

The COVID19 pandemic has changed the way education is imagined and delivered through school systems across the country. In Birmingham City Schools, we want to ensure that all of our scholars have the tools and guidance they need for success. This fact does not change, even if the school setting changes.

Our BCS team has been working diligently to prepare for the start of the school year on August 24, 2020. This document outlines the models we are considering as we prepare for an exciting academic year.

In the coming weeks, you'll hear more from BCS about our plans. But before we make decisions, we will engage our community – including students, teachers, parents and stakeholders.

So far, 2020 has been a year of unprecedented changes and adjustment. As the interim superintendent of Birmingham City Schools, I am committed to working to ensure that our students progress and our employees have the support needed to make this year a success.

Dr. Mark Anthony Sullivan, Interim Superintendent

Birmingham City Schools

As Birmingham City Schools (BCS) prepares to reopen for the 2020-2021 School Year, it is important to note that we are committed to the overall well-being of our students and staff.

BCS is reviewing the following options to include traditional, blended, or remote teaching and learning. The BCS Interim Superintendent and Board of Education are carefully monitoring the community spread of COVID-19 while also reviewing the recommendations from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH), Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to make the best and safest decisions for our students and staff. The options listed here are designed to provide our parents with as much information as possible. At this time, BCS has not made a final decision on any option. The Interim Superintendent plans to make a final recommendation on the option BCS will employ by **July 31, 2020**.

Face-To-Face



TRADITIONAL (FACE-TO-FACE)

THIS OPTION WILL BE USED IF THE CURRENT RISK IS “LOW.”

- All Students (PK-12)
- Students attend classes in a traditional, on-campus setting.
- Students will return to traditional face-to-face instruction with social distancing and ongoing deep cleaning and disinfecting expectations in place.

Remote



REMOTE (TOTALLY ONLINE)

THIS OPTION WILL BE USED IF THE CURRENT RISK IS “HIGH” or “VERY HIGH”.

- All Students (PK-12) (Taught by a BCS Teacher)
- Students attend classes “remotely” using a variety of virtual and paper resources.
- All students and teachers will remain at home to engage in teaching and learning, using electronic devices and BCS learning materials online. Students will be taught through live instruction by BCS teachers and will utilize the district’s online learning resources to enhance their academic growth.

Blended



BLENDED (FACE-TO-FACE & REMOTE)

THIS OPTION WILL BE USED IF THE CURRENT RISK IS “MODERATE”.

- All Students (PK-12) (Taught by a BCS Teacher)
- **Face-to Face** (Learn 2 days at School)
(Group A: Monday/Tuesday)
(Group B: Thursday/Friday)
- **Remote** (Learn 3 days of online at home)
(Group A: Wednesday/Thursday/Friday)
(Group B: Monday/Tuesday/Friday)
- All students will participate in a blended option, alternating between traditional face-to-face and remote learning with all Wednesdays and Saturdays being school deep cleaning days. Students will be taught by BCS teachers and will utilize the district’s online learning resources to enhance their academic growth.

BCS is committed to providing options to help all students reach their full potential. Therefore, if parents decide not to send their child to back to the school buildings during the COVID-19 crisis, the parents can choose Birmingham City Schools virtual school and continue their academic progress.

The students in this option will be taught by BCS teachers. However, students who enroll in BCS Virtual Schools will not have the ability to transfer to the district’s chosen learning option until the end of the nine-week period. At the end of this period, students will have the choice to remain in the BCS Virtual School or return to the district’s learning options (traditional, remote, or blended).

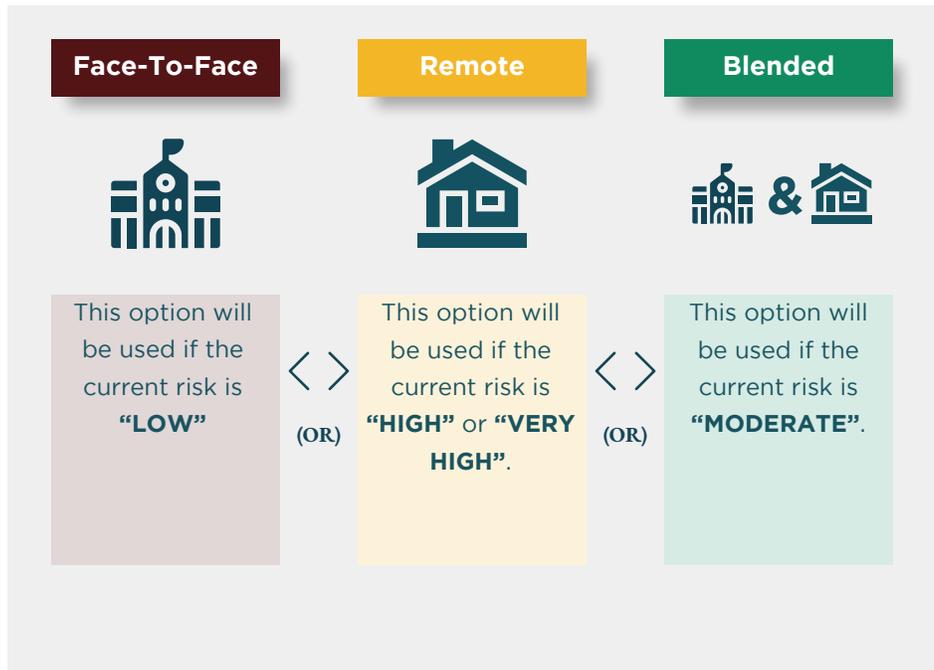
Virtual



VIRTUAL SCHOOL

- Students who choose this option will be enrolled full-time in virtual learning at home for at least the first grading period.
- Students participating in this option will be taught by BCS teachers and will be required to remain in this option for at least nine weeks.

BCS Learning Options



BCS Virtual Option

Virtual



Students who choose this option will be taught by BCS teachers and will be required to remain in this option for at least nine weeks.

FAQ: SCHOOL REOPENING OPTIONS AND REGISTRATION

Q: Who will decide which option BCS chooses in restarting school for the 2020-2021 academic year?

The Interim School Superintendent and the School Board, in accordance with guidance from ADPH and local health officials, will make the final decision on the option chosen for school reopening.

Q: Are parents required to register students for school?

Yes, BCS requires all returning and new students to register each school year. Parents will be able to register their children online beginning July 20, 2020. Visit www.bhamcityschools.org for more details.

Q: Are parents required to choose a reopening of school option for upcoming school year?

Yes, during the registration process, parents will be asked to choose between two choices: (Choice #1: BCS Learning Options: Traditional, Remote, or Blended) or (Choice #2: BCS Virtual School Option).

Q: What option do parents have if they do not want their children to return to school?

During registration, parents who do not wish to send their child back to school can select the BCS Virtual School Option.

Q: What is difference between the BCS Virtual School Option and the other three district options (Traditional, Remote, Blended)?

The BCS Virtual School Option is a parent choice that will allow their child to be taught in a virtual setting (at-home) without returning to school. Those who choose BCS Virtual School will be required to remain in this option until the end of the nine-week grading period. Those who choose the district's option will be subjected to the decision of the superintendent and school board as to which of the three options (traditional, remote, or blended) will be chosen.

Q: How long will the reopening option chosen by BCS remain in effect?

BCS staff will choose the option that best ensures the safety of our student and staff. The superintendent, in consultation with the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and/or local public health officials, will make determinations about specific changes in learning options throughout the school year.

FAQ: SCHOOL REOPENING OPTIONS AND REGISTRATION

Q: How will attendance be monitored in the Blended, Remote or BCS Virtual School models?

Under every option the superintendent and school board chooses, students will receive credit for attendance. If the traditional learning option is chosen, students will be marked as present or absent. If the blended option is chosen, students will be marked as present or absent on the days assigned to the building; and on the days when they are learning remotely (at home), students will be marked as “All Day Other.” If students do not participate that day (meaning they do not log onto their device and work on assignments), they will be marked as “not participating.” This will help to track engagement. If the remote learning option is chosen or if a parent chooses the BCS Virtual School option, students will be marked as “All Day Other.” If students do not participate that day (meaning they do not log onto their device and work on assignments), they will be marked as “not participating.” This will help to monitor student engagement.

For students who are required to quarantine, those students will be marked as “All Day Other” and “COVID-19 positive” or “COVID-19 Exposed.” This will not be counted as an absence. Students in Dropout Recovery, Fast Track, or Temporary Placement, will be allowed to work remotely if requested, but their progress will be evaluated every nine weeks. If students are not meeting the minimum hourly expectation or credit expectation, they will be required to switch back to the superintendent’s chosen options (traditional, remote or blended).

Q: How will the district keep parents informed about district updates and changes?

BCS is very committed to ensuring our parents and communities stay informed about the decisions the district is making to keep all students and staff safe related to school reopening. The district will provide updates through various online platforms to include (district website, school webpages, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter); robocalls, emails, texts and mail. Additionally, parents will have an opportunity to engage with the superintendent through various virtual community meetings. Finally, the district will have a Parent Academy website designed to provide parents with resources for supporting their child’s learning while at home. There will also be a portal for parents to ask questions and receive expedient support and feedback from district staff.

FAQ: WELLNESS

Q: Will face coverings be required if BCS chooses the traditional or blended options for school reopening?

Yes, all students and staff will be required to wear face coverings while in the presence of other individuals.

Q: Will students be required to observe social distancing while at school or on school transportation?

Yes, BCS will observe the social distancing guidance from public health officials as best possible. These recommendations will be observed in the classroom, cafeteria, gym, restrooms, and all other common areas of the school and on school transportation.

FAQ: WELLNESS

Q: Will there be temperature checks when students enter the school building?

Yes, all students and staff will have their temperature checked prior to entering BCS schools and/or facilities.

Q: What will be the procedure if a student or teacher tests positive for COVID-19?

BCS will follow the protocols set by the, ALSDE, JCDH, ADPH, CDC, and AAP. Students with COVID-19 symptoms or who test positive will be placed in the school isolation room and parents will be called for pick-up. Students will be required to stay home until a negative test result is given by a health care professional. This guideline also applies to BCS staff who may exemplify symptoms of COVID-19.

FAQ: OPERATIONS & FACILITIES

Q: Will schools and classrooms be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis?

Yes, BCS is committed to providing enhanced cleaning and sanitization of all its schools and facilities. Cleaning will happen on a consistent basis throughout the school and workday to ensure the safety of students and parents.

Q: What are the requirements for visitors when entering a school or district facility?

Only essential visitors (parents, guardians) will be allowed in any school during the COVID-19 pandemic. These individuals will be required to wear a mask when entering a school and district facility and must be willing to submit to a temperature check by the school's nursing team. Once cleared, these individuals will only be allowed in the front office area of the school.

Q: Will signage be posted throughout the school to provide guidance to students and staff and social distancing and protection?

Yes, BCS will have signage placed in all its facilities to provide safety guidance for students and staff.

Q: If the district chooses the traditional or blended models, will there be changes to school bus transportation?

Yes, bus drivers will be required to wear face coverings. They will provide hand sanitizer to all students and the number of riders will be limited to 13 riders per bus with assigned, socially distanced seating. Students will enter and exit the bus by seat increments to ensure that social distancing is maintained. All buses will travel with roof hatches and windows open, weather permitting, to ensure continued air circulation and will be cleaned before, between, and after each route.



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FAQ: OPERATIONS & FACILITIES

Q: Will students be allowed to participate in athletics?

BCS is closely monitoring the guidance from the AHSAA and will evaluate all sports programs to make the best-informed decisions for keeping our students and coaches safe. If sports events are approved, all competitions will adhere to the above requirements for participants and audience size. For more specific information, please visit the BCS Athletic Department's website.

Q: Will students continue to receive breakfast and lunch?

Yes, BCS is committed to ensuring our students are provided breakfast and lunch through our Child Nutrition program. Breakfast and lunch will be provided to students when they are at school. However, when students are learning remotely or for students enrolled in BCS Virtual, all meals will be available for pick-up for students at any school site within the district at designated service times. For more information, please visit the BCS Child Nutrition webpage.

FAQ: INSTRUCTION & TECHNOLOGY

Q: Will students receive regular instruction?

Yes, students will receive live instruction from a BCS teacher and will also be required to log on to the district's online learning platforms. All learning and assignments will be aligned to the Alabama State Department of Education College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS).

Q: Will the district administer assessments or have measures in place to show how children are progressing throughout the school year?

Yes, students will take various benchmark and progress monitoring assessments throughout the school year. The data from these assessments of students will be used by teachers to inform their instruction and will be shared with parents so that they can support their child's learning at home.

Q: Will the district provide services for students who received gifted services?

School leadership will discuss individual students' needs and make case-by-case decisions for students who receive gifted services.

FAQ: INSTRUCTION & TECHNOLOGY

Q: If a student receives Special Education services through an IEP, how will they receive accommodations if in a blended, remote, or virtual school setting?

Birmingham City Schools will provide specially designed instruction and related services to all students identified under IDEA. Students with IEPs will continue to receive these services regardless of the learning format Birmingham City Schools is implementing. Services can be provided in a traditional, blended or virtual format. Each student has a case manager and/or related services provided to implement services whether remote or in person. IEP teams will develop a remote learning plan for students who participate in a blended learning or virtual format. This plan will provide parents with specific details on the delivery of services, resources required and specific goals. Parents who need assistance regarding their child's IEP or any other concerns should contact the child's teacher and special education case manager. The person who oversees a child's program for instruction is in the best position to help parents understand what services are being provided. For support from the Special Education Department, parents may call 205-231-4633 or email sped@bhm.k12.al.us

Q: If a student receives Section 504 services, how will they receive accommodations in a blended, remote, or virtual school setting?

Birmingham City Schools (BCS) students who meet the criteria to receive Section 504 services are serviced with a Section 504 Plan. This plan outlines reasonable accommodations and/ or related services for instruction, activities and medical care. Regardless of the instructional format (i.e. blended, remote, etc.), students with Section 504 plans will receive reasonable accommodations as identified in their specific plans. Section 504 meetings held via phone, Zoom, Facetime to develop or discuss existing Section 504 Plans during the abrupt closure and summer will be reviewed during the first 30 days of schools by BCS Section 504 liaisons. This will help ensure reasonable accommodations are met. Section 504 Plans may be revised as needed. For additional questions, contact your district schools' Section 504 Liaison. For specific information, email BCS Section 504 District Coordinator, Maria Yvette Lys, myoung2@bhm.k12.al.us

Q: If a student receives English Language services through an I-ELP, how will they receive accommodations if in a blended, remote, or virtual school setting?

Students who have a primary language other than English receive instruction in language acquisition and academic content. For students with an EL status and Individual EL Language Plan (I-ELP), updates and implementation of these plans will continue in traditional, blended, remote, and virtual formats delivered in Birmingham City Schools. Parents and guardians who need assistance regarding their Individual EL Language Plan (I-ELP) and other topics may contact the student's teacher and EL services teacher, assistant, and the Spanish hotline at 1-855-957-3800. All employees have access to over-the-phone interpreting to assist with communication between home and school in Birmingham City Schools.

Q: Will classroom setup be different due to COVID-19?

Yes, all desks will be positioned six (6) feet apart and facing the same direction, thus maintaining social distancing during the day.

FAQ: INSTRUCTION & TECHNOLOGY

Q: Will students be required to log in everyday to complete assignments online?

Yes, students will be required to login into the platform daily. Mandatory online classes and live lessons with teachers will be held at scheduled times during the school day.

Q: Will students leave the classroom for electives (i.e., P.E, art, music, etc.)?

Yes, if the district is in a traditional or blended learning option, students will leave classrooms to attend electives. All elective classroom setup will follow the same guidelines as core classrooms with desks being positioned six (6) feet apart and facing in the same direction. While students are in elective classes, core classrooms will be cleaned using disinfecting and sanitization protocols.

Q: Will school transportation be provided for students?

Yes, if the district is in the traditional or blended learning option, students who meet the district's transportation guidelines will be afforded the opportunity to ride the school bus. Please review transportation routes and times on the district's website.

Q: Can students start the beginning of the year with the district's options (traditional, remote, or blended) and later choose the BCS Virtual School option?

All options chosen at the beginning of the school year must remain in place for the nine-week period. These students will be allowed to begin in BCS Virtual School during the second nine-weeks of the school year.

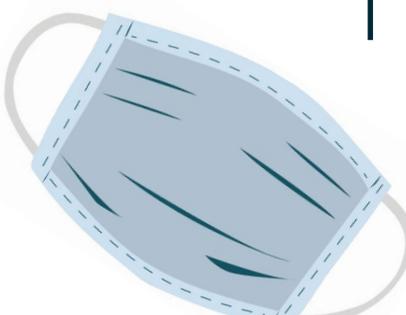
Q: Will the school year calendar remain the same as last year?

No, out of caution for our students and staff, BCS has moved the first day of school to Monday, August 24, 2020 and the last day of school will be Friday, June 4, 2021. All breaks and holidays are outlined in the BCS Revised 2020-2021 District Calendar. View our district 2020-2021 calendar on page 11, and visit the BCS webpage for more details.

FAQ: GENERAL

Q: Will BCS After School Program students in if the district choses the blended model?

If the district choses the traditional or blended learning options, the BCS After School Program (BCS-ASP) is prepared to re-open on the first day of school to provides extended day learning opportunities in grades K-8. The BCS-ASP will offer services to parents/families who are in need of after school care at the end of the student's attendance day from 2:30 pm to 6:00 pm. We have put in place Safety guidelines that align with the CDC and have been vetted by our Health and Wellness Coordinator. All staff will be trained and will follow all district plans for social distancing and hygiene. Any questions concerning the program can be sent to Cathy Baugh, Coordinator for the BCS After School Program at cbaugh@bhm.k12.al.us or 205-231-9840.



FAQ: BCS VIRTUAL SCHOOL OPTION

Q: Will BCS Virtual School learning be online full-time?

Yes, students who select this option will be taught online full-time by BCS teachers in a learning format aligned with the ALSDE critical standards. These students will not be subject to the district options (traditional, remote, or blended).

Q: Who will be responsible for student learning and assignment completion in this option?

The student and parent will have the responsibility for ensuring all online tasks (live and online) are completed as outlined by the teacher. However, the classroom teacher will play a role in working with students and parents to ensure students experience academic success.

Q: Can students start the school year in the BCS Virtual School option and later choose the district's options (traditional, remote, or blended)?

All options chosen at the beginning of the school year must remain in place for the entire, initial nine-week period. At the end of the nine-week period, students and parents will be allowed to choose the BCS options available at that time -- traditional, remote, or blended.

Q: How many hours a day will be required for BCS Virtual School?

All students will be required to log into the learning platform daily and complete tasks as assigned by the teacher in order to credit (attendance and grades). The hours required for each content area is subject to change by grade level. All students will be required to interact with their teachers weekly through live online lessons. Each school will provide students and parents with a detailed schedule so that students know when they are expected to be online and when they are to work independently.

Q: Will classes begin at a specific time each day or will students be able to complete work at their own pace?

The virtual school learning environment can be more flexible than the traditional school setting as students are able to modify the day to suit their strengths. However, mandatory online classes and live lessons with teachers will be held at scheduled times during the school day.

Q: Will students be provided a learning device (ex. Laptop, Chromebook, etc.) to complete their learning tasks if the district chooses blended or remote or if I as a parent choose the BCS Virtual School Option?

Every student grades K-12 will be provided a learning device to continue their learning in a remote or virtual school setting. Communication specific to device distribution will be provided to parents prior to the start of the school year. This information will be provided via BCS social media platforms, websites, robocalls, emails and texts to parents.

AUGUST 2020

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- 17 Teacher Workday
- 18-20 Teacher PD
- 21 Institute/Teacher WD
- 24 First Day for Students

FEBRUARY 2021

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28						

- 15 President's Day

SEPTEMBER 2020

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- 7 Labor Day

MARCH 2021

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- 29 Spring Break Start

OCTOBER 2020

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- 30 eLearning

APRIL 2021

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- 2 Spring Break Start
- 4 Easter Sunday
- 30 Late Spring Break

NOVEMBER 2020

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- 2 Fall Break
- 3 Voting/PD
- 11 Veterans Day
- 25-27 Student Fall Holiday
- 25-27 Teacher Fall Holiday

MAY 2021

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- 9 Mother's Day
- 31 Memorial Day

DECEMBER 2020

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- 23-31 Student Winter Holiday
- 23-31 Teacher Winter Holiday

JUNE 2021

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- 4 Last Day for Students
- 4 Last Day for Teachers
- 20 Father's Day

JANUARY 2021

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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

- 01 Student Winter Holiday
- 01 Teacher Winter Holiday
- 18 M.L. King Day