



MCS D Return with Care FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Since we transitioned to remote learning in March, we have worked to balance health precautions with the educational and support needs of our students. Every week, we learn more from our health experts about the COVID-19 virus.

Based on guidance from the Governor's office, State Office of Education, state and county health department, Murray City School District will resume learning activities for the 2020-21 school year, with significant health precautions in place for students and staff and options for learning that empower families to make choices that make the most sense for them.

Knowing that the situation may continue to evolve, MCS D has worked with state and local officials to develop contingencies that will address local unforeseen spikes outbreaks in COVID-19 to ensure the safety of all, seamless transitions, and continuity of learning.

Our planning takes into account the collective input of our families, teachers, administrators, and partnerships, both local and statewide. Thank you for helping us build a plan that prioritizes safety and is responsive to the needs of our community.

REOPENING AND LEARNING OPTIONS

How and why did MCS D make the decision to return to school for the 2020-21 School Year?

Before the end of the 2019-20 school year, MCS D has been preparing a number of different scenarios for what school would be like for the 2020-21 school year. As with everyone else, we watched carefully the spread of COVID 19 in Utah and across the nation. We also observed and sought our endless opinions about the virus itself and its impact on public education. We believe it's important to place our trust in the best evidence-based science and knowledge when it comes to health concerns. That trust is then aligned to our expertise in the implementation of learning strategies for our Murray administrators, teachers, and students.

In early July the State Board of Education developed a set of guidelines for a return to school, giving each district the charge of developing their own unique plan within that framework by no later than August 1. As plans began to emerge, there were some commonalities that were generally agreed upon. First, that Districts can create a safe environment for in-classroom learning, and second that families should be given options and flexibility to address their unique circumstances.

Working in close collaboration with our state and local partners, MCS D developed and introduced to the Board of Education a plan called Murray Returns with Care the second week of July that we believe achieves the stated objectives of safety and flexibility.

Q What are the learning options available to my student?

MCS D is offering three options for elementary (K-6) students and four options for secondary (7-12) students. By state code, all students must attend 180 days of school. This has not changed from previous years and all schools across the state must follow it. All of our learning options are programmed for 180 days of learning.

We further believe that by offering greater flexibility the net result will be smaller class sizes and thus less potential threat to those who are in our school buildings. **All students must register as students in Murray City School District regardless of learning option chosen.**

Elementary In-Class Learning: We will be offering an in-class option five days a week with an in-school teacher.

Will classes be held outside as much as possible? It is possible to hold classes outside to help with social distancing. However, getting a truly robust learning experience is difficult to replicate without student materials and access to needed supplies. It is not a district mandate to hold classes outside. However, protocols have been put into place to help with ventilation.



Elementary Hybrid Learning: Families with students enrolled in an in-class option will be given the flexibility to determine a mixed schedule of in-class and online learning from the same teacher. Hybrid is also an option when students are sick in an effort to keep up with their schoolwork. Each day, our in-class teachers will video record and upload the direct instruction and accompanying assignments in Google Classroom for Math, Language Arts, Social Studies and Science. Students not in attendance (for whatever reason) can continue to learn from the same teacher and keep pace with the in-class experience for those subjects only. To engage in this option, families are asked to communicate with their school principal as soon as possible, preferably **BEFORE August 11** regarding what days of the week their student will be attending in-class or will be attending using the Hybrid option. **THIS IS CRITICAL** as our teachers plan their instruction based on those who will be in class.



It is important for parents to recognize instruction will be uploaded by 4:30pm each day. In order for students to be prepared for learning the following day, students are **strongly encouraged** to engage in learning after 4:30pm so learning and continuity of instruction is not lost in the hybrid option. Since lessons won't be uploaded until 4:30pm each day, students are encouraged to read, participate in Lexia, Zearn and Typing Agent. Further, only direct instruction and the accompanying activities will be uploaded to Google Classroom. Interventions, small group targeted instruction and class meetings will not be uploaded due to the very nature of its personalized, targeted nature.

How do I choose my schedule for hybrid? Simply register as a student in Murray with the online registration process as you normally would for school. Next, contact your school administrator and communicate with her the days of the week you will be attending in person and the days you will be attending using the hybrid option. There will not be a hybrid option in registration. The expectation is that families will communicate their desire for hybrid scheduling with their administrator.

When are assignments due? Teachers are willing to work with students in completing assignments. It is best when students complete their work after 4:30 each day to be prepared for the next day of instruction. In the event of illness, however, that may not be feasible. All work should be complete by Sunday night each week by 5pm.

What happens to class sizes? Certainly, when families choose a hybrid option, class sizes are smaller. There is no way to anticipate what the class sizes will be until after August 11 when families should declare what days they plan to send their students to school. When families are consistent in that plan, class sizes can be predictable. When families are unable to be consistent is when we are unable to predict class size. However, class size will remain at the regular enrollment rates regardless of what learning option families choose overall.



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Can I choose certain classes for the hybrid rather than days? In secondary schools, this is certainly an option provided parents transport their student to and from school at the correct times for such a transitional schedule. More about that below in the secondary hybrid option. It is not recommended in elementary settings for three reasons: 1. Health officials have asked schools to limit traffic in and out of school throughout the day to limit exposure. 2. Part of the school's protocol include contact tracing and that cannot be accomplished effectively if students are in and out throughout the school day, especially if circumstances change and a student remains in the classroom all day when they were previously due to leave in the middle of the day. 3. The student's LMS could be difficult to navigate as lessons are posted as a whole and not for individual students.

Is there a time limit or commitment time frame for hybrid? No. The expectation is that families will attend the hybrid schedule consistently. If families want to change the schedule, they are asked to communicate well in advance with the administrator.

Will dual language be offered in hybrid? Yes however, the premise behind language acquisition is to practice and "immerse" in a language environment. Hybrid, as of yet, is not live and interactive. In this case, it is a great way to keep pace in the event of absences, but dual language is not an ideal scenario for a long term hybrid schedule and is not recommended by USBE. Murray City School District will honor your place in dual language classes if families choose the hybrid option for this school year or a portion of the school year, but the hybrid will be in English.

Will magnet gifted be offered in hybrid? Yes however, the premise behind gifted education is hand on, in depth discussion and enriched learning. Hybrid, as of yet, is not live and interactive. In this case, it is a great way to keep pace in the event of absences, but magnet gifted *may not* be an ideal scenario for a long term hybrid schedule. Murray City School District will honor your place in magnet gifted classes if families choose the hybrid option for this school year or a portion of the school year.

I am concerned about my student and classes being recorded. What reassurance can I receive? The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents the right to have access to their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. Recording a class is not a violation of personally identifiable information provided that a few criteria are met: 1. The link to the recording is not public. Having the recording in the LMS is a secure venue. 2. The intent of the recording is disclosed to parents and parents know how long the recording is kept. Recordings will be kept for 180 days (a school year) and then destroyed. It will be stored on our secure servers with MCSD. Finally, the intent of the camera is to capture teacher instruction not student participation. Students will likely be heard, but not seen in most cases. For more information, USBE has produced a number of videos about FERPA and data privacy located [here](#).

Can the District provide an example of an elementary schedule that works for my family needs and also works for teachers? Yes. Because interventions and targeted instruction need to be planned, having a predictable schedule is best. Further, assignments are posted after 4:30pm so keeping on pace with in-class students requires students to complete assignments in the evenings. Families choosing Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Friday as hybrid learning days allows families time to do assignments before going to school the following day and allows teachers predictability for when students will be in attendance to plan other



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instruction. That being said, MCS D is offering parents a lot of flexibility in choice but want to ensure that families know all the advantages and disadvantages of those options.

Elementary Online Learning: We will be offering an online class option five days a week from a district designated online teacher. To select this option, families should fill out this [FORM](#). The deadline for choosing the **Online Only option is August 4, 2020**. The deadline is in place to determine how many teachers we might need for Murray Online.

Will my child still be enrolled at their normal school? Yes. The way Murray must structure its Elementary Murray Online program might feel like an online student is not part of their enrolled school. Rest assured, elementary students in Murray Online are still enrolled at their school, will still receive all of the enrolled school's regular correspondence and will still be a part of their enrolled school celebrations. This happens because of the amazing communication between the Murray Online teacher and the "regular assigned" teacher. This also happens because of a communication tool called ParentSquare that the district is providing to streamline communication. More information on that application will be provided to parents from the District.



Will dual language be offered in Murray Online? No. The premise behind language acquisition is to practice and "immerse" in a language environment. Dual Language is not an ideal scenario for a long term online option and is not recommended by USBE. Murray City School District will honor your place in dual language classes if families choose the Murray Online option for this school year or a portion of the school year, but the online learning will be in English.

Will magnet gifted be offered in Murray Online? No. Murray City School District will honor your place in magnet gifted classes if families choose the Murray Online option for this school year or a portion of the school year.

Is there a time limit or commitment time frame for Murray Online? Yes, families must commit for one semester in the Murray Online program. The expectation is that families will register traditionally and fill out this [FORM](#) before August 4, 2020.

How much instruction will my student get in Murray Online? Students will receive a minimum of 4 hours of instruction with a blend of teacher direct instruction, modeling and some synchronous live learning with the teacher. In Elementary only core content area classes will be received, Tier I instruction and *some* Tier II will be accommodated

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Q Why not do an A/B split schedule as an in-class learning option?

There are four reasons we opted to not do a split A/B schedule.

First, the State Board of Education advised against any schedule that creates a hardship on families who would have to line up childcare while they work. An A/B schedule means students are home 50% more.

Second, families asked for flexibility in our survey: 46% supported in-class learning, 42.2% supported a hybrid mix of in-person and online learning, and 11.5% supported all on-line learning. Our plan honors that request.

Third, equity is critical and online-only models make that far more challenging as accessibility and home support issues make it much more difficult as we learned this past school year during the soft closure.

Fourth, based on teacher survey, an A/B schedule is the most challenging to implement for our teachers. Along with creating two lesson plans – one for online learners and one for in-class, there are continuity issues for teachers when we only give them half the in-person instruction time.

What is the bell schedule going to be?

All schools will be on an early dismissal schedule for the first two weeks of the new school year (August 17 – 28, 2020). Lunch will be served and bus routes will run.

- Elementary Grades 1 – 6: 8:35 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

This schedule will allow everyone in the building time to adjust to new routines and procedures. It will also allow teachers additional time for professional learning and to prepare for blended learning.

The following adjustment to school end times has been proposed to the school board as part of our 'Murray Returns with Care' plan but HAS NOT yet been approved. This change in school end times would be from August 31, 2020 – June 3, 2021.

As part of the MCSD reopening plan, the board is considering a change to the end of the school day on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday to allow teachers to have an additional 30 minutes to upload their instruction for the day to the Learning Management System and have office hours as needed to connect with students who are using the blended resources. This additional time is contract time to be used for educational services. No meetings, practices, activities, or other events are to be scheduled during contract time. The proposed end times are as follows:



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Elementary Grades 1 – 6

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:35 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
- Wednesday: 8:35 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Elementary All Day Kindergarten

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:35 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
- Wednesday: 8:35 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Elementary Kindergarten AM

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:35 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
- Wednesday: 8:35 a.m. – 10:35 a.m.

Elementary Kindergarten PM

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 12:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.
- Wednesday: 11:15 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.