

Marathon Central School District

Q and A *(Updated 8/27/2020)*

Transportation

Q - Will there be social distancing on the buses? Are family members (siblings) sitting together on the buses?

A - The guidance allows one child per seat unless the children are members of the same household. Best practices also require that windows are partially open, when weather allows, to allow fresh air onto the bus.

Q - Can my kids ride the bus in the morning or afternoon only?

A - Yes. With information from families in advance, this can be done.

Q - If I opt to drive my children to school, will I still be able to use the bus if needed due to my work schedule?

A - No. If you opt to bring your child to school, they will not have a spot on the bus. If you believe they will ride only one or two days a week, parents/guardians should sign up for bus transportation and let us know the days your child won't be riding.

Q - Does my child have to wear a mask on the bus?

A - Yes. Students must wear masks on the bus.

Q - It's a long ride to school. Can my child eat a snack on the bus?

A - No. No food or drink is allowed to be consumed on the bus for safety reasons.

Q - Will OCM Boces kids be provided busing? And will they be provided bus home on the remote days.

A - Yes, parents need to complete the survey distributed in mid August to notify the school about their transportation needs.

Masks/Mask Breaks

Q - I've heard from other schools that the kids don't have to wear masks in the classroom when seated. Why can't the kids do this?

A - Face coverings are "strongly recommended" by the New York State Department of Health. Data from New York State testing indicated that 20% of the general public had antibodies to COVID-19, meaning they had the virus at some point. Just 12% of healthcare workers had the antibodies. The State attributes the difference to health care workers wearing masks. Our emphasis is the safety of all members of the school community.

Q - How long are the designated mask breaks? Are children required to wear them when sitting at their desk?

A - Students will be required to wear masks at their desks during instructional times. We are still working on mask breaks with our teachers and staff to ensure that mask breaks are done safely. At both the elementary school and the JH/HS school, mask breaks will be in addition to other times that students will not be wearing masks, such as snack time, and during meals.

Q - How will you ensure that children will follow the mask safety protocols all day?

A - It will be established as part of the rules and culture of the school. It will be a process. But just like every other procedure, the students will do what is asked of them once they understand the

rules. Continual refusal to follow the rules may result in discipline consequences or may necessitate full remote learning.

Q - I want my child to go back to school, but I do not want her wearing a mask all day.

A - While we understand the concern, information released by the State of New York, the Department of Health and the physicians are working with, have indicated that wearing masks is significant in ensuring safety and reducing the spread of the virus. Students will be required to wear masks to take advantage of in-person learning.

Q - My son is going into Kindergarten so my only concern is his ability to actually keep a mask on all day.

A - It may initially be difficult for students, but they will adjust to the wearing of masks. There will be built in mask breaks as part of the student day. Face coverings can be removed during meal times, mask breaks etc.

Q - Will the district provide face coverings or is that the parents responsibility?

A - The district will provide one face covering for each child. Parents are responsible for providing additional face coverings. If parents find they need additional face covering and can not provide them, contact the building main office for assistance.

Q - I am bringing my child to school. What is the earliest they can be dropped off? When do I pick them up?.

A - Drop off times at Appleby are 8:05-8:35 AM. At the Jr/Sr High School, students can be dropped off between 7:50-8:05 AM. Students cannot be dropped off prior to the times listed above.

Q - Are face shields still not allowed?

A - Face shields are allowed, but shields are not as safe without a mask. A shield being worn will require the wearing of a mask too.

Q - Will full remote learning students get the mask too?

A - No, masks will be provided to students who are doing in person learning.

Medical

Q - My child has allergies and often has a runny nose/congestion. Will he need to stay home on those days?

A - If your child's runny nose/congestion mirrors COVID-19 symptoms, he/she will need to stay home until he/she has been cleared by their family physician, have no COVID-19 symptoms for 24 hours or had a negative COVID-19 test.

Q - If my child is out sick with a high temperature for a day or two, will they need to be Covid tested before they come back?

A - Your child's physician will need to determine if a COVID test is needed. The district will require either a note clearing them by the family physician, have no fever (without the use of medicine) and have felt well for 24 hour or have tested negative for COVID-19.

Q - What if there is a child or teacher testing positive in my child's class? Will my child have to quarantine for 14 days if in contact?.

A - We have been working with the County Health Department. Much of this will be determined by the county and state contact tracers (they will be assigned to positive cases). A positive case will not necessarily require quarantining of everyone, assuming that all health and safety protocols have been followed (i.e. other staff and students were wearing masks, not sharing

supplies, etc). The classroom and areas that the student had been in will be thoroughly sanitized and disinfected, and a thorough cleaning of the entire school district will be done each night.

Q - If a student has a medical condition that allows them to be mask-free, will they be required to learn virtually? Or can they be in school?

A - The school is required to educate students in-person if a family chooses. A school cannot require students with documented medical conditions to wear masks. A barrier will be provided for these students.

Q - Why is the district not performing temperature checks for staff/students before entering school?

A - The district will be providing temperature checks in multiple ways. Parents will be asked to do a temperature checks for their children prior to coming to school and documenting that they have a temperature less than 100 degrees. Parents will be asked to complete a health screening once a week before coming to school. Secondary temperature checks will be done with random staff and students who are not feeling well. Staff will self screen daily before reporting to work.

Q - So if we don't fill out the app for temperatures they can't come.

A - The first question is why are you not filling out the app. We will work with the family to figure out the problem so that checks can be completed.

Q - Who do I contact if my child has COVID-19 symptoms?

A - Parent should contact your child's primary care physician. For people who don't have a primary-care physician, they can call Guthrie Cortland Medical Central at (607) 299-7676, Upstate Medical University at (315) 464-3979 or Cayuga's Call Center at (607) 319-5708. For additional information on COVID-19 Testing Next Steps click [here](#).

Q - What if someone gets sick. What is the plan to contact the parents?

A - If someone gets sick and it is COVID related, public health will reach out to those who have had contact with the individual. The department of health will let parents know if their child will need to be quarantined, should see their physician or is safe to go to school.

Q - Have teachers had additional training on infection control?

A - All staff will be trained in infectious disease protocols including use of PPE, hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, etc.

Q - Will they have an isolation room for students or staff who are showing symptoms of COVID?

A - Both buildings will have an isolation room specifically for students and staff who are showing symptoms of COVID-19. These rooms are either directly across or adjacent to the nurses office.

Q - What about kids who have medical issues like asthma?

A - The nurses office will still be used for normal medical issues. Students who have symptoms will be in an isolation room.

Q - Will Family Health Network and Family Counseling Services (both outside providers) still be operating in the buildings?

A - Yes

School Day Structure

Q - Is the length of the school day changing? Given the mask requirement, that could be a long day for the children.

A - The length of the school day will remain the same however the start time for students will be moved to 7:50 AM. The end time will be 2:55 PM. (This has been updated)

Q - If my child is learning remotely, will they have the same schedule as those that attend in person?

A - Students will be assigned a teacher/schedule. Teachers will use synchronous and asynchronous methods, depending on the internet abilities in the child's home.

Q - Will there be time for socialization?

A - Students will be with peers during class and will have the ability to socialize with peers while still maintaining social distance. Students will eat with peers in the same room. At Appleby, recess and PE will offer additional opportunities.

Q - When will be the first day for students?

A - The students first day of instruction has been moved to Wednesday, September 9th.

Q - So if you're one of the 9-12 graders that would come on Thursday and first day of school is Wednesday, would they start Wednesday on their computers?

A - 9-12 grade students first day of remote learning will be Wednesday (9/9) and first day of in person will be Thursday (9/10). Students will receive their computers before the beginning of school.

Q - Will the YWCA after school program still be running after school?

A - The YWCA will run a program with reduced numbers and will operate their program under Marathon CSD safety guidelines.

Q - When does OCM boces start?

A - September 9th.

Q - For attendance, what if your wifi is not always great? For the high school for each class?

A - Attendance can be taken between 8:00am-3:00pm. Students will most likely be asked to join a class live where attendance will be taken. If internet speed is a problem, the student should reach out to their teacher. Students will then have the ability to submit their attendance anytime between 8:00-3:00, even for period by period attendance.

Remote/Virtual Learning

Q - Virtual learning is only for medical reasons, correct?

A - During the hybrid mode, families can choose fully remote or in-person learning. Parents must commit to that choice for 20 weeks.

Q - Now it's keep them home the first 20 weeks? Thought it was the first 10 weeks?

A - The district extended the time commitment to 20 weeks when we also allowed parents to make the choice to have their children do remote learning regardless of if they had a medical condition or not.

Q - What will the learning model look like for those who want to keep their children home?

A - Students learning in a virtual environment will have the same academic schedule as their peers. Classes will be live for those that have the internet capability. For those that don't, recorded sessions and assignments will be posted on Google Classroom. Teachers will check in with students to monitor progress and answer questions.

Q - It is unlikely that I will be sending my daughter to kindergarten this year, will there be a district provided curriculum I that we can teach her?

A - The District is only able to provide two options for instruction. First is in person instruction. The second is teaching and learning through remote learning. The District does not provide

curriculum for homeschooling (those that choose to unenroll their children from Marathon and teach them at home.)

Q - Are there any plans with 504 or IEP support for parents/students at home who are doing remote learning?

A - Yes, students with an IEP or 504 will have teachers that can support students and parents with remote learning.

Q - Are there tools parents can use to become more comfortable with online learning?

A - Yes, the district is working on [virtual training videos](#) for parents. These videos can be found on the Marathon Webpage. Parents will also get usernames and passwords to Google Classroom for students in UPK-7th grade along with instructions on how to use the program in the "Welcome Back" materials.

Q - If completely remote... will there be assignments sent home like before and will there still be multiple platforms to check for work?

A - The platform we are using is Google Classroom. We are not intending to send papers home for remote learning. Work will be posted and returned through Google Classroom.

Q - Both of my kids are elementary students and we are doing distance learning, If I don't get home from work until after 11 am, will it be ok for them to take attendance and start their school day then?

A - Attendance can be submitted anytime between 8:00am and 3:00pm. If students are unable to submit attendance during those times, parents will need to alert the principal and work out a plan.

Q - Will they be expected to be on their computers all day?

A - Children will need to be working on their computer for classes. The learning platform is online therefore students would need to access the computer in order to gain instruction. Classwork would also be posted on the computer.

Q - What is the process for a child who is remote learning when they will be absent for a day? Do parents contact the teachers or would they just not log in for the day?

A - Parents should notify the guidance office (7-12) and Sue Light (UPK-6) the morning your child is absent from remote learning. Please explain the type of illness (sick or COVID-19 symptoms).

Q - Will the Jr & Sr High school teachers will be from Marathon (vs. BOCES, etc)?

A - Yes. All Marathon students will be taught by Marathon CSD teachers.

Hybrid/Changes

Q - Can my child start in school and then switch to remote if deemed safer by our family?

A - No. Class lists and teacher assignments will be set at the end of August. Changing after that point will be very disruptive for the learning environment. Students may have the opportunity to change modes of instruction for the second semester (mid January). If a medical or other serious issue arises, an appeal process has been developed. The parent would submit an appeal using the District form which can be obtained through the main office. It must be submitted to the building principal in writing.

Q - Why is the hybrid plan for UPK-5 a full in-person plan, 5 days a week?

A - The elementary years are the most formidable years of a child's education. In-person instruction is emphasized for students with the higher need for support (ie younger students as well as special education and ENL population). Other students are more likely to be independent in their learning.

Q - If I choose to homeschool, what do I need to do?

A - Homeschooling means you intend to withdraw your child from Marathon CSD and teach your child at home. If you are choosing to homeschool your child, you will need to submit a homeschool plan to the school.

Q - Will all work be online in google classroom for UPK-5 ? So no to little paper?

A - Paper will be dramatically reduced, but we will need to use some paper during in person learning. Paper will need to be quarantined once turned in.

Q - What will recess look like for UPK-5? Will students be using the playground equipment?

A - Students will be allowed to use the playground equipment as long as students wash their hands prior to going outside. Students will need to maintain social distancing when outside on the playground or while doing other activities outside. Masks will still need to be worn.

Q - How will music be taught?

A - At Appleby, music class will be taught in the classroom. Singing and use of instruments which require student exhalation will not be allowed unless they can be 12 feet apart. The year will begin with no choir or band classes at Appleby. At the JH/HS band and choir will need to maintain 12' distance and will occur in large spaces.

Q - What will specials look like at Appleby?

A - Special area assignments will be sent out on Monday and be due on Friday. Assignments will be posted within the grade level Google Classroom.

Q - Will UPK kiddos be able to tour and meet the teachers before the start of school?

A - The UKP teacher will be reaching out to all parents/students. Ms. Marcolina and the guidance department will be creating virtual tours for 6th/7th graders.

Q - Will high school students use lockers? If not, will they be allowed to carry a backpack?

A - Lockers will not be used. Students at the high school will carry backpacks between classes. Backpacks do not need to be clear.

Q - You had mentioned that attendance will be taken during the day on assigned remote learning days. What happens if a student has an appointment? Do we need to email an excuse in? Obviously, it's best to make the appointments outside of school hours but that may not be possible so I'm looking for some guidance as to how it would be handled with the new hybrid plan.

A - If your child has an appointment during a day where they have remote learning, it will be handled in a way similar to in-person days. Let the guidance office or ES main office know and send in a doctor's note (have them fax it) so the absence can be marked as an excused absence. You could also email the note to the guidance office (gallagher@marathonschools.org) or the Appleby main office (lights@marathonschools.org). Giving the teachers a heads up is also a great idea.

Q - Will the parents (specifically at Appleby) have to purchase supplies for school and home? Is the school going to provide containers to keep students supplies separate or will they have to store in their backpacks?

A - Appleby students will receive supplies for at school use. Student school supplies will be kept in individual containers and will remain at school. Supplies at home are suggested.

Technology

Q - When will there be pick up for school computers?

A - Hybrid learners in grades 6-8 will get computers that they will be able to use in school and at home on the first day of school (September 9th). Grades 9-12 and remote learners will be able to pick up their computers and their welcome packet on September 1st. Students that are not able to get their materials on September 1st will have them delivered on September 2nd and 3rd.

Q - Are there normally some type of "restrictions" on the school computers so children aren't using Social media or playing games on the computers? It's difficult to watch the student constantly.

A - School computers will use the same filter, regardless of if the computer is used at school or at home. The same restrictions that occur at school will also occur on school computers at home.

Social Distancing/Safety Procedures

Q - Will parents be required to take student temperatures before coming to school?

A - Yes. Parents will be required to take student temperatures and record it in an app/on the computer prior to students getting on the bus or being dropped off at school. If a parent does not have access to an electronic method, there will be a number they can call. If the temperature is above 100 degrees, the student should stay home. Temperatures can be taken at any time in the morning prior to coming to school. Screening questions will be asked once a week to determine if students have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID or have traveled to a high COVID state.

Q - What if I question the reliability of my thermometer?

A - If you are concerned about the reliability of your thermometer contact the school. Additionally the PTSA is working to supply thermometers for families.

Q - Will the teachers have their temperatures taken when they come in the building each day?

A - Teachers will complete a temperature and health screening daily prior to coming to school.

Q - How much time will be dedicated to learning and instruction of curriculum vs. Covid instruction?

A - During the start of the school there will be a greater amount of time dedicated to learning new safety protocols and procedures resulting from COVID-19. Once these are learned, the District fully anticipates maintaining high academic standards and prioritizing learning.

Q - Will the class sizes be adjusted to help accommodate social distances? What will the average class size be?

A - Yes. Class sizes will be adjusted to accommodate social distancing. Classrooms at Appleby are between 12-15. Class sizes at the Junior/Senior High are around 16.

Q - So if there's only 12 kids in a class, will there be more teachers hired?

A - No new teachers will be hired. We are restructuring and shifting teachers to teach additional class sections.

Q - Will there be sufficient running water in all bathrooms, with good water flow, sufficient soap and hands free operation?

A - Yes. Water flow is good. All bathrooms are equipped with plenty of soap. The district will be making recommended changes such as disabling hand driers, the purchasing of new bottle fillers (and turning off water fountains), the installation of hand sanitizer stations etc.

Q - Will testing be mandatory in order to return to school? Will testing take place in the school if anyone shows symptoms.

A - Cortland County DOH does not recommend testing for students or staff prior to the beginning of school. If students or staff show symptoms, they will be referred to their health care provider to determine if a COVID test is needed.

Q - Is the necessary filtration system being put in place per Cuomo regulations?

A - The district's filtration system meets state regulations. Classroom, office and shared space heating/cooling units are equipped with dampers designed to introduce a fixed percentage outside air into the total airflow provided to the space. These dampers will be adjusted to provide the maximum percentage of outside air while maintaining comfort levels in the space. Teachers will be encouraged to keep windows open when the temperature is comfortable for learning to increase air flow.

Q - Who will clean the desks and tables in the high school between the students in 7-12 changing classes?

A - Students and teachers will clean the desks in between classes. Students will wipe down a desk that the teacher has sprayed with soap and water. Paper towels will be thrown away after use. Anything stronger than soap and water will need to be used by an adult that has been trained and has gloves.

Q - If it is a very hot opening to the year, besides open windows is there any way to help keep kids cool that is allowed because the mask could increase body temps?

A - No box fans are allowed. No individual fans are allowed. Dress cool on a warm day while still meeting dress code requirements..

After School Activities/Extracurriculars

Q - Will there be after school activities?

A - At the outset of school, there will not be in person after-school activities. School will end at 2:55 P.M. and all students will go home. We will be able to offer many clubs virtually after school. A full list of clubs available will be provided to the students at the beginning of the school year.

Q -Will there be any fall sports?

A - At this time, Fall sports are scheduled to begin September 21st. The Fall season is still uncertain. Until the season starts, there will be no district sponsored practices or use of district facilities for such purposes.

Meals

Q - Will kids eat in the cafeteria, at desks or in the classrooms?

A - Students in UPK-6th will eat breakfast and lunch in their classrooms. Students in 7-12 will be socially distanced and eat in the cafeteria.

Q - Will students still receive hot lunches from the cafeteria?

A - Students can bring their lunches. There will not be a microwave to heat lunches up.

Q - Can kids bring their lunches to school?

A - Meals being served will be grab and go meals. Starting the year we are not planning to serve hot meals.

Miscellaneous

Q - My questions are mostly related to being a "new" Kindergarten parent. Will Kindergarten screening and orientation still take place?

A - Kindergarten screening will not take place prior to school. Teachers will assess students in school when they return as appropriate.

Q - Does the school have the staff to perform the cleaning outlined in the plan?

A - Yes, the District is fully staffed and equipped to carry out the cleaning and disinfecting protocol.

Q - Can I walk my child to class on the first day?

A - No. Staff will help your children into the building. No outside visitors are allowed into the building at this time.

Q - What are the cold weather procedures for ventilation, it gets cold within 2-4 weeks of September 15th?

A - When temperatures are above 45 degrees, school buses should transport passengers with roof hatches or windows slightly opened to provide air flow. Classrooms will also keep windows open when possible to improve ventilation.

Q - Should we send water bottles for the kids? Will drinking fountains be used?

A - The school will be providing water bottles for all students. Drinking fountains are being converted to fill stations for water bottles.

Q - If a class is quarantined due to a positive test or awaiting results will the kids receive remote learning during that time?

A - Yes

Q -What supplies are needed for grades 7-12?

A - 7-12 school supplies include pens, pencils and paper. Most assignments will be done using Google Classroom, so supplies are limited.

Q -Do we need to provide "at home" and school supplies?

A - UPK-6 will have school supplies provided. Having supplies at home would be a good idea.

Q - For the kids who are doing remote learning in elementary level are school supplies being provided?

A - Not at this time. If parents are unable to provide basic school supplies, reach out to your building principal or social worker, and we will assist with school supplies.

Q - Do staff have the choice to teach remotely due to health/safety reasons? If kids can opt out for health reasons are teachers also able to do so?

A - The Superintendent is working with staff in regards to their options for employment.