

North Monterey County Frequently Asked Questions (updated 071020)

General Overview of Options for Learning

Q: Do I have to send my student back to school in the Fall? If I'm worried about their safety, how will I educate them?

A: NMCUSD will offer several options to on-site learning, including a blended learning hybrid model which continues distance learning at their current school and participation in a small group twice a week, for four hours each day, or enrollment at the North Monterey County Center for Independent Study School.

Q: When will school be opening? Will my students be on campus?

A: Our target date for a phased reopening is August 12. Because of changing guidance on a daily basis, that may change. Currently, we expect to begin with distance learning on August 12th as we continue to organize students, transportation and facilities and will look at September 1st as a possible date for small groups of students to begin to come onto campus.

Q: Will students be on a regular school schedule?

A: Not to begin with. When we are cleared to begin on campus instruction, it will most likely include staggered starts and A and B days, where students will get a combination of in person instruction, along with distance learning when they are not on campus. As well, our ASES program will be operating for those students needing extended learning, or for students waiting for transportation to and from school. Our County Health Department will continue to provide guidance to ensure having students and staff on hand is safe.

Remote Learning/Independent Study School/Independent Learning Options

Are you prepared to go to remote learning if a second spike occurs? We were not prepared the first time in March but we have set up a continuum for learning options that can be adapted given any changes in guidance and/or for individual students and families.

Q: Will my child have access to a teacher if they remain on distance learning and/or enroll at NMCCIS?

A: Yes, your student will be instructed by a teacher and will have regular contact with them each week for questions, additional instruction, materials review and grading.

Q: I worry about my child's emotional well-being. What if my child needs to talk to a counselor?

A: Students have ongoing access to both academic and School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) counselors at each school, including NMCCIS, to help support personal, social and academic needs.

Q: I know nothing about teaching. How can I help support my child if they enroll in NMCCIS?

A: Part of the program includes regular meetings and workshops for parents to help them support their student's learning.

Q: What about participation in athletics or clubs if they are enrolled in NMCCISD?

A: The Coast Conference League allows high school level NMCCIS students to participate in sports in athletics, and students can join the NMC high school teams. Middle schoolers are also able to join school teams. However, due to COVID, athletics and extracurricular activities are currently suspended until we are able to safely address each type of activity within the recommended guidelines.

Q: What if my child wants to return to their school mid-year or next year?

A: Your student will be able to return to their classroom mid-year if there is available space. Your child will be guaranteed a spot at their original school next year if they choose to return.

Q: My child wants to go to college. Will a diploma from NMCCIS count?

A: Yes. NMCCIS is a fully accredited high school and offers a college prep curriculum and classes that are approved by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the University of California. In addition, NMCCIS students qualify for sports and academic scholarships.

Q: What about my child's social needs? How will they be met?

A: Students enrolled in NMCCIS have opportunities to participate in small group instruction, computer and science labs and study hall. Because this is an individualized, blended learning environment, each program is tailored to meet students' individual needs.

Q: My child loves the music instruction at their school. How is that handled at NMCCIS?

A: Elementary students can join instrumental music classes per a schedule. Through our District resources, your child can collaborate with other students via planned STEM and monthly activities, either in person or virtually.

Q: Will you have enough room for all the kids that want to participate?

A: Staffing resources are adjustable if a large group of students enroll. Additional hourly IS teachers can be added to ensure each student has adequate resources.

Q: My child would like to take classes at the Community College this year. Can he/she do that?

A: Yes, because the program is individually designed, students have the ability to participate in classes and activities elsewhere.

Q: Does NMCCIS charge tuition? I can't afford to pay.

A: Because North Monterey County Center for Independent Study School is part of our NMC District, education and extra-curricular activities are part of the public education system and thus, are free. The only step is to request a transfer to enroll.

Social Distancing Implementation

Q: Will everyone wear face coverings?

A: The current order from the California Health Officer is that all children and adults wear face coverings, especially when outside of their stable cohort. We believe that once on-site learning begins, and students are in class with their stable cohorts, there may be the opportunity for face coverings to be off but would be required outside the classroom. We will continue to monitor CDC and County Health requirements and adjust as necessary. Face coverings at anytime can be worn in classrooms voluntarily. Staff will be required to wear face coverings.

Shared Materials

Q: What about shared equipment like athletic equipment, lab equipment, arts supplies?

A: Monterey County Health advises no balls, bats, books or equipment should be shared.

Q: Will there be policies about not sharing pencils, pens between kids?

A: Monterey County Health advises no books or equipment should be shared.

Q: How will you make the library safe and checking out books?

A: At this time, libraries will remain closed but teachers may be sending home books and materials that have been prepared wearing gloves and in a plastic sealed bag.

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Q: Will you do basic training of kids – for example coughing into their elbow, don't hug, stay six feet apart?

A: We will recommend each teacher teach/enforce handwashing, cough and sneeze etiquette and physical distancing at all grade levels. They will also schedule handwashing at the start of each class and before and after meals.

Q: Will temperatures be taken each day? Just teachers or students too?

A: Screening for temperatures and symptoms will occur daily as part of the arrival process and before initial interaction with others.

Q: How will arrive and dismissal work – will everyone just be running to the door at the same time?

A: We are currently working on developing a staggered schedule for arrival/dismissal each day. Additionally, once on-site learning begins, we will likely be adopting an A/B day schedule to limit the number of students and staff on campus at any given time. Buses will limit the number of students on board, and, if possible, we will attempt to group buses by cohorts and family units. For parents who pick up and drop off their students, we will ask to remain in their cars during that time.

Q: Are you testing all employees ?

A: All staff reported in their daily wellness check that includes any symptoms, temperature and any potential contacts prior to any interaction with others.

Q: How will parents enter school grounds?

A: Access to campus will be limited. Parents who transport their students to school should remain in their cars during drop off and pick up.

Classroom Structure

Q: Will there be full classrooms? Will the whole school go back at once?

A: No. We expect to begin school using distance learning as we did prior to summer break. Once appropriate, we will be implementing a staggered start and likely an A/B day schedule, so students on campus will be limited. We will continue to monitor the situation to determine when that might change.

Q: How will social distancing be maintained in classrooms, hallways and outside?

A: Students will be in classrooms with a cohort, which will remain the same until further notice. Students will remain together during lunch and recess. Staff will continue to enforce social distancing during drop off/pick up and other times where cohorts might be mixed. There may be multiple entrances and exits at each site to accommodate social distancing as well.

Q: Who/how will cleaning be handled?

A: Classrooms will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before each cohort arrives and disinfected throughout the day, as scheduled and needed whenever there is a change in who was using the classroom/space, etc.

Extended Learning and Extra-Curricular Activities

Q: What about before/after school care?

A: We expect to offer before and after school care. We will be working on ways to build cohorts or create space for adequate social distancing at all sites.

Q: What about extended learning and ASES?

A: We plan to continue offering extended learning and ASES. Right now, we are investigating possible additional sites to allow for social distancing. We will continue to update parents as we finalize our plans.

Q: When will music and PE begin?

A: At this time, music and PE instruction will be remote via Zoom focusing first on high school and middle school classes. We will follow Monterey County Health and the County Office of Education guidance on when and how PE band in-person instruction may resume.

Q: When will sports and clubs begin?

A: At this time, sports and clubs will not resume. We will follow Monterey County Health and the County Office of Education guidance on when sports and other after school activities may resume.

Transportation

Q: Will buses still be running? How will that work?

A: Buses will be running, although likely with far fewer students than normal. We are surveying every family in the district to understand transportation needs, so we can develop schedules, routes and frequency for pick up and drop off. We will continue to update you as we finalize those plans.

Q: How will parents, particularly of younger children handle drop-off/pick-up?

A: Parents who bring their students to school will be asked to stay in their cars during drop off and pick up. It is likely students will be met by their teachers, have their temperatures taken and be escorted to their classrooms.

Food Service

Q: How will meals be handled?

A: Right now, the County Office of Education recommends students eat with their cohorts and follow the “take what you touch” rule. All students are provided breakfast and lunch meals daily. Students who may attend in-person instructional groups will have meals provided in their classroom or a designated separate area. Meals will be individually wrapped and delivered, or some students may pick up sealed pre-orderd meals with their cohorts following social distancing practices. Handwashing will be scheduled for before and after meals. We will continue to offer a weekly meal pick up for families to have meals at home during distance learning or when students are not in-person for instructio on specific days.

Q: When selecting meals, families and students can pre-order from a choice menu. They are required to use their school ID number. There is no charge for meals.

Where can I find daycare options for my child?

Contact the Family Resource Center programs at 831-633-5975for options. Also, the Monterey County Child Care Planning organization can be reached at 1-800-339-9306 or (831) 757-0775 or www.maof.org or call Monterey County's Information and Referral Services by dialing 2-1-1.

Notification Processes

Q: Will I be notified if a student gets COVID-19?

A: The District will follow County Health guidelines, including notification procedures, with regard to infections. Any student/staff that may have been exposed will be notified. Those infected will be required to self-isolate. The District will honor the privacy of those infected.

Q: If a student gets Covid-19, what happens?

A: The District will follow County Health guidelines, including notification procedures, with regard to infections. Any student/staff that may have been exposed will be notified. Those infected will be required to self-isolate. The District will honor the privacy of those infected

Summary guidance for K-12 schools

K-12 schools should implement a process for daily screening for symptoms of and exposure to COVID19. Parents and caregivers should be empowered to screen children for symptoms at home, prior to coming to school, and should be provided with a checklist that includes the following symptoms and exposure:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell
- New runny nose or congestion
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Close contact with a person with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

Students with symptoms should not attend school and parents should consult their healthcare provider and follow CDC considerations regarding their return to school.

What physical distancing measures should K-12 schools have in place to protect against the spread of COVID-19?

Schools should assign students to cohorts and limit their exposure to other cohorts within the building. This means that students should stay with the same group of students and adults throughout the day. If classes must rotate, schools should consider rotating teachers, rather than moving groups of students throughout the school building. Strict adherence to a specific size of student groups should be discouraged, as this may limit the ability to provide in-person education. Schools should also implement and enforce assigned seating, and keep records of those seating charts to assist with identifying close contacts in the event a member of the school community is diagnosed with COVID-19. Cohorting may not be feasible for middle and high school students and thus, assigned seating can help to reduce contacts among older students. Other physical distancing measures to consider:

- Schools should limit the mixing of cohorts of students to the extent possible.
- Students should be spaced as far apart as possible. Six feet apart is best; when that's not possible, schools should make efforts to ensure a minimum of three feet of space between students.
- Desks should be placed facing forward in the same direction so students do not sit face-to-face.
- Schools should place physical distancing markers and cues throughout the building, which will remind and prompt students to remain six feet apart in areas where they are not stationary,

such as hallways, cafeterias, restrooms and other locations where lines assemble. • Schools should require hand hygiene before and after students move from one space to another within the building.

How should physical distancing take place on a school bus?

School bus transportation may not readily allow for physical distancing. However, strategies to reduce contact on buses and risk of infection can include: • Screening of COVID-19 symptoms at home prior to getting on the bus. • Encouraging hand hygiene upon boarding the bus. • Assigning students to seats so contacts are stable. • Seating siblings together. • Loading the bus from back to front. • Encouraging the use of face masks during transport. • Having windows open when safe and weather-permitting. • Providing bus drivers and monitors onboard with personal protective equipment, such as face masks and face shields and/or eye protection, as long as these do not impair driving. • Installing physical barriers such as plexiglass between the driver and students, if feasible. Schools may also ask families that are able to transport their students to and from school or arrange for carpools, when possible, to reduce the number of students riding buses in the upcoming school year.

How should physical distancing take place during meal times?

Keep students in cohorts during meal times and, when possible, have students eat in their classrooms rather than moving through the school building. Schools may consider bringing meals directly to classrooms but should make efforts to ensure nutritional value and appealing menu choices are not sacrificed. For older students, multiple separate lunch periods may be created and alternate locations, such as an outdoor environment or large indoor spaces (e.g. gymnasium), may be used for lunches with proper supervision.