

HCPSS Announces Fall Reopening Plan

The Howard County Board of Education approved the Howard County Public School System Reopening Plan for the 2020-2021 school year during its work session on August 6, 2020. HCPSS will submit its plan to the Maryland State Department of Education for approval prior to the MSDE August 14 deadline.

The HCPSS Reopening Plan, applicable only for the 2020-2021 school year, fulfills the 13 requirements of the [Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education](#) and includes several additional items beyond those already [approved by the Board](#) on July 16. Highlights of the plan include:

- Assessing the instructional level of students so teachers may provide students with appropriate supports during instruction to mitigate learning gaps experienced from the extended building closure. Multiple measures will be used by teachers to determine instructional levels and supports.
- Aligning the virtual instructional model with Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for prekindergarten through grade 12 in all content areas by providing students with, on average, 3 hours of synchronous learning with their teachers four days each week. The remaining instructional time is designated for students to complete asynchronous learning activities and assignments.
- Detailing comprehensive supports to ensure equity, including tiered supports for mathematics and language arts, and supports for homeless students, English language learners, academic and behavior needs, and several other areas that support student success.
- Providing early intervention and special education services to children and students from birth to age 21. Current Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students will guide the specially designed instruction and related and support services to be provided during virtual schooling and other opportunities for learning during the first semester of 2020-2021.
- Outlining criteria for tracking attendance and grading expectations when students are engaged in distance learning.
- Developing a detailed communication and engagement strategy that sets clear expectations for cultivating awareness, understanding, support, and confidence in the planning and implementation efforts of the school system to develop an instructional plan for the 2020-2021 school year in a transparent and comprehensive manner.

Additionally, the Reopening Plan document includes details about HCPSS plans for all aspects of the fall instructional program, and includes information related to student supports, including provisions for individualized or face-to-face sessions; career education, including dual enrollment programs; fall sports; digital instruction tools and student technology; professional learning for staff; maintaining health and safety; and student meal services. The Reopening Plan also includes provisions for supporting student and staff well-being; diversity, equity and inclusion; expectations for staff, students and families; and other components.

Superintendent Michael J. Martirano provided detailed context about the plan during his [preliminary remarks](#) at the outset of the work session, and additional detail is also provided in the [meeting presentation](#).

Furthermore, Superintendent Martirano shared that through [additional grant funding](#) and the reallocation of savings during the closure, HCPSS will now be able to secure a Chromebook for every student from pre-K through the 12th grade and have additional funds available within the contingency account to support the reopening plan.

The [draft HCPSS Reopening Plan](#) is available online. The final plan and full details—including schedule information, resources for students and families, and answers to frequently asked questions—[will be provided on the HCPSS website](#) within the next week. The HCPSS Reopening Plan and website will be continually updated as new information becomes available.

Visit us at www.hcpss.org
10910 Clarksville Pike, Ellicott City, Maryland 21042