



CHARLEROI

AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

RETURN TO SCHOOL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The purpose of this document is to offer answers to many of your frequently asked questions. While it may not provide all specific details, the administrative team is working tirelessly to prepare for this school year in partnership with our community and our staff.

WHAT IF I HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS THAT AREN'T ANSWERED HERE?

- Contact your child's building principal via email or by phone. Contact information can be found by visiting Charleroisd.org.

CALENDAR

- **When will a final decision be made by the district?**
 - The district's Return to School plan will be approved by the school board on Tuesday, July 28, 2020. The plan will be posted on the district website after that meeting.

REOPENING GUIDELINES

- **Why is Charleroi unable to open 5-days a week to all students?**
 - Currently, the social distancing guidelines in place from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania prohibit us from being able to provide all social distancing (such as 6-foot of space when unmasked and eating).
- **Which option should I choose?**
 - As educators, we believe that it is impossible to replace in-person instruction. It is our recommendation that your child enrolls in the "A/B Schedule" option.
 - We also understand that may not meet your family's situation, which is why we are offering the Charleroi Online Learning Academy option.
- **How will I notify the district of the choice of educational options for my child?**
 - Parents will be asked to complete a digital form to notify the district of their choice of educational options.
 - If you do not complete the form for your student, they will automatically be enrolled in the "A/B Schedule" option.

A/B SCHEDULE

- **When and how will I know if my child/children are in Group A or in Group B?**
 - While it is a massive project, our administrative team is working tirelessly to prepare this information as quickly as we can. This information will be mailed home prior to the start of the school year.
- **Will siblings be able to follow the same A/B schedule?**
 - Yes! All siblings within a household (K-12) will be scheduled on the same day.
- **Why was Friday chosen as the day of online learning?**

- By Friday of each week, all students will have received the necessary instruction in order to successfully complete online assignments.
- Historically, student absences are much higher on Friday. Working from home on Friday will help to avoid students missing one of their two days of face to face instruction.
- **What can I do to help prepare my child for school?**
 - Help model healthy behaviors such as social distancing, proper mask-wearing, and proper handwashing. Practice wearing masks prior to the start of the school year.
 - Start to reestablish a routine (consistent bedtimes and wake times) approximately one week prior to the start of school.
- **Given the effects of online school or in-person guidelines (such as social distancing and masks), how will the district address making school engaging and fun?**
 - Our teachers are skilled with meeting the needs of our students. We believe that we can still deliver engaging and fun instruction, while still providing support for those students who need it. Our school counselors and social workers remain available to all students who need access to them.
- **If we choose to start in the Hybrid option but choose to transition our student to the Charleroi Online Learning Academy option later, what would that transition look like? Will there only be certain periods of the school year where that can happen?**
 - Yes. Students will be able to migrate in and out of options in a fluid fashion..
 - The goal of our online program is to mimic our in-person instruction and curriculum.
 - This will allow your child to change your choice fluidly between the hybrid and online options at any time.
 - Please notify your child's school counselor if you would like to change your instructional option.
- **If school is closed on Monday, would my child attend face-to-face on Friday to compensate?**
 - If schools are scheduled to be closed, there will not be a make-up day for the week. EXAMPLE: If school is scheduled to be closed on Labor Day, group A will only attend on Tuesday that week.
- **Will we be able to choose our set of days due to family/job circumstances?**
 - The administration is currently working to develop the schedule and the days of attendance for specific students. Siblings will be scheduled to attend on the same days. The administration will certainly consider the request.
- **Can classes occur outside instead of inside the building?**
 - Weather permitting, yes. All 3 buildings have significant outdoor spaces in which instruction in a variety of subject areas could occur.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

- If my child has an IEP can they attend face to face with their support teacher with both groups?
 - Yes. If your child has an IEP, he/she will have the option to attend all 4 days that the building is open. However, every student will have online instruction on Friday during the A - B schedule. In addition, during red, online instruction will be mandated.

CHARLEROI ONLINE LEARNING ACADEMY

- **What will the Charleroi Online Learning Academy platform look like?**
 - The Charleroi Online Learning Academy platform will mimic our in-person instruction and curriculum. Online learning is synchronous and asynchronous instruction.
 - This is not going to be like the cyber program offered during the statewide shutdown at the end of the 2019–20 school year.
 - Charleroi is investing in hardware, software, programming, and staff development to provide an exceptional online educational experience.
- **What is expected of me as a parent if my child is part of the online program?**
 - Research shows that no matter the provider of online education, your child will need adult assistance at home to be successful.
- **Will there be a schedule for the school day through the online option? Specific times for specific areas of coursework?**
 - Yes, the brick and mortar classroom activities will attempt to mimic instruction occurring in the online platform.
 - Students who choose the online option will have an opportunity to work in both synchronous and asynchronous educational platform.
- **Will teachers be offered training to conduct online instruction should we suddenly have to transition as we did in March?**
 - Absolutely. Nearly all professional development prior to the school year will be focused on COVID-19 safeguards and online instruction.
- **Will my child need to attend on a daily basis?**
 - Yes. Per the Pennsylvania Department of Education, all students must participate in 180 days of instruction for the 2020–21 school year.
 - Daily lessons will build upon each other so it is essential to stay on track with the assigned workload.
- **My child is enrolled in the Charleroi Online Learning Academy, but I want to switch to the “Hybrid” option. What group will he/she be in?**
 - All students will be scheduled to a group “A” or “B,” even if they are enrolled in Charleroi Online Learning Academy.
 - You will receive communication about your child’s group at the same time as those in the “Hybrid” plan.
- **Would there be an opportunity for a student who is struggling to attend both A and B days (meaning 4 days/week)?**
 - No. Students will have access to a variety of supports in both settings. We remain committed to your child’s success.
- **Would “live” online classes allow the students to see the teachers lecturing to the opposite group?**
 - It is our intention to offer a variety of experiences. The district is pursuing a platform that will allow students to interact with the teachers.
- **What supports are available via Charleroi Online Learning Academy to my child?**
 - Teachers are available via email, by phone, or by appointment.
 - All Charleroi students have access to their school counselor and/or social workers.

- **How much of the school day would be the live teacher instruction?**
 - Live instruction will be available to students in the online setting.
 - Live instruction may mimic the delivery of instruction in the classroom.
- **Will all the class offerings be available via Online Learning?**
 - Most classes will be offered via Online Learning, including, but not limited to, CHS, Honors, and Advanced Placement. Challenges exist, however, with some courses which require "hands-on" experiences including but not limited to Art, Engineering, and Instrumental Music.
- **If we choose to start in the Charleroi Online Learning Academy option but choose to transition our child to the Hybrid option later, what would that transition look like? Will there only be certain periods of the school year where that can happen?**
 - The goal of our Online Learning Academy is to mimic our in-person instruction and curriculum, meaning that they get the same lessons on the same days.
 - This will allow your child to change easily between the hybrid and online options at any time.
 - Please notify your child's counselor if you would like to change your instructional option.
- **Will parents be able to preview the online platform before having to make a decision?**
 - When we finalize the coursework and delivery platform, parents will be able to examine the offering.
- **Will my child need to spend 7 hours a day on his/her device?**
 - The amount of instructional time will depend on many factors, including your child's age, the content to be delivered, and the means with which the teacher is delivering such material.
 - As a rule of thumb, younger students will have less screen time than their older counterparts.

SANITATION/STERILIZATION PROCEDURES

- **What steps is the district taking to ensure the facility is clean?**
 - Charleroi has invested in state-of-the-art cleaning technology that will kill viruses both in the air and on surfaces. This is now a regular part of our cleaning routines.
 - The district will be cleaning all facilities nightly, limiting visitors and outside groups from using facilities, and cleaning frequently-touched surfaces throughout the day.
 - Hand sanitizer will be available for use in all classrooms, cafeterias, and playground areas.

HEALTH

- **What happens if a student or teacher becomes symptomatic during school hours?**
 - First, the student or teacher will leave the classroom immediately and report to the nurse's office or designated room.
 - The nurse will assess the student/teacher, including a temperature check and questions about any pre-existing conditions that may explain the symptoms.
 - As the situation warrants, the nurse will contact a parent/guardian to arrange for transportation off-site.

- Staff and students with elevated temperatures will leave the building regardless of cause.
- The student or teacher's desk area will be sanitized prior to further usage.
- The student or teacher will need to follow the CDC and Pennsylvania Department of Health's guidance on returning to school.
- The school will continue to operate as normally as possible until additional information becomes available on the student or teacher's status. There are many common reasons other than COVID-19 that could explain someone not feeling well at any particular time. Notifications would not be warranted in the absence of further details.
- **Will students and staff have their temperatures checked upon entry?**
 - Students will NOT have their temperature checked upon entry. Students/parents/guardians/caregivers are required to perform a symptom screening prior to arriving at school or the bus stop each day. (Click the link for the [PDE Screening Tool](#))
 - Should a student or staff member show evidence of a fever exceeding 100.4° F in the nurse's office, proper health protocols will be followed for exclusion from school.
 - More details about this technology will be posted on our website at a later date.
- **A student tests positive for COVID-19. What are the next steps?**
 - Due to safeguards put in place (such as minimal movement and assigned seating), we will be able to better trace potential contacts between the infected person and other persons with whom that person had contact.
 - We will work with the Pennsylvania Department of Education and local health agencies to determine the extent of needs to isolate/quarantine.
 - All policies regarding confidentiality will be followed.
- **Protocol for a Confirmed Case on Campus**
 - Notify DOH or local health officials and emergency management personnel.
 - Determine if a temporary suspension (2-5 days) of in-person instruction is warranted.
 - Clean and disinfect all areas thoroughly per CDC guidance
 - Communicate case or exposure information with students, staff, and faculty.
 - Ensure continuity of education and research for all those impacted by any temporary suspension of in-person operations.
 - Ensure continuity of safe housing for affected students.
 - If individuals were in close contact with someone who became infected with the disease, follow CDC guidance
 - Work with local public health officials, if possible, to determine when routine operations can resume on campus

[Access additional CDC guidance on dealing with confirmed cases on campus.](#)

- **If and when we get a vaccine, will it be a requirement for school? Or optional, like the flu vaccine?**
 - Vaccination requirements are set by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, not the local school district.

- If/when a vaccine is created, should the Pennsylvania Departments of Health and Education mandate such a vaccine, it will follow the same laws regarding school vaccinations as all other required vaccines.
- **What will be the protocol if a student or staff member tests positive or has exposure to someone that tests positive?**
 - In every building, we will identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms.
 - School nurses and other healthcare providers should use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for sick people.
 - Safety procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick home or to a healthcare facility, are developed and will be instituted.
 - Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.
 - Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use them before cleaning and disinfection. Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure the safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
 - Advise sick staff members and children not to return until they have met state DOH criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- **Will there be a protocol for a student or staff member that travels/vacations during the school year? (e.g. Negative tests, temperature taking, quarantine)?**
 - Inform those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to follow CDC, DPH, and other governmental guidelines if symptoms develop. If a person does not have symptoms, follow appropriate state DPH guidance for home quarantine.
 - Follow CDC, DPH, and other governmental guidelines concerning travel restrictions and follow-up requirements for individuals returning home from traveling.
 - During any period of recommended isolation, students will have access to instruction through the Charleroi Online Learning Academy.
- **What if my child has allergies or another chronic medical condition that often mimics some of these same symptoms?**
 - Parents should communicate ahead of time (if possible) with the school nurse and alert them to these conditions so that a plan is in place in the event symptoms develop during school. For example, in order to differentiate between asthma and COVID-19 related shortness of breath, when a student uses his/her inhaler, the symptoms should improve as expected. Or a student with chronic allergies having a mild cough and runny nose whose symptoms may be explained through clear improvement with an antihistamine

ATTENDANCE

- **Will attendance be tracked in the same way as it has in the past? If a student is COVID-19 positive, they will exceed 10 days of absence.**
 - Should a student test positive for COVID-19, we will work with the family to obtain medical documentation that shows the need for the absence.

- We are working with other districts and the Pennsylvania Department of Education to determine what flexibility can be provided while still meeting our legal mandate.
- An update relevant to this year will be provided once a comprehensive review is complete.

MASKS

- **Will the district make masks or face coverings mandatory for students/staff and enforce it?**
 - The District will be adhering to Governor Wolf's mandatory mask-wearing order as long as it remains in effect. Acceptable coverings are outlined in the order issued by the Secretary of Health, Dr. Rachel Levine: ([Link](#))
 - Children two years and older are required to wear a face-covering unless they have a medical or mental health condition or disability, documented in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or IDEA, that precludes the wearing of a face covering in school. Accommodations for such students should be made in partnership with the student's health care provider, school nurse, and IEP/504 team.
 - Additionally, the District will be providing face shields for students and staff as an option and masks for those who do not have their own. Please note that students will have ample/scheduled opportunities to remove their face covering and will be granted breaks as requested.
- **If mandatory, what will happen if a student or staff member refuses to wear a mask?**
 - All students and staff in attendance at school are expected to follow all CDC and Pennsylvania Department of Health guidelines regarding masks.
- **If everyone is required to wear a face shield, can the shields be left at school to be sanitized daily? This would allow for proper cleaning and also eliminate anyone forgetting to bring it to school each day.**
 - No, students will be required to wear or have their face mask or other devices with them at all times. The school will sanitize school equipment and other items. Charleroi will not engage in cleaning student or staff devices.
 - If students are required to wear the mask or other device on the bus and they do not have one with them a mask will be provided for them.

TRANSPORTATION

- **Will school-provided transportation be available or will it be up to the parents to drop off and pick up?**
 - Charleroi will continue to offer bus transportation for those who need it.
 - Parents are encouraged to drive their children to and from school when possible.
 - To the extent possible, we will attempt to socially distance all students while riding district transportation.
 - We also support your decision to transport your child to school rather than have him/her ride the bus.
- **If a bus driver tests positive, what will be the protocol for the students that were on that bus?**

- The same guidelines for teachers or any other individual who would test positive will be followed.
- Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.
- Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use it before cleaning and disinfection. Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure the safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
- Advise sick staff members and children not to return until they have met state DOH criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- **How often will buses be sanitized?**
 - Buses will be sanitized at least once daily.
 - When possible, we will encourage the opening of windows and roof vents to maximize ventilation within the bus.

FOOD SERVICE

- **Will my child go through serving lines to get food?**
 - At both school buildings, breakfast lines will be pre-packaged/grab-and-go. The serving lines will be set up in the hallways.
 - Social distancing will be enforced during any and all foodservice distribution.
- **Will my child still scan their finger and use a code to pay for his/her food?**
 - No. We are testing contactless options. A student ID with a barcode will be used to register a student lunch. Elementary students will keep one in school and have an additional one to attach to their backpacks for breakfast.
- **How will payments be handled if there is no contact in the serving lines?**
 - The preferred method will be through the online payment system through schoolcafe.com This will provide the safest and most accurate way to ensure your child has funding for their school cafeteria account.
 - A secondary option will be a money drop box located at the school entrance. The money/check will need to be included in an envelope with the students' names and homeroom teacher, along with the total cash/check contents and a phone number to contact for discrepancies clearly written on the outside.
 - The Charleroi Area School District is not responsible for any lost funds in this process and **strongly recommends utilizing the schoolcafe.com option.**
 - Please note that all students can not ever be denied a full school lunch even in the absence of money on their accounts. Parents/guardians are still held accountable for any outstanding lunch debt.
- **Will the students receive meals for Friday?**
 - The district is reviewing the potential for this now.
 - Currently, there has not been any State or Federal level guidance on if the free feeding program will continue after summer.
- **Will I need to fill out a free and reduced application?**

- At this time, **YES** and it is highly recommended in the event that the state once again approves the distribution of additional funding provided directly to approved families.
- **How will social distancing be practiced in the cafeterias?**
 - New tables have been purchased in the HS/MS. These tables have attached seats which the district will remove enough to keep the students apart.
 - At the Elementary Center assigned seating markers will be placed on bench seats. The table with chairs, half will be removed so students can practice social distancing while eating.

ELEMENTARY-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- **What is the plan for outdoor recess?**
 - Scheduled recess will be facilitated by individual teachers. The enforcement of social distancing will occur during recess time. The playground equipment will be off-limits as we try to reduce/eliminate the use of shared items. Students will not be permitted to use any type of ball during recess. Students and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after being at recess.
- **What is the plan for indoor recess?**
 - Indoor recess can occur while following social distancing guidelines.
- **How will students be kept from sharing items?**
 - The district provides supplies for students who need them. Student belongings should be placed in the individual student's desk, cubby, pencil box, or book bag.
- **Given the requirements for social distancing, how will it be enforced in classes, hallways, cafeteria, gym, library, recess, buses, etc.?**
 - Mobility during the day will be limited, as students will remain in their classrooms for the majority of the day.
 - During unstructured time, classroom teachers will provide guidance and reinforce appropriate social distancing protocols.
 - Traffic flow in hallways will be based upon each school's individual layout. Your child's building principal will work with the staff to communicate these expectations to students.
- **What is the plan for pick up/drop off? Will it be set for different times to limit everyone being there all at once?**
 - At this time, there is no planned change to arrival and dismissal times.
 - However, the specifics about pick-up and drop-off locations and procedures may change, based upon the school's specific layout.
 - Your child's building principal will inform you if any changes need made.
- **How will itinerant classes be handled?**
 - We are committed to a well-rounded education. As of now, all of these classes will occur. We are exploring all available options to deliver these classes to your child.
- **What will lunch look like?**
 - Please see the above food service section.
- **What is the plan for field trips, assemblies, volunteers, and holiday parties?**
 - At this time, building access will be limited to students and Charleroi Area staff.

- Currently, there are no plans for in-person field trips, school-wide assemblies, open houses, in-school volunteers, or holiday parties.

MIDDLE SCHOOL-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- **Will desks be wiped after every period?**
 - Charleroi has invested in state-of-the-art cleaning technology that will kill viruses both in the air and on surfaces. This is now a regular part of our cleaning routines. All classrooms will be equipped with disinfectant wipes for teachers and students to use.
- **Will my child change classes?**
 - Yes, students will follow their schedules and move classes. The students will move in one direction like the road system.
- **Does the district have an idea of what class sizes you are aiming for?**
 - Class sizes due to the A/B Day rotation will range from 5 to 15 students.

HIGH SCHOOL-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- **Will there be multiple classes for AP-level sections since it is required (but social distancing dictates how many can be in a room)?**
 - All classes will be split on the A/B schedule limiting the number of students in a classroom in one class period.
- **Will desks be wiped after every period?**
 - Classes will be equipped with all the proper materials to complete a quick, limited wipe down of frequently-touched areas and that will occur between periods if the students change classrooms.
- **Will my child change classes?**
 - Yes, students will change classes based on their individual student schedules.
- **Does the district have an idea of what class sizes you are aiming for?**
 - Class sizes due to the A/B Day rotation will be an average of 12 to 16 students depending on the physical size of the classroom.
- **Will MVCTC students attend 5 days or the same as Charleroi (A/B Day)?**
 - Charleroi students who attend the MVCTC will still attend during the 2020-2021 school year, regardless of the selection of education (hybrid or full online instruction).
 - MVCTC is currently developing a plan to meet the needs of all MVCTC students that adheres to all current safety guidelines and mandates.
 - Charleroi will provide transportation for students to attend MVCTC.
- **What is the Student Parking Plan?**
 - Qualifying students will be given the opportunity to apply for a **free** parking permit. The \$10.00 fee for parking will be **waived** during the 2020-2021 school year.
 - They will need all of the following items: a picture of his/her valid driver's license.
 - Parking permit applications will be accepted **online only**. The application will be posted on the Charleroi High School website in the near future.

