

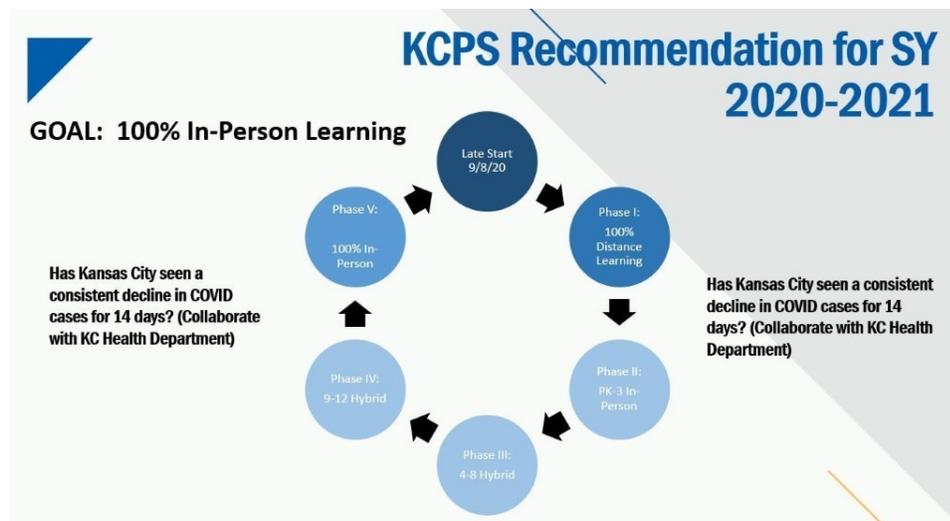


Dear KCPS Family,

I want to provide you with an important update about our back-to-school plans for the 2020-2021 year. First, our Board of Directors has approved our recommendation that we delay the start of school by about two weeks. Classes will now begin on Tuesday, Sept. 8. Second, we will be moving forward with a plan to start with 100 percent distance learning or virtual learning for all students.

Delaying the start of school to Sept. 8 provides a number of benefits. It gives additional time for public health officials to track the pandemic in our community and provide valuable guidance to us. We will use the additional time to continue to gather our KCPS-issued laptop computers from families so that they can be prepared for the new school year. This delay will also help us prepare staff, students and parents for the instructional models that we will be using this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a national crisis that poses a serious health risk for everyone. With this in mind, we developed a phased back-to-school plan for the 2020-2021 year. In-person classes will start for students in pre-K through grade 3 only after the number of COVID-19 cases in our community decreases for 14 days in a row. This process will be repeated in phases for upper elementary, middle school and high school students. Our goal is to be back to 100 percent in-person learning when it is safe to do so.



The decision to reopen our school buildings for in-person classes will be based on data and science. We will work closely with public health officials before re-opening any of our school buildings. This process will not follow any predetermined timeline but will rather evolve based



on the status of the pandemic in our community. Our response will balance the need to protect public health and provide a public education.

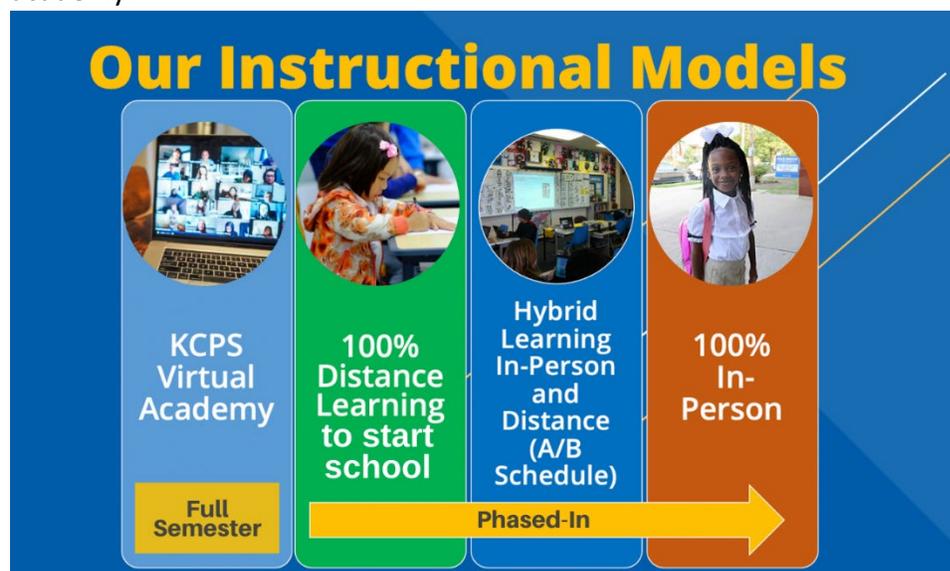
Teaching and learning in KCPS this year will involve four different models. Students and teachers will use these models based on the status of the pandemic and their grade levels:

Distance Learning – Teachers and students engage in classwork online using a variety of digital tools and applications, including Zoom and Google Classrooms. **All classes will start with this model when classes begin on Sept. 8, 2020.** Students will participate in distance learning with their school and grade level teachers in an online classroom setting with regular class check-ins, individual student support, class collaboration and regular assignments and grades.

Blended Learning – Students have an “A/B” schedule, attending classes on campus for part of the week and doing distance learning for the other days.

In-Person Learning – Students and teachers engage in learning on campus every day that class is in session.

Virtual Learning – Students use digital tools and virtual platforms for self-paced teaching and learning through the Kansas City Virtual Academy. Students and staff will be spread across the district, essentially meaning that students will not necessarily have a “home school” or “homeroom,” but will be part of the Kansas City Virtual Academy online. Students and parents will be asked to commit to this option for the entire semester if they choose to enroll in this academy.





Families who choose our Kansas City Virtual Academy option will need to login to our parent portal and select the virtual learning platform: <https://bit.ly/KCPSVirtualSignup>. If you need help logging into the KCPS parent portal, please call our KCPS Help Desk at 816-418-HELP (4357). If you are choosing the Kansas City Virtual Academy, we would like our families to sign up by Aug. 5. We will continuously enroll students into the virtual academy up to the start of school on Sept. 8, but the earlier students select the virtual option, we will better we will be able to prepare for our eventual in-person classes.

Virtual learning will consist of technology-based instruction with daily check-ins via video conference with teachers and students. Virtual learning is different from our distance learning experience. Our virtual learning model is self-paced and can be accessed anytime and anywhere. Each student will have a teacher who will act as a learning coach and provide opportunities for students to receive additional instruction outside of the virtual platform.

Please visit www.KCPublicSchools.org/Reopening-KCPS for complete and updated details about our back-to-school plans for the 2020-2021 academic year. This information includes policies and procedures that will guide teaching and learning, health and wellness, and nutritional services. There are also FAQs for families. I urge you to take the time to familiarize yourself with all of this information.

We have also established an enrollment hotline for your use. You can call 816-418-KCPS (5277) if you have questions about our learning models, phased re-entry or enrollment.

I know that the members of Team KCPS are simply among the best public educators in the entire nation. We have the talent, the resources and the commitment to adapt and thrive during the health crisis. Our community deserves nothing less. Thank you for your patience, flexibility and engagement with us as we overcome the challenges we face together.

Yours in education,

Dr. Mark T. Bedell, Superintendent