



Frequently Asked Questions from Our Community

Distance Learning Plan (DLP)

If our kids start the school year in person, do we still have the option to switch to distance learning after the year starts?

EHPS needs to develop a staffing profile for those students who opt into attending in-person school as well as one for those who opt into the remote learning option, so the district is asking for a one semester commitment.

If we decide to go remote, will there be any teacher instruction (via web feed from the classroom) or video, or will parents be the teachers again?

EHPS is in the process of developing a schedule for students in which teachers are required to provide live instruction for students for 30-35 minutes per subject area at all three levels (elementary, middle and high school.) In addition, middle and high school teachers have an opportunity to bring together students for small group instruction during an Academic Support block. Office Hours will still be available on some afternoons for those students who have a question or need assistance but haven't been identified as needing support by the teacher.

Will there be dedicated distance learning teachers for the DLP?

Yes, there will be teachers assigned as remote learning instructors. Their assignment will be for a half-year.

Will DLP students be able to get extra help from teachers if needed?

Yes, teachers will have the opportunity to identify students for small group instruction based upon their individual needs. In addition, Office Hours will still be available on some afternoons for those students who have a question or need assistance, but haven't been identified as needing support by the teacher.

Will remote learners have the opportunity to have "cohorts" or opportunities to connect with other peers who are also distant learners, to provide the social connections and sense of community a lot of teens need during this time?

Teachers will be encouraged to incorporate group work into their daily lessons and classroom activities. However, the district cannot replicate the experiences that take place in a school building, including the social interactions and community-building that happens through live interactions.

How will the juniors who opt for the DLP take the SATs?

At this time, the College Board is only planning to offer the SATs in-person. Students who opt for at-home learning would have to come into the building if they want to take the SAT during the school day, or they can also register to take it in person on a Saturday.

Will students still have their honors classes or will they receive regular classes because of distance learning?

It will be difficult to offer every class that is currently available to students in our current program of studies. At this time, EHPS cannot determine what classes will be offered through our remote learning program.

Will students still have access to the IB curriculum or will they receive regular classes because of distance learning?

The district curriculum is the same for all students through grade 8. What differs is the method of delivery. IB teachers receive specialized training. Students who attend Sunset Ridge will be placed in standard middle school courses that can be taught by either a teacher from Sunset Ridge or East Hartford Middle School.

The curriculum at the high school level is more specialized. It will be difficult for EHPS to replicate the IB curriculum for students in these grade levels, and it is much more likely that they will be enrolled in a class that is taught by a teacher who has not been trained to prepare them for the IB exams. EHPS is in the process of exploring options to improve the experience for CIBA students who select to work remotely during the fall semester.

Is it a guarantee that students who elect to enter the DLP until January 26th can choose to return to the classroom after the 26th?

At this time, EHPS plans to provide students who select this option in the fall to allow them to return to in-person instruction in the spring, should they choose to do so.

Will students enrolled in DLP have the option to pick up breakfast and/or lunch?

Yes, students will be able to pick up breakfast and/or lunch at an area to be designated as the school year approaches.

How will DLP work if you have multiple children at different grade levels?

Each child in your home will be issued a device and will be expected to follow the schedule for his/her grade level.

Can parents make a one-year commitment to distance learning?

At this time, we are asking parents to make a half-year commitment. You will be able to renew your commitment for the spring as we approach December of 2020.

Will a supply list be provided for the DLP?

At this time, we have not identified a specific “supply list” for students.

How will DLP students be incorporated by in class teachers in January if they switch?

This will largely be dependent on the conditions at the time. If EHPS has to adhere to specific guidelines regarding spacing, this may impact placement. Staffing may also have an impact on placement of students returning to in-person instruction.

Will DLP students be eligible to rent instruments?

Students who opt for the DLP and are a part of the instrumental music program, should one be able to run, would be able to rent an instrument.

In-Class Programming

Will Crossroads be offered?

Crossroads will be offered at the following school locations: Hockanum Pre-School Goodwin Elementary, Langford Elementary, Mayberry Elementary, O’Brien Elementary, O’Connell Elementary, and Pitkin Elementary School.

Are uniforms being required for students?

Yes, uniforms are still required for students who attend in-person learning in our schools.

If I decide to send my kids to school but end up feeling not comfortable with it, am I able to change my mind and go back to DLP?

At this time, we are asking that parents make a decision for the semester or half-year (through the end of January).

Will there be movement breaks from sitting at their desks all day? Will they be able to get up and stretch? What happens in the winter?

At the elementary level, the teachers will plan movement breaks for students. They will still also have physical education included into their daily schedule.

How does this plan support the children who naturally need to socialize to learn & from this plan who might be penalized for not following protocol?

EHPS will work with our staff to help them distinguish between students who are socializing and those who are being defiant and unsafe.

Will siblings be on the same schedule within the same school? Will we have a choice?

EHPS will do its best to keep students within the same family on the same schedule, should we have to implement a hybrid or reduction schedule.

Will schools conduct orientation?

The district is in the process of developing an opening of school schedule to orient new and returning students to the changes they can expect when they return to in-person learning this fall.

Will the district have parents sign a waiver that the school is not responsible in the event a child gets COVID-19?

No, a waiver like this is not considered a legal document.

Technology

Will laptops be offered to students that choose DLP?

At this time, EHPS plans to issue all students a Chromebook or laptop to support their learning.

Will technology support be available for all students?

Yes, students will have access to device support from the Information Technology Department through an email address.

Will laptops/Chromebooks be given to in school students as well?

Yes, students who attend school in the building will also receive a device and will be expected to take it home daily, should we need to transition rapidly into distance learning for all students.

Will those laptops and Chromebooks be handed out at the beginning of the year so we can be prepared in the case of a sudden shutdown?

Yes, the devices will be issued to students at the start of the school year so that students can familiarize themselves with the technology and the teachers' expectations, as well as the online platform (Google Classroom) where they will be accessing their assignments.

Special Populations

Will there be additional assistance for students who have special needs and are considering distance learning?

Distance learning will be provided in the fall 2020, similarly to how distance learning was provided in the spring 2020. The IEP is the program for a child that is to be followed. An Educational Opportunity Plan will be developed based on the IEP. This can be accomplished either through an amendment to the IEP or a PPT being convened to discuss a plan. Services for the child will be discussed at that PPT.

How will IEPs and specialized services be provided through the DLP?

IEPs will be delivered online through an Educational Opportunity Plan.

What happens to the children who will be distance learning but also have services as far as seeing their social workers who pull them out of class?

For children who are participating in online learning, their social work services will need to be delivered online.

How will speech therapy be delivered, and how that will work with masks blocking the mouths of students and staff?

Speech therapy for children who are physically present can be accomplished with the therapist and the child seated at least 6 feet apart. If this is not possible, the therapy can be delivered in an online format.

Facilities/Operations

Does CIBA follow the East Hartford guidelines given it's an inter-district/lottery school?

Yes, CIBA is an East Hartford Public School, and as such, it follows the guidelines for those schools that fall within the district and town.

Will school buses be provided for students that return to school in January?

Yes, EHPS will provide transportation for these students.

What is the plan for classrooms that do not have air conditioning?

Open windows are actually the best suggestion for ventilation in these circumstances.

Will school buses be at capacity? Will there be someone to monitor wearing masks?

Current conditions in Connecticut allow buses to run at near capacity. Bus operators will be required to wear masks, as will all of the students who ride on them. EHPS will address non-compliance circumstances as they arise.

Will there be sports?

At this time, the CIAC is planning to have fall sports.

Social Emotional Support

Is EHPS set up to deal with the mental health of the kid who comes home with COVID and gives it to someone at home?

EHPS has trained social workers and psychologists who work in all of our schools. Several schools also include School Based Health Centers that are staffed with trained social workers.

How will the Social-Emotional Learning curriculum be delivered? Will it be a part of both online and in-class learning?

Currently, EHPS has a SEL curriculum for all students in grades PreK-12. This is delivered in each school in a different way. Elementary school students learn from their classroom teacher. Middle and high school students receive lessons through an Advisory or Connections period which is delivered by one of their classroom teachers. Students who participate in remote learning may be asked to watch pre-recorded videos and complete specific readings.

Health and Safety

How do absences due to COVID-19 or the need to self-quarantine affect student absence policies and credits?

Absences due to COVID-19 will not have a negative impact on student absences and/or credits.

How often do the teachers clean their classrooms and high touch areas? every hour?

High-touch areas within the school will be cleaned throughout the day. Classrooms will be cleaned at the end of every school day.

What cleaning products will be used?

No “new” cleaning products have been introduced in the school buildings. The Facilities staff uses a hospital-grade disinfectant as part of an Ecolab chemical suite which includes environmentally friendly “Green Seal” products. Product information is available in the form of Safety Data Sheets (SDS) at each school building.

Will there be extra staff on the buses to ensure that children are social distancing and keeping their masks on?

At this time, we do not anticipate having staff on the buses. Staff is always assigned to monitor arrival and dismissal. This year, students will be dismissed from school in small cohorts to ensure that they do not gather into large groups, but instead load the bus in an orderly and safe manner.

Will masks be required for all students? Will the district supply them if needed?

Masks will be required for all students, with the exception of those who have a documented health issue in which wearing a face covering restricts their breathing. EHPS request that students bring a mask from home; however, the district will provide a mask to any student who needs one.

If students are placed in an isolation room, will there be a staff member present?

Any child who is experiencing COVID-19 like-symptoms will be temporarily placed in an isolation room until he/she can be picked up by a parent or guardian. This space will be supervised by the school nurse or designee.