheduled by the various classes and teachers.

- All full-day preschool disability classes will run 5 days a week. Tentative times: 9:30-1:30.
- Our special education *integrated preschool program* will run 5 days a week. Tentative times: 9:30-11:20 or 11:50-1:30.
- All kindergarten classes will run 4 days a week. Tentative times 9:30-11:20 or 11:50-1:30. Inclusion students will follow their building's Monday and Tuesday or Wednesday and Thursday schedule with all virtual on Friday. The hybrid Model of Instruction will include live instruction daily both on-site and in-home or families may choose a fully online instructional model.
- Kindergarten students with a *pull-out supplement program* will follow either Monday and Tuesday 9:30-1:30 or Wednesday and Thursday 9:30-1:30 with all students virtual on Friday.