



BSD Parent Preference Survey FAQ

9.29.20

The survey stated that there is a possibility that a student's teacher might change due to the learning preference selected. My child has already developed a positive bond with Teacher Y. What do I select to make sure my child stays with Teacher Y?

As we begin to transition to an in-person/hybrid model, we know that some of our staff will not be able to return to being on-site and in-person with students due to serious, underlying health conditions that place them at a significantly higher risk of susceptibility and complications from COVID (chemotherapy, transplant recipients, heart disease, and other immunodeficiency disorders). Like all employers, the District must provide reasonable accommodations to qualifying employees as per the Americans with Disabilities Act. In some cases, teachers will be assigned a full remote teaching schedule as an accommodation. When this occurs, class lists will need to be revised accordingly. The classes involved and the extent to which adjustments will need to be made won't be known until the student preference data from this survey can be compared to the list of staff available for each preference, full remote and in-person/hybrid.

I am hesitant to make a selection without knowing more specifics about the hybrid model. How many days a week will students be going to school for in-person/hybrid instruction – 1 day, 2 days, etc? Why isn't the District allowing us to select how many days we want for our student if we select in-person/hybrid?

Four independent variables will determine how many days of in-person instruction we will be able to offer at each grade level cluster (elementary, middle, and high):

- the total number of students preferring in-person/hybrid per grade level cluster;
- the total number of in-person/hybrid students in need of district transportation per grade level cluster;
- students per classroom capacity according to social distancing guidelines; and
- total number of staff available to provide in-person instruction to students.

If the District had access to an unlimited number of teachers and a bus fleet three times the size of our current number, a variety of feasible options could be offered from which parents could select. In the scenario we face, the actual numbers and the restrictions that are in place will determine the extent to which in-person instruction can be offered. This is not an effort to mislead, but to be as open and as transparent as possible. We do not want to publish options that we will not be able to provide and want parents and guardians to know this up front. Quite simply, the District can only provide what it has the capacity to do based on the imposed restrictions. Determining exactly what we have the capacity to provide is based on the actual data of the variables involved. Without exact numbers, we run the risk of over-promising and under-delivering on estimates and forecasts.

If I choose in-person/hybrid, will the time that my child is not with his teacher in-person be synchronous or asynchronous?

In our survey of parents and students from last spring's remote learning, it was clear that a synchronous approach was desired over an asynchronous experience. To this end, the District's objective is to

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provide synchronous learning sessions whenever possible as we make the transition to in-person/hybrid. In full transparency, until the plans can be finalized with actual data, we cannot fully rule out the possibility of some previous synchronous learning being replaced with an asynchronous experience. It is our hope to avoid this if at all possible, but the uniqueness of the situation and the variability of the data involved compels us to be transparent with parents that the possibility of such exists. Again, we hope to avoid such, but just want parents to know up front of the possibility.

As the transition occurs, is the District prioritizing specific grade levels for in-person learning?

As communicated to parents and stakeholders since the August Board of Education Meeting, the District will begin to bring back small groups of students beginning the first week of October and expanding the cohorts through the end of the 1st Marking Period. The initial group will focus on students in need of special services and programs and will gradually grow to include general education students. In previous reports and communications, the District has stated that it will follow the Delaware Department of Education and Governor Carney's recommendation in prioritizing the return of our earliest elementary learners first, followed by other grade levels, when general education students start to return to buildings.

How can I sign up for in-person/hybrid when I don't know what safety protocols the District will have in place to protect my child?

The District's website has a link to the Reopening Plan for the 2020.21 school year. This plan lays out the District's plan for a remote opening and also provides an overview of the safety protocols that are in effect when the transition from remote to in-person begins. On the BSD homepage, scroll down to District Headlines and Features and click the headline titled Health & Safety Protocols. The link will take you to the previously shared Reopening website, <http://www.proud2b-bsd.com/>. Please note that this channel will be updated in the weeks ahead with important information regarding the return of students for in-person learning as data specific details become known and planning evolves.

Why am I being forced to make a decision for the duration of the whole 2nd Marking Period? I don't understand why I can't change my child to full remote or to in-person/hybrid if I want to?

The task that lies before us may seem simplistic, but it is indeed complex from multiple aspects within the school system. The changing of class rosters and the potential imbalance between student load per teacher must remain relatively equitable and educationally sound. A shift between sections can quickly result in two thirty-student classes evolving into one class having 45 students and the other 15. Forty-five students per class is not educationally sound nor equitable in terms of student to teacher responsibilities. This is true regardless of the delivery of instruction (remote or in-person). Another example has to do with allowable capacities. Both classroom and bus capacities have been severely restricted by the State's Reopening Guidance that all public schools are required to follow. Once schedules are set, classroom and bus capacities will be at or near maximum capacity. Simply put, it may not be physically possible to accommodate even one more student in a given area. Forcing a student onto a bus already at capacity (23 students) could create a ripple effect impacting two to three other buses. As a result, students on three different buses would get revised bus pick-up and drop-off schedule changes. If not restricted, such changes could happen multiple times a month, much to the frustration of parents and students changing bus route times with each change.