

March 3, 2021

PCPS OFFERING MORE IN PERSON INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS

LURAY, Va. — Page County Public Schools is excited to announce that we will be providing more in person learning days for our students. PCPS has always been focused and committed on bringing back as many as students back as soon as safely possible. We are grateful that since September we have been able to offer at least two days a week in person instruction for students in grades 3-12 along with 4 days a week of in person instruction for our youngest scholars in PreK – 2nd grades.

So why now? Thankfully the community spread and COVID metrics have been trending downward. In-school transmission remains extremely low; the majority of our cases are from community spread and not from the schools. Thanks to our staff, Valley Health, and the VDH Lord Fairfax district, over 70% of our employees have been vaccinated. We have had plans in place to be able to execute as soon as metrics and guidance from the various local state agencies were aligned.

When it is happening? Some will start next week and others the week after. The 4 days will be Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Wednesdays will remain remote or asynchronous (not live) days for students, planning days for teachers, and additional cleaning days for all schools.

March 8th - elementary school students in grades 3 -5 will begin attending 4 days a week *without A or B groups*; students in grades PreK-2 will continue with their 4 day a week schedule

March 15th – middle school students in grades 6-8 will begin attending 4 days a week *without A or B groups*

March 8th – high school students will have access to synchronous (live) learning; students who are struggling or those without access to the internet will be asked to come in for the other two additional days or participate synchronously (due to various scheduling constraints, the high schools cannot accommodate all students for 4 days; hence, the switch to synchronous learning, which will be available to all students)

How are we doing it? To accommodate more students, there are some situations wherein we have to reduce some social distancing down to 3 ft. which is still safe with everyone wearing face coverings. Buses will have to have more than one student on each seat. Students will continue to have assigned seating and wear face coverings. Windows on the buses will be cracked to allow for cross ventilation. For parents who are able to drive their students to school, we ask that you continue to do so. For those riding a bus, all you have to do is be at your bus stop on the additional school days and we will get you to school. Also, students in the elementary school will be allowed to play on the playground equipment again. Except for a few instances at the elementary level, all students will be traveling to the

elective/resource classes with masks and appropriate social distancing. Additionally, the high school students will now travel to each of their classes. Students will continue to eat in their classrooms or in select outdoor spaces. Recess will continue for elementary and middle school students.

Can we switch instructional models? We strongly encourage students to participate in the 4 days of in person instruction to engage with their peers and teachers for more robust learning experiences that remote learning cannot provide. As long as we still have remote learning as an option, we will continue to need Wednesdays for additional planning time for our teachers. If you would like to switch to in person learning, please reach out to your child's school administrators. We realize that some students may need or want to stay remote, so that option will still be available. Teachers will continue to use Wednesdays as a day to connect with their remote learners. However, if your student is not being academically successful, your school administrators will be reaching out to you to invite your student to attend in person and/or to work on a plan of support. There are no waivers this year (unlike last spring) wherein students will get to proceed forward without demonstrating the necessary growth and progress to meet the requirements for advancement.

What will instruction look like? At the elementary schools, small group instructional model will resume (with mitigation strategies in place). New learning will be occurring every day. Students will be expected to bring their school issued devices to school to support the learning in the classroom. Teachers will be teaching and technology tools will still be a part of the experience. Schoology will still be utilized to communicate and share lessons, materials, assignments, and report academic progress. High school teachers will be live streaming their lessons to remote students while teaching the in person students. Other teachers may be recording their lessons to load on Schoology for asynchronous (not live) learning access.

Going forward? We will continue to monitor the four main factors that have determined our ability to provide in-person and remote learning models which are: community spread, transmission and/or outbreaks in schools, reduced workforce, and official mandates. If needed, as in the past, we may have to return to full remote for short periods at specific grade levels, schools, or even division-wide. We are constantly reevaluating and consulting with the Lord Fairfax health department and VDH, as well as monitoring the K-12 School Metrics webpage.

For specific questions regarding your child or situation, please reach out to your child's school administrators.

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