

Frequently Asked Questions for Blended Learning

Will siblings be grouped on the same day?

Yes

If we first decide on a hybrid choice, do we have a choice to go fully remote at any point?

Yes. You will need to notify us of this change so we can monitor your child's attendance remotely.

It said sign in by 9am so are they on a different schedule or watching the entire day live.

Students will be watching segments of the day live. They will not be watching the entire day live. There will be recordings, assignments and independent practice for those working at home as well to complete while the students that are in-person are working on things and going to specials, lunch, etc. 9:00 is just the cut off period for attendance to be taken to make sure the student is engaged in the learning process. We would actually like for them to make a connection much earlier in the day with their reflection buddy, but this is the latest they can sign in to be counted as "in attendance".

If families decide to homeschool, are they allowed to come back the next year? Or do they have to enter the lottery?

Once a family leaves EMSA for homeschooling or another school, they are no longer an EMSA student and will need to get on the waitlist or go through the lottery to be re-admitted to EMSA.

Are you able to supply a Chromebook per child? Or is it per family?

Yes, we have enough Chromebooks for each child to have one. All students will need to bring their Chromebook back and forth to school each day of in-person attendance, fully charged and ready for use.

Will there be school picture day?

Yes

If families cannot support the remote learning days during the "usual" school hours, due to work commitments, will they be given accommodations to the sign in time, etc.

Those families will need to contact us so we can work out a plan that keeps their students engaged in the learning with accountability measures in place in regards to attendance.

If students have a holiday on a Monday, and come to class on Wednesday instead, when will the cleaning between cohorts take place?

On those few instances, we will have to do night cleaning for those cohorts due to the special circumstance.

When will we find out which group our child is in?

We will be sending out the cohort your child is in very soon.

Will the in-person lesson for the A cohort on Monday and Tuesday be repeated in-person for B Cohort on Thursday and Friday?

No, each day will be the same lesson for the students that are in-person and those that are remote. Students will need to keep up with the class on their remote learning days. If we just repeated assignments, students would only be getting half a year of instruction. Blended learning is a continuous learning process, 5 days a week. The only thing that is different is whether the student is in-person or doing so virtually.

How will students do assessments?

Students will conduct as many assessments as possible on the in-person learning days. If a student is remote only, we will provide assessments that they can do at home to show proficiency.

Will there be recess?

We will not have traditional recess, but more structured movement breaks and PE each day to allow for movement on in-person instruction days. Traditional recess does not provide the structure to follow the safety protocols.

Will students wear masks for recess?

If recess/PE is outside and students are not close to each other, they will not need to wear masks. If recess/PE is inside, masks will still need to be worn.

Some classes have tables instead of desks. Will students need to share a table space or will it be one per student?

Teachers are currently assembling their spaces according to the guidelines provided in the plan. We do have enough desks to replace tables if that is what the teacher chooses to create her spacing.

What are the protocols when masks are off eating lunch in class?

Students will take their masks off to eat, but in order to move about the room, the mask will need to be on. This is the same protocol used in many restaurants.

What safety measures other than cleaning desks will be in place for lunch?

Students will wash their hands before and after eating. They will wear a mask when they are moving about the room, but can remove their masks to eat. Students will be seated at their desks which will be spaced according to guidelines.

Is there a possibility of a student being in Group A and Group B and being able to go 4 days a week if there are enough families opting for full remote learning thereby leaving open spots in the classroom?

To answer your question, all students will have a slot in a cohort classroom regardless if they choose to do remote learning. Parents have until the 27th to determine if they will utilize remote learning only option after reviewing our plan by completing the survey. Because this is a fluid situation, families may opt into remote learning and then the next month choose to opt into in-person learning cohort and vice versa. If we fill those remote slots (if there are any) with students from other cohorts, the remote students will not be able to attend in-person if their situation changes. Moreover, if we allowed all to

attend in-person, we would not have the space to accommodate social distancing which is the reason for only allowing half of the students to attend at a time with blended learning. The other issue is that we are trying to keep cohorts contained to prevent cross contamination in the event that quarantine is necessary. If we have a student come all four days we would not be able to minimize this impact.

Which cohort is my child in?

The cohorts are not finalized yet. We will need you to complete the survey attached to the back to school letter in order for us to finish the cohort determinations. The deadline for the survey is July 27th. We will send parents the cohort information as soon as possible.

Can my student do remote only instruction?

Yes, please fill out the survey attached to the letter and the slide show with your decision to do remote only. We will follow-up with you with the parent compact and expectations for this process once we have those final decisions from parents.

Can I choose which cohort my child attends?

There is no way to guarantee cohort placement requests from parents for over 300 students. There are so many considerations that go into cohort placements including special services, transportation, etc. We have to look at the needs of all students and the instructional plan for them as part of a blended situation as well as for a complete return to in-person instruction when and if we move into phase 5. In fact, there are laws that govern some of our student ratios within class lists as well.

Can students wear their own mask?

Absolutely. We would love for the students to have a fun mask that they choose to wear each day.

Will the school be supplying masks for the students?

We will have face masks available for students that need one. We have added a face mask to the supply list and would like to encourage students to pick out or design their own so it is something they would like to wear.

Can children wear face shields instead of masks?

Face shields are not the recommended face covering. In the original 63 page document from ISBE it stated that face shields could be worn. A week later we received information contradicting this information telling us face shields were not an option to a mask. Only students that can't wear a face mask for medical reasons will have the option of wearing a face shield. Moreover, face shields may be utilized only in specific circumstances such as speech or language services to assist with the programming, but a mask should be applied the moment that therapy has concluded. When wearing a shield for the purpose of therapy, the child should be spaced 6 feet apart from others.

Are we able to switch to full remote learning if we are at all uncomfortable after the start of the school year?

Yes, you can switch to remote only instruction at any time, you just need to notify us of this change so we can manage your student's attendance, food service, transportation, etc. in a manner in keeping with the remote only option.

Are students still able to bring their own lunch from home?

Of course they can bring sack lunches and snacks from home for their individual consumption.

How will blended learning at EMSA coincide with siblings attending different schools?

EMSA has no control over the plans, calendar, or scheduling of any other school. Each district has local control to determine their own plans. In fact, we have designed our overall school calendar each year to align as closely to that of U46 as possible to help families be on the same schedule for breaks if they have kids in different schools. This year we even had to get special permission to start school on August 12th from the State Charter Commission to keep that alignment with the U46 calendar to help our families.

What are the bussing details?

Please fill out the transportation survey by Friday, July 24th so we can finalize these plans with the bus company. Once the bus company creates the routes, we will communicate that information to our students in need of bus transportation.

Will Chromebooks that are currently in use need to be returned for redistribution?

No, if you already have a Chromebook assigned to your child, that is the Chromebook you will continue to use for this school year.

Will there be one contact for IT help?

Please call the school if you need IT help and we will assist you.

Will all supplies travel back and forth with the students (i.e. pens, pencils, markers, notebooks...) or just the Chromebooks with a second set of supplies needed at home?

It's preferable that only the Chromebooks travel back and forth with a second set up supplies at home for students to use for their work.

What will services look like for students with an IEP or 504?

Our Special Education Director will contact you prior to school starting in regards to your child's services.

Do my children need to invest in uniforms if they will be doing e-learning?

Students will only need to wear uniforms for in-person instruction.

We were wondering if EMSA is considering any modifications to their plan?

We continually monitor data and guidelines and will continue to do so throughout the year and adapt accordingly. EMSA is not modifying the plan at this time, but will inform parents if and when something changes.

What changes has the school made to keep the building clean throughout the day as kids are moving about in class and between rooms.

Movement in the building will be kept to a minimum as lunch and breakfast will be served in the classroom, PE is outdoors, Art is online, etc. We are putting together an increased cleaning and sanitizing schedule, some of which is highlighted in the presentation.

When can I pick up a Chromebook?

If you do not already have an assigned Chromebook, we will be passing out Chromebooks on August 11th from 8-10a.m. If you've already been assigned a Chromebook for use during the summer, that is the device you will continue to use.

Can we see the classroom set-up?

Each teacher is preparing a presentation for our virtual back to Back to School Night on August 11th that will include a picture of the classroom. More details will be sent out later regarding Back to School Night.

Are teachers going to be online full-time for students?

Teachers will utilize a blend of recorded/live streamed lessons, conference sessions, and independent practice sessions to engage each learner in the content.

