2020-21 School Reopening Frequently Asked Questions

Completing the Online Parent Intent Survey

- For help with password reset, please call (813) 744-6673.
- If you did not receive the survey email, please contact your child’s school to verify or update the information in the Student Information System as a way to ensure that you receive future communications. In the meantime, please go to the District’s main webpage at www.hillsboroughschools.org for direct access to the survey link.

General Questions

As a parent, what are my choices with sending my child back to school?

In early June, the district conducted a parent survey as part of a comprehensive plan to determine the overall pulse for returning to school in August. After a review of the survey results, families made it clear that at the very least they wanted a choice that represented an opportunity to keep their child home while the pandemic continued to impact our community. As a result, Superintendent Davis worked with his leadership team to develop a reopening plan incorporating input from all stakeholders with student and staff safety as the priority.

Our intent has always been to bring students back to school full-time as we believe that the most ideal educational experience for most children is to be in front of a teacher. However, we would never intentionally jeopardize the safety and health of students and staff, and by extension, our families. This Reopening Plan remains fluid and will be updated strategically depending on the status of the coronavirus spread throughout our community in the coming weeks. It is impossible to predict what the spread may be like in our community in August.

The models we examined covered a full continuum of designs and costs ranging from all students returning to school full-time, to a blended face-to-face and remote learning, to a complete closure like we experienced this past spring. Embedded within Model A are options for full-time remote learning that includes eLearning (school-based remote instruction) or enrollment in Hillsborough Virtual K-12.

As a result of the Executive Order #20-114 issued from the Florida Department of Education, all districts are mandated to offer a five day per week onsite option to students in the fall. In partnership with the Department of Health and other medical partners, the district opted to implement Model A to allow parents the flexibility to select one option that best fits their learner’s academic needs: Traditional classroom instruction, eLearning, or Hillsborough Virtual K-12.

To learn more about our Reopening Plan, visit www.hillsboroughschools.org.
When will I have to make a final decision for my child’s learning path?

In light of the need to plan for reopening, and the logistics of where and how 25,000 staff and teachers will be strategically utilized, we are asking parents to make a commitment on which option would be best for their child. We certainly understand and will be prepared to assist families if personal circumstances require them to change their child’s learning option either before or after the first day of school.

The Declaration of Intent that parents received on July 1 will remain open through July 19. This survey will allow us to be proactive for the way in which we finalize our staffing model and overall plans for the new academic year. Any student without a recorded parent choice on file will automatically be assigned to the full-time, traditional classroom instruction option.

Will I be allowed to change my student’s learning option before the first semester ends?

When making a selection, parents are committing to at least one full semester of instruction.

Could the first day of school be pushed back into September?

Any decision about moving the start date will be made with guidance from the Governor’s office and the Florida Department of Education. Currently, there has been no discussion of this happening at this time.

As school reopens in the fall, will visitors still be allowed on campus?

Regardless of the school opening model ultimately chosen, at this time we are planning that visitor access will be limited to appointment only. Temperature checks will be conducted upon entry to the front office and there will be a controlled access point in each school to minimize gathering. This decision remains fluid; we will continue to update the public in the weeks ahead.

If parents select eLearning or Hillsborough Virtual K-12, how will supports be provided for students with an IEP or 504 plan, as well as English Language Learners?

Students with disabilities attending Hillsborough Virtual K-12 or participating in eLearning will have access to accommodations and services that naturally occur in the traditional setting. However, specific supports will be determined by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan and take into consideration the unique nature of a virtual setting. Please note that some accommodations and services may not be possible in the online educational setting.

Schools will establish a line of communication with students and their families to regularly review assignments, curriculum, and other updates to ensure that student needs are being met. Translation technology and interpretation services for families will be in place.
where needed. The district will assess the accessibility needs of learning platforms and resources for parents and students (language, hardware, internet access, etc.), and provide necessary guidance, instructions, and support to students and their families in their home language.

Students receiving supports through English Language Learners programming will be provided daily opportunities to speak and be formatively assessed on a regular basis throughout their virtual participation regardless of the platform. These opportunities may be provided over the phone with the educator, remote interactions with classmates, and other forms of communication. Parents will be engaged to ensure their children read, speak, write, and listen in their native language as well as English every day. Texts, videos, and writing assignments will be strategically selected so that ELs can read, listen, and write regularly. Models will be provided to demonstrate clear criteria for success. Student agency, curiosity, and exploration will be emphasized, and parents will be provided access to quality multilingual learning resources to supplement learning via electronic, print, and video formats.

Our focus will be to utilize technology to create a collaborative partnership with teachers in a digital environment. Using online platforms such as Microsoft TEAMS, Google Voice, or Zoom, you are encouraged to engage teachers in quality conversations about differentiation of instruction for ELLs, the implementation of appropriate ELL strategies, and providing support as the teacher takes action to systematize virtual classroom learning routines. The frequency and structure of virtual PLCs should be differentiated to meet the needs of individual teachers.

What type of professional development will be provided to instructional staff if the eLearning platform is utilized?

Canvas, our new Learning Management System, is designed to support face-to-face, blended, and online instruction. The system provides teachers with resources and training modules designed to enhance instructional practices in both a traditional classroom setting and through remote delivery. Canvas will house grade level instructional frameworks, curriculum, and most of the instructional/textbook resources previously located in multiple places.

Canvas has many features that reinforce and enhance technology skills acquired during eLearning. Our teachers committed multiple hours to sharpening instructional skills during last year's school shutdown in preparation for remote instruction. Virtual and self-paced training for instructional and site-based administration will be available.

All teachers have access to professional learning to prepare them for the 2020-2021 school year.

• Summer professional development will be offered virtually with session facilitators focusing on important teaching and learning topics related to the 20-21 instructional models: blended learning, synchronous learning, Canvas, Achieve 3000, iReady, SIPPS, digital tools and platforms, etc.
## Virtual / eLearning Instruction

### What is the difference between eLearning and Hillsborough Virtual K-12?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>eLearning</th>
<th>HV K-12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are assigned to their brick-and-mortar school, and to teachers within that school.</td>
<td>Students are assigned to Hillsborough Virtual K-12 full-time, and to teachers within Hills-borough Virtual K-12.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers provide eLearning instruction that follows their daily face-to-face classroom instruction. Classroom hours and office hours are specified on a daily, scheduled routine.</td>
<td>Teachers provide a front-loaded semester-long syllabus for students, to enable them to work at their own pace. Correspondence hours with teachers are flexible, to accommodate student and family schedules.</td>
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<td>Student work is submitted according to the daily schedule for assignments, activities, and assessments.</td>
<td>Student work is submitted at the student’s own pace, providing all assignments, activities, and assessments are completed by the end of each week. (Note: students may complete at a more rapid pace, providing teachers verify mastery of standards)</td>
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<td>Curriculum is provided through Canvas, and is directly aligned with the teachers’ face-to-face, daily classroom instruction.</td>
<td>Curriculum is provided through Canvas at the elementary level and is designed by Hills-borough Virtual K-12 teachers as an entirely web-based instructional pathway. Secondary curriculum is a franchise of the Florida Virtual School (FLVS).</td>
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<td>Parents are encouraged to support their children’s pacing as set forth by their teachers and to provide a home setting which is conducive to the classrooms’ daily schedule.</td>
<td>Parents are encouraged to serve as the learning coach and to facilitate their children’s daily routine as best suits the family schedule.</td>
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<td>eLearning is designed for students who wish to be connected to classroom teachers within their assigned brick-and-mortar schools, thereby enabling them to work at a prescribed pace with their peers. It is a prime option for students who wish to stay connected to their school classmates and school community.</td>
<td>Hillsborough Virtual K-12 is designed for self-motivated students who wish to work at an independent pace, with flexibility in hours and scheduling of work completion. It is a prime option for students who need to accommodate a work schedule, college and career-minded students, homeschool students, hospital-homebound students, children in military families, amateur athletes, students who wish to accelerate their learning path, as well as students in need of credit recovery.</td>
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How involved do I need to be as a parent in eLearning vs Hillsborough Virtual K-12?

Hillsborough Virtual K-12 and eLearning both require adult guidance. With Hillsborough Virtual K-12, the program is designed around parents acting as a “learning coach”. For elementary grades, this means parents will likely need to provide daily guidance to their learner. For secondary grades, the parent will need to check in with the student throughout the week to ensure that activities are being completed at a rate consistent with completion in one semester.

On the eLearning platform, parent guidance will resemble that for Hillsborough Virtual K-12, although there will be a need for more frequent check-in with the learner regardless of the grade level. Parents are expected to oversee their child’s participation and provide guidance in completing assignments and seeking teacher feedback.

How are we going to put enough rigor into eLearning so that students are challenged?

eLearning courses will be designed to ensure rigor matches the traditional classroom setting. Standards have been prioritized in the scope and sequence of instruction to support students as they enter the next grade, course level. High-quality curriculum and learning experiences are being designed that can be implemented in both the traditional and eLearning model. The exact course offerings by school will be solidified by the student’s school.

Students are expected to participate daily in the eLearning option; attendance will be recorded when a student logs in each day. The student will adhere to a schedule that resembles traditional school hours, and the program will mirror the content, rigor and daily expectations as if participating in classroom-based learning.

If my child decides to enroll in Hillsborough Virtual K-12, will they lose their spot in their magnet school of choice next year?

If a student enrolls in Hillsborough Virtual K-12 but was scheduled to enroll in a magnet school for 2020-2021, consideration will be given to the student reenrolling in the magnet school for 2021-2022 academic year, space permitting and assuming interruption does not prevent successful program completion.

If I choose eLearning, will my student be learning with children who are also in a classroom? Will teachers provide instruction for students in both online and traditional classroom settings?

No. While the content that both groups of students will be learning is the same, the instructional delivery will be adapted for the eLearning group of students. There will be teachers dedicated to the eLearning platform and those dedicated to the traditional classroom model. In most instances, teachers will teach either one format or the other; however, there may be cases where teachers provide support in both formats.
**Will my child be able to take part in extracurricular activities, clubs or sports if I choose eLearning or Hillsborough Virtual K-12?**

Yes, eLearning and Hillsborough Virtual K-12 students will be able to participate in extracurricular activities, clubs and sports at their attendance-area school.

**Health & Safety**

**Are face coverings required when entering school buildings?**

Yes. Students, staff, vendors and visitors will be required to wear face coverings on campus when social distancing is not possible. Students shall wear these face coverings during extracurricular activities, as well as on school buses.

Masks provided: Staff members and students will receive an allotted number of reusable cloth masks from the district on the first day of school to ensure each person on campus is following proper safety precautions. If a staff member or student forgets or loses the mask, a disposable one will be provided for the day.

Enforcement: School administration or staff will be stationed at entry points throughout each campus to remind students to wear face coverings prior to entering campus. In instances where reusable masks are left at home, a disposable mask will be provided for the day. Students who repeatedly do not wear a mask on school grounds will be educated on their importance while faculty will work to use restorative practices to encourage students to utilize a mask. Each school will have a COVID Point Person to work on compliance issues at the school level.

**Can my child bring his or her own mask to school?**

Yes, your child can wear a mask provided from home. They must be school appropriate and shall not interfere with the district’s dress code policy.

**What measures will you take to socially distance students while at school?**

Every classroom will be designed to maximize space and distance between each student. We will utilize outdoor spaces when possible, limit large gatherings, and control student movement. Administrators will create site-based procedures for community restrooms and confined spaces to allow for social distancing and proper hand washing. All schools will participate in a grab-and-go breakfast program utilizing breakfast carts. Schools will explore in-class meal service options when possible. During cafeteria orientation, administrators will explain to students that they are not to pass or share any items, including food, with other students. Administrators will ensure tables are labeled to identify seating by class and specialized seating for students with health conditions.

**How often will my school be cleaned?**

Schools will be cleaned daily, focusing on major touch entry points in common areas such as doorknobs, handles, elevator buttons, stairwell railings, light switches and soap dispensers. Custodial staff will disinfect using proper cleaning products (ADQ, Avistat-D) with microfiber cloths to spray and wipe down objects.
Custodial staff will create a schedule to clean cafeteria tables and classrooms throughout the day.

- **Routine cleaning:** Throughout the workday, the custodial staff will implement a routine of surface cleaning in the major touch point areas discussed such as restrooms. The staff will, in some cases, report at staggered times depending upon hours of operation to ensure consistent disinfection practices while primary building employees are present. Latter custodial shifts will apply the full standard cleaning of all areas to be ready for the next day. Additional disinfecting will be performed prior to the arrival of district staff in high-traffic areas such as the front office. Custodial staff will wear face masks and gloves.

- **Deep cleaning:** If a positive COVID-19 case is determined within a school or building, district staff will use an approved chemical and fogging machine to disinfect any area deemed appropriate by contract tracing processes. The Vital Oxide sanitizer for spray or foam application is OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), WHMIS (Workplace hazardous Materials Information System) and GHS (Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals) compliant.

**What precautions are you taking on school buses?**

- Students will be encouraged to stay socially distanced while at the bus stop. This must be a joint education effort between families and school personnel.
- Students will be socially distanced as much as the physical capacity of the bus allows. Students will load the bus from back to front in order to encourage social distancing throughout the bus ride.
- School administration, in conjunction with the driver, will establish seating charts with social distancing in mind to the best of their ability.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be on each bus, and students will be encouraged to use it upon entry and exit.
- Students will also wear masks while social distancing. Bus drivers will have disposable masks to hand out to students in the event a student does not have his or her mask.
- Ventilation will be incorporated into the bus along with air conditioning systems.
- Although the CDC recommends cleaning buses once a day, our district will clean buses twice per day. Bus drivers will wipe down high-touch areas between each run.
What is the district doing to ensure children and staff are mentally healthy?

Students, staff and families have encountered additional stress and anxiety over these past few months. Hillsborough County Public Schools has provided a Mental Health Hotline to help families deal with the added uncertainty of COVID-19 and eLearning. **That hotline will remain in place. The number is 813-272-4787.**

**Mental Wellness Support:**
- Triage needs and provide supports to families and educators
- Modify schedules as needed for students and staff
- Ongoing consultation to school-based teams on mental health, threat assessments and suicide assessment
- Crisis Intervention Team ready for response when needed
- Enhance partnerships with network of mental health professionals to provide services
- Provide a blended model of support, inclusive of in-person and virtual deployment of mental health services

What mental health supports are available in my community?

The School Board has approved Central Florida Behavioral Health Network, Inc. to serve as the managing entity of contracted community providers, who will deliver evidence-based mental health services to students including: mental health assessments, mental health and co-occurring diagnoses, mental health interventions (including transport to crisis care as needed), mental health treatments, mental health transition/recovery supports, and telehealth services. Parents may contact their school's Student Services team to inquire about our community partnerships and explore other possible agencies that may be available to assist students with mental health concerns.

Through our mental health plan, the district will break down barriers that may exist with students and families receiving services, including insurance issues, high co-pays, and accessing important services that may not be available with other agencies. Our contracted community mental health providers include Chrysalis, Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, DACCO, Gracepoint, HEADS, Northside, and Success for Kids and Families.