

Communication to Community
September 22, 2020

Hello RTM Families,

As I previously have communicated, to inform school reopening plans, we have been monitoring the metrics regarding positivity rates and incidence rates in our area regarding COVID-19. I am happy to report that we have seen our positivity rate stabilize (around 4%) and our incidence rate begin to flatten out (around 45-55 per 100,000). This places us at the lower end of the "moderate" range and allows us to consider safely reopening schools for in person learning under our Blended Model: Learning at School with Learning at Home.

With the exception of our kindergarten students and our students with significant disabilities who will attend school five days a week, students will attend school under the blended model by cohorts:

- Cohort A-last names A-K attend in person Mondays, Wednesdays, and alternating Fridays
- Cohort B-last names L-Z attend in person Tuesdays, Thursdays, and alternating Fridays.
-

To return to in person learning, we will follow the phased reopening plan listed below. A phased approach will allow us to bring back cohorts of students to reacclimate to the routines at school, as well as help our students learn new routines specific to COVID-19 such as hygiene practices, distancing, and masking. We will begin with our early learners and our learners with significant disabilities as these students face the greatest challenges learning remotely. If your child is identified as a student with significant disabilities, you will be receiving an email directly from your child's special education supervisor regarding your child's return to school.

Phased Return to School Schedules:

Students with significant disabilities will begin school on September 29th.

Kindergarten students will attend school five days a week, beginning on October 5th.

1st, 6th, and 9th grade students will begin attending school on the blended schedule (Cohort A or Cohort B) beginning on October 5th.

2nd and 10th grade students will begin attending school on the blended schedule (Cohort A or Cohort B) beginning on October 7th.

All students will be fully virtual on October 9th. Instruction will be provided either synchronously or asynchronously depending on grade level.

3rd, 4th, 7th, 11th, and 12th grade students will begin attending school on the blended schedule (Cohort A or Cohort B) beginning on October 12.

5th and 8th grade students will begin attending school on the blended schedule (Cohort A or Cohort B) beginning on October 14.

There is no school for students on October 16th.

For detailed information, see the [Elementary Calendar at this link](#):

See the [Secondary Calendar at this link](#):

Our ability to have all of our kindergarten students attend each day is dependent on the number of families who selected the fully virtual option. The number of students who want to return to in person learning MAY affect our ability to keep all of our kindergarten students in an in-person five day a week model due to physical distancing requirements. In addition, there is the likelihood that students/teachers may need to isolate at home if they are considered a close contact of a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case. **Therefore, ALL families should have a back-up plan for addressing child care issues should these conditions arise which will result in a child(ren) having to remain at home. In addition, the schedule for in person learning will remain highly responsive to school-related transmission as well as metrics for COVID-19 in our community.**

We have constructed the blended model's instructional schedule based on our experience from fully virtual learning as well as feedback from teachers, parents, and students. We are aware that "screen fatigue" is real for our teachers and our learners. We believe the daily instructional schedule provides for a balance of synchronous and asynchronous activity that supports the development of skills and content knowledge through providing direct

teacher instruction as well as authentic offline teaching and learning resources. We believe this will provide a robust way of moving forward that is sustainable for our students, parents, and teachers.

We appreciate all of your hard work supporting your children during the fully virtual phase. We know that this has not been an easy task for our parents or our teachers. However, in the true spirit of collaboration and partnership, our students have been able to engage in a robust learning process. As we move to the blended model, we will, once again, ask for your grace, flexibility, and patience as we address the new challenges that the blended model will present as we begin implementation.

We are very much looking forward to our students returning to our classrooms! We will also continue to engage and support our fully virtual learners so they continue to feel like an integrated member of our classrooms and schools.

Please look for additional information from your child(ren)'s building principal(s) regarding more specifics on school processes, schedules, and dismissal times in the upcoming weeks.

Regards,
Dr. Eleanor DiMarino-Linnen