

COVID-19: Update on our return — October 6, 2020

Dear CPS Families:

Over the last seven months, Columbia Public Schools has worked diligently on plans for the many possibilities of learning during a pandemic. We have a plan. All of the elements of the plan are designed to be flexible as information and data dictate.

The district remains encouraged by the reduction of positive cases in our community. We are also aware that there are strong feelings on both sides of the discussion about what is the right path to take to move forward. This is hard for all of us. Ultimately, we can agree on one thing – everyone wants our students to return safely to in-person learning and we all want the best for our children.

The Columbia Board of Education continues to meet regularly to determine the next steps. The Board held a special session this afternoon to discuss reopening plans for the school district. The Board heard a comprehensive update from district administration that included processes and considerations for implementing planned options. It also discussed which options in the plan are currently possible based on where we are as a community with our infection rates.

A key discussion from today's meeting included a **possible revision to the draft of the in-person phased-in approach**. The board discussed the possibility of preschool and elementary students who selected in-person learning to return to school in a full 4-day-week format as phase 1 of the district's reopening plan. This possible option does not impact students who are currently learning via CPSElementary@Mizzou or CPS Virtual for middle and high school students.

If numbers continue to remain steady, the Board could then consider a return of in-person students grades 6-12. The tentative timeline might look like:

October 19 – PreK-5 in-person learning students

November 5 – Middle school in-person learning students (after the first quarter)

January 19 – High school in-person learning students (after finals, which are administered after winter break this year)

*\*\* Special Education students grades 6-12 may need to return sooner, which was discussed at the meeting.*

The presentation slides from today's meeting are available on our website at: [https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SB\\_Meetings/ViewMeeting.aspx?S=42&MID=8572](https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SB_Meetings/ViewMeeting.aspx?S=42&MID=8572)

The meeting aired live on CPS-TV and our cable-access television channels. If you missed the live meeting, the recording of the meeting will be available tomorrow on CPS-TV at <https://www.cpsk12.org/cpstv>.

Based on the direction provided by the Board of Education over the last several months and in preparation for our return, the district prepared 3 possible options for the Board to consider – a hybrid, phased-in hybrid, and full 4-day-week return. These options are in addition to the current learning models for virtual learning that are also in place for students who chose virtual learning.

The Board will vote on the next steps in the district's reopening at its regular monthly meeting on **October 12**.

Thank you for your continued support as we continue to navigate a pandemic together.

Columbia Public Schools  
1818 W. Worley Street  
Columbia, MO 65203

[www.cpsk12.org](http://www.cpsk12.org) | [www.cpsk12.org/fall2020](http://www.cpsk12.org/fall2020)