



Reimagining Education During the Pandemic

**PORTLAND
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



PPS K-5 Hybrid Learning FAQ

Portland Public Schools has started the process for getting students back into the classroom in a hybrid model after almost a year of classes being held online under Comprehensive Distance Learning (CDL) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please see:

- [Message to PPS families](#)
- [Presentation to the Board of Education](#)
- [Example weekly calendar](#)

Who will have the option to participate in the hybrid schedule?

At this time, only K-5 students will be able to participate in the hybrid schedule.

We are working on plans to expand additional limited in-person instruction options for our middle and high school students and hope to share more about that soon.

When will the hybrid schedule start for families that choose this option for their students? (Updated March 15)

The first day for students to start hybrid learning:

- **Grades PK-1:** Thursday, April 1
- **Grades 2-5:** Monday, April 5
- **Middle, high school:** Week of April 19

(Note: Dates are pending approval of the Portland Association of Teachers members and the PPS Board of Education)

How do families sign up?

Families of eligible students received a survey on February 12 in which they are asked to give their preference, hybrid or CDL. Your answers are important because they will help us plan accordingly for staffing, bus routing, meals, and other important supports.

The deadline to respond is Thursday, February 25.

What is the difference between the hybrid model and limited in-person instruction (LIPI)?

The hybrid model involves a wide-scale reopening of school buildings for all of our K-5 students.

LIPI is a targeted service we are offering for a small number of K-12 students. LIPI is an on-campus model

supported by the Oregon Department of Education and designed to meet the needs of specific groups of students based on needed educational, relational, social-emotional, curricular, instructional, and/or assessment supports.

We are currently offering LIPI and will continue to do so after the K-5 hybrid model is implemented. We are continuing to develop plans for hybrid instruction for middle and high schools; given complexities with regard to social distancing, these programs will likely look different than elementary school hybrid instruction.

Why did you choose this timing?

Our K-5 teachers are able to access vaccines now, and we want students to return to our school buildings as soon as it is safe to do so. The April timeline works well with the current vaccination schedule. It also allows us to bring students back at a natural transition in the school year (in between grading periods).

What is the benefit for students to participate in the hybrid model?

Students, especially our younger students, often do better with in-person learning than in CDL. With the hybrid model, teachers will be able to group students together to more efficiently help with learning recovery.

What about students whose families choose not to participate in the hybrid model?

The schedule for students who choose to stay in CDL will remain essentially the same after we launch the hybrid model. Teachers will determine which students receive live instruction in the morning and which receive it in the afternoon. Live instruction time is currently 2.5 hours and will be 2.25 hours after we start the hybrid model. Students in both models will still engage in some asynchronous activities.

If we choose to stay in CDL and would like to switch to the hybrid model, can we do that?

Yes, we will allow families to change their student's school model choice after selecting one or the other.

CLASSROOM QUESTIONS

What will the physical set-up look like?

PPS Operations staff have removed furniture from school buildings to ensure classrooms are set up in a way to allow 6 feet of space between everyone in the room. Students and staff entering schools will notice a number of new things including:

- Special signage and floor markings to ensure social distancing
- Hand sanitizer stations
- Special sign-in and sign-out protocols
- Plexiglass and other physical barriers
- Reduced number of desks in classrooms to maintain social distancing (required by the State of Oregon to be 35-square feet)
- Dedicated space for students or staff who show to be symptomatic during the day
- Regular cleaning of often-used surfaces

Will windows be open while students are in the classroom?

Our industrial hygienist consultant has indicated the need for air to be circulating throughout our buildings as much as possible. Opening windows and adding air purifiers, along with running HVAC systems for extended periods of time, will be safety measures we follow. These efforts will be especially important in symptom spaces and in areas where there is poor air circulation.

What will be the structure for the hybrid model?

K-5 teachers will separate their students into two cohorts – a morning cohort and an afternoon cohort. Each cohort will have in-person instruction with their teacher for 2 hours and 15 minutes on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Wednesdays will continue to follow the current Comprehensive Distance Learning (CDL) format.

When hybrid students are not in the school building, they will engage in CDL for the remainder of the school day. The in-person instruction will cover mathematics, reading, and social emotional learning (SEL).

Will my student's teacher change during this transition?

In most cases, your student's teacher will remain the same regardless of whether you choose to participate in the hybrid model or stay in CDL. There may be some cases where a teacher cannot return to work. We will make adjustments and communicate with families accordingly in those cases.

Will school staff and students participating in the hybrid model be required to wear a face mask?

Yes, all staff are required to wear face masks while in shared space in our buildings. Students with IEPs or 504 plans that prevent them from being able to wear masks will not be required. In those situations, school staff will be provided additional personal protective equipment (PPE).

Will school staff be required to be vaccinated before working on site?

No, COVID vaccinations are not a condition of employment. However, we are making sure all school staff have access to one as soon as possible.

MEALS, TRANSPORTATION**What will breakfast and lunch look like for students attending the hybrid model?**

Meals will be made available to students who participate in the hybrid model.

Students in each cohort will receive breakfast and lunch when they leave the school building. Meals are not able to be eaten while on the bus.

Will meal service change for students who do not participate in the hybrid model?

Students who do not participate in the hybrid model will be able to access meals through identified Nutrition Services meal sites.

Transportation will likely not have enough resources to continue supporting home meal deliveries once we transition drivers and buses into the hybrid model.

What kind of safety protocols will be put in place to ensure school buses are safe for students that will use that mode of transportation to get to school?

Ensuring our students are safe on school buses is as important as ensuring they are safe in the school buildings.

Students will be seated one student per seat or about 3 feet apart following ODE guidelines. The frontmost and rearmost windows will remain open to create optimal airflow through the bus. The buses will also be cleaned in between cohorts.

OTHER TOPICS

Can a parent/guardian request to have their student placed in a particular cohort (either morning or afternoon) to help with child care needs?

No, the school will determine the cohorts. We are working on a plan to provide additional child care support for families who may have trouble with the cohort their student is placed in.

If all K-5 families decide to opt-in to participate in the hybrid model, does PPS have the building capacity/space to accommodate that number of students?

Yes, because our K-5 students learn in a self-contained classroom setting, this will be possible.

Will there be additional custodial staff hired to help with cleaning in between cohorts?

No, there is not a plan to increase custodial capacity. We do plan to limit the use of spaces in each school building to ensure the current custodial staff at that site are able to adequately clean and sanitize in between cohorts.