

Office of the Superintendent of Schools  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Rockville, Maryland

February 9, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Return to In-Person Learning

WHEREAS, The Board of Education is committed to the safe return to in-person learning for all students, in particular prioritizing the most vulnerable student populations; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education voted on January 12, 2021, (Resolution No. 5-21) to delay the return of students for in-person instruction until March 15, 2021, on the condition that established health metrics are met in advance of that date or health guidance is adjusted as a result of COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration and to confirm no later than February 23, 2021, whether a safe return to in-person learning can begin on March 15, 2021; and

WHEREAS, On January 21, 2021, Governor Lawrence B. Hogan, Jr. and State Superintendent of Schools Karen B. Salmon announced that schools must begin to reopen for in-person instruction by March 1; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 cases and test positivity rates are trending downward in Montgomery County; access to the vaccine is increasing; and research now suggest, with proper mitigation strategies schools safely can be reopened; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools is implementing safety measures in alignment with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, including, but not limited to face coverings, frequent handwashing and physical distancing, and has committed resources to ensure air quality in buildings meet the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers standards; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools has identified specific discrete programs serving the most vulnerable populations of students in special education programs and career readiness programs that require in-person experiences to acquire certification or licensure for a March 1, 2021, return to in-person instruction; and

WHEREAS, Parents of Montgomery County Public Schools students were provided the opportunity to choose between having their children remain in an exclusively virtual learning environment or having them engage in a combination of in-person and virtual instruction; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools employees have the ability to request an accommodation or leave under applicable state and federal law, and aligned with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for individuals with certain underlying medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools will provide dedicated time for employees to prepare their spaces and engage in additional professional development in advance of the return of students; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education hereby amend the resolution adopted on January 12, 2021, (Resolution No. 5-21) that delayed the return to in-person instruction on March 15, 2021, to approve the March 1, 2021, return to in-person instruction for students in specific discrete programs serving the most vulnerable populations of special education students and career readiness programs that require in-person experiences to acquire certification or licensure, recommended by the superintendent of schools; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education hereby approve the phased return of students to in-person instruction as recommended by the superintendent of schools by March 15, 2021, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education amend the 2020-2021 Traditional and Innovative Instructional School Year Calendars to make March 8, 2021, a non-instructional professional development day to provide employees time to prepare their spaces and engage in additional professional development in advance of the return of students to buildings.

JRS:DGT:fmy