



# INDIAN RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Planning for Fall 2020: *Frequently Asked Questions*

In following guidance from Governor Carney's office and the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), the Indian River School District is currently planning for a hybrid opening in Fall 2020. In order for us to plan effectively, we must first determine how many of our students may return to us for any aspect of face-to-face learning as this number impacts many decisions including, but not limited to, transportation, and student and staff schedules. We understand this is a difficult decision to make in the face of many unknowns, so we have created this FAQ to provide as much information as we can at this time. Please know that the IRSD will continue to inform you as details become available. We will also continue following recommendations from DDOE, including this document released during Governor Carney's Press Conference today: [FAQs about Safe School Reopenings in Delaware](#)

**Q: How can families make this type of decision when there are so many unknowns such as how social distancing will be implemented in schools and on buses, how lunches will be handled, and what will happen when a student or staff member displays symptoms or tests positive?**

We do understand this is a difficult decision. We wish we could start this school year in a traditional manner; but the Governor has recommended that we plan for a hybrid model that includes both remote and in-person learning opportunities. The various departments in the IRSD (transportation, nutrition services, instruction, etc...) are all working with the state's guidance documents to prepare for the hybrid opening to our school year. Additionally, our district has been assigned a Division of Public Health (DPH) Liaison who will work with us to ensure we are accepting your children onto buses and into buildings that are sanitized and monitored by staff that are fully trained in ensuring the guidance provided by DPH and our DDOE will be followed.

The guidelines DPH and DDOE have provided will be the protocol we use on our buses and in our schools. Details around those topics you may have the most questions about, from face coverings to transportation, can be found at the links below this response. You will see that the guidance explains recommendations for everything from sanitizing and maintaining clean school and bus environments, social distancing on buses and in schools, and responding to potential or confirmed Covid cases. Please be assured that our district will implement all recommended safety protocol.

[DDOE's Returning to School Guidance](#)

[Responding to Covid in Schools](#)

**Q: Will siblings in different grades/schools be scheduled to attend in-person on the same days?**

The district intends to schedule all students living in the same household, who will attend school via the hybrid model, to attend school on the same day(s); and will arrange transportation as such if district bus transportation is being used.

**Q: What is the IRSD Remote Academy? Does this mean my child will or will not be attending classes with their regular school teachers and peers?**

Families who choose to have their child[ren] participate in instruction through a full-remote model will be provided district curricula and instruction through online courses posted in Seesaw or Schoology (specifics to follow). Certified IRSD teachers and instructional support staff will provide the instruction in both synchronous (in real-time through Zoom) and asynchronous (through recorded teacher instruction, instructional support videos, and self-paced assignments) manners. At this time, we cannot specify which teacher(s) students will have as we do not yet know how many will be participating in a fully remote model or a hybrid model; however, we can say that instruction will be planned and delivered so that students have the opportunity to interact and collaborate with their peers.

**Q: What am I committing to when I complete this survey?**

You are informing the district of two choices: whether you would like your child to attend school through a hybrid mix of in-person and remote instruction; or if you would prefer your child to attend only through our IRSD Remote Academy (see previous response). Student schedules and staff schedules cannot be determined until we know how many students will physically be in our buildings on any given day; as we will follow DOE's guidance in how many students can be on a bus at a time, as well as adhere to other safety guidelines such as social distancing in hallways, cafeteria, classrooms, etc...and in-person student numbers impact these decisions.

If you choose the hybrid model for your child, please know that you can, at any time before school starts or during the first marking period, decide to change to full remote by contacting your child's school. PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade students choosing the hybrid model will attend school in-person 2 days per week; whereas, high school students will attend 1 day per week. In both cases, the remaining days of the week will be focused on remote learning. Families choosing the IRSD Remote Academy will be unable to move to the hybrid model until after the first marking period concludes. We are saying at this



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time that schedules, whether hybrid or remote, will be designed for the entirety of the first marking period; however, we will always follow the state's guidance in when is the appropriate time to fully reopen our schools for all students.

**Q: How will social distancing be enforced in situations where a student has documented special needs?**

The Department of Special Services is working within the framework of guidance from the state of Delaware. We are committed to ensuring that students continue to get services whether remote or hybrid works best for the families. We will be hosting IEP meetings for all students in the Fall of 2020 to continue to monitor for additional services and/or supports needed with each family's choice of how to attend school.

Students who attend Howard T. Ennis School and the Indian River Autism Program will have the same options as the rest of the IRSD. Students will attend in person two days per week, if hybrid is the family's choice, to lessen the amount of students in the building at the same time. Families also have the option of choosing to attend a full remote program. Therapies may be offered by appointment when the Governor moves us into Phase 3.

For students who need hand over hand instruction, the staff will wear full protective gear and keep hand over hand interaction to less than 15 minutes per the current guidelines if hybrid instruction is chosen.

If you have individual questions regarding your child, please call the Department of Special Services hotline at 302-604-2121. The hotline will put you in touch with one of the administrators from the Department of Special Services.

Stand by for up to date information as plans are finalized. IRSD is closely monitoring the guidance from the Delaware Department of Education and the Governor.

**Q: Will you provide students and families with what they need such as a computer, masks, and paper copies of learning materials?**

As in spring 2020, those families in need of a device in order to participate in remote learning will receive one. Our district will be in contact with families to determine need and will follow protocol similar to the spring to provide the devices.

Likewise, any student or staff member in need of a mask while in school will be provided one.

Schools will also continue to provide paper copies of all learning materials; and methods designed to receive work in return from students who are unable to submit electronically.

**Q: What if my child struggles with the remote learning?**

Your child will have a designated teacher, or teachers, who will be available to support your child with the learning and assignments. The district will also work with staff to ensure we can provide interventions, even remotely, in the event that students are struggling.

**Q: Will students have their specials classes such as art, physical education, etc...?**

The district values all aspects of your child's education and consideration is being given to how learning across all content can be provided in both remote and in-person situations during this time. Again, once we have numbers for our Remote Academy and our hybrid model, student schedules will be designed and shared with you prior to the first student day.

**Q: What happens if a staff member or student tests positive for Covid-19 during the school year?**

The State of Delaware has provided districts the following guidance, [FAQ Document](#), which outlines the process for responding to positive COVID-19 tests. Facial coverings, hand washing, social distancing, and regular cleaning are the best way to prevent positive cases and the spread of the disease.