

Parent Update – 8/3/2020 Transcript

Hello, Team CMS students and Families! For those of you who are new to CMS, I am Dr. Elmendorf. I am the Principal of CMS and the 6th grade administrator. When we get closer to the beginning of the school year, I will distribute a contact sheet so that you know who to contact for specific concerns or questions. However, you can always contact me if you'd like. It's been a little while since I've sent out an update. I'll try to be succinct, but this update may be a little longer than others, considering the unique nature of this upcoming school year. The transcript of this video has several important links that you may want to check out. First of all, for those of you who are returning, we still have not received yearbooks. Please let your rising 9th grade friends know that we will likely pass out the yearbooks along with their t-shirts from 8th grade. We will contact all of you as soon as the yearbooks come in. Now that we know we will be online for at least the first semester, please bookmark our website. I plan to put all important updates, documents and information on there. For example, I added this year's [supply list](#) to the website yesterday. Our website is <https://catonsvillems.bcps.org/>. If you are a Facebook user, please also follow the [Catonsville Middle School PTSA Facebook page](#). There is a team of people who update that regularly. Most of the staff's email addresses are on the website. We will make sure that is completely updated by the time school starts. You can also call the school and leave a voicemail. Our number is 443-809-0803.

OK, so let's get to the re-opening info. First, please be sure to check out the [BCPS plan for re-opening](#) on the [BCPS website](#). As you know, anything we decide to do as a school needs to be aligned with that plan. Virtual instruction will now: (1) contain strengthened alignment to [MD College and Career Ready Standards](#); (2) include diagnostic curriculum tasks to determine unfinished student learning; (3) provide live instruction with teachers on the designated school days for every course; (4) include up to 3.5 hours of daily synchronous (live) teaching; I have my headphones on and my leadership team and I are ready to get into these sessions on a regular basis and (5) include up to 3 hours of daily independent, asynchronous (anytime) learning, which may include additional small group instruction on a rotation. Teachers will be on duty Monday through Friday with Wednesday held as a day for targeted student intervention, asynchronous (anytime) instruction, individual and collaborative planning, and professional learning. Teachers will take student attendance daily and will adhere to traditional grading and reporting procedures as outlined in the [BCPS Grading and Reporting Procedures Manual](#).

OK, so what does that mean for CMS? Well, we do not have a completely finalized schedule yet, but we have a good idea of what we want to do. First of all, you will get a course schedule that looks almost identical to any other year, which includes 10 periods. Keeping this course schedule intact will allow us to immediately switch to in-person learning if that option becomes available in the Spring semester. What is going to be different is how we schedule the synchronous or live sessions. While you will get a very specific schedule before school starts, our draft plan is to have students participate in four 50 minute live classes on Monday and three 50 minute classes on Tuesday with scheduled small group, independent work time and lunch scheduled during other parts of the school day. Students would follow their A Day schedule on those 2 days. Wednesday is reserved for various things like small groups, independent work time, meeting with teachers, etc. There will be no full class live sessions on Wednesday. Thursday and Friday will look very similar to Monday and Tuesday, except that students would follow their B day schedule for Thursday and Friday. Please remember that some classes meet on

both A days and B days. So, classes that meet on A and B days would have 2 live class meetings per week and classes that meet only on A or B days would have 1 live meeting per week. We will likely start the school day at 8 am and end around 2:50. We haven't ironed out all of the details yet, but I wanted to give you a rough idea of what you days may look like in the Fall.

More information is forthcoming, including clubs, a new House System we are excited to implement, and teacher assignments. In the meantime, stay safe, check out the [Summer Reading information](#) on our website and enjoy the rest of your summer.