

# **PRESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



## **LEARNING OPTIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR 2020-21**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020-21 school year at Preston Public Schools will look different. The plans listed below are subject to change as new information on the coronavirus becomes available or as positive cases become more prevalent in the community or within our District. At PPS, the health and safety of students and employees is always the top priority, and we will do everything possible to comply with the very latest recommendations and guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), as well as state and local health agencies.

Although we are able to share this information, we realize there are still more questions than answers. All of this is unprecedented, none of it is easy. There may not be answers to every question right now, but we will attempt to address those questions as soon as possible. As the start of a new school year approaches, please continue to check your email and monitor all PPS platforms for the very latest information.

There are three distinct learning options for students enrolled at Preston Public Schools for the 2020-21 school year. These options were created to provide choice and flexibility for PPS families. We want to help every parent make an informed decision about how their child will experience learning in the new school year. Please look at each one of these options carefully.

**Regardless of what option is chosen, every parent/guardian must complete the online Back to School Registration process. The updating process is completed through your Online Enrollment.**

## **OPTION #1 - ALL AT SCHOOL LEARNING (Option Available Pre-K - 12)**

In this option students will:

- Remain enrolled in Preston Public Schools
- Attend school daily in a traditional, face-to-face classroom environment
- Engage in a variety of learning experiences with teachers and peers
- Continue to access educational technology supports
- Continue to access all courses and activities offered at Preston Public Schools
- Continue to access guidance and counseling, media centers and other student programs as needed

**\*\*\*When necessitated by COVID-19 conditions, At-School Learning will move to Distance Learning facilitated virtually via Exact Pathanel Pathblazer and Edgenuity. Teachers will continue to introduce new content and assess/grade student progress.\*\*\***

## **OPTION #2 - ALL VIRTUAL LEARNING THROUGH ONLINE CLASSES PROGRAM (Option Available K - 12)**

In this new option for 2020-21, students will:

- Remain enrolled in Preston Public Schools
- Access learning activities via an online platform (Exact Pathanel Pathblazer for grades K - 5 and Edgenuity for grades 6 - 12)
- Have progress monitored by a certified Preston Public Schools teacher
- Receive supplemental instructional support for coursework from a certified Preston Public School teacher
- Require at-home parental guidance and support during learning activities in grades K - 6
- Have access to guidance and counseling services, media centers, and other student programs as needed
- Receive technology device and internet access support as needed

## **OPTION #3 - BLENDED LEARNING (Option Available Grades 7-12 ONLY)**

In this option students will:

- Remain enrolled in Preston Public Schools
- Attend school daily for a portion of the school day while completing remaining courses via the Edgenuity online platform
- Interact directly with teacher and peers
- Engage in a variety of learning experiences
- Be eligible to participate in school-sponsored activities and athletics
- Access guidance and counseling services, media centers, and other student programs as needed
- Receive technology device and internet access support as needed

# **Preston Public Schools**

## **Return to Learn at PPS - General Guidelines for Staff, Parents and Students**

Over the last several weeks, District administrators and staff members have listened to experts in the medical and educational communities, while continuously researching and evaluating the best practices and strategies for creating the safest possible learning environment. Although it is impossible to eliminate all risk, the goal is to maintain a layered approach to reducing the risk of spread in our schools. These practices are flexible and can be adapted or changed quickly depending on the current nature of the pandemic and the latest information from state and local health agencies.

Guidance published by the American Academy of Pediatrics states, “all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school.” The AAP also provides a variety of reasons why schools are fundamental to the overall health and development of children and adolescents. From the instructional aspect to social and emotional wellness, as well as providing meals, counseling services, and physical activity, schools play a critical role in the lives of students and in the overall health of a community.

The following information is shared to help everyone in our community understand how Preston Public Schools is mitigating the risks associated with COVID-19 and how staff members and families can play a role in helping to stop the spread.

### **Monitor Symptoms**

Staff members will be expected to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms prior to reporting to work each day.

Parents/guardians are expected to screen their students for COVID-19 symptoms each day prior to sending their students to school.

If a student begins displaying COVID-19 symptoms at school, he/she should report to the office immediately.

People with COVID-19 have reported a variety of symptoms - ranging from mild to severe. Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 -14 days after exposure to the virus. Families should monitor children and should not send children to school if they have one or more of the following symptoms:

- **Fever**
- **Chills**
- **Cough**
- **Headache**
- **Loss of smell or taste**
- **Sore throat**
- **Nausea or vomiting**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **Muscle or body aches**
- **Congestion or runny nose**
- **Diarrhea**

## **Exposure and Return to School After COVID-19**

Students or staff who come in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual will be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days and may not return to their school site during that time.

### **What counts as “Close Contact?”**

- You spent at least 15 minutes or more at a distance of six feet or closer.
- You had direct physical contact with the person (e.g., handshake, hugging).
- You shared eating or drinking utensils with them.
- You came into contact with their respiratory droplets (e.g., they coughed or sneezed on you).

Adapted from MIT

**Any student or staff member who tests positive or has COVID-19 symptoms may return to school after:**

- 3 days with no fever AND
- Respiratory symptoms have improved AND
- 10 days have passed since the first symptoms appeared

**Any student or staff member who tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms can return to school after:**

- 10 days have passed since the test OR
- Two consecutive negative COVID-19 tests taken 24 hours apart

Source: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

**\*Students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to submit a letter of good health from a physician's office prior to returning to school.\***

## **Masks/Face Coverings**

All PPS staff members, visitors, and students in **grades 3 - 12** will be required to wear face coverings. Any exceptions require the approval of the site principal.

Students in grades **Pre-K - 2** are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings as feasible. Masks will be encouraged when social distancing is difficult to accomplish.

## **Bus Transportation**

Regardless of age or grade level, all students are required to wear a mask while riding on a bus. All PPS bus drivers are required to wear a mask. Because socially distancing on a bus is more difficult, masks for all riders and drivers are important in helping to contain respiratory droplets and stop the spread of the virus. All PPS buses will have extra masks and hand sanitizer on board. Buses will be cleaned and disinfected after morning routes are completed and again when afternoon routes are completed.

As students board the bus, they should sit in an available seat closest to the back of the bus. Students getting on the bus should be seated from back to front to reduce the amount of close contact as much as possible.

## **Access to School Buildings for Parents and Visitors**

All individuals entering a school building or PPS facility will be required to wear a mask or face covering. Parents will not be permitted to escort children into the building. Parents must remain in their cars and drive through the drop-off line. Staff members will be stationed outside of the school building to help direct students to their classrooms.

Parents who wish to check their student(s) out of school must only enter the main entrance of their child's building and must wait in the office. Parents and visitors will be prohibited from entering hallways, classrooms, cafeterias, gymnasiums, and other common areas.

## **Activities and Athletics**

Extra-curricular activities, clubs, and athletics play an important role in a student's educational experience. All school-sponsored activities and athletic teams will continue to adhere to guidelines put in place by the District, as well as recommendations from state and local health agencies.

## **Changes to Start of School Meetings and Activities**

Events such as Meet the Teacher and Schedule Pick-Up will be significantly altered due to the pandemic. Each one of these events will occur at the discretion of each PPS school site. Please continue to check your email, your child's school webpage, social media pages, and other communication methods for the very latest school-specific information on events and activities.

Parents/Guardians, at your earliest convenience, please complete the online Back to School registration process.

## **Additional Measures for Disease Mitigation**

### **Hand Washing/Sanitizing**

Washing and/or sanitizing hands frequently is one of the easiest ways to protect against infection. Throughout the school day, students will be reminded to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Students and staff members will also have access to alcohol-based hand sanitizer in classrooms and other common areas. Staff will be expected to regularly wash or sanitize hands throughout the day.

### **Social Distancing**

When feasible, school sites will implement social distancing in common areas such as hallways, gyms, and cafeterias.

## **Cleaning Protocols**

During the school day, staff will clean commonly touched surfaces inside classrooms, while maintenance personnel will clean commonly touched surfaces in common areas. At the end of each scheduled event or school day, the District's custodial staff will clean frequently touched surfaces and objects. A CDC approved disinfectant agent is also sprayed through rooms and coats commonly touched surfaces after cleaning.

## **Classroom Seating**

Placing plastic barriers around desks or between desks is simply not feasible. It is not a financially practical solution for the District. Classroom seating will be arranged to allow for as much distance between individual students as possible. However, available classroom space and class sizes will not allow for a 6-foot distance between students.

## **Meals at School**

Students must wash hands or sanitize hands before going through a food line or sitting down to eat in the cafeteria. Students should socially distance while waiting in a food line. No guests will be allowed to have lunch on-site as long as there is still a threat of COVID-19 exposure.

## **Supplies**

Students will not be allowed to share supplies such as pens, pencils, markers, scissors, or crayons. Any supplies or tools needed to be used by multiple students will be sanitized between uses.

## **Water Fountains**

Each school site will be equipped with water bottle filling stations. Students and staff members are encouraged to bring non-breakable water containers to school.