

Delivering the USC Experience
In-Person AND at Home

Recommendations for USCSD Instructional Delivery Model *2020/2021*



Agenda

- I. Goals for Educational Planning**
- II. Recommendation for a Phased Approach**
 - Current Plans for Moving to Phase II in Nov. and Phase III in Jan.
- III. Updates Regarding Key Factors in Our Decision-Making**
 - Mental Health, Local COVID-19 Data, Parent Commitment Data
- IV. Updates From Reopening Teams**
 - Updated Mitigation Efforts and Considerations for Instruction
- V. Timeline & Next Steps**

Our Goals

Primary Goal

To deliver a USCSD quality educational experience to all USC families, in-school and at home, in a way that minimizes exposure and disruption to the greatest extent possible.

Key Components

- Safe schools for students and staff
- Choice for families
- High-quality education (in-school or remote) with opportunity to transition seamlessly
- Emphasis on social-emotional well-being

We are committed to a full-return as soon as conditions permit, and we will continue to provide the option to remain fully remote.

*****We will monitor and adjust on a weekly basis.*****

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Phased Approach:

Recommendations for the Remainder of 20/21



Our Recommendation

Implement phase approach to move toward 5-day in-person option

1. Phase I: 2-day hybrid in-person learning option ends on Nov. 13
2. Phase II: 4-day (M,T,R,F) expanded hybrid in-person learning option begins on Nov. 16
 - a. Maintain Wednesday as a full remote learning day
3. Phase III: 5-day in-person learning option begins on Jan. 19

Key Points:

- Retaining full remote learning option through end of the school year
- Finalizing details of Phase II plan based upon commitment #s
- Implementing all changes for Phases II and III contingent upon changing, present conditions

In-Person Learning Schedules by Phase

Schedules by Phase In ALL phases, remote option will be made available!					
	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Phase I (2-day schedule) SOY-Nov. 13	In School	In School	Remote	Remote	Remote
Phase II (4-day schedule) Nov. 16-Jan. 15	In School	In School	Remote	In School	In School
Phase III (5-day schedule) Jan. 19 - EOY	In School	In School	In School	In School	In School

What Will be Different in Phases II & III?

Key Differences

- There will be a reduction in physical distancing for students to less than six feet in most instructional spaces, excluding cafeterias and other areas where students may be eating.
 - We will maintain the greatest distance possible depending on class size and composition...estimated range 4-6 feet (Average classroom is between 4- 4 1/2 feet in desk spacing measured from center to center).
 - Staff desks must always remain at a minimum of 6 feet distance from student desks.
- Mitigation continues to be layered.
 - No mask breaks will occur during classes.
 - Mask breaks will be provided with 6 feet of physical distance.
 - Opportunities for mask breaks will exist throughout the school day, but not in classrooms.
- Buses will have more students.
 - Masking and cleaning will remain in place.
- The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) is unlikely to require the quarantining of entire classrooms.
- **We are asking for a 9-week commitment (if selecting remote).**
 - **If selecting remote, you may not be able to move to in-person during Phase II (2nd nine-weeks).**
 - **If selecting in-person, you can move to remote at any time.**

Why four days and not five?

Safety of Students and Staff

- Providing 20% less contact
- Monitoring the virus on an on-going basis for an additional 9-weeks
- Updating of safety plan

Educational Considerations

- Allowing for development and implementation of a full-remote and a full-return teaching model
- Adjusting staff and student schedules
- Minimizing disruption for students and teachers during marking periods
- Retaining capability to transfer to remote temporarily if quarantine need arises

Operational Needs

- Updating transportation routes
- Considering all staffing implications
- Collaborating with labor groups
- Preparing facilities (furniture, food services)

Why is hybrid no longer an option in Phase II?

Consistency

- Three options would require significant re-sectioning (teacher changes and student schedule changes).
- Synthesis of data from the October survey shows that ~50% of all elementary students would change classroom teachers under a three-option model.

Staffing

- A third option would require significant increases in staffing. (Resulting in cost increases during a time where there is a significant shortage of qualified candidates.)
- Three options at the HS level would lead to the need for hybrid-only sections along with larger sections to maintain near status quo for staffing.

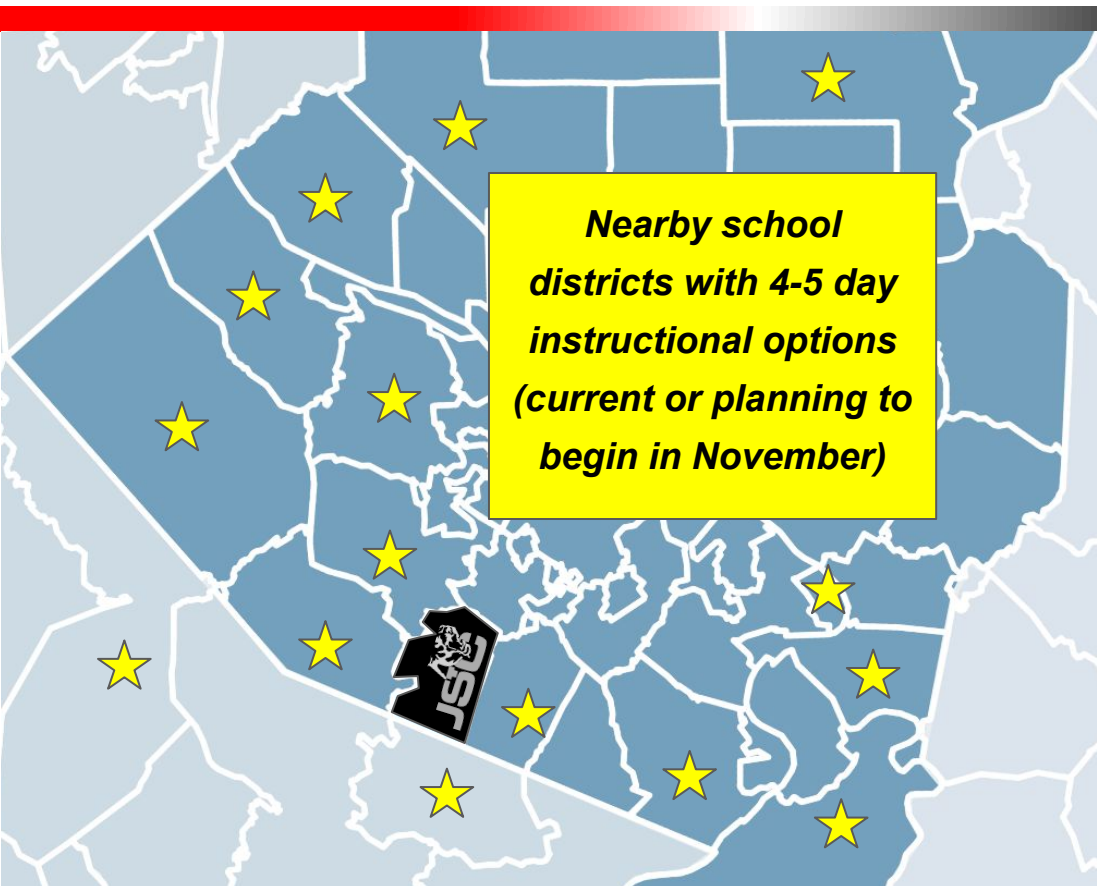
Complexity for Potential Contact Tracing

- Complicated scheduling could slow down the County's contact tracing process and result in avoidable closure.

Goal: Return to a 5-day in-person option

- It is essential to ensure Phase II effectively leads into Phase III.

Are we an outlier?



District	4/5 Day In-Person Option Notes
Bethel Park	Phasing 4-day return for K-12 by 11/23
Chartiers Valley	Phased in 4-day return 10/5-10/19
Montour	K-8: 5-day in-person option since start 9-12: 5-day in-person since 10/19
Moon	K-12: 4-days in-person since 10/4
North Allegheny	Planning for full-time return for K-8 in November (K-5: Nov. 4, 6-8: Nov. 16)
Peters Twp.	K-12: 5-day in-person option since start
South Fayette	Phasing in 4-day option between 11/10-12/1
West Allegheny	K-12: 5-day in person option since start
West Jefferson Hills	Phasing in 5-day in-person throughout November (K-2 returned previously)

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Decision Making Criteria:

Recommendations for the Remainder of 20/21



Key Factors in October for Phased Update

1. We need to balance mental health & academic needs with the impact of the pandemic.
2. Local data supports lower case counts in schools.
3. The PA Department of Health and ACHD have updated some processes.
4. Parent survey data consistently supports increasing in-person learning.

Mental Health Considerations

- Relationship between overall health and academic achievement
- Increased connectedness to peers and caring adults
- Access to preventative and responsive programming and services for all areas of student health



Key Factor #1

We need to balance mental health & academic needs with the impact of the pandemic.

Allegheny County Data



COVID-19+ Cases in Allegheny County Students and Staff		
	September 2020	October 2020 (to 10/21)
# of Staff & Student Cases	128	92
# by Instructional Model		
• Full online	59	24
• Hybrid	50	54
• Full in-person	19	14

No increase
versus prior
month (MTD)

Sep &/Oct:
Full-online
was higher
than full
in-person,
supporting that
outside
contact was
the greatest
driver of
transmissions

Key Factor #2

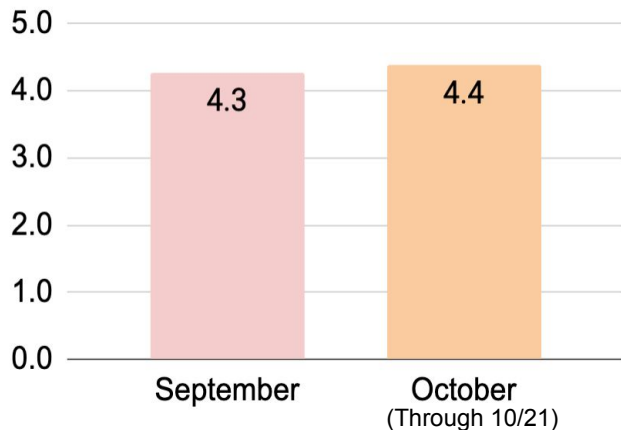
Local data supports lower case counts in schools.

Allegheny County COVID+ Data

Key Points

- Low school transmission (Social gatherings is top cause for spread)
- Minimal difference in #s of COVID+ staff and students across instructional models
- Some closures due to challenges with contact tracing by the County

of COVID+ Cases/Day

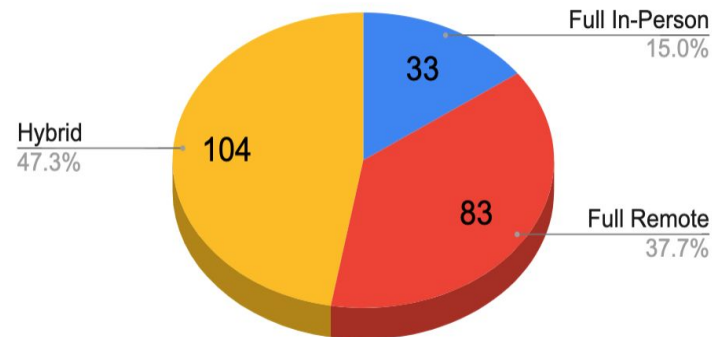


QUICK STATS

~146,000 Students
in Allegheny County

220 COVID+
Staff and student cases from
beginning of 20/21
school-year to Oct. 21, 2020

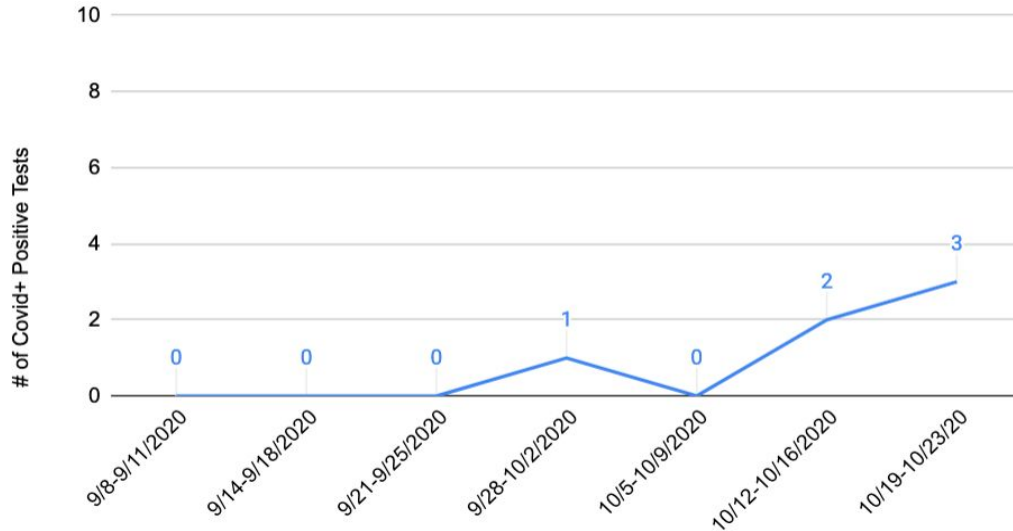
of Staff and Student COVID+ Cases by
Instructional Model (Sept. & Oct. 2020)



New COVID-19+ Cases in USCSO

Sept. 8, 2020 - Oct. 23, 2020

Covid+ Tests by Week



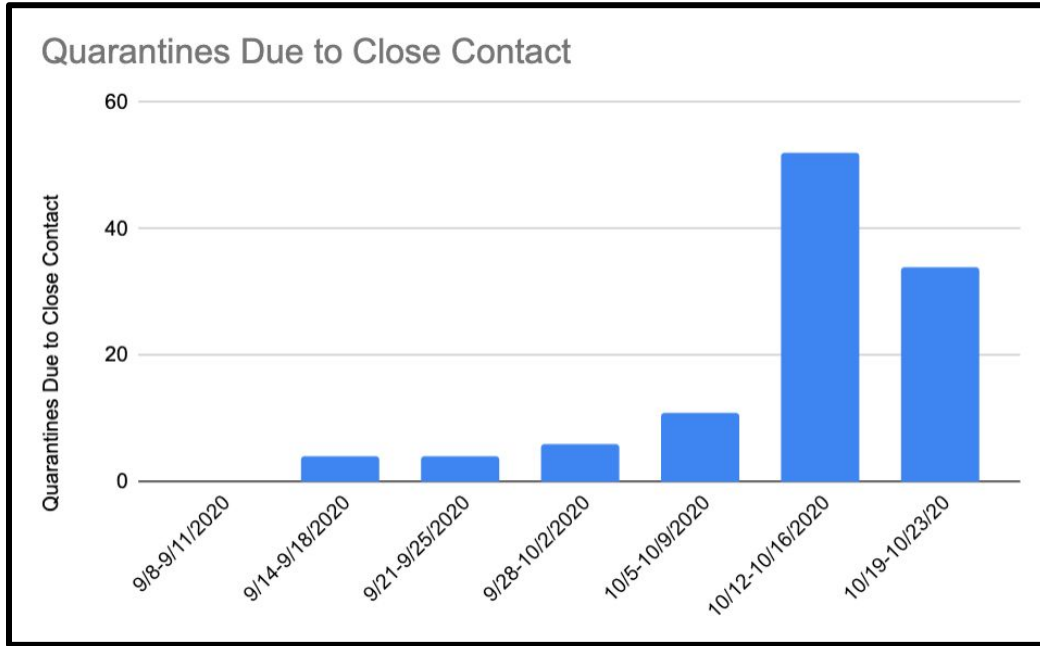
ACHD determined all transmission occurred outside of schools.

Key Factor #2

Local data supports lower case counts in schools.

COVID-19 Quarantines in USCSd

Sept. 8, 2020 - Oct. 23, 2020



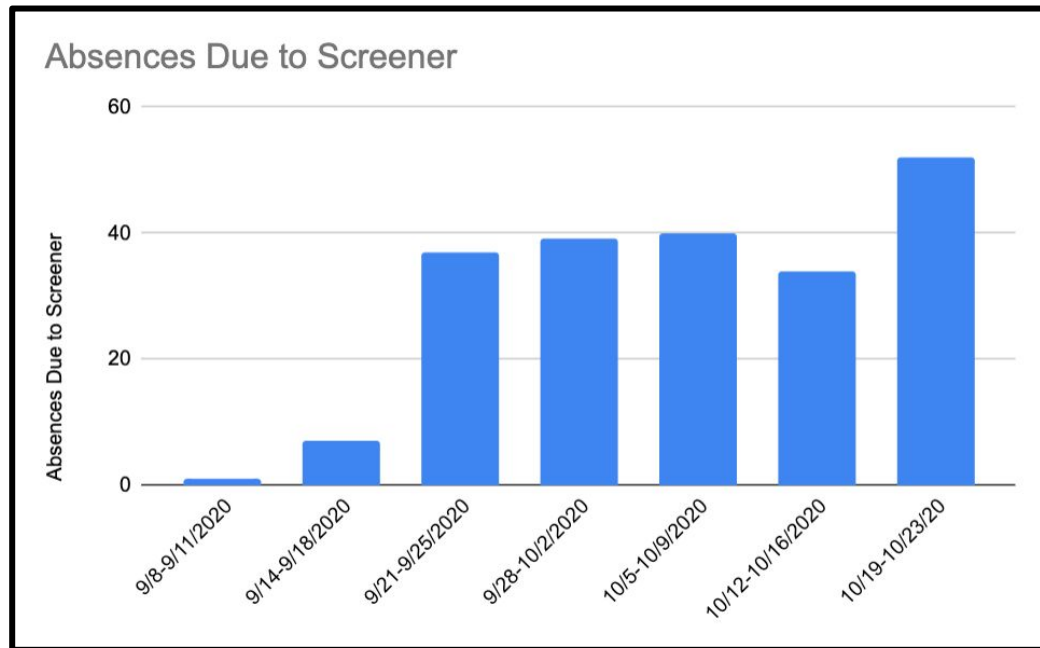
ACHD determined zero individuals have been quarantined as a result of in-school COVID+ close contacts.

Key Factor #2

Local data supports lower case counts in schools.

Absence Due to Health Screening in USCSO

Sept. 8, 2020 - Oct. 9, 2020



Individuals are following the health screening guidelines.

Key Factor #2

Local data supports lower case counts in schools.

Impact of CDC Clarification

Update from CDC 10/21/20:

“...15 cumulative minutes of exposure at a distance of 6 feet or less can be used as an operational definition for contact investigation.”

Response from ACHD 10/22/20:

“[CDC update]...is a clarification, and we have interpreted it as consecutive, and will continue to do this based upon experiences to date.”

****ACHD Rationale:** Due to narrowness of rationale for update

USC Interpretation:

We are anticipating no change to close contact quarantining procedures.

October Phase II Commitment Data

99.4%

Responses Completed

3984 Completed

4012 Possible

99.11%

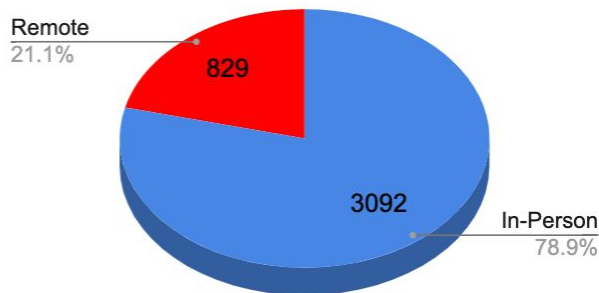
Phase I Remote Response Rate

99.42%

Phase I Hybrid Response Rate

Phase II Commitment	#s
In-Person	3143
Remote	841

Phase II Commitments



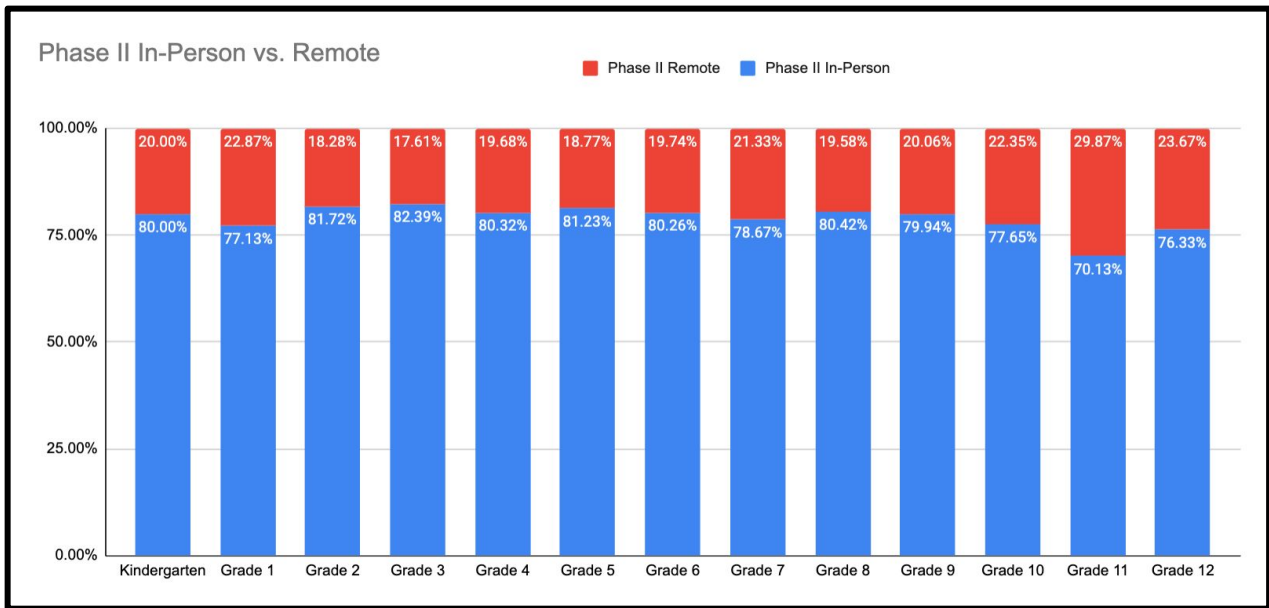
**Current Actual Phase I
October Enrollment:**

- Hybrid (2 day): 75.5%
- Full Remote: 24.5%

Key Factor #4

Parent survey data consistently supports increasing in-person learning.

October Phase II Commitment Data



Key Details:

***50 more students
K-12 opted for 4-day
in-person than 2-day
in-person (net
change K-12)***

Key Factor #4

Parent survey data consistently supports increasing in-person learning.

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Phase II & III: *Health & Safety Updates*



On-Going Mitigation Strategies

- Requiring daily health checks for staff and students
- Requiring quarantine after travel to high-risk areas
- Requiring “Return to School” process for any exposed/symptomatic individuals
- Collaborating with ACHD
- Using desk dividers
- Focusing on hand hygiene
- Ensuring high-frequency cleaning
- Emphasizing strategic movement of students in buildings
- Maintaining at least 6 feet of distancing for students while eating
- Planning carefully for any events/activities

Updating Mitigation Strategies

- **Eliminating mask breaks** within classrooms (will be conducted periodically in an alternate setting)
- Encouraging consistent **seating charts by cohort** when changing classrooms
- Articulating clear **communication plan**
- **Spacing students as far apart as possible**, but will likely be seated < 6 feet apart in classrooms and on buses
- Reinforcing staff mitigation efforts on an ongoing basis to **prevent staff-to-staff transmission** (most identified spread in schools is occurring in staff eating/common areas, per ACHD)

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Phase II & III: *Facilities Updates*





Social Distancing - Cafeteria
will remain at 6 feet in all eating areas

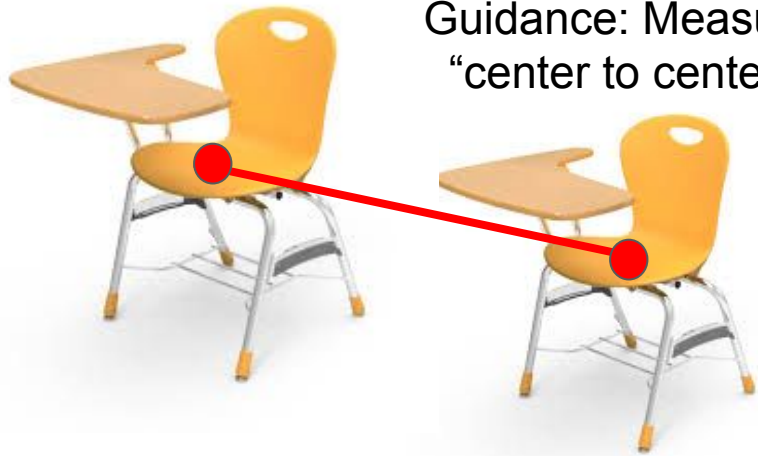


Tri-fold desk dividers



Plexiglass sneeze guards

Guidance: Measure
"center to center"



Classroom at 6 feet (13 desks)



Classroom at 4 feet (24 desks)

Additional Phase II Mitigation Strategies: Facilities

- Providing auxiliary custodial support during second shift
- Reinforcing and utilizing CDC signage and other messages
- Running exhaust fans continuously to pull air out of the buildings
- Purchasing additional furniture to ensure maximum spacing



American Society of Heating,
Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning
Engineers



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Phase II & III: *Instructional Updates*



Phase II Updates to In-Person & Remote Offerings

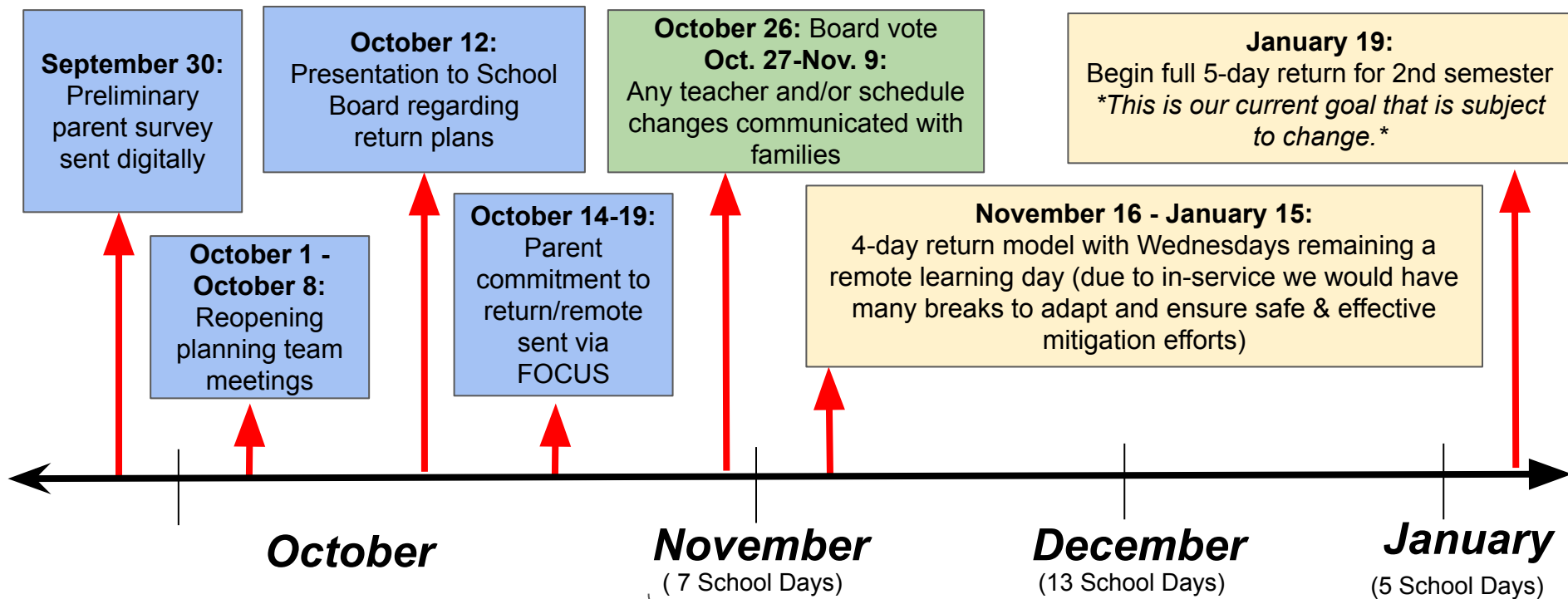
- Increase hybrid in-person learning option to 4-days while continuing:
 - Full remote learning practices (will include robust synchronous and asynchronous instruction)
 - Similar in-person instructional approaches and schedules to 2-day model
 - Remote Wednesday schedule for in-person and remote learners
- Modifications being considered:
 - Adjusting schedules to ensure adherence to mitigation strategies regarding lunch & hallway traffic
 - Continuing development of parent resources to support monitoring of student learning
 - Minimizing section changes

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Phase II and III: *Timeline for Implementation*



Timeline for Change/Implementation



All dates are dependent upon present conditions.

25 school days to evaluate Phase II prior to Jan. 11 Board Meeting

Communication Channels

Please forward any questions regarding our reopening plans to:

Tina Vojtko, *Communications Specialist*

tvojtko@uscsd.k12.pa.us



Key Takeaways

1. We are committed to providing a robust fully remote learning option.
2. Plans must balance all needs of students (physical health, social-emotional well-being, academic).
3. Ongoing collaboration with medical professionals has been a key to developing and updating phased plans.
4. All plans are subject to change based upon conditions at time of implementation. .