



August 28, 2020

Good afternoon,

This is an update on staffing for the Elementary School Hybrid Model and the Remote Learning Academy, grades K-8.

I know you are focused on getting your children ready for the new school year. While no one wants more uncertainty, we are finding we need to be flexible as changes arise daily and we need to consider what is in the best interest of both students and staff.

Over one thousand students have selected the Remote Learning Academy option. Almost half, 516 students are in K-5. There are 258 students in middle school and 253 in high school. At the same time, over 200 staff members have met with Human Resources to request consideration for remote teaching or other accommodations. The confluence of these two processes has required a change in our approach, even as we finalize schedules and staffing.

Elementary Classroom Assignments

In grades K-5 we need a total of 24 Remote Learning Academy class sections (combining students from different schools into the same section). This impacts the number of sections per grade in each building. Where necessary, we have reduced the number of sections, while maintaining district expectations for class sizes (K-2 no more than 23 (21 at McKinley), 3-5 no more than 25 (23 at McKinley)). As a result, some staff are being shifted to the Remote Learning Academy, while others may be moved within their current building or to another building. Please keep in mind that this approach works best to support all students, regardless of their learning model, with qualified and experienced teachers. Initially, the Remote Learning Academy elementary schedules will focus on core instruction in Reading, Writing, Math, Social Studies and Science. We will review opportunities to add in Unified Arts classes (Specials), as the year progresses.

Elementary class assignments for the Hybrid model will be posted in Infinite Campus on Monday, August 31st. Elementary Remote Learning Academy class assignments will be posted shortly thereafter.

Middle and High School Remote Learning Academy Class Assignments

Grades 6-12 present additional challenges to staffing our Remote Learning Academy. We are developing a Remote Learning Academy schedule for middle school students to provide core instruction in English/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Languages. Student schedules will also honor their math course sequence. We will start the year with these core classes and review opportunities to add Unified Arts classes as the year progresses.

Middle school Remote Learning Academy class schedules will be provided by Wednesday, September 2nd.

High school Remote Learning Academy class schedules have already been posted in Infinite Campus. High School students in the Remote Learning Academy (RLA) will follow the courses on their provided schedule; however, they will not be part of the hybrid learning on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Students in the Remote Learning Academy will be a part of the whole class on Wednesdays, when teachers are able to bring students from both hybrid cohorts together with RLA students. Students will be included in all full-class activities with their peers in the same classes, including: group collaboration, full class remote lessons on Wednesdays, and all other scheduled events such as homerooms and advisory.

All assignments and assessments will be posted in Google Classroom, along with clear directions, expectations and rubrics. Students will be provided access to an Academic Center staffed by teachers in Math, Science, English/Language Arts, Social Studies, and World Language. Support for elective area courses and some specialty core courses will not be available. The school will post office hours to match the in-school bell schedule (the 85-minute block schedule) so that students opting for 100% remote learning will have access to teachers to answer questions. The schedule would be set in advance so students know which content areas are available during each period.

Webinar

In the coming days we will be providing you with more specifics on teacher assignments, schedules, classroom orientations and other information. We will also be hosting a [YouTube Live webinar](#) for parents of and student remote learners on Thursday evening, September 3 at 7 pm, on the BoE-live channel (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dg_yVcOI9ec). The link is also posted on the front page of the district website <https://www.fairfieldschools.org/>.

Looking Ahead

Answers to additional FAQs have been posted on the 2020 Reopening page of the district website. More information is coming regarding technology requirements, device pick-ups, COVID-19 protocols, as well as building ventilation.

This year requires a great amount of flexibility from all of us. We remain committed to the health and well-being of your children and to providing them with the best education. Keeping those two goals as the focus may require further adjustments to planning. We continue to watch the health data and we will continue to make necessary changes.

Take care,

Mike

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