

School Reopening 2020:
**Final
Framework**



Reopening Schools in a Safe and Responsible Manner



Table of Contents

Letter to Families from Chief Executive Officer Dr. Janice K. Jackson and
Chief Education Officer LaTanya D. McDade

Executive Summary

A flexible plan for the year ahead

Our recommendation

NEW: Remote Learning: What will learning at home look like?

- Preparing to Learn at Home
- Remote Learning Expectations
- How do these new expectations compare to remote learning in Spring 2020?
- Equitable access to technology and the internet

Hybrid learning model

Keeping Students and Staff Safe

CPS health and safety protocols

Letter to Families from Chief Executive Officer Dr. Janice K. Jackson and Chief Education Officer LaTanya D. McDade

Dear CPS Families,

Our top priority in planning for the fall has been to provide a high-quality education for every child while keeping our school communities healthy and safe. As educators and dedicated education professionals, we all want students to be in school, but at this time, the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) believes that current COVID-19 transmission trends would not allow us to reopen schools in a safe and responsible manner. After carefully considering their guidance and hearing feedback from our families and community members, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) will begin the year learning at home through at least the end of the first quarter.

This framework builds upon the preliminary framework we released earlier this summer and reflects the thoughtful feedback we received from parents and families. In this document, you will find new sections detailing our plan to improve upon the remote learning experience from last spring, how we will increase equitable access to technology, and what students should expect during a normal school day learning at home. In the accompanying [remote learning guidance](#), you will find more details on how we are supporting our most high-needs students including Diverse Learners and English Language Learners.

Lessons learned in the spring to improve remote learning for students

Students will be learning at home this fall, and we're committed to providing students with an engaging learning experience that significantly improves upon what students and families experienced last year. Here are just a few of the changes we will be making this fall to improve remote learning:

- Rather than providing a recommended amount of time for daily student academic engagement, students should expect to be engaged for the entirety of a typical school day, five days per week, through a combination of live real-time instruction with their classmates and teacher, small group activities with their classmates, and independent learning.
- We will help students develop routines by establishing daily expectations, including tracking classroom attendance and completed graded assignments.
- To help students engage more easily in online learning, all students will use Google Suite tools on a daily basis while learning at home.
- We will provide a greater level of support to our teachers to ensure they are implementing remote learning practices that are responsive to student needs.

Expanding equitable access to technology and the internet

We know students need consistent access to devices and high-speed internet to be successful while learning at home, and we are committed to providing devices for all students. Last school year, we distributed more than 128,000 computing devices to students, and we will provide an additional 36,000 devices to children who still need them prior to the start of school. We will continue to monitor our students' needs and ensure students in need have access to devices.

Over the summer, we also began offering high-speed internet access at no cost to approximately 100,000 CPS students from limited-income backgrounds through our [Chicago Connected](#) initiative. Families eligible for this program have been contacted individually, and 35 community-based organizations are working to get students connected prior to the start of the school year. Families can check their eligibility for the program and access their activation code by simply entering their child's student ID number and birthdate into our eligibility tool at cps.edu/chicagoconnected.

We remain committed to helping every student reach their full potential, even under these unprecedented circumstances, and we are confident that with your support, CPS will remain a school district on the rise. Prior to the beginning of the second quarter, we will assess the state of COVID-19 and the safety of switching to a hybrid learning model that is outlined in this framework. Thank you for helping make our plans for the 2020–21 school year as strong as possible.



Janice K. Jackson, EdD
Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools



LaTanya D. McDade
Chief Education Officer
Chicago Public Schools



Executive Summary

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is committed to providing high-quality instruction in a learning environment that prioritizes the health, safety, and social and emotional needs of our students and staff. To balance these objectives, CPS considered several learning models for beginning the 2020–21 school year. While each scenario has its own challenges and benefits, the district developed a reopening plan that aligns with the commitments and core values outlined in our Five-Year Vision, [Success Starts Here](#), and the guidance of the city’s public health officials. These are the **guiding principles** for our reopening guidance:

- **The health and wellness of students and staff is our highest priority**
 - The health and wellness of the CPS community remains our highest priority, and we will make every effort to provide teachers and students with pre-existing health conditions the ability to safely participate in school activities.
- **All students have a high-quality learning experience**
 - Students’ academic progress must be protected despite changes to the learning environment.

- **High-need students are supported**
 - As part of our commitment to equity, every student must be able to participate in learning, whether at home or in school. CPS will identify and respond to inequities and differences in opportunities among our student population.
- **The needs of the whole child and staff are met**
 - The physical, social, and emotional needs of our students and educators are a district priority. This past year has presented our students and teachers with unprecedented challenges, and we will focus on reducing anxiety related to COVID-19 as well as building a supportive community.
- **The evolving needs of the CPS community due to COVID-19 and racial injustice are addressed**
 - The COVID-19 public health emergency illuminates historical inequities experienced by our students and communities of color. CPS' mission is centered on achieving educational and health equity. We will continue to engage and collaborate with students, parents, staff, and community partners to better understand and respond to our community's evolving needs in relation to impacts of COVID-19 and the demonstrations and social actions responding to racial injustice.
- **Stakeholders are informed and know what to expect**
 - Guidelines for the current school year are transparent, accessible, and easily understood by all members of our community.

What we heard

Through multiple surveys and focus groups administered over the summer, we heard from our students, families, and staff on their thoughts, concerns, and priorities for resuming school this fall.

We conducted 22 family focus groups across the city, with an emphasis on engaging families on the South, West, and Southwest Sides and parents of English learners and diverse learners, in order to better understand the unique challenges they may face as we plan for the fall.

Through surveys, we heard from over 58,000 parents on their experiences with remote learning in the spring. CPS also convened a group of over 100 district and school leaders to participate in our reopening task force to develop proposed learning models for the fall of 2020. The reopening task force was composed of 11 priority groups focused on key educational and operational areas who emphasized the need to:

