

**MARS ESTATES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REOPENING
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
FEBRUARY 21, 2021**

The purpose of this document is to answer frequently asked questions and provide more specific information for our school family. *Please keep in mind, updates and information continue to be shared and at times new information may impact or change protocols and policies that are currently in place.*

Much of this document is taken directly from the BCPS Reopening Plan with edits specifically related to Mars Estates Elementary School. For more information, the BCPS plan can be accessed at: [BCPS Reopening Plan](#)

What is the phase-in process for students?

Students will return to school in a phased-in process. Students in pre-k through grade 2 will return in the hybrid model on March 1st. Students in our FALS, special education program will return in the hybrid model on March 15th. Students in grades 3-5 will return in the hybrid model on April 6th.

Who	Return Week Of
<p style="text-align: center;">Phases I and II:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in Public Separate Day Schools • Students in Preschool – Grade 2 	March 1
<p style="text-align: center;">Phase III:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in Grades 3-12 with special needs served outside general education • Select Career and Technical Education students notified by school 	March 15
<p style="text-align: center;">Phase IV: Remaining students in Grades 6 and 9</p>	March 22
<p style="text-align: center;">Phase IV: Remaining students in Grades 3 – 5, 7 – 8, and 10 – 12</p>	April 6

What are the hours of the school day for students?

From March 1st to March 12th, Mars Estates students in Kindergarten – Grade 2 participating in the **hybrid schedule** will attend school from **8:45 am to 1:15 pm**. This is similar to a two-hour early dismissal; however, students can log back into their Google Meet and engage in virtual

learning for the remainder of the day. **Beginning on March 15th**, students (both in-person and virtual) will attend school for a full day from 8:45 am to 3:15 pm. **Please note** doors open at 8:30 am each day for students.

What do the cohorts mean? Will both my children at Mars Estates be in the same cohort? Will my children at different BCPS Schools (HS and/or MS) be in the same cohort?

Parents have noted on surveys their preference for students to return to school or remain virtual. Students returning to school are assigned “cohorts” or groups. They are assigned to Cohort A or B. Students that will continue to work virtually will be assigned to Cohort C. Students with siblings at Mars Estates will be assigned to the same cohort. In addition, students with siblings at other Middle School or High Schools will also be assigned to the same cohort.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A: In-Person Cohort B: Virtual	Cohort A: In-Person Cohort B: Virtual	All Students: Virtual	Cohort B: In-Person Cohort A: Virtual	Cohort B: In-Person Cohort A: Virtual
Cohort C: Virtual			Cohort C: Virtual	

If I do not want my child to return to school on March 1st, can my child return at a later date?

Yes, if a parent chooses to have their child learn virtually at this time and later decides that their child should return to the schoolhouse the child may return to school after March 1st. As stated in the BCPS Reopening Plan, there will be a process for parents to change this decision. Parents/guardians can contact the school to request a change in cohort assignment. If the request is made during a specific window, the start date noted for that child to return to school is shown below.

Audience	Request Date Window (Window closes at 5:00 pm on Fridays)	Start Dates (Start dates applicable to the start day of the individual phases)
Phase 1 - Public Separate Day Schools and	Survey window- February 5	Week of March 1
	February 6- February 19	Week of March 8
Phase 2- Pre- School through Grade 2	February 20 – March 5	Week of March 22
	March 6 – March 12	Week of April 6
Phase 3 – OGE Special Education programs Grades 3 - 12 and Select CTE programs	Survey window- February 12	Week of March 15
	February 13- February 26	Week of March 22
	February 27 – March 12	Week of April 6
Phase 4- Grades 3 through 12	Survey window – March 12	Week of March 22 (Grades 6 & 9 only) Week of April 6
ALL	March 13 – March 26	Week of April 19
	March 27- April 9	Week of May 3
	April 10 – April 23	Week of May 17
	April 24 – May 7	Week of May 31

What health and safety protocols will be in place at the school?

Hand sanitizer stations will be available throughout the building. Students will have access to sinks for hand washing. High touch areas will be cleaned frequently throughout the day. An isolation room has been established for students that demonstrate COVID-like symptoms. PPE has been purchased for school staff and the building. Ventilation, circulation, and filtration systems have been checked and are functioning as designed. Safety is the priority for our students and staff.

What happens if my child is exposed Covid-19?

Students who develop symptoms will be removed from their classrooms and cared for in isolation rooms. They will be sent home immediately and excluded from in-person school per the COVID like Illness Protocol and COVID Nursing Procedure. Any persons with close contact with the student will be notified and excluded from in person school. Students will be excluded from schools for 10 days unless they have a negative COVID test and/or are diagnosed with a specific condition other than COVID-19.

What are the expectations for screening students before sending to school?

There will be a Wellness checklist for parents to complete daily stating whether students have been in close contact to anyone who tested positive with Covid-19, waiting for Covid-19 test results, have any Covid-19 symptoms, etc... This form will be collected monthly by the classroom teacher.

Will my child be able to receive breakfast at school?

All students will be able to receive a free breakfast upon their arrival at school. Breakfast will be individually packaged items in a bag for each student. There will not be choices of breakfast items for students. Students will eat breakfast in the classroom.

Will my child be able to receive lunch at school? What will lunch look like for my child?

All students will be able to **receive a free lunch**. Lunch will be individually packaged items in a bag and delivered to classrooms. There will not be choices of lunch items. Only one meal choice will be provided each day. BCPS will continue to provide meals at Mars Estates Elementary School on Monday and Wednesday for virtual students. Students will eat in their classroom at their desks and freely talk with one another. Students will be asked to remain seated at their desks during the lunch period. Teachers will monitor lunch time with their students.

What will my child's school day look like in person? What will my child's school day look like virtually?

Students in both the virtual and in-person environment may work concurrently (both virtual and in-person at the same time). There are times that the instruction will include both sets of students while other times, some students may work virtually while the teacher meets with the

students in the classroom or vice versa. For example, a typical structure for a lesson. Updated grade level schedules will be shared soon.

Lesson Component	Virtual Cohorts	In-Person Cohort
Outcomes	Concurrent • Unpack Objectives • Anticipatory Set	
Think About It	Chat Post	Class Discussion
Learn About It	Concurrent • Teacher Modeling • Direct Instruction	
Try It	Small Group Instruction	Independent Practice
Show What You Know	Formative Assessment	

What will the classroom look like for my child?

Students will work at a desk or table with 6 ft. social distancing in place. The lesson will allow in person and virtual students to interact with one another both on the computer and in the classroom. Social distancing will be in place at all times. Therefore, students will not be seated in groups together around the room. Students in grades K – 5 will not move to centers, rather the center may be at their desk or virtually. In special area classes, students will remain socially distanced. Special area teachers will travel to homeroom classes, except for Physical Education, which will take place outside weather permitting. At times, the gymnasium may be used for Physical Education class.

Can my child bring a water bottle to school?

Students can bring a personal water bottle to school to keep at their desk. Water fountains will not be available at this time.

What will recess look like for my child?

Students will continue to have recess daily. Recess will take place outside except in extreme weather conditions. Each class will have a designated area for outdoor recess. Students will wear masks and maintain social distancing. Playground equipment will not be available at this time. Recess may include specific activities that allow students to exercise and some measure of socialization.

What safety measures are being taken for students that ride the bus?

Buses will operate at a limited capacity, up to one person per seat with appropriate distance behind the driver. There will be assigned seating on the bus. Students that live in the same

household may sit together. Students (and the driver) will be expected to wear their masks from the bus stop, during the ride, and into the schoolhouse. High touch areas will be cleaned frequently.

Will my child have to wear a mask all day? Will my child have an opportunity for a mask break during the day?

Students will be required to wear a mask on the bus and throughout the school day, even during recess. Students will be provided with opportunities for short mask breaks throughout the day, in keeping with all other mitigation strategies.

What are the protocols for parents/guardians and visitors?

The building will maintain a limited number of people throughout the day. Visitors and volunteers will not be permitted in the building. Parents/guardian and those registering new students will complete this process online. All meetings and conferences will be held virtually at this time.

What will arrival and dismissal look like?

When dropping off, parents/guardians will remain in their vehicle during the arrival process. Masks must be worn when on school grounds (even when in a vehicle). When dropping off, parents/guardians are asked to use the drop off lane (not the bus lane) and staff members will open doors and help students to safely go to their classroom entrances. Walking parents/guardians must maintain social distancing while on school grounds. Staff will be present to greet walking families and escort students to their classroom entrances. When picking up for dismissal, parents/guardians can line -up 6 ft apart at their child's classroom door (PreK – grade 2) or their specific exit location (grades 3 – 5). Staff will be outside directing parents/guardians to the pick-up location. Arrival time is 8:30 – 8:45 am and dismissal time is 3:15 – 3:30 pm each day.

What should I do if my child is tardy and arrives at school after 8:45 am?

We ask parents/guardians to do their best in arriving within the arrival window. If a student is tardy, parents/guardians should remain in their vehicle and call the school office at 410-887-0154 and a staff member will come out to your car and escort the student into the building. If walking, parents should call school and a staff member will come out to meet the student.

What does my child need to bring to school each day? What about my child's device?

All students will need to **bring their fully charged device** to school each day, as most assignments will continue to be assigned, delivered, and submitted via Schoology. They should also bring a set of **headphones** and a **mask**.

How can I prepare my child for his/her return to school?

There are many ways to prepare your child for the transition back to the schoolhouse. First, it is important to present the change in a positive way. Take time to answer any questions your child may have and let them know that school is a safe place. Be clear as to what the changes may look like (or what school might look like for our youngest students) and tell them the “why” behind the differences. For example, why we need to practice social distancing and why we need to wear a mask. This is a familiar expectation if your family has experienced grocery shopping or other events outside the home. Set a routine for sleep and being prepared for school in advance. This will help your child physically prepare for the change. Please keep in mind that it will take some time for everyone to adjust and get used to the new routines and expectations.

One School Family

We will continue to be one school family creating an inclusive learning environment for all students regardless of whether your child is coming in hybrid or remaining home for virtual instruction. Our teachers are committed to providing a welcoming and loving environment for all!

What plans are the Mars Estates staff making to provide parents additional information as we move into this next phase of teaching and learning?

Our Mars Estates Reopening Team has been doing tremendous work preparing for the transition to hybrid learning. Modified schedules will be in place to allow time for teachers to set up classrooms and prepare for hybrid learning. The following schedule modifications will be implemented:

PreK- Grade 2

Monday, February 22: Asynchronous learning for students in grades PreK – Grade 2. This means all work will be done independently (no Google Meet Sessions for PreK – Grade 2 today).

Friday, February 26: Half day of school for PreK- Grade 2. Dismissal is at 12:30 pm.

FALS Program

Monday, March 8: Asynchronous learning for students in the FALS program. This means all work will be done independently (no Google Meet sessions for students in the FALS program today).

Friday, March 12: Half day of school for students in the FALS program. Dismissal is at 12:30 pm.

Grades 3 - 5

Monday, March 22: Asynchronous learning for students in Grades 3 – 5. This means all work will be done independently (no Google Meet sessions for Grades 3 – 5 today).

Friday, March 26: Half day of school for students in Grades 3 – 5. Dismissal is at 12:30 pm.

Transportation Planning:

Transportation assignments for our Preschool-Grade 2 students will be finalized by transportation one week prior to the March 1 start date. Transportation communication will be shared with families the week of February 22nd.

Updated Schedules:

All revised grade level and special area schedules will be sent very soon so that parents/guardians and students can make plans for the adjusted schedules.

Thank you for your patience and support!

We appreciate your patience and support as we work to prepare to welcome students back to the building for hybrid learning. We will continue to keep you updated as we engage in the planning and implementation of hybrid learning.