

February 1, 2021

Dear Kenwood families,

Thank you for your patience as we've worked hard to create protocols, schedules, rosters, and routines in anticipation of our return to in-person learning for many of our students. These adjustments will have an impact on our Distance Learning schedules, and we thank you in advance for your flexibility as we cascade into a full K-5 in-person and Distance Learning model.

As a reminder, there is no school this week, Feb. 1-5, to prepare for these transitions.

We know there are many questions about Phase 5 and hope to provide some answers about what things will look like here at Kenwood. Please know this information is specific to our school, and other schools might have different procedures or ways of handling things.

This is a long message, but in it we will cover:

- Class rosters
- How to switch between distance and in-person learning if you've changed your preference
- Face covering requirements
- When and how you should hear from your student's new teacher
- Transition schedule and in-person learning
- Distance learning updates
- What things students need to bring for in-person learning
- What our daily schedule will look like
- How students will enter and exit the building
- Where students will eat breakfast and lunch
- Who to contact if your student is feeling ill
- Free COVID-19 saliva testing available before school starts
- How we'll notify families if there is a positive COVID case
- How to handle personal quarantines
- Where to find more information

Class Rosters

We will share class placement information with you in a separate communication this week. These new assignments are permanent unless, of course, your family chooses to change learning models from Distance to In-person or from In-person to Distance (more on that further down). If the Superintendent were to require everyone to return to Distance Learning, the new rosters would continue into Distance Learning; we would not revert back to semester 1 class rosters.

Switching between distance and in-person learning, or vice versa

First, if you registered for or were placed automatically in-person learning but would like to switch to distance learning, please contact the main office at 612-668-2760 or email

Danielle.Sanders@mpls.k12.mn.us. This change can start immediately upon request. Your child can continue using the same devices and resources already provided to your student and will be assigned to one of our Distance Learning teachers.

If you registered for distance learning and would like to switch to in-person learning, please call the main office at 612-668-2760 or email Danielle.Sanders@mpls.k12.mn.us. Because of the logistics necessary to support this change, such as staffing, meals, and transportation, this switch will take at least two weeks. The actual switch to in-person learning will occur on a Monday when there have been at least 5 full school days to permit teachers to prepare for the change in roster. We will work with your family and your student to make this as easy as possible. Examples:

- The office is notified on **Wednesday, March 3** that your child would like to switch to in-person learning. The student would begin in-person learning on **Monday, March 15**, if transportation has been set up.
- The office is notified on **Monday, Feb. 22** that your child would like to switch to in-person learning. The student would begin in-person learning on **Monday, March 8**, if transportation has been set up.

Face covering requirements for students and staff

Face coverings must be worn at all times while students are in the school building, including during recess and physical education classes. Exceptions will be made for students who have a doctor's note excluding them due to a medical condition or a disability. Please contact our health office at 612-668-2766 if you're seeking an exemption. Face coverings can also be removed while eating or drinking, but must be worn at all other times.

We have some child-sized masks in stock to provide to students who forget their masks. Please make every effort to send your child to school with two masks, one worn and the other as a back-up in their backpack.

When and how you should hear from your student's new teacher

Many students will have a new teacher starting on February 8, 10, or 22 to accommodate the community's need for both Distance and In-person learning. Families will be notified of classroom placements the week of Feb. 1 via email. The new teacher, if there's been a change, will reach out to your family via email or phone call prior to the in-person start date for your child's grade-band.

Transition schedule and in-person learning

Our Kindergarten students will return Feb. 8. Grades 1 and 2 will return Feb. 10, and grades 3-5 will return on Feb. 22. During the transition, students will remain in distance learning until their in-person start date.

Kindergarten: you will receive class placement emails from the office and communications from your new teacher (if applicable) the week of Feb. 1. Kindergartners will be with their new class (as applicable) on Monday, Feb. 8.

Grades 1&2: you will receive class placement emails from the office and communications from your new teacher (if applicable) the week of Feb. 1. 1st and 2nd grade students will distance learn with their current teachers on Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 8 & 9, and begin with their new teachers (if applicable) on Wednesday, Feb. 10.

Grades 3-5: you will receive class placement emails from the office the week of Feb. 1 and communications from your teachers no later than the week of Feb. 15. 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders will continue distance learning with their current teachers until Monday, Feb. 22, when students will begin with their new teachers.

Distance learning updates

Distance Learning specialist schedules will change to accommodate our specialist teachers' need to support Distance Learning and In-person learning classrooms. There will be changes to schedules on Feb. 8, 10, and 22. Your classroom teachers will communicate the first phase of schedule changes to you the week of Feb. 1.

What things students need to bring for in-person learning

When returning to In-person learning, students should bring the following with them. Families may choose to deliver these materials in labeled bags (name, classroom teacher) to Door 1 the week of Feb. 1 to reduce the number of items your child must bring to school on their first day of in-person learning.

- Backpack
- 2 masks (1 worn, 1 for back-up in the backpack)
- MPS devices and hotspots
- Earbuds/Headphones
- Gym shoes
- All school materials, including workbooks, math manipulatives (dice, cards, counters), science kits, notebooks. All items should be labeled with the student's name.
- Water bottle, labeled with student's name.
- Winter gear: coat, hat, mittens, boots, snow pants. This gear can be stored at school in students' lockers or cubbies as needed. All kids will go outside every day.
- Personal pencil sharpener
- Personal hand sanitizer (will be available in the classroom, but students may prefer to have their own)
- 1 package gallon-sized ziplock bags (if possible)

What our daily schedule will look like

- For in-person students, specialist, lunch, and recess schedules will adjust each time a new grade band enters in-person learning. Your classroom teachers will provide updates about daily schedules as the weeks progress. February 22, the day that all grades will offer in-person learning, will mark the last significant change in schedules. We will post our schedules on the website once in-person learning is in session, beginning on Feb. 8.
- For distance learning students, specialist, lunch, and recess schedules will adjust each time a new grade band enters in-person learning. Your classroom teachers will provide updates about daily schedules as the weeks progress. February 22, the day that all

grades will offer in-person learning, will mark the last significant change in schedule. We will post our schedules on the website once in-person learning is in session, beginning on Feb. 8.

How students will enter and exit the building

There will be some changes to drop-off/arrival and pick-up/dismissal for students. For students who walk to school or are brought by their families, please have students enter at Door 4 (on 21st, near the cafeteria) if your last name begins with A-M. Students with last names beginning with N-Z should enter through Door 8 (on Franklin, near the gym). At the end of the day, students will exit at the same door where they entered the building in the morning. Families should not enter the school with their students and should avoid congregating near the drop-off and pick-up locations. Kindergarten students may be picked up at Door 4 and Door 8 (according to last name) starting at 2:20 to facilitate dismissal procedures. All students must be picked up by 2:40.

For students riding on a school bus, the bus will arrive on Penn Ave. and students will enter the school through Door 1. At the end of the day, students will exit at Door 3 and Door 1 and the bus will pick them up on Penn Ave.

Where students will eat breakfast and lunch

When students enter the building in the morning, they will take a grab and go breakfast, if they choose, and bring it to their classrooms to eat. All students will eat lunch in the lunchroom. There will be two class cohorts in the lunchroom at one time, but the cohorts will be socially distanced.

Who to contact if your student is feeling ill

If your student is experiencing any symptoms of illness, please keep them home. You can contact the main office at 612-668-2760 and follow our school's normal attendance procedures. We ask every family to complete a self health-screening of your student before sending them to school each day.

Everyone has the right to keep their medical condition confidential and MPS will not identify individuals who have tested positive for COVID. However, we highly encourage families to inform their school if their student has tested positive for COVID. MPS gets information every day from both the Minnesota Department of Health and the Minneapolis Health Department about positive cases in the MPS community. If there is a concern that your student was exposed to someone who has tested positive with COVID, you will be notified with next steps.

Free COVID-19 saliva testing available before school starts

While COVID test results are only good for a moment in time, MPS is making [free saliva tests available on several dates](#) before school starts for those who are interested.

How we'll notify families if there is a positive COVID case

Because each case is unique, we will work with the Minneapolis Health Department to make the best decision about how and who to communicate with about an exposure to COVID at school. Due to confidentiality of medical information for all of our students and staff, families will not be told who has tested positive.

While it is rare that we would need to close an entire school due to a positive case of COVID, the school principal will notify families when and if the school building needs to be closed or if a classroom or certain students need to quarantine. In most cases, a school can stay open due to our strict daily cleaning and disinfection practices. Those identified as being in close contact with someone who tested positive will need to quarantine under the direction of the Minneapolis Health Department. If a school is closed, students will return to distance learning.

Traveling: absence vs. quarantine

If your family has planned a vacation while school is in session , please contact the main office at 612-668-2760 and follow our normal absence procedures. If your child must quarantine because of travel, Distance Learning will be available to them. Please contact the classroom teacher and main office.

More information available often

Stay tuned for updates via both MPS and our school -- websites, emails, robocalls, texts and social media. [More safety videos will soon be available on our MPS Phase 5 website.](#) [Also check our FAQ for the latest answers to new questions.](#)

Things are changing quickly and often. For example, last week we were excited to learn about vaccination opportunities for more than 2,000 staff who work directly with children. MPS will continue to work closely with state, county and city health officials and provide COVID-19 updates as possible. See the latest key data on the [MPS COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

We are excited to see our students again. Please contact our main office at 612-668-2760 for more information.

Sincerely,

Heidi Johnson
Principal at Kenwood Community School