

Chenery Remote and In-Person FAQ 3.18.21

Will I be able to change models (remote to in-person or vice versa) during the spring if my family's situation changes?

Yes. There will be two dates - April 30 and May 21 - when you will have the option of requesting a change. All requests will be reviewed within two weeks and responses will be determined based on classroom capacity.

Will my child have to change teachers in either the remote or the in-person model?

Either choice may result in a new teacher(s) for your child. We are doing as much as we can to avoid moving students to different classes, but will have a better sense of how much moving is necessary once we receive survey results.

How long will the school day be, and will it be the same for in-person and remote students?

The school day will be the same length as it was pre-Covid -- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday from 7:45 to 2:25PM; and Wednesdays from 7:45-1:15PM.

How is Belmont supporting school staff to get vaccinations?

We have been working hard to support our educators (teachers as well as other school staff) in getting vaccinated as quickly as possible. For many months we have worked in partnership with the Belmont Education Association, Senator Brownsberger, Representative Rogers, and neighboring schools and districts to advocate for educator vaccines and dedicated vaccination days for school staff.

We are providing days off for our staff to use when they get vaccinated, and days off for people who don't feel well after their vaccination. We are providing coverage in the schools in order to remove as many barriers as possible to educators getting vaccinated. We are partnering with our educators as much as we can to ensure that they are vaccinated as quickly as possible.

We are also grateful to a community partnership with Belmont Helps that is helping our educators find and sign up for vaccination appointments.

Can you provide more details about lunch?

Lunch will happen either in the cafeteria, gymnasiums, or outside. Students will eat lunch distanced 6 feet apart (from edge of chair to edge of chair, per DESE guidance), each at their own desk/table. There will be some form of assigned seating (for potential contact tracing purposes), although the student will not necessarily have the same seat each day. Desks will be sanitized in between students. There is no need for plexiglass barriers because students will all face the same direction and will be properly distanced.

We will offer school lunch, for free, to any student who would like it. This is being done in partnership with a federal USDA initiative. Students will move through the lunch line much as they have in the past, though they will not touch any pin pad or device. There will be no monetary transactions or payments. The choices for lunch may be more limited than they have been in the past, but there will still be a hot lunch option available every day. Students can also bring their own lunch from home.

Why do close contacts have to quarantine for 14 days?

We continue to follow CDC guidance and the advice of the Belmont Board of Health when determining our quarantining procedures. CDC guidance recommends 14 days of quarantining following exposure to a Covid-positive individual.

In some cases related to adults who will suffer economic hardship if they are required to quarantine for 14 days, the CDC guidance reduces the number of days needed to quarantine so that these individuals may return to work. This guidance is not extended to students in school. We have seen students test positive on day 10 or 11 following exposure to a Covid-positive individual and we believe that a 14-day quarantine period is the safest option at this point.

We will continue to follow CDC guidance on quarantining.

What is the status of surveillance COVID testing for in-person Chenery students?

The state has provided us with six weeks of free surveillance testing, a plan that came together quickly during the month of March and which we have implemented at the high school. We chose the high school as our pilot site because all high school students move between classes and are therefore our students who potentially come into contact with the greatest number of other individuals on any given day. The majority of our peer towns have chosen the same approach, either beginning testing with their senior class or with their entire high school. Two hundred students and 40 staff members at the high school are participating in this pilot project. If we find that the data we receive is helpful in our effort to provide a safer school environment, we will work to expand testing to a greater number of students.

What mitigation efforts will be in place besides social distancing?

We are asking our entire community to rededicate ourselves to a range of mitigation efforts - using the symptom tracker daily, masking, washing and sanitizing hands, etc. A community-wide effort on all of these elements is necessary in order for us to be able to hold school each day for our in-person and our remote learners.

Masking, in particular, will be more important than ever. Our school nurses will be sending out lots of information about masking, especially about ensuring that your child's mask has a proper fit.

Please continue to reach out to your school nurses if you have questions about any of our mitigation measures.

What will happen to in-person learning if community spread increases to high levels again?

The Commissioner of Education and our Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have been very clear that they will not retreat from in-person learning. They are relying on the data suggesting that most spread happens in the home rather than in school. I do not anticipate that they would allow us to change back to a hybrid model this spring.

If there is a spike of cases in Belmont, we would have the option of pivoting back to a fully remote program for a short period of time. We will rely on advice from the Belmont Board of Health and from our Director of Nursing Services, Beth Rumley.

Transportation

DESE guidance says that buses may operate at the same capacity as they did prior to Covid, which means up to three students per bus bench. Depending on the number of students who opt to take the

bus, we are very hopeful that we will have fewer students per bench and that we will be able to provide more distancing.

In the case of our buses to and from Boston, even if 100% of students choose in-person learning and opt to take the bus, we will have no more than two students per bench, and in most cases there will be only one student per bench.

Students will wear masks and have assigned seating on the bus. All windows will be open at least 2”.

We encourage families to consider alternate modes of transportation to and from school if possible.

Our goal is to hire monitors for every bus. Please consider volunteering or applying for a position.

Who should I contact with further questions?

Please be in touch with any of the following people if you have further questions [add email hyperlinks]:

For questions related to daily educational routines, contact the administration at Chenery:

- [Karla Koza](#), Principal
- [Jodie Cohen](#), Assistant Principal Upper School
- [Jonathan Hartunian](#), Assistant Principal Lower School
- [Nicolette Foundas](#), Assistant Principal Encore Programming
- For questions related to lunch, [Dustin O’Brien](#)
- For questions about English learners, [Lindsay Rinder](#)
- For questions about special education, [Ken Kramer](#)
- For general or district-wide questions, [John Phelan](#)