

Dr. Jeanice Swift:

Thank you for joining us for this community information session. It's really important to us as we plan and prepare for our next steps to add an in-school hybrid learning opportunity that our parents, our students and our families will have the information needed in order to make the very best decision we understand that needs vary widely across our community, across each child in family. And so our goal is to ensure clarity of what we can expect in a hybrid in-school learning opportunity today. We're joined by Ann Arbor, public schools, elementary principals, as well as district leaders. And they'll be sharing more information with you during this session around our hybrid in school learning option. We'll begin with assistant superintendent Jazz Parks, Ms. Parks.

Jazz Parks:

Thank you, Dr. Swift, and thank you community for joining us to listen to us, share with you some details around our hybrid return to in-person learning as we've previously shared in person learning when it's safe to do so. We'll begin in Ann Arbor public schools in stages stage one are our preschool through 12th grade students who are in our self contained classroom placements stage one also includes our students who are preschoolers young fives, kindergarten students, and our students in grades six through 12, who will populate our small group learning centers in our secondary schools. Stage two is our first and second grade students. Stage three are our third, fourth and fifth grade students. And stage four will be our secondary students. AAPS families will have the option to remain fully virtual. As we proceed through the phases of our re re-imagined learning plan, students will continue to receive daily instruction virtually in much the same way that they are currently experiencing as it becomes safe to do so families will be given the option to return to in-person hybrid instruction.

Jazz Parks:

In order to prepare for hybrid instruction, information is going to be shared with you in both this community format, as well as school-based information sessions, families will be asked to complete a survey, sharing their decision to either remain fully virtual or returned to in-person hybrid instruction. And families can expect to receive this survey in the coming weeks. Safety remains our critical priority for the return to in-person learning. And in order to ensure that we appropriately put in the safety protocols and training and make sure that each and every classroom is appropriately distanced and balanced families will be asked to make a choice in advance of that transition to hybrid learning. I'm going to now turn it over to Ms. Bacolor to talk about our safety protocols. Yeah.

Jenna Bacolor:

What I'm showing you now are our super six. These are the key strategies for reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools. They should look familiar since we've talked about some of them many times in the past, each of these six strategies provides a layer of protection for students and for staff, when they're all put together consistently and effectively, they are very effective in preventing transmission. Our four primary sources for the super six are the CDC, the Johns Hopkins consortium for school-based health solutions and the Michigan department of health and human services. And we also consult with the Washington County health department regularly.

Jenna Bacolor:

So let's move on and talk about the school safety practices that are occurring every day that are aligned with the super six. These include universal masking at all times inside the building, except when eating or drinking hand sanitizer stations placed in classrooms and throughout hallways. The physical

distancing of state student desks being set apart and hallway markings and seating charts as well to minimize contact between students and a policy that there will be no visitors during the school day. Except in situations where it's must need a parent guardian and other meetings are also going to continue in virtual.

Jenna Bacolor:

One part of the super six may be less familiar for people. So I wanted to do a little bit more focus on cohorts. So the cohort is an essential part of the hybrid learning plan. It's actually a public health intervention, and I've taken a lot of this information from the Johns Hopkins COVID-19 guidance that I mentioned a few minutes ago. A cohort in the context of a school is a small group of students and adults who learn and go to recess and eat together during the day. This is specific to the school setting in different from a household or group of families who form a pod. It's important to note. And you can see in this diagram that a cohort is not one classroom at the elementary level, a cohort may consist of two or more classrooms. It might be a grade level of adults and students. How does cohorting relate to COVID-19 cohorts decrease the transmission risk because any one student or one staff person is only interacting at school with a limited number of people each day, when cohorts do not mix, it means that if there is a case of COVID-19 the whole school doesn't have to necessarily go into quarantine, it can be confined to the investigation and quarantine can be pretty confined within that group. And now I will turn things over to Ms. Linden. Thank you

Dawn Linden:

Very much, Ms. Bacolor the safety information you just heard will help families to make some decisions about their choice to return to hybrid. And so all these next few slides. So here we'd like to talk about family responsibilities. It's important that you screen your student for symptoms every morning before you send them to school. Certainly if you do discover any symptoms we ask that you keep your student home and a district screening questionnaire will be provided to you to help with that. It's also important that you immediately notify your building principal. If your student or someone in the household test positive for COVID-19. We ask that you speak with a district contact tracer if needed for an investigation as well. In addition, we'd love for you to ensure that your child has a mask and a water bottle every day for school. If students come to school without a mask or a water bottle, masks will be provided and disposable cups will be used for water.

Dawn Linden:

It's important to note that symptoms may appear while students are at school. So families need to be available to pick up their students. Should that happen? There are a couple of caveats that we ask. One is that our families please be patient and know that the hybrid plans can change from day to day in order to better meet the needs of students. And to understand that our staff or students at any time may need to quarantine. If there is a classroom case, the student responsibilities are similar. We ask that our students wear a mask at all times, except when they're eating or drinking. There's a special note here that students who are unable to remove a mask independently must not wear one. And for all other students, there are very rare exceptions that can be made with a doctor's note. For a medical reason, we ask that our students bring their water bottle every day and that they follow school rules to stay physically distance from others.

Dawn Linden:

And importantly, if our students feel any symptoms during the day we ask, they report those immediately to an adult. Now, Ms. Parks and Ms. Bacolor talked a little bit about the stages and the cohorting in the next slide. You'll learn here about how the Ann Arbor public schools will be cohorting students for safety. So students will be assigned based on the letter of first letter of their last name in cohort. One that will be students with last names, A through L those students will be going to in-person on Mondays and Tuesdays on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Those same students AQL will receive their virtual instruction as they're doing right now in cohort two students with last names M through Z will attend in-person school on Thursdays and Fridays, again on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, those students would receive their instruction in much the same way they are now in a virtual way.

Dawn Linden:

Now there's a special note here that based on different school populations, that letter distribution may be maybe adjusted to accomplish some balance. For example, an individual building might be cohorted with letters, A to M in cohort one and N through Z and cohort two. Again, our goal is to ensure some balance and minimal members. We want to ensure reassure families, but also ensure that families in the same household will remain in the same cohort, regardless of letter of last name. Next, we're going to talk a little bit about what families in this stage one group can expect. We will likely be having to transition that daily bell schedule to make some adjustments in preparation for other stages of return. And that's, that's important in order for us to be able to provide transportation. Our role here is to reduce the impact of any changes to the schedule by only shifting once during the spaced in process.

Dawn Linden:

Next, we'll talk about the hybrid instruction overview. So what will instruction look like? What might be different during hybrid instruction? Our teachers will be teaching students in person and the students who are attending virtually during the instructional blocks at sometimes together. So some of these key features will be whole group instruction, where both groups of students are roomies, who are in-person students. And our zoomies who are attending virtually through video conference will be receiving instruction at the same time. At times, however, students will be working in breakouts. So they might be in separate teams where the teacher would spend time with each group separately. We want to make special note that the instructional resources, all the tools and assignments that students are using now will currently continue to be used during, during use of the Schoology platform in much the same way they're doing now, for example, turning in homework and assignments.

Dawn Linden:

Next we want to share with their families what a sample day could look like. It's important as we look at the sample slide that we all understand, this is just one version. The times for breaks and lunches will vary based on the actual schedule in your school. But this will give us a sense of what we can generally expect. So here you will see that starting at about eight, 10, and then eight, 10 to nine period. This is a time for our zoomies or our virtual students to get some small group with their teacher. The roomies will be on their way to school during that time and preparing to come. So student arrival will happen between nine and nine 10. That's when our zoomies get a break while our face-to-face roomies are coming in and taking off their coats and preparing for learning about nine, 10 in the morning, that's a period where both our roomies and the zoomies are receiving some whole group instruction.

Dawn Linden:

They'll do that through morning meeting just as they're doing virtually. Now there'll be a transition period as they move into their first instructional block, which will likely be a combination of whole group and some independent work. And then there's time at 10 30 in the sample schedule for some small group time. So there could be zooming a virtual specialist happening while small group students are receiving some instruction during that face-to-face block in the afternoon, you'll see some similarities. Each of these learning blocks has that same combination of whole group and independent or small group breakout time. You'll see some time for lunch and recess here in this schedule. It's at noon. But again, that will vary based on your child's individual schedule. There's a little bit of time for that transition. Coming back from lunch recess, we call that quiet time here. We're independent and work will be happening.

Dawn Linden:

And then we begin another block after lunch. So you'll see a little bit of time here for science and social studies followed by some more time for small group interaction. So our zoomies might be receiving an interactive read aloud while our roomies are in small group. Face-To-Face time with teachers and then between two and two 10, we expect to have our closing circle and to prepare for dismissal. So that will be a whole group time for the entire class to end the day. So we hope that is helpful. And last we'd like to share a little overview of what the classroom may look like. So you heard Ms. Bacolor talk about cohorts here. You can see the cohorts by color coding. So cohort one being blue corporate to being red. Now, of course, these cohorts are never in the classroom at the same time. So on Monday and Tuesday, our blue cohort will be present in class and you can see their space between those blue desks where only blue cohort students or cohort one, students will use those desks, but they are separated.

Dawn Linden:

And then you'll see when, when our face-to-face students in cohort two, come back on Thursdays and Fridays, they'll be using the red desks. You can also see there is a carpet space. You can see the teacher desk and the kidney table there, and the student hooks everything that's familiar in a typical elementary classroom, but we wanted to show you that distancing and let you know that we're working very hard to continue to keep our students safe. So at this time, it is my pleasure to hand this over to Mr. Bernerd Rice. Who's going to share a little bit more about the facility.

Bernerd Rice:

Thank you. Miss Linden, Ann Arbor Public Schools have set cleaning and disinfecting protocols by following the CDC and EPA guidelines. According to the CDC school districts should develop a cleaning and disinfecting plan for all buildings and classrooms implement a plan with consistency and quality control measures, maintain the plan throughout the academic year and revise it as needed. The district began the re-entry plan in partnership with ABM services back in June to reopen this past fall, it was important to do an audit of each facility comprehensively to determine what needs to be cleaned daily, to determine how areas will be disinfected, prioritizing disinfecting frequency, touch surfaces, and ever public schools will move to implement daily classroom cleaning in advance for the return of face-to-face learning. The disinfecting of high touch surfaces will occur twice a day and will include, but not limited to the following door knobs bottle, filling station, handrails, light switches, elevator buttons, and any other touchpoint in high traffic areas, light centers and touchless fixtures have been installed to eliminate some of these high exposed touchpoints. The district will service and disinfect restrooms daily with adequate supply of toilet paper. So, and hand towels, common spaces such as hallways gyms, cafeteria multipurpose rooms will be clean and disinfected daily. The district communicated in advance with ABM services that a deep cleaning will with electrostatic sprayers will be performed twice a week,

Wednesdays and Fridays between cohorts using the EPA approved disinfecting product, the district will follow the CDC cleaning and disinfecting guidelines of any confirmed cases of COVID-19. And with that, I'll turn it over to Ms. Margolis.

Liz Margolis:

Thank you Mr. Rice. Today, I'm going to talk a little bit about bus safety practices. First. We want to make sure everyone understands that all staff that includes bus drivers, monitors, and students are required to wear a mask at all times while they're on the bus. Every APS bus has been equipped with a hand sanitizer unit that's placed at the bottom of the first step. Every student and staff member are required again to use the hand sanitizer upon entry to the bus, our windows will be opened, weather permitting. And so we are asking students to dress appropriately. It, this allows the air to circulate and again, every school and every bus will have seating charts associated with those students. Additionally, this year we are going to be asking students who are eligible for bus transportation services to register for this service families with eligible students will be sent a transportation survey.

Liz Margolis:

They'll register their students for bus service either to, or from school or both to and from school, if an eligible student opts out of bus service, but the families transportation needs change. They can apply and wait a two week period and we will start the students bus service. As a reminder, students are eligible for transportation. If they one and a half miles from school or for safety busing in district transfer students and school choice, students are not eligible for bus transportation. And now I'll hand it over to Ms. Parks.

Jazz Parks:

Thank you, Ms. Margolis, and thank you AAPS community for joining us today. As we approach the hybrid phase of in-person learning, we will hold more information sessions to ensure that our families are prepared to make the most informed decisions about their educational plans for your children. And now I'll turn it over to Mr. Cluley, who will take some questions and answers.

Andrew Cluley:

Thank you team for the presentation. We're now going to have our panel answer a few of the questions we've already received. If you have additional questions, please visit [school.org/elementary](https://school.org/elementary) hybrid option to share them panel. Would you please introduce yourselves?

Jeanice Swift, Superintendent of Schools,

Jazz Parks, Assistant Superintendent of School Leadership,

Dawn Linden, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning,

Liz Margolis, Executive Director of Student and School Safety,

Jenna Bacolor, Executive Director of the Community Division,

Bernard Rice, Executive Director of Physical Properties.

Melita Alston Principal at Pittsfield Elementary,

Natasha York, Principal at Thurston Elementary,

Matt Hilton Principal at Mitchell Elementary school.

Andrew Cluley:

First of all, why is it necessary to implement a hybrid plan for return of elementary students rather than having all students returned to school? As we have in the past,

Jenna Bacolor:

That is a question that we get quite often. And what I learned from the research from other schools that have gone back to school face to face is that we need to have fewer people in our buildings compared to the regular school year. When it's a non pandemic year, we have a set of key strategies for decreasing the risk of transmission, and they include things that can really only happen. If we have fewer students in the building, they include cohorting and physical distancing our ventilation systems and other measures that need to have fewer people in the building at one time.

Andrew Cluley:

Well, thank you for that answer. The next question is what is the protocol, if a staff member or student test positive, what is the plan at the elementary level for contact tracing and how families notified if there's a positive case in a school? I think this one is probably for you, Jenna.

Jenna Bacolor:

Yes. Thank you. So we do have a district protocol for contact tracing, which we have used several times since the fall. It has five steps, first there's notification. So the staff person or the family member, as soon as possible notifies their principal or supervisor that they have a case of COVID-19, then there's an investigation. And we ask that families answer the questions from the district contact tracer. So we can determine that critical contagious period at the same time, we're working with the principal to communicate to the cohort or to the teacher about the case and that that is something that happens as soon as possible as well. And of course, information about any cases of COVID-19 is kept confidential. So that letter looks a lot like the different communicable disease letters that we have that go out normally, then we take next steps. This is step number four. This may include quarantining. Some students and staff and additional communication as needed. Our goal is to complete all four of these steps within 24 hours. So that means we need people to be immediately notifying us and talking to contact tracers. The fifth step is the return to school after the isolation or the quarantine is complete.

Andrew Cluley:

When we come back to a hybrid option, what changes will happen in the typical classroom experience? For instance? Will, we have students gathering on the carpet, whether it be group work, those types of things. I'm hoping that the principals here one of you can answer that question.

Natasha York:

Some parts of the day will look familiar and some will look a little different. The biggest change you will see is then the number of students in the classroom and our proximity from one another. We don't envision all the students gathering at the carpet or working in close proximity at a table, simply because our social distancing efforts. However, we do expect there to be opportunities for whole class instruction, which would include our roomies and dummies whole class instruction with just the students, actually in all the rooms, small group and even partner work again all well socially, doesn't see,

Andrew Cluley:

Will, students get to have in-person art, music and gym?

Dawn Linden:

Thank you, Andrew. At this time, we're working to ensure a safely distanced and cohorted environment. And for this reason, our special classes will continue to be taught virtually it's important for our families to know that our goal is to provide as many quality face-to-face learning opportunities as it is safe to do so. So when possible we'll be layering in additional opportunities.

Andrew Cluley:

Will students have to switch their teachers if they choose in-person versus remaining online?

Jeanice Swift:

One of our top priorities throughout the planning for this COVID school year has been to keep our teaching and learning consistent with teacher in classroom, in learning community the same. So for that reason, we're going to do everything we can to ensure that our classrooms stable. As we begin this option of a hybrid in-school learning opportunity. Of course we know it's always possible that there could be a staffing change or some reason why a teacher could change. But for the most part, we're doing everything we can to keep those relationships and that classroom learning community stable.

Andrew Cluley:

I'm hoping one of the principals can answer this question. Can you talk about recess and how proximity will be monitored?

Melita Alston:

Andrew, I'll take that question. The question about recess is a question our kiddos are eager to know the answer to going outdoors, to get fresh air is so important. Each elementary building will have an opportunity to work with their school team to ensure we are physically and socially distant during recess, during lunch recess, the playground will be zoned off to determine which cohorts will play in each designated area.

Andrew Cluley:

How will lunches, be handled to make sure that everyone stays safe?

Liz Margolis:

Thank you Andrew, for that question. And I think I'll also take this opportunity to talk about both breakfast and lunch. AAPS will be providing breakfast and lunch for free actually this year for all students. This is part of the USDA program until the end of the school year in the morning, students will be able to grab a breakfast and they will be taking it to their designated eating area depending on the school. And in the lunch, we will also be operating in the same trying to maintain our cohorts. And so each school is coming up with some designated eating areas. So students won't necessarily be going through a cafeteria line. They will have pre-prepared lunches and breakfasts for them to take advantage of. The one thing that we are asking families is to please register and sign up for these meals through the new meal magic program. And you will get a lot more information about that shortly. We will continue to do our food distributions at all of our food distribution sites, but we will be moving to a one day a week distribution on Wednesday. And at that point we will be distributing either five days worth of food for the families that have chosen to go hybrid or seven days worth of food for the families that are staying virtual.

Liz Margolis:

And these meals will also include dinner for the students. Again, we will give you plenty of time and information before we switch to that one day a week of food distribution. So please look for information coming shortly regarding the meal magic program.

Andrew Cluley:

Will, kids share school supplies and will students need to bring them from home?

Jenna Bacolor:

I think I can get us started with that question. The CDC has consistently recommended that students do not share their school supplies and we will uphold that in the learning plan. I can turn to one of my instructional colleagues to answer the second part of that question.

Melita Alston:

I'll take that question. Thank you, Jenna. Again, you know, with Jenna outlining our super six and the presentation students will not share supplies with their classmates. Instead, each student will have their own supply kit kept in the classroom. In addition, students will not transfer or bring their supplies back and forth between home and school. It's important that students have access to their supplies while at home learning virtually

Andrew Cluley:

How strictly will the social distancing and other guidelines be followed?

Jenna Bacolor:

I can take that, that question. Thanks. We know that as students return to a school environment, that there will need to be a lot of learning of routines. It's already a big part of school. Usually it happens in



the fall and will happen again naturally as, as we enter into the hybrid learning environment. So I know that our teachers and our principals and other building staff will do their very best to make all of these mitigation measures a natural and routine part of the day.

Andrew Cluley:

Thank you, Ms. Bacolor, as you shared, the social distancing and other guidelines should become pretty much routine habits. However, if there's a student that can't wear a mask due to a medical reason with other families in the classroom, be notified,

Jenna Bacolor:

This is a concern for some parents. First, we know that it will be very rare for a student to have a medical condition that would exempt him or her from wearing a mask. It is just not common to have something that a doctor would sign off on as being a condition that would prevent mass squaring. And of course we can never reveal the name of a student with a medical condition. So in this case, we wouldn't be able to notify parents about a specific student, of course. But our, we do have a plan in the rare situations where this might happen to provide a plexiglass unit for this student to use on his or her desk. This would prevent direct droplets spray in the classroom. So what we need all families to understand from the get-go has your choosing hybrid is that in the rare event that a student can't wear a mask, they will have that plexiglass unit. And there may not be notification, but we will put in safety measures to account for that.

Andrew Cluley:

Our panel is answering some of the questions we've already received. A reminder. If you have additional questions, please visit [a2schools.org/elementaryhybridoption](https://a2schools.org/elementaryhybridoption) to share them. Our next question, how will teachers balance teaching students in the classroom and learning from home?

Dawn Linden:

Thanks, Andrew. Our teachers are going to provide instruction to both students who are face-to-face and at home in really exceptional ways. We shared a little bit in the presentation about how the daily schedule look with some whole group and some small group. And we already have some adeptness in putting students into breakout rooms so that the teacher can work with small groups. So teachers and families and students can expect a similar pathway when they're face-to-face. And when they're virtual, there were plenty of time for students to see each other and plenty of time for teachers to be with smaller groups after whole group instruction. We do know that it's not going to be perfect on day one. So we just want to make sure folks know that we'll be in a period of learning together in the first couple of weeks when we come back to hybrid. And that's one important moment for us all just to remember, to be patient and to engage together in ways that are positive and that expect good things to come. So thank you.

Andrew Cluley:

Thanks, Dawn. I think along the same sort of similar thoughts will students that are in the classroom be on zoom all day long?

Natasha York:

No, Andrew roomies will not be on zoom all day. There will be some times when the roomies will be with the zoomies. However, while at school, we will be taking advantage of face-to-face instruction

throughout the day. There will be numerous times when students are not on their devices at all. Additionally beyond zoom, students will have an opportunity to use their personal devices, to participate in opportunities with virtual peers in small group instruction, participation in activities and submit their assignments,

Andrew Cluley:

Can parents and other visitors come into the school?

Matt Hilton:

Thank you, Andrew. I'll take that question. And the answer to that question is no. While, we cannot wait for the time when we can welcome parents and visitors back into our buildings. As we typically have in the past, we know that in order to ensure safety, that time is not now having said that we will make appointments with parents for free central matters, such as medication drop-off.

Andrew Cluley:

How are face-to-face meetings, including PTO and afterschool enrichment meetings going to happen?

Melita Alston:

Andrew, I'll take that question. That is one of our most frequently asked questions. And I just want to say we sell them as the opportunity to socialize and interact with one another in a face to face environment. However, in order to maintain health and safety within our community, all activities will remain virtual for the remainder of the school year.

Andrew Cluley:

So we know that after-school meetings will remain virtual. What about before and aftercare?

Jenna Bacolor:

Unfortunately, we will not be able to offer before or after care. We're not able to do it because of the cohorting. That's required to keep our schools safe. And also our physical distancing within the school day takes the space where childcare was in the past. So unfortunately for this year, we will not be offering that.

Andrew Cluley:

Will students be able to try in-person and then switch to online, or conversely remained virtual initially and then switched to in-person at some point, or do they need to stick with the option that they choose?

Jeanice Swift:

We're asking that as we move toward a transition to adding the in-school hybrid option, that parents make their choice for their students. At the time of that transition, this will set our course for the end of the school year so that we can plan and prepare for the cohorts in, for the classrooms. So we are asking that parents consider the opportunity and make that choice at the time of the transition. Of course, we also understand that at any time, either through a rising cases or a quarantine necessity, that the classroom may revert to a full virtual, you remember we called it the turning of the dial rather than the

flipping of the switch. So it is absolutely possible that a family or that a classroom may move from being in person to a fully virtual status that may be necessary. So again, we ask that families and parents in students make that choice either to remain in virtual or to choose the in-school hybrid learning option at the time of the transition of their level. Thank you.

Andrew Cluley:

Thank you to our panel for answering these pressing questions. Remember that individual schools will be hosting information sessions with more specific details soon. And if you have additional questions, please visit [eighttwo.schools.org/elementary hybrid option](https://eighttwo.schools.org/elementary-hybrid-option) to share them.

Jeanice Swift:

Thank you for joining us today for this community information session regarding our in-school hybrid learning opportunity. We understand that this COVID time has been extremely challenging for everyone. We looked so forward to having our students back into our schools with us. And yet we know during the spring of 2021, we'll need to follow mitigation strategies in a hybrid schedule in order to keep our students in staff, our families in community as healthy and safe as possible. We look forward to our next set of community sessions at your schools to ensure that your questions have been answered, that you have a clear idea of what the hybrid in-school learning opportunity is about, and so that you can make the very best decision for your child and for your family during the coming weeks of 2021. Thank you.