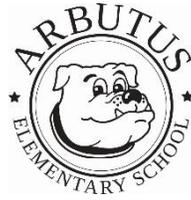


Arbutus Elementary Parent Handbook for Hybrid and Virtual Instruction



The purpose of this handbook is to provide information to caregivers about Arbutus Elementary reopening plans. We are committed to make the return to school a very positive experience for our students and families. This situation is evolving, and we will update this information as soon as we receive any news from BCPS. Please continue to reach out to us with questions and concerns.

What is Hybrid (In-Person) Learning?

Hybrid learning is an educational model where some students attend class in-person, while others join the class virtually from home. Educators teach remote and in-person students at the same time (concurrent instruction) using tools like Google Meet.

Phase in Process for Students

Students will return to school in a phased-in process. Arbutus hybrid students in PK through grade 2 will return beginning on March 1st. Arbutus hybrid students in grades 3-5 will return beginning on April 6th.

Daily Schedule

All students (PK-grade 5) will experience schedule changes beginning March 1st due to the change in bell times, as well as to adjust for in-person learning. These schedule changes will be included in this packet and will also be shared by teachers.

Students attending in the hybrid instructional format will be able to learn concurrently with students remaining virtual. There are times that the instruction will include both sets of students, while at other times, some students may work virtually while the teacher meets with the students in the classroom and vice versa. Classroom teachers will provide updated schedules the week before hybrid instruction begins for that grade level (week of February 22nd for PK-grade 2 and the week of March 22nd for grades 3-5).

Hours of the School Day

Pre-Kindergarten: Beginning March 1st, Pre-Kindergarten will attend the morning program from 9:00 AM-11:45 AM (arrival 9-9:15, dismissal 11:45-12) OR the afternoon program from 1:00 PM-3:45 PM (arrival 1-1:15, dismissal 3:45-4). Pre-Kindergarten schedules will be provided to families by the teacher.

Kindergarten-Grade 2: Students in Kindergarten through grade 2 (hybrid and virtual) will attend school March 1st-March 12th from 9:00 AM-1:45 PM. This will resemble a normal two-hour early dismissal. Homeroom will be from 9:00 -9:15 AM. Dismissal will begin at 1:45 PM. Hybrid students will engage in asynchronous activities in the afternoon from March 1st-12th. Moreover, they may be asked by teachers to join virtually for additional instruction upon returning home. Virtual learners will engage in synchronous (live) activities with their teachers from 2:00 PM-3:45 PM. Beginning March 15th or March 18th, those Kindergarten through grade 2 students who have selected hybrid learning will return to school, depending on cohort A or B assignments, and follow a full-day schedule from 9:00 AM-3:45 PM. All teachers will provide schedules to families.

Grades 3-5: Grades 3-5 students will attend school virtually from March 1st-March 26th. Those students who have selected hybrid learning will return to school in-person on April 6th or April 8th, from 9:00 AM-3:45 PM, depending on cohort A or B assignments.

Cohort Information

Parents have noted on surveys their preference for students to return to school (hybrid) or remain virtual. Students returning to school in the hybrid format are assigned “cohorts” or groups. Cohort A students will attend in person on Mondays and Tuesdays. Cohort B students will attend in person on Thursdays and Fridays. Students who chose to remain virtual will be assigned to Cohort C. Students with siblings at Arbutus will be placed in the same cohort. In addition, students with siblings at other BCPS schools will be assigned to the same cohort.

**For the weeks of Easter Monday and Memorial Day, Wednesday will become a synchronous (live) instruction day. For these weeks, synchronous instruction shall take place on Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday and Friday for the respective cohort of students.

Depending on the number of students returning to classes, there may be changes to their assigned teachers. We are working hard to avoid any disruption to our students’ routines, but we may need to account for the number of students assigned to classes.

Change of Cohorts (Virtual to Hybrid or Hybrid to Virtual)

You may change from hybrid to fully virtual learning at any time. You may also decide to change from fully virtual to hybrid at any time. Please note, there will be at least a two-week delay from the request date to the start date of hybrid instruction. To request a change from virtual to in-person/hybrid learning, please utilize the following link. Request and start date windows are listed in the chart found below.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=3cPDSRs_g0G0dLONSDpa_VSKHDz86RhLhI8IWcA6eYBUMU04WDBTTTREUEpOT1NHQUJZSFNCQUhTMi4u

Please use the schedule below to identify request date windows and hybrid learning start dates for students. The specific start dates will be cohort-dependent (Cohort A-Mondays/Tuesdays and Cohort B-Thursdays/Fridays). Families will receive a cohort assignment message before the first day of school.

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 Phase 2- Pre- School through Grade 2	Survey window- February 5	Week of March 1
	February 6- February 19	Week of March 8
	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

Health and Safety Protocols

Hand sanitizing stations will be available throughout the building. Students will not be permitted to bring their own bottle of hand sanitizer to school. Students will have access to sinks for frequent hand washing. Bathroom capacity has been reduced. High touch areas will be cleaned frequently throughout the day. Students will keep a distance of 6 feet from one another (to the extent possible), and they will wear masks (except while eating and drinking). An isolation room has been established for students that demonstrate COVID-like symptoms. The nurse will closely monitor students in the isolation room. **Please be certain you have a plan in place to quickly pick your child up from school, should the nurse call you.** PPE has been purchased for school staff and students. Proper ventilation, circulation, and filtration systems have been checked and are functioning as designed. Safety is the priority for our students and staff.

The COVID-19 HEALTH SCREENING AND EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM is being mailed home. Please complete this form and send it with your child on the first day back to school and the first school day of each month. It is very important that you complete the family health screening every day before school. Keeping our school community safe is a team effort.

Breakfast

All students will receive a free breakfast upon arrival to school. Breakfast will be individually packaged items in a bag for a “grab and go” format. There will be no choices of breakfast items for students. Students will eat their breakfast in the classroom.

Lunch

All students will be able to receive a free lunch. Lunch will be individually packaged items in a bag for a “grab and go” format. Students may also bring their lunch to school. There will be a yogurt bag every day and one other option. Snacks will not be available for purchase. There will be no money handling in the cafeteria. The daily lunch menu will be posted on the BCPS website (www.bcps.org). BCPS will continue to provide meals at all middle and high school locations for virtual students. Students will eat in the cafeteria, socially distanced, and may politely talk with one another. Students must remain at their tables and will not be able to leave their seats to visit one another. Students will be permitted and are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school. However, they may not be filled using water fountains.

Classroom Setup

Students will be seated at least 6 feet apart and follow social distancing protocol. Students learning virtually will be able to interact with the teacher and students during instruction. In-person students will not move to centers, but students may have center or small-group activities while staying at their seats, or by connecting virtually. Students will travel to special area (Art, Music, P.E., and Library) classes.

Recess

Students will continue to have recess within their Cohort groupings. Recess will take place outside, except in extreme weather conditions. Students will continue to wear masks and maintain social distancing. While the playground equipment will not be available, teachers may plan specific activities that allow students to exercise and socialize.

Bus Information

Buses will operate at a limited capacity, with only one student per seat (except for siblings, who will be permitted to sit together). Students will be assigned seats based upon their bus stop. Students (and the driver) will be expected to always wear face masks. The eating of food and drinking will not be permitted on the bus. High-touch areas on the bus will be cleaned frequently. Bus information will be shared with families the week of February 22, 2021.

Car Rider Information

Car riders will exit/enter their cars at the back of the building for arrival (9-9:15 AM) and dismissal (1:45-2 PM or 3:45-4 PM). Staff will be there to meet the students and direct them where to go. Drivers should remain in their vehicles.

Walkers

Students who walk to school will enter the building using the main front doors. At dismissal, students who walk home will exit the breezeway doors.

Masks

As stated before, students must always wear a mask while on BCPS property, including the bus and bus stops. All faculty and staff members are required to wear a mask throughout the day. Staff members may also wear a plastic face shield. It is recommended that students keep an extra mask in their backpacks for emergency purposes. Additionally, Arbutus will provide disposable face masks to students when needed.

Visitors to the Building

Visitors and volunteers will not be permitted inside the AES building. Parents who need to come to school in-person must make an appointment, and arrangements will be made to meet outside. Meetings and conferences will continue to be held virtually. When dropping off or picking up a student, parents will need to wear a mask and remain in their vehicle during the arrival and dismissal processes.

Late Arrival and Early Dismissal

If your child arrives late, please call the main office to let them know when you will be arriving. When you arrive, a staff member will come out to your car to walk your child into the building. If your child needs to be dismissed early, please let us know when you arrive as a staff member will walk your child from the front door to your car.

Student Materials

Your child may need to bring school supplies to and from school. Your child's homeroom teacher will provide a list of supplies the week prior to the return of your grade-level cohort. Arbutus will also provide supplies as needed. In compliance with CDC guidelines, students must not share supplies. All students must bring a charged BCPS device and charger to school each day. If your child does not have an assigned BCPS device, please call the main office and a request will be sent for one. During this transition, please continue to use your current device in order to not miss important instruction. Homeroom teachers may provide updated information regarding the need for devices in the classroom.

Ideas on How to Prepare My Child for the Return to School

There are many ways to prepare your child to transition back to school. First, it is important to present this change in a positive and caring way. Take time to answer any questions your child may have and remind them that school is a safe place. Be clear on what the changes may look like and tell them the "why" behind the differences. For example, explain why we must practice social distancing and mask wearing. Set a routine for sleep and be prepared for school in advance. This will help your child physically prepare for the change. Keep in mind that it will take everyone some time to get used to the new routines and expectations. Our staff is always here to help!