



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) 2020-21 School Year

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Q: When is the first day of school?

A: The first day of school for students is scheduled for Monday, August 24, 2020, as proposed in the school calendar that was approved by the Fannett-Metal School District (FMSD) Board of Directors earlier this year. Professional staff will begin with in-service on Monday, August 17, 2020.

Q: How was the District's Health and Safety Plan developed?

A: A team of administrators, nurse, bus contractor, and other staff members developed the District's Health and Safety Plan, which serves as our in-person (face-to-face) back to school plan. In addition, some of these task force members are parents of FMSD students.

Furthermore, the plan incorporates data from the District survey on returning to school, as well as guidance and planning guides from numerous state and federal groups that include the [Pennsylvania Department of Education](#), [Pennsylvania Department of Health](#), and the [Centers for Disease Control](#).

Q: What will determine how schools look throughout the school year?

A: With opening school on August 24, 2020, the goal is to remain open in person for the entire school year. However, our administrative team has been working with their respective teachers to develop a distance learning model of content delivery that is more comprehensive than what occurred at the end of last school year. The Health and Safety plan addresses temporary closures due to positive cases. In addition to this plan, the district will be working with Mr. Dennis Smith, the Public Health Preparedness Coordinator for the Southcentral District of the Department of Health to assist when making the proper health decisions. Ultimately, the determining factor will be the level of transmission during the school year within our region and within our schools. We plan to use incidence data from the [Pennsylvania Department of Health's COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring System](#) to determine viral spread in the community.

The [Fannett-Metal School District Health and Safety Plan](#) was approved by the Board of Education on Tuesday, July 14, 2020.

SCHOOL SCHEDULES AND LUNCH

Q: What will my elementary child's school schedule look like at the start of school?

A: Elementary students Kindergarten through grade 5 will begin the year attending school in-person (face-to-face) every day. To better adhere to best practices for student spacing, we will minimize movement and contact by having students spend most of their day within their classroom. Students will have recess and specials; however, those classes might not look like they have in the past.

Q: Will elementary students still have recess?

A: Yes! Our elementary students will be able to get outside, play, and burn off some energy at school. Recess will occur in grade-level cohorts, where students will be purposely scheduled to use various facility spaces. Supervised children who are engaged in activities that keep them 6 feet apart during recess will not need to wear a face covering. However, students who are playing within 6 feet of other children will need to wear a face covering as per the Pennsylvania Department of Health Guidelines. It is our goal to provide opportunities for play during recess, where students do not need to wear their face coverings.

Q: How will my child eat lunch?

A: All students will eat lunch in their assigned classrooms or areas. While this might look slightly different in each school, we want to ensure that students are supervised in a way that still allows for interaction with their friends. The needs of students with food allergies will be taken into consideration when planning the lunch process and schedule for each classroom.

Students will maintain social distancing while eating their lunch in the classrooms or areas. Students will be required to sanitize or wash hands prior to, and after, eating.

We will ensure that students on Free and Reduced Lunch have access to meals. More information on that will follow prior to the start of school.

Q: What will my secondary child's school schedule look like?

A: Secondary students will begin the year attending school in-person (face-to-face) every day. Please note that schedules may be modified to reduce the number of students in hallways at any given time. Students will be grouped in minimum class size possible, but may move between classrooms within the building based on their individual schedules.

Q: What is the school schedule for special education students?

A: Students will receive core instruction and begin the year attending school in-person (face-to-face) every day. Individual IEP team meetings will be convened to address the specific learning needs of students who receive special education services.

Q: Will devices be provided to use if the students are not receiving face-to face instruction?

A: Yes! This year all students in grades K-5 will receive an iPad, while students in grades 6-12 will receive a laptop. Students in grades K-8 will only bring electronic devices home if the district would have to start distance or virtual learning due to another statewide school closure.

Q: Will school activities (field trips, assemblies, etc.) still occur?

A: At this time, field trips or other activities where social distancing cannot be maintained will not occur. We will plan to continue to provide specific activities that are a core function of our educational program. Additionally, there will also be no shared birthday treats of any kind.

Q: Will visitors be permitted in the building?

A: All non-essential visitors, volunteers, and likely all activities that involve outside groups will not occur this year.

Q: Will my child have access to breakfast?

A: Yes. Breakfast will be available K-12 and will be served grab-and-go style and students will eat their breakfast in their classrooms.

Q: Is the school schedule subject to change?

A: Yes. We will start with full face-to-face instruction at all levels. It is our hope to stay with this schedule during the entire 2020-2021 school year. The District is building contingency plans in case we see broad viral transmission or community spread.

Q: Is my child permitted to bring a water bottle to school?

A: Yes. Water fountains will not be accessible per the Governor's order. Students should bring their own bottle.

FACE COVERINGS, HEALTH CONCERNS, and DAILY CLEANINGS

Q: Will my child be required to wear face coverings?

A: At the direction of the Governor and Secretary of Health, all students and staff must wear a face covering while on school transportation, in hallways, and in classes where six (6) feet of physical social distancing is not possible. The guidelines clearly define all options that are considered a face covering and reviews medical conditions that fall within an exception to this [order](#).

Fannett-Metal School District is providing a face covering that comply with the orders issued by the Secretary of Health and the Governor. The school district is ordering school decaled buffs/neck gators and face shields for every student. It is recommended that students have an extra face covering with them in the event one is lost or somehow rendered unwearable during the school day. In addition, it is recommended that students begin to spend time wearing a face covering so that the first day of school is not the first time that students are asked to do this.

Q: What happens if my child does not wear a face covering?

A: Students are expected to wear a face covering anywhere that social distancing cannot occur. If a student arrives at school without wearing a face covering, the building principal will contact the students' parents/guardians to discuss the use and importance of face coverings. The principal will document the meeting concerning face coverings.

If a student cannot wear a face covering due to medical reasons, the District will work with the parents/guardians to develop a 504 agreement in compliance with Section 504 Rehabilitation Act and IDEA. This agreement will be developed to make appropriate accommodations for the student to assure that they are successful in school.

Q: How are we enforcing the wearing of facemasks?

A: At this time we have not identified how wearing a face covering will be enforced by the District. The expectation is that all students wear a face covering unless they are exempt due to medical reason such as having a 504 Plan.

Q: What if a student cannot wear a face covering?

A: Students who cannot wear a mask should experiment with other face coverings that are identified in the Secretary of Health's [order](#) to identify if one is available that meets their needs. For students with medical conditions that do not allow them to wear any type of face covering, the District will work individually with student's families to put in place safety procedures and other physical supports and distancing options to ensure that staff members who work directly with those students and other students within the building are safe.

Q: Should I prescreen my child for COVID-19 symptoms?

A: Yes. We are asking that parents/guardians complete their own personal home screening of your student before sending them on the school bus or dropping them off at school. Also, we are asking all students and staff to not attend school if they are experiencing any of the COVID-19 symptoms (fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea).

Q: If our family travels during the school year to a state in which the recommended quarantine order is in effect, will my child be required to quarantine prior to returning to school?

A: The District does not have the authority to exclude students from school who have [traveled to areas](#) identified by the Governor and Secretary of Health as having a higher risk of COVID-19 incidence and potential for infection. Parents/guardians who have traveled to other countries (or other states) should consult the Pennsylvania Department of Health guidance.

Q: Can my child carry their own hand sanitizer?

A: Yes, students will be encouraged to sanitize their hands throughout the day. Having disinfectant on hand will allow the students to practice good hygiene.

Q: What are the daily cleaning procedures?

A: In addition to nightly cleaning of our buildings, our custodial staff will be disinfecting high-touch areas throughout the course of the school day. In addition, all teachers will be provided with appropriate cleaning products and are being asked throughout the day to wipe down personal spaces and classroom desks. For devices and materials that must be shared by others, staff will ensure cleaning and disinfecting occurs between uses. Bus contractors will ensure that all buses are sanitized on a daily basis.

FANNETT-METAL CYBER ACADEMY (for) TIGER STUDENTS (FM-CATS)**Q: Will there be a fully online option for my child, should I so choose?**

A: Yes. We understand that these are challenging times and we know that every family needs to make a decision that is best for their personal circumstances. The FM-CATS option will provide increased rigor with both live instruction and recorded lessons for students through our partnership with Edmentum. The FM-CATS online curriculum and instruction are aligned to FMSD's standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.

Q: Can students move between FM-CATS and face-to face learning?

A: We are asking students who sign up for FM-CATS for a commitment of at least nine-weeks (one marking period) before other enrollment options are considered. Should students begin using face-to-face instruction and then decide they would like to move to FM-CATS, the District would work to accommodate that request.

Q: Are FM-CATS students who take courses able to enroll in at Franklin County Career and Technology Center (FCCTC)?

A: FM-CATS is open to any FMSD students K-12. FM-CATS students will be allowed to enroll at FCCTC.

Q: If I want to enroll one of my children into FM-CATS, must I enroll all of my children who attend FMSD into the fully online model?

A: Parents are encouraged to select the model (FM-CATS or face-to-face) which best suits each individual student's needs.

Q: What are the requirements for FM-CATS?

A: FM-CATS will provide instruction, assignments, and assessments the same way traditional students will receive when face-to-face. The same expectations will exist for FM-CATS and face-to-face classes.

Q: Will my child be able to take Honors and/or Advanced Placement courses through FM-CATS?

A: Course offerings are dependent upon student enrollment requests. We need to first look at the student's previously completed courses and then create the level of courses based upon those students' capabilities and needs.

Q: Will my child be able to participate in middle/high school athletics and extracurricular activities through FM-CATS?

A: Yes, FM-CATS are invited to participate in school athletics and extracurricular when they are being held.

TRANSPORTATION**Q: What will transportation look like for my child?**

A: Members of the same family will be seated next to each other so that we may increase the amount of physical distancing between students. Buses will be loaded from the back to the front in the morning. The specifics of the transportation schedule will be provided with more information as available. Again, buses will be sanitized on a daily basis.

Q: I'm not comfortable with my child riding a school bus. May I drive my child to school instead?

A: Absolutely! Look for information closer to the start of the school year from your child's building principal regarding student drop-off and pick-up procedures.