

SOMSD Return to School LIVE Q&A

Participate/View Via:



MON., 12/21 @ 7:30PM

Submit questions to:
<https://bit.ly/SOMSD-QA>



www.somsd.k12.nj.us | A district that celebrates students, community and diversity

Q & A Sections

- Introduction (Slides 3 - 6)
- Academics & Scheduling (Slides 7 - 26)
- Health & Safety (Slides 27 - 32)
- CHS Questions (Slides 33 - 35)
- Facilities & Transportation (Slides 36 - 38)
- Special Services (Slides 39 - 42)
- Technology (Slides 43 - 44)
- Upcoming Dates/Resources (Slides 45 - 47)

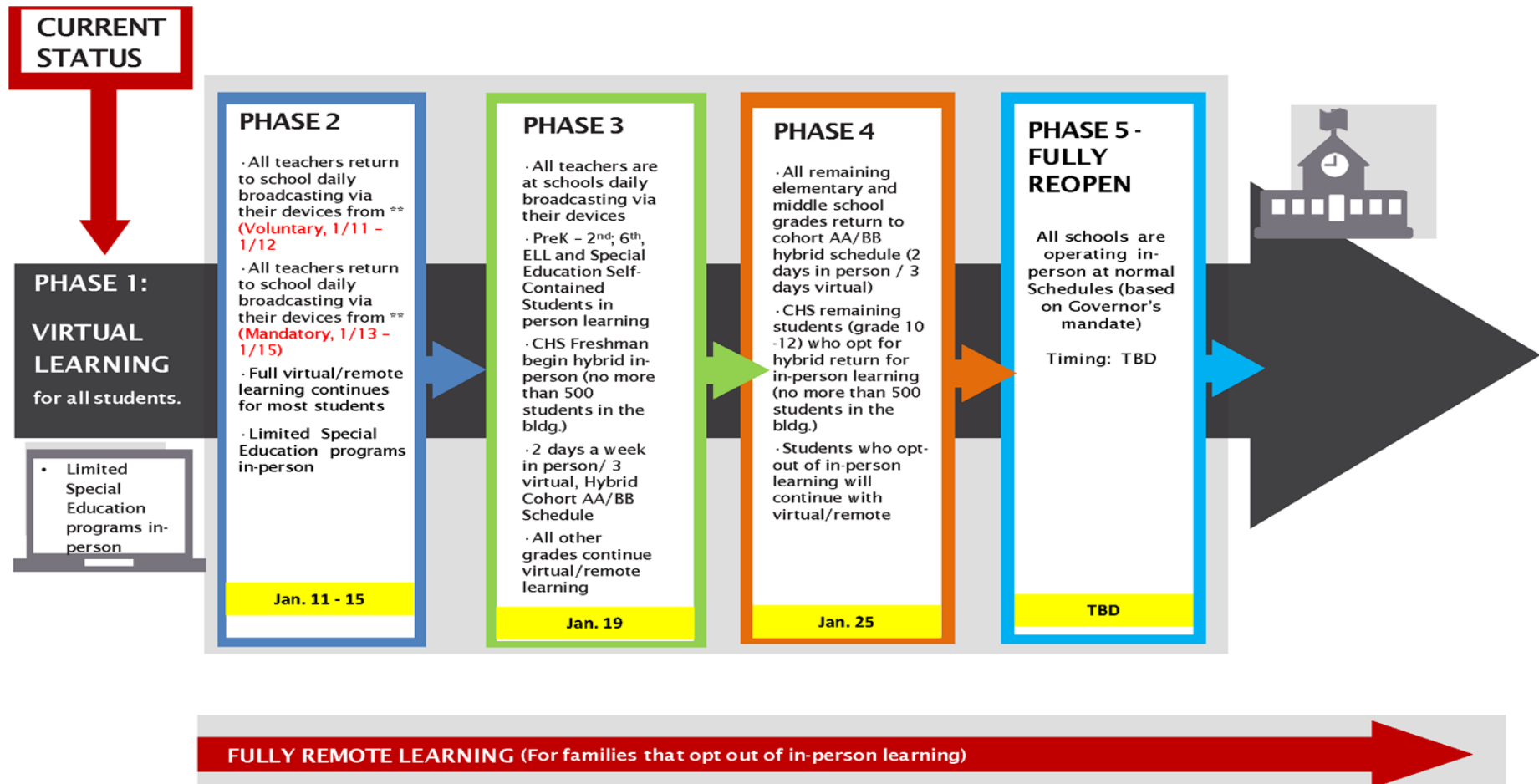
Introduction

*Dr. Ronald G. Taylor,
Superintendent of Schools*



SOMSD Stages of Re-Entry Plan (2020- 2021)

On Tuesday, January 19 (subject to delivery of supplies), in-person learning at schools will begin (virtual only students will continue their instruction online)



All re-entry decisions will be made taking into consideration guidance from the Maplewood and South Orange health departments and federal and state guidelines.

Point of Clarification: Virtual Instruction “As Is” Hypothetical

The pre-record presentation seemed to contradict itself; early on Superintendent Taylor noted that students who choose virtual could not revise that decision at a later point and move to hybrid/live instruction. Later in the presentation, it seemed that students could indeed revise that decision, but at the end of a marking period. Can you provide clarity on what point in time a revision can be made?

If a student chooses virtual to start, can they switch to hybrid in “March”? If they start hybrid, and are not comfortable after the first day, can they switch to virtual and still have all their same teachers? (There is confusion since it was mentioned some teachers may change if you choose virtual only). If choose virtual, will all teachers remain the same and students at home will have a live feed to in-class instruction? Thank you.

Virtual Instruction “As is” Hypothetical

- The virtual “as is” question that was included as part of our Return to School Preference Form, was asked to collect data and get a better of idea of the % of parents who feel strongly about keeping our virtual option explicitly ‘as is’.
- The information shared on slide 25 (in the key considerations section) from our 12/17 Return to School presentation outlined the steps that would be needed to keep our virtual 'as is'. We understand that it is not very likely, however we wanted to make sure that we were making an informed decision.
- We tried to make a clear delineation between our plan and this option depending upon the feedback received from the community.

ACADEMICS & SCHEDULING



Academics: Switching Schedules

- **How will re-registration work for families who left the District and want to return if schools open for a hybrid instruction?**
- **If student chooses virtual to start, can they switch to hybrid at the start of the next marking cycle?**
- **If they start hybrid, and are not comfortable after the first day, can they switch to virtual and still have all their same teachers? (There is confusion since it was mentioned some teachers may change if you choose virtual only)**

Devices for In-Person Students

- **Students will need their devices in school to:**
 - Allow teachers to use technology as they normally would before the pandemic
 - Continue their writing pieces on Google
 - Continue using online books and texts to limit sharing of materials in schools
- **Please send your child to school with:**
 - A fully charged device (K-12)
 - Power cord (K-12)
 - Whiteboards and markers (K-5)

Instruction Models

- **How will the virtual days for hybrid students be different from the existing all-virtual schedule? Will there be more asynchronous learning?**
- **What will in-class participation be like for students who are virtual when others are in class (for lower elementary and middle school)? Please specify where the teacher will be and whether in-class students will be on computers with their at-home classmates. Will in-person be just like what the virtual students experience now, but in the classroom?**

Elementary Sample Schedule (Using Late School Schedule)

- All students will be received at the door by staff greeters
- Teacher and Virtual Students will log onto their computers by 8:45am each day
- Teachers will have their cameras on for all 4 hours in the morning engaging and interacting with both in-person and virtual students

Elementary Sample Schedule

Cohort A: Mon./Tues. (In Person Learning, 4 hours in the morning)

Cohort B: Wed./Th. (In Person Learning, 4 hours in the morning)

Friday: All-Virtual Day for all students

–During Phase 3 - January 19th - all specials for K-2 will be held in the
–Starting in Phase 4, January 25th - all schools will move to their early release specials schedule.

		Student Schedule				
Period	Time	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.
1	8:45 am - 9:15 am	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	<div>All-Virtual Day: All Virtual Day will reflect current instruction and schedules</div>
2	9:20 am - 9:50 am	Math	Math	Math	Math	
3	9:55 am - 10:25 am	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	
4	10:30am - 11:00 am	Science/Social Studies	Science/Social Studies	Science/Social Studies	Science/Social Studies	
5	11:05 am - 11:35am	Specials (PE, Music, Art, Library, Spanish)	Specials (PE, Music, Art, Library, Spanish)	Specials (PE, Music, Art, Library, Spanish)	Specials (PE, Music, Art, Library, Spanish)	
6	11:40 am - 12:10 pm	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	
7	12:15pm - 12:45pm	Closing Meeting	Closing Meeting	Closing Meeting	Closing Meeting	
12:45pm		In-Person Student School Dismissal				
1:00pm - 1:55pm		PICK UP BAG LUNCH/TRAVEL HOME/LUNCH				
2:15pm - 3:30pm		Live Small Group or 1:1 Instruction Focusing in on Virtual Student				



Middle School Sample Schedule (Using the MMS 6th Grade Schedule)

- All students will be received at the door by staff greeters
- Teacher and Virtual Students will log on to their computers by 8:20am
- Teachers will have their cameras on for all 4 hours in the morning engaging and interacting with both in-person and virtual students
- Both middle schools will continue to follow their current schedule

Period	Time	Subject
1	8:20 - 8:54	Math
2	8:59 - 9:30	Social Studies
3	9:35 - 10:06	PE, RA, WL, Music
4	10:11 - 10:42	Language Arts
5	10:47 - 11:18	Science
6	11:23 - 11:54	PE, RA, WL, Music
7	11:59 - 12:30	Rotation
8	12:30 - 1:34	Bag Lunch P/U, Travel Home, Lunch
Afternoon Conference	1:34 - 2:24	Afternoon Conference Period X
Afternoon Conference	2:24 - 3:14	Afternoon Conference Period Y

Columbia High School: Schedule

CHS Schedule					<p>All Cohorts are 100% VIRTUAL (with a rotating A/B Day Schedule)</p>
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	
	A Day	B Day	A Day	B Day	
TIME					
8:00-8:50	Period 1	Period 6	Period 1	Period 6	
9:00-9:50	Period 2	Period 4	Period 2	Period 4	
10:00-10:50	Period 3	Period 8	Period 3	Period 8	
11:00-11:50	Period 5	Period 7	Period 5	Period 7	
11:50-12:00	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	
12:00-12:50	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
1:00-1:50	Conference	Period 9 (VIRTUAL)	Conference	Period 9 (VIRTUAL)	



Columbia High School: Sample Schedule

	DAY 1 (A)	DAY 2 (B)	DAY 3 (A)	DAY 4 (B)	DAY 5
Block 1	Pre-Calculus (1)	Physics (6)	Pre-Calculus (1)	Physics (6)	All Cohorts are 100% VIRTUAL (with a rotating A/B Day Schedule)
Block 2	Health (2)	AP Language (4)	Health (2)	AP Language (4)	
Block 3	US History II (3)	French III (8)	US History II (3)	French III (8)	
Block 4	LUNCH (5)	Orchestra (7)	LUNCH (5)	Orchestra (7)	
Dismissal for lunch / Grab & Go Option					
Block 5	Conference	TV Production (9)	Conference	TV Production (9)	

Academics & Technology

- **Will students need to bring their laptops to school for in-person instruction, or will they use school Chromebooks when at the school building?**

A: Students should bring the devices they used for remote instruction to school for hybrid learning. If a student was using a desktop at home or the device at home cannot be transported to school, students will be provided a district Chromebook. A supplemental survey to families will help the district prepare additional devices for students.

Academics & Technology

- **How will students in each model do work and submit work? Will students in school use Chromebooks or work on paper? Can students hand in paper assignments safely? Can students use Chromebooks safely in school? Many families are finding that Chromebooks are inadequate for the multimedia necessary in Canvas.**

A: Students will utilize the district's Learning Management System, Canvas, to submit work. Work will be submitted through Canvas using the online assignment section of Canvas. If a paper assignment is required, students have the ability to take photos of the paperwork and upload it into Canvas.

Some of the district's older Chromebook fleet do not have the necessary technical specs to display multimedia-rich content. Primarily, Chromebooks will be used for general content creation and submission (websites, Google docs, Canvas, etc).

Teachers & Livestreaming from Classrooms

- **Will teachers be live-streaming directly from their classes? How will sound issues be addressed?**
- **What will happen with elementary school specials if classroom teachers are holding one hour of live instruction in the afternoons for their at-home students?**
- **Will teachers be sitting at their desks in front of their computers in the classroom during hybrid in-person instruction days? Can teachers walk around the classrooms to check on students' work? Will teachers be able to have one-on-one sessions with in-person students for assessments?**

Teachers & Livestreaming from Classrooms (cont.)

- **When the hybrid system is fully implemented, will teachers be simultaneously teaching those students who are online from offsite, as well as those who are present in the classrooms?**
- **Why can't learning remain as is for our youngest learners (k-2) who are planning to remain virtual? It's been a year filled with changes and it's a lot to ask of these little humans. Why can't our teachers live stream from the classroom like in neighboring districts such as Livingston?**

Teacher Assignments

- **If my child remains fully virtual, will their class/teachers remain the same? So the same teacher would teach to classroom and video at the same time?**
- **Can you say with certainty that student K-5 will not have a change to their class/teacher regardless of their choice virtual/hybrid?**

Scheduling

- **The schedule presented on 12/17 reflects that there will be a 1hr 45m break daily for dismissal/lunch, followed by “Live Teaching” from 1:50p-3:05p. For All Virtual students, is this 1:50p- 3:05p the guaranteed “live virtual instruction” outlined in the plan? On Fridays, when all students are virtual, do we need a 1hr 45m break for lunch? This creates a huge interruption in instruction.**

Scheduling: Switching Classrooms & Changing Models

- **Will students be switching classrooms with the same cohort, or will new teachers come into their classrooms, or how does it work?**
- **Will all kids be six-feet apart for in-person instruction? And if a child goes in and does not feel safe with the set-up, can they immediately switch to virtual learning?**
- **Will people who have left the class have the opportunity to rejoin the class?**

Elementary

- During the Town Hall presentation it was shared that in Phase 3 at the elementary level, all students will be receiving “Specials” at their regular scheduled class time. Will “Specials” classes be taught live by the instructors to the entire class- Cohort A/Cohort B/ Virtual students synchronously?
- How will specials be handled for 5th grade students? Will the in person (hybrid) students be physically going to the gym, music room, art room, library etc? If so, how will the students who are visually learning from home participate? For example, if the hybrid students are doing a P.E. activity outside at the school, will the virtual students be watching a pre-recorded video instead?

Elementary (cont.)

- If we opt for all virtual, how many hours of live instruction per day can we expect at the 2nd and 3rd grade levels? If it is not possible to give an exact number of hours, can you provide a range or sample schedule?
- If my child, who is a third grader, chooses all virtual, does that mean that he will lose his current teacher and have a new virtual teacher?

Middle Schools

- For middle school kids who switch classes with each subject, how will the live instruction be divided among subjects?
- MMS hybrid schedule reduces class time back to 30 min per subject. Why not remove "rotation" and keep the class lengths longer?
- We are concerned about the reduction in live instruction at the middle school. Why aren't classes being broadcast live as they will be from CHS? And if they can't be how will asynchronous learning look differently from the spring?

Friday Schedules

- Do cohorts A and B convene virtually in one class on Fridays?
- On Friday's current information simply says that all virtual hybrid is a 4-hour mix of live instruction, pre-recorded instruction, independent work and small groups, plus 1 hour live with a teacher in the afternoon. How much of the 4 hours will be live instruction?
- On Fridays, when all elementary students are learning remotely, will the full day of instruction be live interactive broadcast to the entire class, maintaining the current remote learning model we've been experiencing for the past 4 months?
- Why would Fridays not shift back to "full" days of school (ie: to 2:30 for middle schools) if it's all remote for all students?

Academics

- **How can you ensure that our children will have an equal or better educational experience under the hybrid system than they are in the present all-virtual model when teachers will need to be focused on students live in their classrooms and students on-screen at home?**

HEALTH & SAFETY



Health & Safety

- **Why is the district opening when the COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix for NJ is high? Does the Department of Health consider local data to make closure and opening decisions?**
- **Can you please explain the district's rationale on opening now when the numbers in NJ are as high as they've been? What evidence are you drawing on that supports the notion you can do this safely?**

NJDOH School Closure Guidance

The COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix is one tool that can inform the decision-making process for school districts when considering when remote learning might be indicated. More information can be found on NJDOH website: [COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for local DOH for K-12 schools](#).



COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix

**For use by LHDs when providing guidance to school districts*

Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk	Very High Risk
<p>Evaluate alternatives to in-person learning to ensure continuity of work or educational services.</p> <p>In response to COVID-19 positive staff or student, follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts following CDC guidance; refer to guidance on cleaning and disinfection.</p> <p>In response to ill students and staff, follow NJDOH School Exclusion List.</p> <p>* If ill person had potential exposure in past 14 days, follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; wait at least 24 hours and clean/disinfect areas where ill</p>	<p>Consider a mixture of remote and/or hybrid learning approaches, and/or fully remote learning.</p> <p>In response to COVID-19 positive staff or student, follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts following CDC guidance; refer to guidance on cleaning and disinfection.</p> <p>In response to ill students and staff with COVID-19 compatible symptoms, follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; wait at least 24 hours and clean/disinfect areas where ill person spent time.</p>	<p>Consider implementing fully remote learning.</p> <p><i>If schools remain open for in-person learning:</i></p> <p>In response to staff or student who is COVID-19 positive <u>or</u> who has COVID-19 compatible symptoms (not yet tested), follow COVID-19 exclusion criteria; work with local health department to identify and exclude close contacts according to CDC guidance; refer to guidance on cleaning and disinfection.</p> <p>* Decisions on when ill person's close contacts can return to school are dependent on the ill person's medical evaluation and COVID-19 test results.</p>	<p>Implement fully remote learning</p>

NJDOH School Closure Guidance

Closure is a local decision that should be made by school administrators in consultation with local public health. The following scenarios may help inform the decision for when schools should temporarily close. More information can be found on NJDOH website: [COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for local DOH for K-12 schools](#).

SCENARIO	CLOSURE
1 confirmed case in the school	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive case are excluded from school for 14 days.
2 or more cases in the same classroom (outbreak limited to one cohort)	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive case are excluded from school for 14 days. Recommendations for whether the entire classroom would be considered exposed will be based on public health investigation.
2 or more cases within 14 days, but are linked to an exposure outside the school setting (e.g. in same household, exposed at the same event outside of school)	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive cases are excluded from school for 14 days.
2 or more cases within 14 days, linked together by some activity in school, but who are in different classrooms (outbreak involving multiple cohorts)	Recommendations for whether school closure is indicated will be based on investigation by local health department.
A significant community outbreak is occurring or has recently occurred (e.g., large event or large local employer) and is impacting multiple staff, students, and families served by the school community	Consider closing school for 14 days, based on investigation by local health department.
2 or more cases are identified within 14 days that occur across multiple classrooms and a clear connection between cases cannot be easily identified (outbreak involving multiple cohorts)	Close school for 14 days.
Very high risk of community transmission (refer to COVID-19 Regional Risk Level Matrix)	Close school until COVID-19 transmission decreases.



Health & Safety (cont.)

- **What will the District's protocol for vaccinations be? Will staff/teachers be mandated to be vaccinated?**
- **There is some new guidance presented that recommends that young students be in-person at ANY level of community spread and need only 3 feet of distancing in classrooms. Will you consider this guidance? We are truly hoping for more than two half days for our youngest learners this year.**

Health & Safety (cont.)

- **Why are you allowing mask breaks inside the buildings at all? That seems unwise. If you're allowing mask breaks, why not let the kids have breaks to drink and eat (which legitimately seem more necessary)? No masks off for biological needs should mean no masks off for any reason.**
- **Will entry and exit protocols be the same for pick-up?**
- **How will the students have a snack/drink during their 4 hour day? Most elementary school students cannot go more than 2-3 hours without a snack/drink. Thank you**

CHS QUESTIONS



CHS Questions

- **For students who have taken drivers Ed will they be able to finally take the test for their permits?**
- **How will you handle choral activities? Will you consider holding classes outside once the weather gets nicer in the spring?**
- **How will you safely handle change of classes at the high school?**

CHS Questions (cont.)

- **Can you confirm that once school reopens, there will be soap and hand towels stocked in the bathrooms. In past years, this has always been an issue.**
- **At CHS, if all-virtual is selected, can student elect to switch to hybrid? When can that be done?**
- **Will all siblings be in the same cohort at CHS?**
- **PE at CHS - will masks requirement be enforced?**

FACILITIES / TRANSPORTATION



Facilities

- With the filters expected to be received beginning of January, does that timing with installation and inspections still realistically provide for a 1/19 start date for students? Are there thoughts to just opening windows?
- Why is the district stating MERV 8 is "adequate" to reduce transmission of SARS/airborne type viruses, below even MERV 13, as being safe and sufficient for school reopening during the pandemic? What has changed since September?
- Are we to take it that proper and required filters will be in place for when schools starts? Also will all classrooms be able to accommodate open windows to increase air flow and circulation?
- RE HVAC. In the Town Hall it was stated "Note that the highest rated filter each unit is rated for will be used. The units will not support MERV 13 filters." Will all filters meet the standards for removing viruses (particles in the size range of 0.1-1 um) ?

Facilities: Transportation

- Will drop off and pick up of Students be the same as in the past (before Covid-19)?
- As a parent if I decide to drop my child off to school by car vs. allowing them ride on the school bus, is there a protocol I must follow?

SPECIAL SERVICES



Special Services: ELL & IEP

- You explained that ELL students and those who receive special services will be able to attend school in-person four days/week.
 - Can you please clarify which students will benefit from these additional two days?
 - Are all ELL students going to be offered 4 days of in person instruction?
 - And will IEP special services be offered in addition to the 4 hours of academic classroom instruction a student will receive 2 days/week?

Special Services: Inclusion Classes & Scheduling

- I have two questions about inclusion classrooms.
 - (1) You said that cohorts would be split alphabetically. What about inclusion classrooms? Will the IEP kids (max of 8 kids) be split 50-50, kept together or split randomly, based on the letter of their name?
 - (2) Also, in inclusion classes, which have 2 teachers, will both teachers be in person 4-days a week, or will they alternate in-person with the other teacher working remotely with the kids who are virtual on that day?
- My daughter is an inclusion/in-class support student at CHS. The presentation shows inclusion students in-person 2 days per week. Will this be the schedule for my high school inclusion student as well?

Special Services: Other

- **As a parent of a child who is hearing impaired, a major concern I have, is I want to know how the hearing-impaired students will be allowed to benefit from being able to join their peers in the classroom and their academics not being sacrificed. What accommodations will be provided for the students with hearing impairments in the hybrid model?**
- **Can you please go into greater detail about what this new schedule will look like in terms of what kind of childcare services will the Y (YMCA) be able to provide?**
- **For classes with only one teacher - no paras or aides or co-teachers - in K-5, will extra staff be hired to help out in the classroom?**

TECHNOLOGY



Technology

- The explanation of ISP bandwidth indicates that the district needs in the hybrid model (>6 Gbps) are greater than the available bandwidth from the ISP. What is the impact of this limitation to (1) teachers, (2) virtual learners, and (3) on-campus learners?

Upcoming Dates



Upcoming Important Dates

- + **Monday, January 4:** Preference Form Submissions Due - bit.ly/3acxlUe
- + **Week of January 11:** Family cohort letters sent to families from schools
- + **Mon., January 18:** District Closed for MLK
- + **Tues., January 19:** Phase 3: First-Day of Hybrid In-Person Learning for Pre-K-2 and 6th grade students and CHS Freshman
- + **Mon., January 25:** Phase 4: All other students Grades 3 - 5; 7 & 8 and CHS return to in-person learning (starting with Cohort A)

Resources

Please see links to key resources on reopening plans and information that were shared with the SOMSD community:

- [12.17 Return to School Presentation](#)
- [NJ Restart & Recovery SOMSD Reopening Plan Appendix Only \(August 2020\) - provides protocols on SOMSD critical areas of operation](#)
- FAQs (to be posted we will share a link with the community)
- [NJ Restart & Recovery SOMSD Reopening Full Plan \(8/8/20\)](#)
- [Phased-In Return to School Presentation \(10/19\)](#)





The School District of

SOUTH ORANGE & MAPLEWOOD

525 Academy Street • Maplewood, NJ 07040

www.somsd.k12.nj.us | A district that celebrates students, community and diversity