

Reopening Plan Fall 2020

Ellington Middle School



Table of Contents

- [Message from the Co-Principals](#)
- [EMS Key Mitigation Strategies](#)
- [Grouping of Middle School Students \(Cohorts\)](#)
 - [Arriving to School](#)
 - [Entering the School Building](#)
 - [Late Arrival/Early Dismissal](#)
 - [Dismissal from School](#)
 - [Breakfast and Lunch](#)
 - [Hallways](#)
 - [Bathroom Use & Water Breaks](#)
 - [Masks & Mask Breaks](#)
 - [Bus Transportation](#)
 - [Sanitation and Cleaning Protocols](#)
 - [Attendance and Reporting Absences](#)
 - [Health Information](#)
 - [The Counseling Office](#)
 - [The Main Office](#)
 - [Student Belongings & Materials](#)
 - [Athletics & Extracurricular Activities](#)
- [Special Education & Intervention Services](#)
 - [Five Day in Person Plan](#)
 - [Hybrid Plan - Purple and Gold Groups](#)
 - [Full Distance Learning Plan](#)
 - [Distance Learning Opt In - Silver Group](#)
 - [The First Week of School](#)
- [Distance Learning - Student Expectations](#)
 - [Physical Education](#)
 - [Music - Band/Chorus/General Music](#)
 - [District and State Resources](#)

Message from the Co-Principals

Dear Ellington Middle School Community,

As the first day of school for the 2020-2021 school year quickly approaches we know it comes with a mix of emotions. The process of reopening schools has been filled with such rapid change it has been difficult to comprehend. The simple fact that we are using the term “reopening” and “school” in the same phrase is in itself shocking. Back in early March it was inconceivable that schools would ever be “closed” for anything other than a scheduled break. This pandemic has caused us to quickly consider a reality that previously never seemed possible.

While the rapid change to education has been disorienting and confusing at times, we reopen schools with a sense of optimism and hope. The young people we are lucky to call our students are as inspiring as they have ever been. In just a few short months, we’ve witnessed our students adapt, persist and show incredible grace during these unforeseen challenges. Through virtual lunches, student council meetings on zoom, car parades and live streamed awards assemblies, our community of learners has found creative ways to stay connected. We have no doubt we will continue to innovate and connect, regardless of cohorts, distance learning, or other changes we experience in the future.

This year we will be anchoring our work in the [Ellington Seeds of Civility](#). This document serves as an important foundation for our collective efforts to work in the best interests of the children of Ellington. While we may disagree with certain perspectives or ideas, we also know that every teacher, student, parent and community member in Ellington brings with them what they believe is in the best interests of our students. We share a common goal together, and only together will we be able to meet the challenges of this time.

The pages that follow are the best efforts of the Ellington Middle School staff to welcome our students back to school. Our priority will always be the safety of students and staff. This plan takes the guidance from the [Ellington Public Schools Reopening Plan](#) and the [CSDE Reopening Plan](#) and puts it into action at the school level. We hope you find many of your unanswered questions addressed in this document and it offers a more clear glimpse into how our school will safely open its doors to students this year. We continue to welcome additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us with anything that is on your mind.

We look forward to the year ahead. It will be different, but in many ways the same as always with amazing teachers, awe inspiring students, and a caring and supportive community.

Sincerely,

Michele Murray and Michael Nash
EMS Co-Principals

Key EMS Mitigation Strategies

The middle school will be using a variety of strategies in combination and aligned with the “Three Ws: Wear, Wash, & Watch” to reduce the spread of the virus. These strategies include:

- a. Requiring the use of masks by all students and staff members
- b. Cohorting students into groups
- c. Practicing good hygiene and hand washing
- d. Staggering passing times and reducing the number of students in the hallways
- e. Maximizing the space of classroom layouts & furniture to support social distancing
- f. All students and staff will be provided a plexiglass barrier to place around their work area
- g. Daily cleaning of each classroom and twice daily cleaning of bathrooms
- h. Wiping/cleaning of desk surfaces or shared materials between use. Use of gloves for shared materials will be used if wiping/cleaning is not appropriate

Grouping of Middle School Students (Cohorts)

EMS students will be grouped into 20 cohorts (5 cohorts per team) and assigned to a homeroom classroom and attend all classes together, with the exception of students receiving specialized instruction. These cohorts will be assigned within each team, with students organized by their world language selection. This strategy will be used to minimize student interactions with students in other cohorts during the school day.

Cohorts will continue to switch classrooms in order to provide the most effective in person instruction by maintaining classroom spaces such as the use of science labs, unified arts spaces, and access to classroom materials and resources specific to content areas. Protocols for [hallway passing](#) including teachers escorting students to their next classroom will be used to further support providing a safe environment as students use the hallway. Finally, cohorts will eat lunch in their A block cohort classroom or together as a cohort using an alternative space in the school. The location for cohort lunches will be determined by the model being used by Ellington Public Schools ([Full in Person](#) or [Hybrid](#))

AM Arrival to School

Students may begin arriving at school at 7:30 am and should be in their homeroom class by 7:50 am. This allows a 20 minute window for drop off to allow for staggered entry into the building.

To accommodate the expected increased traffic flow of parent drop offs as well as reduce the amount of students entering the building at a time, we will be splitting parent drop off into two groups.

7th grade parents will use the neighboring church parking lot for drop off, entering the parking lot via the eastern most entrance (farthest from the school) and looping around the church to drop off at the other parking lot entrance closest to the school. Students will use the sidewalk to walk the remaining distance to school. A staff member will be positioned nearby this dropoff point to assist.

8th grade parents will enter the EMS parking lot and stay straight to pull up as far as possible before dropping off by the gymnasium entrance. After drop offs parents will continue to loop around and follow signage to exit the parking lot.

In addition to assigned EMS staff at drop off locations to help with directions and to ensure student safety we will also be using a school resource officer to further assist with traffic flow.

For the 20-21 school year students will utilize one of 4 assigned entrances to the building based on the following:

Grade 8 Bus Students - Bus Entrance Door 2 (closest to the main office)

Grade 7 Bus Students - Bus Entrance Door 1 (closest to the soccer field)

Grade 7 Walkers & Drop Offs - Main entrance (via sidewalk from church) Door 3

Grade 8 Walkers & Drop Offs - Gymnasium Entrance Door 4

Students will not be allowed to congregate outside the entrances prior to 7:30am as in previous years. In order to prevent this, parents should not drop students off at school until 7:30am and walkers should plan their route to avoid arriving earlier than 7:30am.

Entering the School Building

At the beginning of the school year, each student is assigned to a homeroom and a homeroom teacher. Upon arrival to school, students will be visibly checked for signs of illness by staff members at each entrance. Any student exhibiting visible symptoms will be immediately sent to the nurse's office. Students will be expected to enter the school wearing a mask or will be provided with one upon entry.

Homeroom ends at 7:50 a.m and all students are expected to be present in homeroom by 7:50 a.m. All students are required to go to their homerooms upon entering the building or immediately after breakfast in the cafeteria. Students are not allowed to wander the building or congregate during homeroom. Daily attendance will be taken in homeroom at 7:50 am.

Late Arrival and Early Dismissal

Students arriving late to school (after the 7:50 am bell) or parents picking their student up early from school (prior to 2:13 pm) should follow the following protocol:

- Parents should park their car in the visitor parking area and go to the main entrance of the building.
- Through the intercom the parent must state who they are and who they are dropping off/picking up along with a reason for the late arrival or early dismissal.
- The EMS Office staff will sign student in/out.

- Student ONLY is then buzzed in/out and goes directly to cohort classroom or to parent. Office staff will call into the room to let the teacher know the student will be entering the classroom if the student is arriving late.
- Parents will not be allowed into the building during this process at any point.
- If parents have something to drop off for their student, the office staff will meet them at the entrance to collect the materials.

Dismissal From School

Students will be dismissed from school from their last period classroom. In order to reduce the number of students in the hallways at dismissal, students will be dismissed from their class using a staggered dismissal:

2:11 - Panthers bus students dismissed by PA (exit 1)

2:13 - Lions bus students dismissed by PA (exit 2)

2:15 - Jaguars bus students dismissed by PA (exit 1)

2:17 - Tigers bus students dismissed by PA (exit 2)

2:19 - Grade 8 (exit 4) walkers and pickups dismissed (gymnasium entrance)

2:21 - Grade 7 (exit 3) walkers and pickups dismissed (main entrance - church parking lot)

Parents of 8th grade students will use the gymnasium entrance to pick up students. Parents of 7th grade students will use the neighboring church parking lot for student pick up. Parents are encouraged to park if possible to avoid forming a pickup line that may cause further traffic.

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast

Students purchasing breakfast should go immediately to the cafeteria after entering the building. Students will eat breakfast in a designated socially-distanced area, then report immediately to their homeroom. Grab & Go breakfast options will be visible so students can make their selection and it will be handed to them by the cashier as the sale is processed.

Lunch

Students will submit a lunch order form during homeroom. Hot and cold options will be available daily, the menu will be available to view at www.ellingtonpublicschools.org/parents/food Pre-wrapped utensils and condiments will be provided with each meal. Students will not be permitted to share food or utensils.

The middle school will rotate on two lunch waves with 7th grade lunch starting at 10:59 am and 8th grade lunch at 11:25 am. The food service staff will deliver lunches to students who will be eating with their cohort. The location for where student cohorts eat lunch will depend on the model the school is using (5 day in

person or hybrid). Please see [Full 5 day schedule](#) and the [Hybrid model](#) for more information about lunch locations.

Initially upon reopening, there will be no “a la carte” options or snack purchases. Parents are strongly encouraged to add money to student accounts online via payschoolscentral.com or send in checks to the main office to eliminate cash handling. Information about free and reduced meal benefits can be found at www.ellingtonpublicschools.org/parents/food

Details regarding meal pick up for Distance Learning students and Hybrid students during Distance learning days will be available soon. Information including pick up days, times and locations will be emailed directly to parents and students as well as updated on the website www.ellingtonpublicschools.org/parents/food

Hallways

Students will be moving classrooms for instruction while staying in their cohort groups. See the [section on student groupings](#) for detailed information on this procedure. Expectations for students to move safely through hallways during passing times include having teachers walk cohorts to their next class, following hallway markings for directions, and limiting the number of students in the hallway by staggering the passing time by teams. The stairway by the 8th grade bathrooms will be an upstairs staircase, while the stairway by the world language classrooms will be an downstairs stairway.

Students will not be assigned lockers this year and will be able to use their backpacks to carry their personal items and chromebooks from class to class. A space will be provided in each homeroom for students to leave coats.

Bathroom Use & Water Breaks

- Each grade level will be assigned a specific bathroom to use on each floor and should use the appropriate bathroom depending on their class location.
- Each bathroom will be limited to two students at a time. There will be a sign on the door indicating the number of students in the bathroom. Students should mark this sign as appropriate as they enter/exit.
- If the bathroom has two students in it, the student will wait in a designated area outside the bathroom until someone leaves.
- Students will not congregate in the bathrooms and should wear masks and distance to the extent possible while in the bathroom.
- Students must wash hands after bathroom use.
- Teachers should not allow more than one student at a time to leave their classroom for either a bathroom or water break, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Bathrooms will be monitored regularly throughout the day and will be cleaned twice daily.

- Students must bring their own water bottle to school and may use the water fountain to fill their water bottle during the day. No one should be drinking directly from the water fountain at any time.

Masks & Mask Breaks

We are requiring all students and staff to wear a mask that covers both their mouth and nose at all times during the school day. Masks must meet the specifications outlined in the district reopening plan. Exceptions to this policy will be granted for documented medical reasons as outlined in the district plan.

There will be natural breaks in the school day where masks may be removed. These natural breaks include:

- When eating or drinking (breakfast, lunch).
- When outside and at an appropriate distance from others.
- When participating in activities as indicated by an EMS staff member (e.g. yoga, running pacers).

In addition - teachers are encouraged to take their classes outside for both instruction and appropriate breaks during the day where spacing can be maintained and students can remove masks as a “mask break”.

Students refusing to wear a mask, in the absence of any medical documentation on file, will be given a prompt to wear a mask and reminded of the policy. A second refusal to follow this important safety mandate will result in the student being sent home from school.

Masks will be provided to any student and staff who needs one upon entry to the building or throughout the day by request.

Bus Transportation

Due to the need to assign specific seats and to ensure social distancing on the busses, we are unable to issue bus passes to allow students to take a different bus home.

For additional information on bus transportation, [please see the EPS reopening plan](#).

Sanitation and Cleaning Protocols

The building will be thoroughly cleaned each day including areas such as classrooms and office spaces. Bathrooms will be cleaned twice daily including at least one time during the school day.

Students will be traveling for their classes. As such students will be wiping down their desks or work areas at the end of each period, to help ensure that the space is clean for the next student coming in. Incoming students will also have the option to clean their station upon arrival.

Gloves will be provided for students when using shared classroom materials such as guitars, drum sticks etc. All shared classroom material will be kept to a minimum and shared only when necessary.

Each student will be asked to use hand sanitizer upon arriving at each classroom which will be provided.

Attendance and Reporting Absences

EMS teachers will take attendance each period in all three potential models of instruction (full in person, hybrid, distance learning). While in person, students should be in their classroom at the start of the class to be considered present. While in a virtual setting (hybrid or distance learning) being present means being in the google meet video call at the assigned time. Students participating virtually in a class will be required to turn on their webcam during the attendance process to confirm their attendance.

If a student needs to be absent for all or part of a school day, even if that student is participating virtually, a parent/guardian must call the school attendance line and leave a message. For students absent without a parent phone call, our school nurse/attendance system will make one attempt to call a parent/guardian to confirm a reason for the absence. Any absence where a parent/guardian cannot be reached for verification will be considered unexcused.

Health Information

Health Information

Please err on the side of caution prior to sending your child to school. People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported and range from mild to severe. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

Daily home screening for Families and staff; checklist to decide prior to going to work or sending your child: [Click here](#)

Decision Tree for Families and staff; guidance of symptoms to decide to go to work or send your child to school: [Link to document](#)

Information on how to report illness and potential exposures including travel: [Click here](#)

If your child has any of the following symptoms **please** keep them home;

- Feeling feverish, chills, or a temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Uncontrolled new cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea, vomiting, (**if not associated with a known medical condition**)
- New unexpected loss of taste or smell
- Headaches, Fatigue, (**if not associated with a known medical condition**)
- Sore throat, (**if not associated with a known medical condition**)

Students or staff who attend school with any of the COVID-19 key symptoms listed above (unless those symptoms are associated with a documented medical condition) will be sent home and asked to quarantine.

Should your child need to be picked up from school due to any of these symptoms, you will need to arrive within 30 minutes. Please ensure you have a second option should you be unable to pick up your child within 30 minutes. Each building will have an isolation room for students who are exhibiting a fever or more than one of these symptoms until parents arrive. (See more information below)

Infection Control:

- **Social Distancing:**

- Is an essential component of infection control: Students and adults in the building need to remain aware of and maintain sufficient distance from each other at all times.
- Desk shields will be used in classrooms
- Will look different for different contexts:
 - When PPEs are effectively employed (masks, shields, etc.), students and staff need to still socially distance, when possible.
 - In the absence of PPEs, students and staff need to maintain a minimum social distance of 6 feet.

- **Hygiene:**

- Students and staff should wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Hand washing are recommended during following times
 - When entering/or leaving a classroom
 - Before and after eating
 - After using the bathroom
 - After coughing, sneezing or blowing a nose
 - After touching commonly touched items and/or surfaces (door handles, copier, etc.)
 - Before touching eyes, nose, or mouth
 - After recess
- Students and staff members will be asked to follow 5 steps every time they wash their hands
 - **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm)
 - **Apply** soap and lather your hands by rubbing them together with soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nail.
 - **Scrub** our hands for at least 20 seconds (sing the birthday song from beginning to end twice)
 - **Rinse** your hands well under the water.
 - **Dry** your hands using a clean paper towel
 - **Turn off** the faucet using a paper towel, discard the paper towel.
- When hand washing is not available, an alcohol based hand sanitizer can be utilized;
- Hand sanitizer will be placed in every classroom.

- Students and staff will be asked to follow the following steps when using hand sanitizer
 - **Apply** the hand sanitizer to one palm and lather your hands by rubbing them together. Be sure to later the backs of your hands, and between your fingers until dry
 - **Scrub** your hands until your hands are dry- approximately 20 seconds
- Disinfecting wipes will be provided for each classroom
- **Use of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment):**
 - Masks must be worn at all times over the nose and mouth of all students and staff *except* during mask breaks, while eating or drinking, during PE, or when students are outside and practicing 6 foot social distancing.
 - Other forms of PPE will be employed as appropriate, including desk shields, clear dividers, and facial shields.
 - Some exceptions apply as follows
 - Anyone who has trouble breathing or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
 - Anyone who has a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face covering
 - Medical documentation will need to be submitted to the assigned nurse for review in order for the student and staff member to be exempt from the policy
 - Staff members working with student(s) who are not wearing face coverings due to one of the exceptions and cannot maintain social distancing will be provided with increased protective equipment; including not limited to a surgical face mask, face shield, gloves, and disposable gown if required.

Student Screenings should a student fall ill:

- Students will go through a visual check screening.
- Temperature checks shall be conducted as a secondary measure if a student presents with symptoms.
- Visual checks conducted by a staff member include looking for the following symptoms:
 - Flushed cheeks
 - Rapid or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue or extreme fussiness
 - Coughing or shortness of breath
- If a student is found to have any of these symptoms the staff member will call or walk the student to the nurse. Students who have a fever of 100.4 or greater will be escorted to the isolation room.

Isolation Room:

- Any student who enters into the isolation room shall be dismissed for the day, with the recommendation to follow up with a medical provider and receive a COVID-19 test. The district shall provide the family with the **latest** guidance from the CDC.
- Any student who enters the isolation room will wear a mask at all times, unless the situation presents

as an immediate danger to their health.

- A staff member will be in proximity of the child in the isolation room. The staff member will have full PPE.
- The isolation room will be disinfected after the sick child leaves.

Response Team/Protocol:

- If a student reports s/he is feeling ill, the teacher will call the school nurse and alert her a child is coming to her office. Once in the office, the school nurse will assess the student's symptoms and deem if the student needs to enter the isolation room. If this is the case, our designated isolation room staff member will be called. The school nurse will escort the child to the isolation room where a member of the staff will be waiting and will observe the student in full PPE. The school nurse will notify a parent to pick up their child within 30 minutes of the call. Based on symptoms the school nurse may recommend a parent take their child for a COVID-19 test (dependent on the CDC recommendations at that time).
- Isolation and Transporting of Those Who are Sick:
 - Students in the isolation room shall be required to wear a mask at all times, unless doing so presents an immediate danger to their health.
- PPE Requirements for Staff Entering Isolation Room:
 - Staff entering the Isolation Room with students shall wear a N95 facemask, face shield, gloves, and a disposable gown. Upon leaving the isolation room, masks, gloves and disposable gowns shall be thrown in a designed receptacle. Face shields may be sanitized and reused.
- Notification of Health Officials & Central Office:
 - If a student or staff member is present at school with or reports symptoms of COVID-19, the School Nurse will fill out the reporting form provided by the NCDHD and fax the form to the Health District. School administration, or designee, shall log the details of such an event using a Google spreadsheet (similar to Emergency Drill Forms) and notify the Central Office via text.
 - If it is known that a person present within a school has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, the health department and central office must be notified immediately

Reporting to Nurse - Protocols for when to go/how to go

- Teachers will be provided with a bag of frequently requested health items (band-aids, etc.) to reduce trips to the Health Office for minor concerns
- Staff will call and speak to the Nurse before sending any students to the Health Office
- Nurse will need to know students' symptoms before students go to the Health Office

The Counseling Office

All counseling services will be offered by scheduled appointment only. This includes regularly scheduled student counseling services. Students wishing to schedule an appointment should email Mrs. Caron, our

counseling office assistant, at scaron@ellingtonschools.net. Students may also email their counselor directly if they prefer (see below). Virtual counseling appointments are also available for distance learning students.

If there is a more immediate student need, the teacher may contact the counseling office by phone to see if one of the counselors is available. Students should not report to the counseling office without a scheduled appointment or without the teacher confirming that a member of the counseling staff is available.

Counseling Office Staff

Sherry Caron, Counseling Assistant
scaron@ellingtonschools.net

Beth Shaw, School Counselor (A-K)
bshaw@ellingtonschools.net

Valerie Baigert, School Psychologist
vbaigert@ellingtonschools.net

Scott Raiola, School Counselor (L-Z)
sraiola@ellingtonschools.net

The Main Office

Students will visit the main office by appointment only. Students will ask their teacher if they need to go to the office and the teacher will call to ensure there is available space for the student.

Student Belongings and Materials

Students will not have use of lockers and will carry all their belongings in their backpacks.

All students must bring with them daily, a water bottle and their chromebook fully charged with chromebook charger. Any student who arrives at school without their chromebook will be asked to contact a parent to bring it in to them.

Students will need minimal additional supplies for school this year. Students should bring pens/pencils, paper or notebooks, and folders or binders for each class. In some subject areas teachers may ask students to bring additional supplies specific to that class that they will share on the opening day(s) of school.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

It is our intent to safely offer as many in person extracurricular activities and athletics as possible this school year. Public health data and guidance from our local health department will always drive the decisions about what activities can safely be offered. Being a middle school, we also understand that the various models of schooling possible this year (hybrid, distance learning) will impact our students ability to participate given transportation and other concerns.

Since we are starting the school year in a hybrid model, we will be holding off on a decision on if/when to offer fall in person extracurricular activities and athletics until full five day in person schooling is resumed. If/when that decision is made, we will communicate separately an update on in person activities.

As a general rule, if Ellington Public Schools are in a hybrid or full distance learning model any in person extracurricular activities or athletics that may be running at Ellington Middle School will be put on hold or moved to a virtual environment.

For athletics, if they are offered in person this year, we will follow CIAC guidelines for health and safety. There are some elements of the CIAC guidelines that apply specifically to high school programs that as a middle school may not apply.

Special Education and Intervention Services

Students receiving specialized or individualized services may receive these services in a small group with students from another cohort. During these times, students and staff will wear masks and will also use a location that allows for more social distancing.

How will special education services and 504 accommodations be implemented during in person learning?

- Ellington Public Schools will provide Special Education Services and Implement 504 plans in compliance with state and federal mandates to the best extent possible
- During in person learning, students requiring special education and related services outside of the regular education classroom in accordance with their IEP, will continue to receive those services to the best extent possible with specific safety protocols in place including the following:
 - Staff and students hand washing/hand sanitizing upon entering resource room setting
 - Face masks worn by students and staff
 - Face shields worn by staff when appropriate social distancing cannot be achieved
 - Transparent dividers placed between staff and students
 - Disposable gowns (OT/PT/Full-care needs)
 - Wiping down student learning space before and after service
 - Wiping down all materials prior to the next group entering the room
 - Adult escort of students from one space to another space
- For students whose IEP's require a majority of their time in a self-contained setting and require significant adult support, we will try to maintain a consistent paraprofessional with limited changes **as much as possible**
- Students who require Counseling, Speech/Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and/or Physical Therapy:

- Counseling must occur in a secure environment and cannot occur in the general education setting. Transparent dividers must be set up between the student(s) and the service provider for both individual and small group sessions. In addition to transparent dividers, teachers will have access to PPE and cleaning supplies as described above
- Physical Therapy (PT) or Occupational Therapy (OT) occurs within a dedicated OT/PT room. Individualized programming will be set up with transparent separators and teachers will use PPE as described above, disinfect shared equipment directly before and after students have attended a lesson
- Speech/Language Therapy is often in a self-contained setting with one to one or small group. Individualized programming will be set up with transparent separators and teachers will use masks and desk shields and disinfect shared equipment directly before and after students have attended a lesson. Teachers will be provided with face shields
- For students with 504 plans and in-class support per their IEP, these supports and accommodations will continue as written in their plans to the greatest extent possible. Each student's accommodation plan will be reviewed by the case manager. Parents should reach out to case managers and/or school counselors or school administrators with questions or to set up a meeting to discuss concerns.

Hybrid Learning Guidance:

- While schools are in the hybrid model, students will attend school for two days per week and participate in a virtual learning environment for three days
- On distance learning days, instruction from both regular education and special education staff will be provided in a blended learning model, both synchronous and asynchronous

Distance Learning Only Guidance:

- If parents select the DL only option, services written in the IEP will be delivered to the greatest extent possible understanding that some services do not lend themselves well to a virtual mode of instruction. Services will be provided in a blended learning model, both synchronous and asynchronous
- For services that require adjustments due to a Distance Learning environment, a Learning Model IEP Implementation Plan must be developed in collaboration with the school team and parent. A PPT will not be required to make these adjustments.

Five Day in Person Plan

While Ellington Public Schools are operating in the full five day in person model Ellington Middle School students will follow the below bell schedule with staggered passing times to allow for safe passing while the building is operating at full capacity.

Arrival - [see arrival protocols](#)

7:30-7:50 Building entry/breakfast/homeroom/attendance

Tigers/Panthers	Lions/Jaguars
7:50-8:35 A Block 8:37-9:23 B Block 9:25-10:10 C Block 10:12-10:57 D Block 10:59-11:50 X Block (lunch) - in E Block 10:59-11:24 - Grade 7 11:25-11:50 - Grade 8 11:54-12:39 E Block 12:41-1:26 F Block 1:28-2:11 G Block	7:50-8:33 A Block 8:35-9:21 B Block 9:23-10:08 C Block 10:10-10:55 D Block 10:57-11:48 X Block (lunch) - in E Block 10:59-11:24 - Grade 7 11:25-11:50 - Grade 8 11:52-12:37 E Block 12:39-1:24 F Block 1:26-2:11 G Block

Dismissal - [see dismissal protocols](#)

2:11 - Lions bus students dismissed by PA (exit 1)

2:13 - Tigers bus students dismissed by PA (exit 2)

2:15 - Panthers bus students dismissed by PA (exit 1)

2:17 - Jaguars bus students dismissed by PA (exit 2)

2:19 - Grade 8 (exit 4) walkers and pickups dismissed (gymnasium entrance)

2:21 - Grade 7 (exit 3) walkers and pickups dismissed (main entrance - church parking lot)

Teachers will escort cohorts between classes to reduce congregation in the [hallways and ensure safety during passing times](#).

While in the full five day in person model students will eat lunch in their classroom with their cohort. During this time students will be allowed to remove their masks while eating. During the other half of the block where students are not eating masks must be worn in the classroom. Teachers may choose to take students outside during their lunch and/or X block time.

Hybrid Plan

While Ellington Public Schools are operating in the hybrid model Ellington Middle School students will be assigned to either purple or gold groupings and attend school two days a week in person while attending 3 days of instruction online.

Group:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Purple	In-Person	In-Person	Distance Learning	Distance Learning	Distance Learning

Gold	Distance Learning	Distance Learning	Distance Learning	In-Person	In-Person
Silver	Distance Learning				

Whether in person or online, students will follow the below bell schedule on days in person lessons are being offered, typically Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday ([see calendar here](#)). Due to the reduced building capacity in a hybrid model there will not be a staggered bell schedule in this model.

Hybrid School Day - M,T,Th,F Bell Schedule

7:50-8:35 A Block

8:37-9:23 B Block

9:25-10:10 C Block

10:12-10:57 D Block

10:59-11:50 X Block (lunch)

10:59-11:24 - Grade 7

11:25-11:50 - Grade 8

11:52-12:37 E Block

12:39-1:24 F Block

1:26-2:11 G Block

On most Wednesdays, all students, regardless of group assignment, will engage in distance learning. When these days occur EMS students will follow the bell schedule below.

Hybrid School Day - Wednesday Bell Schedule

8:00-8:40 A Block

8:42-9:22 B Block

9:24-10:04 C Block

10:06-10:46 D Block

10:48-12:18 X Block - lunch, independent work time, teacher professional learning time

12:20-1:00 E Block

1:02-1:42 F Block

1:44-2:24 G Block

Synchronous Learning - on days students are learning via distance learning they will attend class with their teacher via google meets at the times listed on the above schedules. [Attendance will be taken](#) at the start of each period.

Asynchronous Learning - students will also engage in asynchronous learning where appropriate. [Music](#) and [Physical Education](#) will not hold synchronous classes on Wednesday. Students will be expected to use the available time to complete the independent assignments given by the teacher for these classes as needed. There may be other times, although infrequently, when a class meets asynchronously (substitute teacher, special project, etc) and this will be communicated to students by the teacher via the google classroom assignment.

For the sake of our PE/Music rotating schedules, the first in person day of the week for the purple/gold group will be day 1 and the second in person day of the week will be day 2. Any full distance learning day (typically Wednesday) will be neither day 1 or day 2 and students will not have a live class. They will instead have independent asynchronous assignments for both classes. For students who receive a support class (resource, intervention, etc) as dictated by a day 1 or day 2 schedule, the teacher will communicate with students via google classroom about the schedule for that support period that day.

A Typical Distance Learning Class

The class structure of a distance learning class will vary depending on the teacher/subject. However, as a guide to help families better visualize this new method of instruction, the following will be a typical class structure used by many teachers.

- 1) The teacher and student will join a google meet virtual meeting. The link/location for this meeting will be posted in the google classroom page.
- 2) The teacher will start a distance learning class by taking attendance.
- 3) The teacher will then give directions/direct instruction (mini lesson) for a period of time, typically for no more than 10-15 minutes.
- 4) Students will then be given a portion of time where they will work on an assignment in groups or individually. There will always be some active engagement for students.
- 5) While students are working in this manner, the teacher will remain in the google meet to answer questions or check in on students as they work. Students may leave the meet or mute their camera/webcam while working but return to the meet to ask questions.
- 6) Teachers may ask students to reconvene in the google meet (if they left) for closure to the lesson.

Our goal for distance learning is to have as much hands on student engagement as possible. We do not plan to have students watch lecture on the computer screen for the duration of a school day, as we do not believe this is engaging or appropriate for middle level students. Despite being synchronous and online, our lesson structure will be similar to what an in person lesson would look like, with plenty of time for student engagement guided by the teacher.

Full Distance Learning Plan

While Ellington Public Schools are operating in the full distance learning model Ellington Middle School students will participate in their education from home fully online. In this model, EMS students will follow the schedule below.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

8:00-8:45 A Block

8:47-9:32 B Block

9:34-10:19 C Block

10:21-11:06 D Block

11:08-12:03 X Block - lunch, independent work time

12:05-12:50 E Block

12:52-1:37 F Block

1:39-2:24 G Block

Wednesday

8:00-8:40 A Block

8:42-9:22 B Block

9:24-10:04 C Block

10:06-10:46 D Block

10:48-12:18 X Block - lunch, independent work time, teacher professional learning time

12:20-1:00 E Block

1:02-1:42 F Block

1:44-2:24 G Block

Synchronous Learning - during a full distance learning model, students will attend classes with their teacher via google meets at the times listed on the above schedules. [Attendance will be taken](#) at the start of each period.

Asynchronous Learning - During full distance learning, students may also be asked to engage in asynchronous learning during the school day where appropriate (substitute teacher, special project, etc). We expect these exceptions to occur rarely. When they do occur, students will be expected to use the available time during the

class period to complete the independent assignments given by the teacher. When asynchronous learning is scheduled, it will be communicated to students by the teacher via google classroom.

During the full distance learning model our schedule will rotate between day 1 and day 2 daily, including Wednesday in this rotation (unlike in the hybrid model).

A Typical Distance Learning Class

The class structure of a distance learning class will vary depending on the teacher/subject. However, as a guide to help families better visualize this new method of instruction, the following will be a typical class structure used by many teachers.

- 1) The teacher and student will join a google meet virtual meeting. The link/location for this meeting will be posted in the google classroom page.
- 2) The teacher will start a distance learning class by taking attendance.
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- 6) Teachers may ask students to reconvene in the google meet (if they left) for closure to the lesson.

Our goal for distance learning is to have as much hands on student engagement as possible. We do not plan to have students watch lectures on the computer screen for the duration of a school day, as we do not believe this is engaging or appropriate for middle level students. Despite being synchronous and online, our lesson structure will be similar to what an in person lesson would look like, with plenty of time for student engagement guided by the teacher.

Distance Learning Opt In - Silver Group

Students who are in the silver group (opted to do distance learning fully) will be assigned to a cohort and will follow the schedule of that cohort depending on the model we are using as a school district (see the above sections on the different models for the bell schedule). While their cohort is attending in person classes (full in person model, hybrid model) they will join their peers in the classroom via webcam on the google meet platform (synchronous). There are some classes that may offer a better experience to these students by posting asynchronous lessons for students. The chart below is a guideline for when this may occur.

Synchronous Classes - students join via webcam/google meet when their cohort is in person

Language Arts

Math

Science
Social Studies
World Language -Spanish/French
Academic Literacy
Computers
Art
Health

Possible Asynchronous Classes- depending on lesson

Due to the nature of the following classrooms, joining via webcam may be impractical or impossible on certain days. On days where joining via webcam would not provide the best possible student experience, asynchronous activities will be posted in google classroom for the student to complete instead. When this occurs, completion of the daily activity will serve as the student being “present” in class that day.

Tech Ed
Music - Chorus/Band/General Music
Physical Education

There may be other times where asynchronous learning may need to replace synchronous participation via webcam (substitute teacher, special project, change of classroom location, technology glitch/internet outage). If/when these exceptions occur the teacher will communicate with students via google classroom what the expectations are for class that day. In these events, completing the expectations as posted in google classroom will count for students being “present” for this class period.

If students cannot attend live classes or complete the asynchronous assignment as posted by the teacher on a given day a parent/guardian must call the school to excuse the student from school. We anticipate there may be technology glitches or other reasons students may not be able to participate on a given day beyond illness/appointment that wouldn't occur during in person learning. Please let us know so we can help and make sure students are excused as needed.

The First Week of School

The first week of school (September 8-11) will be ½ days of school for students. During this first week the purple group will attend school on Tuesday 9/8 and Wednesday 9/9 with the gold group attending in person school on Thursday 9/10 and Friday 9/11. There will be no day during this first week of school where all students are distance learning on Wednesday, which will begin in any future weeks that we are using the hybrid model.

Whenever students are on a ½ day we will use the schedule below. Students distance learning from home would follow the same bell schedule.

Ellington Middle School

Half Day Schedule

7:30 - 7:50 Students enter building/breakfast/homeroom/attendance

7:50 - 8:18 A Block

8:20 - 8:48 B Block

8:50 - 9:17 C Block

9:19 - 9:46 D Block

9:48 - 10:15 E Block

10:17 - 10:45 F Block

10:47 - 11:15 G Block

11:15 Lions/Panthers busses dismissed by PA (exit 1)

11:17 Jaguars/Tigers busses dismissed by PA (exit 2)

11:19 Grade 8 walkers/pick up dismissed by PA (exit 4)

11:21 Grade 7 walkers/pick up dismissed by PA (exit 3)

Distance Learning - Student Expectations

While in distance learning (silver group, all groups during hybrid or full distance learning models) it is essential that EMS students adhere to the following expectations:

1. Check email at least once daily. While we are not together many communications will occur via email.
2. Respond to teacher/EMS staff emails. If the email asks a question or asks for a response, please do so.
3. Check google classroom as scheduled every period.
4. Accurately mark assignments when completed - please do not mark incomplete assignments as complete (trust us, your teachers and parents check them).
5. Ask for help if needed. When you aren't with us in person it is more difficult to notice if you are struggling.

Physical Education

In a typical school year we have a predictable rotation between Physical Education and health activities. This year, the weather and mode of learning will dictate what types of lessons students will receive in PE/Health class.

- PE class will most often occur when the students are in person and the weather allows them to participate outside. There are some PE activities that may also safely occur while inside on days the weather is poor or in the winter months. We anticipate going outside more than ever, students should

be prepared on colder days with sweatshirts and other clothing to participate outside as often as possible.

- When the weather is poor or students are on the computer, students will participate in health lessons that are more conducive to an online format.
- If we are in a distance learning mode (hybrid, full distance learning) PE/Health class will not be synchronous on Wednesday (no google meet to join on this day). Instead, students should use this time to log physical activity (details to follow from the teacher).
- For safety reasons, our locker rooms will be closed to students this year. All students should plan to wear appropriate footwear to school on days they have PE or to bring appropriate footwear to school to change into for physical activity.
- When PE activities are distanced and outside, we will offer all students the option to remove their mask as a mask break.
- PE teachers will share with families the schedule of PE activities before they begin. As some activities may necessitate the option to remove masks during more strenuous or active outside play, families will know beforehand and may choose an alternate PE activity if they wish.

Music - Band/Chorus/General Music

In recent studies the playing of instruments as well as singing have been identified as higher risk activities due to the increased spread of droplets and inability to wear masks. We have been hard at work to continue offering these programs while also considering safety. As such, we will be making the following adjustments to our music offerings to balance safety while still maintaining programming as much as possible:

- While in person, all students will participate in curricular activities that support the general music curriculum and standards.
- Any distance learning teaching (hybrid, full distance learning) will be customized for each student based on their selection of band, chorus or general music. This includes independent work and/or practice activities with individualized teacher feedback for each student based on their selection of band, chorus or general music.
- We have purchased software programs for all students to support our music curriculum and students individual instruction in their music choice.
- During the distance learning modes (hybrid, full distance learning) music class will not be synchronous on Wednesday (no google meet to join on this day). Instead, students should use this time to practice their individualized program based on their selection of band, chorus or general music.
- We have also created procedures for the safety and hygiene specific to the music suite that includes using gloves when using certain instruments.

District and State Resources

[Ellington Public Schools Reopening Plan](#)

[State Department of Education Resources for Families](#)

