

# Q&A

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL OPENING, FALL 2021

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year!

The Merrimack School District utilized Reopening Task Forces to make recommendations to the Chief Educational Officer and School Board regarding the opening of the 2021-2022 school year. Please refer to the district's website for more complete information.

### QUESTION



When is the first day of school?

### ANSWER

- September 9th, K-12
- Week of September 13th, Pre-school.



### QUESTION



Are face masks required for staff?

### ANSWER

Yes. All staff will wear masks indoors for the first month of school. Data will drive future decisions about the continued need for mask-wearing.



### QUESTION



Are masks required for students?

### ANSWER

Yes. All students will wear masks indoors in all common areas (i.e. hallways). Students will not have to wear masks outdoors. Mask breaks will occur regularly. At the August 23rd school board meeting, the board voted to allow parents to opt out for student face masks use in the classroom.



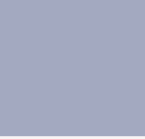
### QUESTION



Will there be mask breaks?

### ANSWER

Yes. Students will be encouraged to take breaks outside. Masks will not be required during lunch and snack times.



### QUESTION



Are masks required on district provided transportation?

### ANSWER

Yes. Masks are required on all buses and vans. For more information, please review the CDC's transportation guidance.



### QUESTION



Will there be remote education?

### ANSWER

Unfortunately, remote learning is not currently an option. Schooling will be in-person, full time, five days a week. Virtual learning will be a pathway for individual students who have a documented critical medical condition as stated either in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan. Please refer to the published statement.



### QUESTION



Will there be free lunches?

### ANSWER

Yes. At this time, lunches will be free to all families. Most students will eat lunch in the school's cafeteria with physical distancing maximized. Please contact your school for details on lunch protocols and schedules.



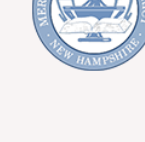
### QUESTION



Will rigorous cleaning of schools continue?

### ANSWER

Yes. We will continue to offer disinfectants, cleaning wipes, and targeted fogging (as needed), as well as encourage frequent washing and sanitizing of hands. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has excellent resources to help students, staff, and families understand when and how they should wash their hands. These visuals will be posted throughout the schools as needed.



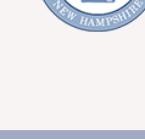
### QUESTION



What local data will be used to determine the ongoing status of Covid-19 outbreaks?

### ANSWER

We will monitor data provided by the NH Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS), weekly data provided by the Merrimack Fire Department's Health Office and continuous review of trends and expertise provided by local medical professionals. Weekly data will be published on the website and families are encouraged to continually check the NH DHHS dashboard at <https://www.covid19.nh.gov/>



### QUESTION



Will tents continue to be used for outdoor activities?

### ANSWER

Yes. Most of the schools in the district will have covered tents. All schools have outdoor learning areas that can be used by all teachers and staff. Outdoor learning is encouraged in each school.



### QUESTION



Will physical distancing guidelines be in place?

### ANSWER

No. Schools will be at full capacity, thus, physical distancing cannot be guaranteed.



### QUESTION



Will there be contact tracing if there is a positive case of Covid-19?

### ANSWER

Please refer to the NH DHHS website for more information about exposures to Covid-19.



### QUESTION



What if my child has seasonal allergies?

### ANSWER

Please contact the school nurse at your child's respective school for guidance on seasonal allergies.



### QUESTION



What do I need to know about Canvas?

### ANSWER

The district remains committed to the Canvas Learning Management System K-12 and to continued improvements for access by students, staff, and families. We are committed to:

- Providing ongoing information to families and students about navigating Canvas.
- Providing educators with training on Canvas and district-wide expectations for usage.
- Providing common experiences for our lower elementary schools.



### QUESTION



Will technology continue to be leveraged?

### ANSWER

Yes. The Merrimack School District, through federal emergency funds, is providing a computing device for every student in the district starting this school year. Important things to note:

- Students in kindergarten and first grade will have access to iPads,
- Students in grades 2-12 will have access to Chromebooks.
- Devices in K-4 will be assigned to their classrooms.
- Devices in grades 5-8 will be assigned to each student and initially housed in their classroom (MUES) or Team (MMS). The assigned device will be "theirs" until the end of the device life cycle or the student leaves the district. Processes and guidelines regarding home use and the need for devices to go back and forth will be shared after the start of school.
- Devices in grades 9-12 will be assigned to each student. Distribution has already begun for these grade levels. Students who have not received a device should pick one up in the library during the first week of school.
- Students who still have a device out from last year need to return what they have before receiving a new one.

