



Return to Learn: Remote Learning

First Day of School: August 17, 2020

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REMOTE LEARNING

From the desk of Marlon Styles, Jr., Superintendent



On Monday, July 20, 2020, the Middletown Board of Education voted to start the 2020-2021 school year in a remote learning environment due to the increased spread of COVID-19 in our community.

This is a decision the Board of Education and my administrative team have not made lightly as we all want to get back to the classroom environment, but the risks to the health and safety of our students and staff are too great at this point in time. When it is safe to do so, we will make decisions on returning to an in-person classroom environment (with a virtual option) with the guidance and support of our area health departments.

While it might seem too early to make the call from a remote start to the year, we wanted to give our families four weeks to process the information and make plans. We believe by starting the year in remote learning, we are giving our students the best opportunity to get back to the classroom this school year.

The Remote Learning will be different from what happened in the spring.

- Assignments will be graded.
- Attendance will be required and tracked.
- Teachers will be expected to provide live virtual classroom experiences.
- Teachers will be required to offer a certain number of hours each week for live classrooms, open office hours, and individualized learning support.
- Schoology or Google Classroom will be the platforms used by teachers and students to provide access to homework, tests, and lessons that students can access at their own pace.
- MCSD will provide students grades 3-12 a school-issued laptop.

I know you have a lot of questions. We've created a web page bit.ly/MCSDreturn2learn where we will post information and frequently asked questions.

We are excited to welcome students back (remotely) for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. We thank you in advance for your patience and understanding while we developed our plans. We thank you for always supporting the Middletown City School District. Mask up and stay safe! You are #MiddieRising!

All the best,

Marlon Styles, Jr.

Proud Superintendent, Middletown City School District



Remote Learning

This delivery model will occur if a student becomes sick during the school year, a classroom or school building must close, the district closes all school buildings, or the governor orders a school shutdown. Students will receive school work from their teacher via Google Classroom or Schoology and students will have opportunities to interact with staff and students online.

In-School Learning

This delivery model is a full return of students and staff to school buildings with the option of virtual learning. Students who return to the physical buildings will have face-to-face instruction, access to classes such as band and orchestra, recess, and lunch in the cafeteria. Safety protocols will be in place including required masks and sanitization measures.

Virtual Learning

This delivery model is for students in grades K-12 who choose not to attend school during the school day. Virtual students will be totally online for their school work. Students must commit for an entire semester. Virtual Learning at Middletown City Schools provides a more flexible approach to learning, but requires students to be self-motivated. Students are generally able to work at their own pace (asynchronously) to complete online work, usually through a program such as School PLP (K-5) and APEX (6-12 program). Teachers will monitor student work, provide necessary support, and provide office hours for student/parent questions. Register: <https://bit.ly/virtualmiddies>

You have options

We recognize some students may be unable to attend school in-person due to either medical reasons or personal family choice. We know this is a difficult decision and we respect your choice. We will work with you and your student so their education can continue during the pandemic.



Remote Learning

MEALS, DEVICES, & THE FUTURE

Meals for Students

We will still be providing meals to students. Much like what you experienced in the spring, we will have meal pick-ups at certain to-be-determined locations.

Devices & WiFi

There is a large technology gap at MCSD between students who have access to their own computer devices and those who do not. We are working to close that gap by providing devices to all students, grades 3-12. We are also working to provide reliable home internet to students. During the 2019-20 school year, we polled the community and we found nearly 30% of our families do not have reliable WiFi. With help from the Middletown Community Foundation, T-Mobile, and other community partners, we plan to roll-out a WiFi plan to start the 2021-21 school year.

Future Plans

Eventually, the spread of COVID-19 will be reduced enough for us to return to an in-classroom environment. The students enrolled in the Virtual Learning Option will remain virtual while all other students will return to the buildings.

Returning to school does not mean returning to business as usual. There will be significant additional safety precautions taken to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Grades 3-12: District Providing Computers for Students

School-Issued Laptops

Beginning this fall all students in grades 3-12 will be provided with a school computer. The District Technology Plan calls for this next step as part of the “Middle Modernization Movement.” Equity and access to learning for all students is a commitment in the Middletown City School District.

SHOULD THE DISTRICT SEND HOME LAPTOPS?

RESULT FROM PARENT SURVEY

87% *yes*

Why now?

Why not now? Prior to the pandemic, Middletown City Schools was planning on giving students district-issued devices. Our district is uniting for change! We are uniting to provide opportunities for ALL students. We are excited to offer students the opportunity to continue their learning outside of the school day. We are excited to start the process of removing the device barrier and getting ALL students "logged in." We have a systemic equity problem and we are excited to be a part of the positive solution.

- ALL students grades 3-12 will be provided with a district-issued laptop to take home every day.
- We will distribute the laptops the week of August 10.
- We will ensure privacy and safety measures on all devices.
- Students can access all classroom assignments and sites for learning.
- When in-school learning happens again, students will be responsible for charging their device at night and returning to school each day with the working device.



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