



Colchester Public Schools

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Dear Colchester Families and Colleagues,

I hope this communication finds you and your family well as we continue to live with COVID-19, and the aftermath of Tropical Storm Isaias. I apologize for the delay in sending out this email as we had planned last week, but we had significant connectivity issues that impeded our ability to collaborate and communicate as a team.

On August 31st, the District will be reopening with the Hybrid Model. We have received many questions regarding our reopening plans and will have a Q&A document and webinar by the end of the week (delayed as well from last week).

Required Parent Survey

This questionnaire will assist the District in planning for students who will be in person for the Hybrid Model and those students who will temporarily opt into voluntary at-home learning. Please complete this survey for each student you have in CPS no later than August 17, 2020: [REVISED Fall 2020 Reopening Parent Survey](#)

The Hybrid Model Philosophy

The Hybrid Model provides an opportunity for everyone to transition back to school in a controlled and managed setting, to attend to the safety of students, teachers, and staff, and to promote their emotional well-being. We believe a successful re-entry back to school will help the District stay open longer and enable students to return to full in-person classes in mid-October, if the public health data in Connecticut and Colchester warrants the transition.

The core philosophy of the Hybrid model is that reduced student attendance will reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Per Local Health Department advice, the number of students attending school is reduced through use of an alternating schedule. Please note that our schools will be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly every day in accordance with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and CT Department of Public Health.

Responding to your Questions

Your questions submitted to planquestions@colchesterct.org are being addressed by the Reopening Task Force on Thursday, August 13th. That webinar will be recorded and sent

to all parents and caregivers immediately after. An updated Q&A document will also be linked on our website and shared.

Full Reopening Plan

For the full draft of the reopening plan, visit here: [Colchester Public School Access Plan DRAFT v1 \(Submit\).pdf](#)

What Does the Hybrid Model Look Like?

The Hybrid Model has 50% of students participating in-person on Monday and Tuesday, and the other 50% in-person on Thursday and Friday, on alternate days students will participate in digital learning with support. On Wednesdays, all students will participate in a half-day of at home learning where the teachers will provide direct instruction to their entire class. Building administrators are working to ensure families with more than one student will be in the same group. During weeks that have 4 school days due to holidays or professional development, the Wednesday remote learning day will be eliminated.

Normal week (groups A & B)

A - A - Home - B - B

Shortened week Due to Holiday/Teacher Prep:

Calendar Closing - A - A - B - B

Non-Participation Options

If your student(s) will not be participating in the Hybrid Model, there are two learning options: “**At-Home**” and “**Homeschooling**.” For the “At Home” option, students will remain enrolled as a student and may utilize [District curriculum guides](#) and the CT Learning Hub to guide their learning. You can learn more about the Learning Hub here: [CT Learning Hub](#). Under this model, students may receive limited tutoring support from staff members who have to work from home, not their assigned classroom teacher(s). Students will continue to receive support as outlined in their IEP and 504 plans. Parents can switch from “At-Home” to “In-Person” at any time and choose to send students to school if they inform the principal in writing one-week in advance of the scheduled return. Further information on the “At-Home” model will be provided shortly.

Alternatively, parents and caregivers can select the **Homeschooling** option. Under this option, the student must be withdrawn from Colchester Public Schools, and education will become the sole responsibility of parents and caregivers.

Cohort Grouping

Notification for group assignments will be sent by Friday, August 14th. Building administrators are working to ensure families with more than one student will be in the same group.

Modification to the Hybrid Model for School Weeks Less Than Five Days

Four Day School Weeks

During four day school weeks there will be two days of school for each group of students and no full day of distance learning for all students. The schedule for

September will be as follows (schedules will updated in the weekly communication):

Week of September 7:

- Group A will attend September 8, 9; Group B will be on distance learning
- Group B will attend September 10, 11; Group A will be on distance learning

Reassessment of Hybrid Model

The Hybrid Model will continue through October 2nd. On or slightly before this date, the district will make a determination if leading and secondary indicators, as well as additional considerations explained in [Interim Guidance for Decision-Making Regarding the Use of In-Person, Hybrid \(Blended\), or Remote Learning Models in Connecticut Schools during Covid-19](#), warrant full in-person instruction. This decision will be made in consultation with the School Medical Advisor and the Director of Chatham Public Health.

We realize the Hybrid Model may pose an inconvenience to some families and may leave others without adequate childcare. We are working with our local child care centers and Colchester Parks and Recreation to be innovative in how we can support families in need. We will share information as it becomes available.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and State Department of Public Health (DPH) have collaborated to provide school districts with guidance and protocols for responding to specific COVID-19 scenarios that may occur with school reopening for the 2020–21 school year: [Addendum5.pdf](#)

Resources for Parents

- [Webinars for parents on Google Classroom](#)
- [Families_ Q & A Session with Medical Experts on Back-to-School Safety.pdf](#)

I will continue to provide school reopening updates and want to thank you in advance for your patience and understanding as the District works through the details related to a safe and successful reopening. I respectfully ask for you to do your part in keeping Colchester and Connecticut healthy by wearing a mask in public, washing hands frequently, and practicing social distancing.

Best Regards,



Jeffrey Burt
Superintendent