



Q & A Transcript from Parent Informational Session
eLearning Blended Virtual Program from Home
March 30, 2021



Q: *Blended in person days won't be at a HCPS school? Where is the CEO again?*

A: The CEO is an HCPS school and is located at 253 Paradise Rd, Aberdeen MD, 21001.

Q: *Are students allowed to 'jump' programs? For example, if they start in blended, could they switch to full in-person?*

A: There is a minimum commitment of one (1) Semester to the Blended Virtual Program.

Q: *Will all teachers [be] conducting blended virtual instruction ...do they have the same credentials as in person teachers?*

A: Teachers in the Blended Virtual Programs are Maryland Certified and employees of HCPS. Only teachers at the CEO will be conducting Blended Virtual instruction.

Q: *Has the blended virtual instruction been enhanced and geared specifically for virtual learning making it more enriching and engaging?*

A: HCPS continues to review and add technologies to our digital ecosystem that provides affordances to support ALL K-12 learners and specifically responds to the needs of virtual instruction. Additionally, teachers will be provided with specific and targeted Professional Learning experiences that allow them to continue to grow their expertise as educators, ensuring that they are engaging and meeting the needs of all virtual learners.

Q: *Dr. Bulson was mentioning that there will be another option where students come in one or two days a week. Could you expand on how this would work, and which grades would be eligible for this option?*

A: Dr. Bulson was referring to the In-Person Blended Virtual Program that is also housed at the CEO. This Program is for students in grades 6 through 12. More detailed information can be received by contacting Asst. Principal Mr. Lovelace or Principal DeLeva.

Q: *What about musical instruments? Will the e-learning program support those?*

A: At this time, the eLearning Elementary & Middle School Programs will offer General Music.

Q: *What are your requirements for selecting students?*

A: All students are eligible to apply. Parents, Teachers, Administrators, and Counselors from the Home School will be consulted for students that had difficulty with virtual learning during the 2020-2021 school year to determine if the eLearning Blended Virtual Program will provide the best opportunity for the success of the student.

Q: *If an application is submitted in April, could we withdraw the potential acceptance later in the summer like mid-Aug depending upon student vaccines and case rates, prior to first semester beginning?*

A: Requests will be fulfilled based on current staffing resources.

Q: *At what point in the application process must we officially unenroll in our homeschool in order to attend?*

A: Once the application is approved (by June 1, 2021) and parent notifies of student intent to attend, registration will be handled by the CEO and a 2021-2022 schedule can be created for the student.

Q: *Will the students be allowed to keep their chrome books?*

A: Students in grades Kindergarten through 8 will continue to use HCPS issued Chromebooks.

Q: *What if we decide to apply later in the summer will we be able to?*

A: Applications will continue to be accepted, but those received by April 20, 2021 will be given first consideration.

Q: *If a child is not accepted to the At-Home [eLearning Blended Virtual] Program then where do they study?*

A: Students would continue to be enrolled and attend their current Home School.

Q: *How many at home days and online days?*

A: Students enrolled in the eLearning Blended Virtual Program attend their scheduled classes five (5) days a week virtually from home.

Q: *Where do we pick materials up for the [eLearning Blended Virtual Program]?*

A: 253 Paradise Road, Aberdeen MD, 21001

Q: *Can students with special needs attend?*

A: All students in HCPS are eligible to apply. The eLearning Blended Virtual Program will have Special Education Teachers on staff.

Q: *Will the name of the school change?*

A: A name change for the school is currently under review by the BOE and open for 60 days public comment. The new name of the school is expected to be finalized by the end of April 2021.

Q: *We have recently moved to the area and did homeschool this year. Is my child eligible for this program as she has never been enrolled in HCPS previously?*

A: Yes. Students that are currently homeschooled are eligible. Students would need to enroll with HCPS.

Q: *Just to be clear, will there be an asynchronous option for the k-12 program?*

A: There will not be a 100% Asynchronous option for the 2021-2022 school year.

Q: *Can a student decline standardized testing if unable to attend - because of family risk?*

A: Any decision regarding the format for the administration of standardized testing will be determined by the state and we will need to follow that guidance.

Q: *Will students be able to have their I.E.P services if they are only attending online?*

A: Yes. There will be a Special Education staff that will deliver services virtually. An IEP meeting may be held to ensure IEP services can be implemented prior to acceptance.

Q: *For those who want to stay home, how does standardized testing work? Can this be done from home also?*

A: Standardized tests will be taken in person at an HCPS building.

Q: *April 6th applications go out, what is the last day to register? Also is the registration fully online?*

A: Registration will remain open with priority given to those received by April 20, 2021. If a paper application is needed, please contact the school at 410-273-5594.

Q: *How often will students be required to use their webcam?*

A: Active participation is required-including, but not limited to class discussions, camera use, and daily participation with teacher and peers. Students will be required to engage in live virtual instruction using a webcam and microphone when prompted to do so. Students' active participation in Virtual Instruction is critical to the student's success.

Q: *Are they [students] allowed to use personal laptops?*

A: Yes.

Q: *With separation from home schools, how will social interaction be encouraged in a virtual environment?*

A: Teachers will use a variety of student engagement strategies to encourage social interaction. Clubs & activities will be offered based on student interest that will also encourage social interaction.

Q: *Will children new to HCPS be eligible?*

A: Yes. New students will need to register & enroll with HCPS.

Q: *Where will the enrollment information be listed? Is April 20th the deadline?*

A: Enrollment information will be listed on the HCPS.org website and via an email from HCPS on April 6, 2021. Applications received by April 20th will be given first consideration.

Q: *What will the social clubs/options look like for all virtual programs?*

A: Student input will drive the clubs & social options for the eLearning Blended Virtual Program.

Q: *Will this program follow the same calendar school year as in person students?*

A: Yes.

Q: *I currently have a child on a boundary exception. If I apply for virtual and she is not accepted, what happens regarding the boundary exception?*

A: The boundary exception remains in place.

Q: *Will parent orientation be online?*

A: Both In-Person and Virtual orientation options will be available.

Q: *If my child starts at the regular home school and if masking is still a thing, then and [the mask] bothers her would she be eligible to switch to the blended [virtual] learning without having to wait?*

A: The student would be able to apply at that time.

Q: *You stated that this elearning/virtual blended has been under works before covid and not because of covid. So, will this teaching/learning/school staying for people who prefers this way of learning in the future to come? And if not covid why was this way of learning created? Just curious...*

A: Yes, we foresee this being a long-term option for students. There has been an increase in the need to offer additional learning options for students that offer more flexibility in how they access the curriculum.

Q: *How will technical issues be handled? If MS Teams isn't working or, if the problem originates from home, how can the student "catch up"?*

A: We will work with the HCPS Technology Help Desk to address technical issues. Teachers will work with students and parents to address any missed time due to technical issues.

Q: *What about things like spring break and winter break?*

A: The eLearning Blended Virtual Program follows the same instructional calendar as all HCPS schools.

Q: *How many students will be in an elementary classroom?*

A: Class sizes of 20 students or less will be the goal.

Q: *How will gifted and talented services be provided?*

A: There will be a Gifted and Talented specialist who will identify and provide services based on the county model. The GT specialist will be co-teaching, co-planning and pulling students for additional instruction as needed.

Q: *How will differentiated instruction be handled at the elementary school level?*

A: Teachers will be able to group students in small groups based on strengths and needs and provide students synchronous instruction to meet the needs of individual learners. Teachers have been differentiating in the current environment and will continue to do so. The PLT time throughout the day will give us the ability to give students additional supports.

Q: *If the in-person blended program appears successful, do you anticipate opening it up to elementary students as well?*

A: At this time, we do not plan to open the in-person program for elementary age students.

Q: *How will children at the elementary school level be grouped? (will there be enough staff to group by ability level)*

A: Enrollment will drive our staffing. Teachers will work to meet the needs of all the students based on the staffing allocation provided.

Q: *My child would potentially be enrolling as a Kindergarten [student]. Can you clarify how Kindergarten would work and how applying would work since not enrolled yet in HCPS?*

A: The student will register for Kindergarten at the CEO.

Q: *Will you provide community building/social activities for elementary students to meet in-person?*

A: Yes.

Q: *Will a Middle school, 8th grader be able to take a level 1 world language like Spanish 1?*

A: At this time, World Language is not a course option at the Middle School.

Q: *Since my child will be in her last year of middle school next year, will there be any problems or disadvantages to her attending this program next year and then going to in person learning for her first year of high school?*

A: Students will be accessing the same HCPS curriculum so there should not be a disadvantage if transitioning to In-Person learning for school year 2022-2023.

Q: *Will there be design courses at the middle school level (i.e. fashion design - project runway)?*

A: At this time, these are not courses being offered at the Middle School.

Q: *My child is looking to attend Harford Technical for high school. Will this hurt against him by attending?*

A: Students will be accessing the same HCPS curriculum so there should not be a disadvantage when applying to HTHS.

Q: *Will colleges know if a student did in person vs blended virtual or virtual curriculum that someone completed. How do you report to colleges...as if they attended in person?*

A: Courses are not denoted as completed in-person or virtually. Transcripts denote completed courses as all HCPS transcripts do as the program will be utilizing HCPS curriculum and HCPS teachers and not an outside vendor.

Q: *The A/B rotating day, is that similar to Flex Friday?*

A: No. HCPS High Schools follow a published A/B rotational schedule. Fridays will alternate between scheduled A-Day classes and B-Day classes.

Q: *Will the individual magnet schools be offering virtual elearning?*

A: No. Magnet Programs & Specialty Programs will not be offering eLearning Blended Virtual courses.

Q: *Are the same advanced and AP courses offered for virtual?*

A: At this time, AP courses are not in the course offering list.

Q: *How do high school students choose electives? Or are there elective choices?*

A: Students will work with their School Counselor to choose their elective courses.

Q: *The math programs at the HS level didn't appear to have Pre-Calculus. Is that an accurate statement? If so, what course would a student take to get 4 math credits if they enter HS as a 9th grader taking Algebra 2?*

A: At this time, Pre-Calculus is not a listed course option. Statistics & Trigonometry are two options. Additional math courses would be considered in the future.

Q: *You said elementary and middle school students will continue using the Chromebook, what device will the high school students use?*

A: A windows-based laptop is the recommended device.

Q: *So, will the alternative education students be combined with this program or will it be two separate schools?*

A: The Blended Virtual Programs are open to all students.

Q: *If students attend the blended [virtual] program, can they participate in sports at their home school?*

A: Students would be enrolled at the CEO and not be eligible to participate on another school's sports teams.

Q: *Is the Intro Alg/Alg 1 course offered at Patterson Mill High offered at CEO? I saw each individual course on the list, but wasn't sure if the combination was.*

A: Yes.