

Dear Manchester Public Schools Community,

As you know, on Wednesday, I shared a plan for the full return of all K-4 hybrid students with the Board of Education. I am writing to share the upcoming change in schedule for all K-4 hybrid students. ***This change will not affect K-4 remote learners or any of our 5-12 students.*** We will be moving anyone who previously requested to go from hybrid to remote into a remote section next week. However, while we prepare to make this move, we are not able to accommodate additional requests to change K-4 students from remote to hybrid or vice versa.

Starting Monday, November 2, all K-4 hybrid learners will return to school five days per week (Monday through Friday) with classes in school buildings running from 9:10 a.m. to 2:10 p.m. Please note Tuesday, November 3 (Election Day) is a remote day for all students.

The change for our K-4 hybrid learners is being made so we can provide more direct instruction for students at these critically important developmental years. We are confident we can bring K-4 students back full time while keeping classes small enough (13 or fewer students per class) to ensure social distancing (at least 6 feet apart) while continuing to wear masks, use desk shields, and encourage hand washing.

In order to keep class size at 13 or fewer, a number of cohorts will be reconfigured resulting in some K-4 hybrid students being assigned a new teacher. We know this is not ideal but making the current cohorts smaller allows us to increase time in school for our students and to do so safely. Building administrators will reach out to parents in the next week to discuss cohorts.

To maintain this class size, our 16 STEM specialists will be reassigned to teach elementary students meaning STEM instruction will be suspended for all K-4 students. We also are hiring four new teachers.

As we prepare for this change, we continue to carefully follow state and local data measuring the spread of COVID-19. If there is a significant spike in the virus we could be forced to reconsider this move or move to an all-remote scenario for all students.

In the meantime I want to again thank you for your patience and flexibility during this unusual year. I am pleased by the commitment of students and staff in our buildings to wearing masks and taking other appropriate precautions and I greatly respect the hard work of families of remote learners as you juggle all the challenges this experience presents.

Sincerely,

Matt Geary