



School Year Start Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) 2020-21 Academic Year

This page will be updated regularly to include answers to the most frequently asked questions regarding CPS' plans for Fall 2020. If you have a question or suggestion not addressed below, please contact the school at 215 235 0461 or info@cpsphilly.org.

Why has CPS decided to start the school year using a virtual learning with open facility model?

In preparing for the start of the school year, the administrative default position focused on getting students back into our building safely. Our belief is that the optimal operating method at CPS occurs in-person. Of course as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are in a less-than-optimal situation.

As we have drawn closer to the first day of school, and given the growing anxiety and confusion about so much regarding COVID-19, it became abundantly clear, after reassessing family and employee readiness to return to the building, that a shift in the way the program is delivered was necessary.

As a result, all academic instruction and SEL programming will take place virtually to start the school year. Families can choose whether their children will come to the building or access the program remotely. Classroom teachers will deliver instruction virtually for all students (including those in the building). For families interested in having their children access the building, we will prioritize families who need childcare and/or reliable Wifi access in the event that demand for this option exceeds staff capacity.

As virus updates and guidance from health and civic entities continue to evolve, we will plan on updating the school calendar and delivery method on a month-by-month basis, though we remain ready to adapt at a moment's notice as health conditions dictate.

Has the updated reentry plan affected when the school year will begin?

The first day of school will still be Monday, August, 31st. We remain hopeful that things will clear up enough to return for full in-person programming but, moving forward, will plan recognizing that working remotely may be necessary for a significant portion of the school year.

I have not heard from my child's classroom teacher to schedule a Home Visit. Are Home Visits still happening?

Now that we have settled on a plan to start the school year, you should expect to hear from your child's teacher to schedule a Home Visit. This school year, all Home Visits will be conducted virtually. If you do not hear from your child's teacher by Friday, August 28th, please contact Beth Vaccaro, our Director of Curriculum and Instruction, at b.vaccaro@cpsphilly.org.

Who do I contact if I have a question about the program moving forward?



- To address specific matters related to your child's academic experience, please contact your child's classroom teacher first.
- To address social-emotional matters, or for support with concerns outside of school, feel free to reach out to Yamina Nasir, Family Life Coordinator (y.nasir@cpsphilly.org), or Eliza Taylor, School Counselor (e.taylor@cpsphilly.org).
- For administrative support around any program matter, feel free to contact Beth Vaccaro (b.vaccaro@cpsphilly.org).
- For tuition matters, contact Mary Small (m.small@cpsphilly.org). Families experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID crisis should reach out to Ms. Mary to discuss.

What about tuition payments while we are not on campus?

As we are not confined to bricks and mortar to operate, our program will continue, whether in-person or virtual. As such we will continue to collect tuition payments from families. CPS remains committed to crafting and delivering a meaningful experience for our students in close partnership with our families and the wider community. As we experienced this past spring, successfully navigating the COVID-19 pandemic requires countless hours of preparation and this is what our families should expect from us.

For specific questions regarding how to pay, please contact Ms Mary.

Will the School Nurse be available when CPS operates remotely this year?

Our School Nurse, Eileen Baughan, is available to answer questions and provide guidance for families regarding health related concerns. She can be reached via email at e.baughan@cpsphilly.org and will get back to you within 24 hours.

What can my family or CPS community members do to support other community members in need?

Our CPS Support Services Team, consisting of our Family Life Coordinator, School Counselor, School Psychologist, and Director of Curriculum and Instruction, meet regularly to, in part, develop strategies to support CPS families and others in the wider community. Stay tuned for more information.

What if we need technology assistance in order to prepare for the school year?

Every student will need a device in order to access the academic program to start the school year. For tech support, please contact Adam Lamay anytime at a.lamay@cpsphilly.org. He will reply within 24 hours.

Are uniforms required for students?

Given the uncertainty around when we will return to a fully in-person, five day a week operation, uniforms will not be required for students at any point during the school year. We are clarifying our updated dress code and will deliver details by Tuesday, August 25th.

I'd like my child to access school-provided meals. How do I sign up?



If you would like your child to access breakfast and/or lunch this fall, whether your child is learning on-site or remotely, please contact Ms Mary as soon as possible for more information.

Will there be an Extended Day program?

While we hope to provide a vibrant and convenient Extended Day program this coming school year, we are currently assessing our ability to do so safely. We will make a determination before Labor Day and contact families who have indicated interest.