



# **McGuffey School District Return to School**

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***FAQ July 14, 2020***

# If I want to give feedback, or I have additional questions, how can I contact the school district?

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- Please email [returntoschool@mcguffey.k12.pa.us](mailto:returntoschool@mcguffey.k12.pa.us) or call your student's building.



# What types of reopening were identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education

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- **Total reopen** for all students and staff (but some students/families opt for distance/cyber learning out of safety/health concern)
- **Scaffolding reopening**: Some students are engaged in in-person learning, while others engage in distance learning (i.e., some grade levels in-person, other grade levels remote learning)
- **Blended reopening** that balances in-person learning and remote learning for all students (i.e., alternating days or weeks)
- **Total remote** learning for all students.



# What are the options McGuffey is recommending for the fall?

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- When PA is in Yellow or Green: Blended Learning Model
  - A combination of in person and distance learning
- When PA is in Red: Distance Learning

OR

- McGuffey Sponsored Cyber Program
  - An option families can choose-- not required
  - Available for all students



# Did the district consider a full return to school as an option for the fall?

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Yes, this was considered at length and was our starting point because we want students in school as often as possible. After applying the extensive guidance from the CDC and PDE, we feel the blended model is the safest compromise in regards to social distancing protocols, preferences for face coverings, and face-to-face instruction.



# What are the details of the Blended Learning Model?

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- Students will be assigned to either a Blue or Gold group.
  - Preference will be for families to be kept in the same group
  - The Blue group will learn in person on Mondays and Tuesdays and will engage in distance learning the other days of the week.
  - The Gold group will learn in person on Thursdays and Fridays and will engage in distance learning the other days of the week.
- Wednesdays will either be:
  - All students engaged in distance learning
  - An additional in-person learning day for one of the groups-- each group will be every other week



# What is the difference between distance learning and cyber education?

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- **Distance learning** is led by the same classroom teacher the student sees during face-to-face instruction. It includes taking current classroom lesson plans and instructing the content through printed material and/or online activities which are completed at home; this may include some interaction between teacher and students through communication tools such as Google Classroom and would incorporate the use of current McGuffey materials. There would also be opportunities for live interaction between students and teachers via video, email, and/or phone.



# What is the difference between distance learning and cyber education?

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- **Cyber education** is implemented through an online educational platform by McGuffey teachers. The cyber education platform will instruct the same content, but resources, textbooks, materials, and activities may differ from current McGuffey materials.
- **Synchronous learning is learning at the same time.** It can use live webinars, instant messaging, video conferencing, and virtual classrooms; students learn at the same time in real time; allows for instant feedback and clarification.
- **Asynchronous learning** is learning at different times. It can use email, screencasts, flip classrooms (recorded lessons), videos, blogging, and lesson recordings; students learning at different times at their own pace; allows students to work at their own pace using their own daytime routine.





# Which model was offered in the spring of 2020?

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- Learning in the spring of 2020 was in response to an unprecedented emergency. Our main focus in the spring was on ensuring all learners and members of our community were safe. We offered learning opportunities to keep students engaged in learning. However, the distance learning model and student learning expectations being presented from the fall are vastly different than the spring experience.



# Will assignments be graded in the fall?

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- Yes.
- Formal grades will be earned no matter what instructional model is offered.
- There will be flexibility in due dates for assignments. Students will not be penalized if there are barriers to completing assignments.



# Will attendance be tracked?

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- Yes. Attendance will be tracked. Students will be required to meet the requirements of the attendance policy.
- Compulsory education will be enforced.
- The current attendance policy will be modified to reflect a McGuffey sponsored cyber program.
- We will fulfill PDE's requirements of 180 days of instruction and 900 hours of instruction for elementary students and 990 for secondary students through both our blended learning and district sponsored cyber models.



# Is the School District locked into the designed plan for the entire year?

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- Health and Safety Plans are living documents that may be altered and modified as needed. As mandates and regulations change, the District's plans and educational programming will change as needed.



# Will school return to “normal” this year?

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- As mandates and regulations change, we will continue to modify our programming. Our goal is to have students in our buildings as often as safety allows.
- However, any family who chooses the McGuffey Cyber program and would like to continue with it, even if a regular school day is possible, will be welcome to continue throughout the entire year.



# Would parents be able to preview the cyber option before choosing this option?

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- Yes; curricular content is reflective of what is currently taught which is aligned to the PA State Standards. This means that it is the same skill being taught at the same grade level. The lessons, assignments, resources, textbooks, materials, and activities may be different.
- There will be family presentations scheduled about our cyber program the week of July 20th.



# Would cyber lessons coordinate to what is happening in the traditional setting?

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- At this time without knowing exactly how the programming will be arranged, we are not sure lessons can be totally aligned. Curricular content will be the same, however, the actual lesson taught, resources, and activities may vary. In addition, timing of presented content may be slightly different.
- Our longer term goal for the McGuffey cyber program would be to align cyber learning with the brick and mortar learning.



# Can students switch between the McGuffey Cyber program and the traditional educational program?

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- In order to maintain consistency with grading and content execution, enrollment/withdrawal periods will be offered every nine weeks.





# Could a student attend extracurricular activities if they choose McGuffey's Cyber program?

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- Yes, if a student attends McGuffey's Cyber program, he/she can participate in extracurricular activities.
- Transportation to and from the activity would be the responsibility of the family.



# How will IEPs/504 services be implemented?

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- As per PA School Code, FAPE, IDEA, and all specialized programming must be implemented in all models of learning.
- During in person learning, students will most likely move to their specialized classrooms for instructions and therapies. Groupings of students will remain extremely consistent to minimize exposure.
- Virtual Zoom sessions will continue to be utilized as appropriate.



# What is the protocol for a student/teacher who tests positively for COVID 19?

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- At this time, our understanding is that anyone testing positive for the virus must be isolated and quarantined. This would include any student/staff that came into direct contact with the quarantined individual. The District will consult with the health department and will make the appropriate notifications based on the health department's guidance.



# Would quarantined days be excused per attendance guidelines?

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- Yes, as long as the child is participating in distance education, the days may count towards days of instruction.



# What is the plan for Western Area CTC? Are our students still able to participate?

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- The District anticipates Western Area CTC will be available for eligible students. More information will be provided once the District receives plans from Western Area.



# What if a teacher becomes ill and/or needs to quarantine?

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- Just as in the past, if a teacher is not available, a substitute teacher will continue classroom instruction. If a sub is not available, the responsibility will move to another certified building personnel.



# What expenses are anticipated to implement the health and safety plan?

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- Additional cleaning supplies and equipment will be necessary for our custodial staff to be more efficient in the additional cleaning duties that will arise. Additional air filters for more frequent filter changes, acrylic sheets for cafeteria serving areas, hand sanitizer, masks and other personal protective gear will be needed.



# How are Internet access issues being addressed?

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- Increased Internet access in our district has been a focus of our efforts over the past few months. Here are a couple of unique efforts that we are currently developing to aid in increasing the access to students around our district
  - Traveling WiFi Program
  - Increased Outside Wireless Access at our Buildings
  - Obtaining MiFi hotspots for student lending opportunities





# How is the distance learning in the fall different than in the spring in regards to lack of Internet access?

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- We are currently in the process of obtaining “Mobile Broadband Devices” to create a student lending program for internet access.
- We are currently working to obtain enough devices (Chromebooks) to equip students K-12.
- Because students will be in our buildings consistently through the blended model, they will be able to connect to the network and download content. Google Classroom can be used offline.



# How are courses like PE and Chorus being handled?

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- During in person instruction, we will maximize the available physical space. Shared materials will be minimized.
- During distance instruction, students will practice skills and engage in project based learning to supplement their in person learning.



# Will all district buildings close if a student or staff member tests positive at only one building?

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- We will cooperate with and follow guidance from the Department of Health to determine the extent of any closure and quarantine measures.



# How will the district prepare students and families for the start of school?

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- There is a subcommittee focused on ensuring we are intentional about ensuring we are communicating well and addressing students' emotional and social needs.
- There will be kick off events as health and safety mandates allow, including orientation for K, 6th grade, and 9th grade.



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