

Carlsbad Municipal Schools Back to School FAQ School Year 2020-21



FAQs Updated: 7/23/2020

This document is provided as a means to clarify information and reassure families regarding the return to school. This information is intended to be a fluid and changing document to address new guidance from the Governor of New Mexico, the Public Education Department (PED) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as it becomes available.

Questions and answers are organized by the following topics:

- GENERAL INTEREST FAQs:
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In adherence to reopening guidelines issued by the Governor of New Mexico, the Public Education Department (PED) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Carlsbad Municipal Schools will begin the 2020-21 school year in a Hybrid model. Under this model, the number of students present in the school building will be limited to half of the students attending class at one time. For those interested in a 100% virtual learning model, the district has created the **Carlsbad Academy of Virtual Learning** which is referred to as ***The CAVE***. The district is committed to returning to a daily face-to-face instructional program when allowed to do so by the State of New Mexico.

Please contact your child's building Principal should you have additional questions regarding your child's return to school.

GENERAL INTEREST FAQs:

1. How will CMS start the school year?

Answer: On August 24, CMS will begin the school year with students participating in a Jump Start program. Some students will physically report to school for the 10 day jumpstart programming and others will participate virtually. Then, on September 8, if public health orders permit, we will move to the options selected by parents and guardians of either 100% Online School option (The CAVE) for their child or Hybrid option for their child. CMS will transition to a normal school schedule as soon as the district is approved to do so.

2. With CMS starting every student in a jumpstart before moving to a Hybrid model after Labor Day, what platform will my child be on?

Answer: There will be two groups of students participating in the 10 day jumpstart program; one group will report to school every day, and the other group will participate remotely. Students physically attending school during the Jump Start will report Monday through Friday for the first ten days. Each school will notify parents with notice as to which group their child has been assigned. Beginning August 24, students in the Hybrid option will start the school year in person with supplemented learning packets and/or *Google Classroom* activities. Students registered for the 100% online school option (The CAVE) will start with *Google Classroom* and *Google Meet* for K-6; *Google Classroom*, *Google Meet* and *Apex Learning* for 7-8; and *Apex Learning* for 9-12.

3. How do I select either the Hybrid option or 100% Online option?

Answer: All students currently enrolled and registered through our regular registration process for the district will automatically be placed in the Hybrid option. Parents/guardians who wish to select the 100% online option need to complete a registration form for The CAVE at www.carlsbadschools.net or by phone at 575-234-3300. Registration for the 100% online option is open from July 22 through July 31. This applies to kindergarten through 12th grade.

4. Do all of the children in my family need to be on the same option?

Answer: No. All children in your household/family are NOT required to be on the same learning plan. For example, you may select the same for all of them, or you may select the Hybrid for one and the 100% online option (The CAVE) for two others. It is a parent/guardian choice.

5. Will attendance be taken?

Answer: Yes. Per the NM Public Education Department guidelines, attendance will be officially recorded on days in which students are physically present in schools. We will monitor participation on remote learning days. Students are expected to attend in-person on their hybrid days and continue working remotely on the other three days.

6. Will grading be pass/fail or regular grades?

Answer: Grading will be standard grading as it would in a traditional school year.

7. If there is a spike in COVID cases, could the State change the school reentry category from Yellow (Hybrid Model permissible) to Red (fully remote learning)?

Answer: Yes. The state will continuously monitor public health data and will communicate that data to the Carlsbad Municipal Schools. In the event of a spike in confirmed COVID-19 cases, schools may need to shift into a remote learning model for all students until the spike in cases subsides. Therefore, it's possible that your child will experience a variety of learning environments for the 2020-2021 School Year.

THE CAVE, 100% ONLINE SCHOOL OPTION FAQs:

8. Where do I register my child for The CAVE, the 100% online option?

Answer: Parents/guardians who wish to select the 100% online option need to complete a registration form for The CAVE at www.carlsbadschools.net or by phone at 575-234-3300. Registration for The CAVE is open from July 22 through July 31. This applies to kindergarten through 12 grades.

9. If I select The CAVE, the 100% online school option for my child, do I have to commit for the full school year?

Answer: Students participating in the 100% online option must commit for a semester at a time. Transferring from the 100% online option (The CAVE) to the Hybrid model or face-to-face regular format could lead to learning gaps as curriculum is paced differently. Our policy is that students may transition from online to in person instruction at semester; however, we will consider special circumstances for individual students.

10. If I select The CAVE, the 100% online school option for my high school aged child, will AP and Pre-AP Courses be available to them?

Answer: Yes. Our *Apex Learning* platform offers a variety of AP courses for students. Not all are offered, but the majority are. In addition, the platform also offers some limited selections of honors courses.

11. Can my high school child participate in dual credit courses?

Answer: Yes. Students need to work closely with their grade level counselor for enrollment in dual credit classes at NMSU-C. The student would not be able to participate in dual credit courses offered by CMS faculty.

12. Where can I find a full list of class offerings for *Apex Learning*?

Answer: You may find a list of *Apex Learning* classes at https://cdn.apexlearning.com/al/catalog_20-21.pdf (Note: *Apex Learning* tutorials in the catalog are not currently available.)

13. If I select The CAVE, the 100% Online School option for my child, will that void their approved elementary school transfer?

Answer: No.

14. If I select The CAVE, the 100% Online School option for my secondary child, will they still be able to participate in their school sports or activities?

Answer: Yes. Parents/guardians need to reach out to their respective school for participation information.

15. If I select The CAVE, the 100% Online School option for my child, are they still part of their regular school?

Answer: Students in grades 9-12 would still be assigned to their regular school and assigned a teacher as a learning coach for *Apex Learning*. Students in grades 7-8 will have a typical schedule with 7 different teachers which include cores and electives. Students in grades K-6 will be supported by a centralized team of certified teachers.

16. How many courses will high school students take in the 100% online option through the CAVE?

Answer: Students will take the same number of classes they would be scheduled for at their respective school.

17. Will AP courses through The CAVE, the 100% online option, be weighted the same as regular AP classes?

Answer: Yes.

18. Will students enrolled at The CAVE, the 100% online option, still work with their regular school counselors?

Answer: Yes.

HYBRID OPTION FAQs:

19. For the Hybrid option, will siblings be placed on the same schedule?

Answer: Yes. We will work to place siblings on the same A or B schedule and will do so for those with the same last name and with different last names. If a parent finds that siblings were assigned a separate schedule, they may contact any school where children are enrolled and make a request for a schedule change.

20. Will logging into lessons on the remote days of the Hybrid option be at the parents/student discretion or at specific times?

Answer: Online learning will likely be at the student's pace with specific assignments from teachers. However, there may be specific times when students must log on for *Google Meet* video meetings or video lessons. Each teacher will provide those details to parents/guardians, and each campus will provide further direction.

TECHNOLOGY FAQs:

21. Will we be issued a Chromebook if we cannot afford one?

Answer: Yes. **ALL** students will be issued a Chromebook at the start of the school year regardless of their financial situation.

22. When will student Chromebooks be distributed?

Answer: ALL CMS students will receive a Chromebook in August. The distribution dates are still being finalized.

23. I don't want a Chromebook, can my child just use our home computer or laptop?

Answer: CMS strongly discourages students from using a computer device that is not issued by the school district while in the Hybrid learning mode. CMS is providing Chromebooks along with a framework of filters, and other technology support systems for students. Here is a quick overview of our reasons for strongly recommending the use of an CMS issued technology device for this coming school year:

a) If every student is using the same equipment, it is easier for the teacher to help troubleshoot and support students from home.

b) We have all the necessary programs and settings set up on the Chromebook for your student including any software for standardized tests, etc.

c) Your student will be using the SAME Chromebook all year regardless of "in-school instruction" "hybrid" vs. "100% online" instruction. No sharing of equipment.

d) If we return to our "brick and mortar" building, your student will use the Chromebook at home and at school. They will not have to bring a personal laptop to a school setting and worry about theft, damage, etc.

e) Because of standardization, our Technology department is able to troubleshoot, replace, and repair all CMS equipment quickly and efficiently.

f) We cannot support personal devices in case of technical issues.

g) The CMS Chromebooks have a filter in place to protect your child and the teacher has software to monitor activity and share their screens and interact with every student.

24. How do I get assistance with WiFi or internet connectivity if I cannot afford it?

Answer: To request assistance with internet connectivity, please reach out to your building principal. If participating in the The CAVE, the 100% online option, please identify your need on the enrollment form.

COVID SAFETY PRACTICES FAQs:

25. Will students be allowed to wear a face shield (clear plastic) instead of a cloth face mask?

Answer: Yes. Per the NM Public Education Department guidelines, Face Coverings are defined as a mask (disposable or reusable/washable cloth) or face shield. Bandanas will not be allowed.

26. What happens if my family can't afford a face covering?

Answer: CMS has been directed by the NM Public Education Department to implement the face covering requirement similar to a uniform policy. CMS has ordered every child and staff member a reusable face mask (Gaiter). Some face shields will be available for those that cannot wear a mask. If your family needs a mask, you may also reach out to the State of New Mexico at 1-833-551-0518 or at [EmailMe Form - Stop The Spread](#).

27. If I choose to NOT have my child wear a face covering, will they be sent home from school? Will you force them to wear a mask against my wishes?

Answer: In accordance with the Governor's Health Mandate, all students and staff are required to wear a face covering while at school unless they are eating, drinking or exercising. Students who arrive at school without a mask will be provided with one to wear. Should the student lose their mask, they may purchase an additional mask at \$5.00. Should they refuse, they will be sent home from school. Parents who do not want their child wearing a mask should register their child for The CAVE, the 100% Online School option.

28. Will my child with autism, asthma or other cognitive disabilities be required to wear a face covering or mask?

Answer: Per the NM Public Education Department guidelines, all students and staff are required to wear face coverings except while eating, drinking or exercising. In addition, limited exceptions may be made for students or staff who have medical reasons for not

being able to wear a face covering. The procedures and process for the limited exceptions is still being developed and will be released when it becomes available.

29. Will elementary students be required to wear face coverings while at recess or on the playground?

Answer: Yes.

30. If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, what happens? Will parents be notified? Will there be a quarantine and testing?

Answer: Should we have a student test positive in a classroom, all parents and guardians from that school will be notified. The Department of Health is not recommending that school districts test all staff. The district will have access to a rapid response number that we can contact immediately should we believe we have a case or someone has been in contact with someone who has tested positive. The Department of Health will customize the response plan based on the details surrounding the positive case. This could mean closing a classroom, closing a wing, or closing an entire school along with specific testing groups.

FOOD SERVICES FAQs:

31. Will CMS still feed my children on days they aren't in school facilities or if they are on the 100% online option through The CAVE?

Answer: Yes. CMS is currently working out the details.

32. Will students be required to sit apart from one another during their lunch period?

Answer: Yes. We will utilize classrooms and/or cafeterias for feeding lunch. However, students will still need to maintain social distancing during lunch periods and we will have reduced capacity in the cafeterias.

33. Is my child still allowed to bring their own packed lunch or lunchbox?

Answer: Yes.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC FAQS:

34. How will recess be handled?

Answer: Recess schedules will be determined by each school site. Since schools have different campus layouts and enrollment, they will be building lunch and recess schedules to accommodate social distancing requirements.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES FAQS:

35. How will my child receive special education services?

Answer: The IEP team must determine which services can be provided to appropriately meet the student's needs, including whether services can be provided by alternate or additional methods for each reentry model. This may be done through an addendum using the Prior Written Notice (PWN).

36. Will the Student Assistance Team still be offered?

Answer: Student Assistance Teams (SAT) will continue to implement and monitor any student in the hybrid or 100% online model. Schools with Reading interventionists will begin the year working with the students that were scheduled. SAT meetings will be held virtually through Google Hangouts.

The Carlsbad Municipal Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.