



Millis Public Schools

Nancy L. Gustafson, Superintendent

245 Plain St. Millis, MA 02054

Phone: (508)376-7000 FAX: (508) 376- 7020

E-mail: Ngustafson@millisschools.org

Small School, Big Family

October 5, 2020

Dear Millis families,

We hope you and your children have had a good beginning to the school year. Teachers and all staff have worked hard to make this phase of remote learning as successful as possible. The Millis Public Schools are considering moving to a hybrid model and we wanted to give you a bit more information about this so that you can make informed decisions for your family regarding hybrid or long term remote learning. One of the most important aspects of learning is student engagement and our teachers have spent time in professional development to learn and develop ways that hybrid and remote learning both can be more authentically engaging and effective. Social-emotional learning and well-being are other critical components of learning that will continue to be a focus for all staff with focus on relationships with and among students and increased communication and support for families. Specifically we are working hard to implement the following strategies for both remote and hybrid learning:

- ❖ 100% of students have devices, connectivity and access to all necessary instructional materials
- ❖ A Flipped Model where time with teachers and staff (whether on-line or in-person) is prioritized for connecting, conferencing, coaching, mini-lessons. Content delivery and learning pathways may be provided in our learning management systems (Google Classroom or ITs Learning)
- ❖ Frequent face-to-face instruction, coaching, conferencing and connecting with students is essential

During Hybrid and Long Term Remote, students and teachers will also continue to adhere to all of the components listed below.

- Continue use of our system for tracking attendance, student participation and student engagement
- Continue use of alignment of academic work with State standards
- Continue use of established practice of standards-based assessment
- Continue use of our grading policy that includes standards-based assessment and report cards in Pre-K through grade 7, and standards-based assessment with numerical grading in grades 8-12

- Continue use of communication system that supports regular communication with students and families, including translation of communications as required
- Continue academic engagement with students through the use of learning platforms, such as Google Classroom and itslearning, Google Suite tools and applications
- Continue use of learning applications such as STAR, IXL, Freckle, Khan Academy, EPIC, and Video conferencing, meetings, and check-ins using Zoom.

Hybrid Learning Model Description

Students have been assigned to cohorts. Cohort A will meet in school Monday and Tuesday. Cohort B will meet in school Thursday and Friday.

This hybrid model allows for :

- Students will have two consecutive days of in-person learning in their classroom
- Three consecutive days of remote learning supports stakeholder input relative to the convenience and availability of childcare
- One day per week of 100% full remote learning allows for thorough cleaning of school facilities
- The full remote learning day each week provides teachers and staff with time to collaborate and plan for the best possible learning experience for students

During this phase, students and teachers will continue to adhere to all of the components of remote learning as listed in the section above.

Long Term Remote Learning Model Description

For families choosing to have their students stay home full time and not attend the in-person offerings, students will attend the remote learning days of both cohorts (Cohort A and B). On Monday and Tuesday, they will be remote with Cohort B, on Wednesday they will be remote with their entire class and then on Thursday and Friday, they will be remote with Cohort A.

During this phase, students and teachers will continue to adhere to all of the components of remote learning as listed in the section above.

How will it look?

Remote Learning has been the mode of instruction for Millis Public Schools students since September 16, 2020. As we transition from remote to our hybrid model, here is how it might look at each of the three schools. Please keep in mind that these are examples and there might be some variation between grade levels and classrooms.

Mills High School

All students (Long Term Remote and hybrid) will begin the class for attendance and check in. Following this, a number of options will be utilized depending on the subject/content/concepts of the lesson. After check in, the remote students may stay in the class “virtually” for a teacher-directed activity. There may also be whole group discussion, problem-solving, etc. There also will be times when the remote group is placed into breakout rooms or paired with in-person students. On other occasions, remote students will log off from the class meeting to

complete asynchronous work and check back in prior to the end of the class meeting. In most classes, students choosing LongTime Remote learning will be assigned to one of the in-person cohorts and may, at times, continue with the in-person cohort when the hybrid remote cohort goes offline. This does not mean, however, that LongTime Remote students will be zooming in from 8:00 to 2:20 each day that the cohort they align with is in the building. In some cases, they will be working on alternative assignments that allow them to get off their screens and do asynchronous work.

Millis Middle School

Middle School students will follow the same A Day/B Day class schedule they are following now when the transition to a Hybrid phase occurs. There will be a change to the block three times due to lunch schedules. Middle School teachers will use a variety of methods to teach students from three different groups: in-person cohort, hybrid remote cohort, and long-term remote cohort. Generally we envision our long-term remote cohort students joining in with each M/T and Th/F hybrid remote cohort. On Wednesdays all students will work remotely from 8:00 - 1:00 following the current MS schedule. As in the high school, a number of options will be utilized depending on the subject/content/concepts of the lesson.

The Hybrid model for classes at the Middle School level may include the following components:

- Synchronous zoom sessions with in-person, hybrid remote, and long-term remote cohorts for attendance purposes, sharing an agenda, engaging in a warm-up, doing presentations, checking in, Q&A, closure, exit-tickets, etc. Students will log in to Zoom at the beginning of each period. The duration of the Zoom session will vary depending on the class and teacher.
- Asynchronous independent, self-paced practice activities, which may include content support applications such as Freckle, IXL, Membean, Edpuzzle, etc.
- Flipped Classroom model, where students view recorded lessons while working remotely then apply that learning while present in-person.
- Project-Based Learning or Genius Hour projects, where students research a topic of choice related to the curriculum unit of study and prepare a presentation or proceed through steps to find a solution to a problem and engage in mini-lessons along the way.
- Personalized learning pathways, which allow students to work at their own pace through scaffolded steps created by the teacher for building skills and content knowledge.
- Collaboration between in-person and remote cohorts may occur via Zoom breakout rooms, online discussion boards (Padlet, Flipgrid, etc.), or collaborative projects and tasks completed virtually by pairs or small groups.

Teachers may vary the model used based on the curriculum content, agenda, and learning objective. On some days and in some classes, students may be working more independently off-screen during remote learning days. On remote learning days during a Hybrid phase, students may experience less live session time with teachers

Clyde F Brown Elementary

Students in Kindergarten through grade 5 (Hybrid and LongTime Remote) will have an opportunity to participate in a morning meeting, live instruction, and an end-of-the-day meeting

much like our current structure. During these times, the remote students will Zoom into the classroom with the students who are in-person. While the structure of the day will remain very similar to what has been established since the beginning of the year, some adjustments may be necessary to support the hybrid model. Long-term remote students will follow the remote schedule for both the Monday/Tuesday cohort and the Thursday/Friday cohort.

Remote and in-person students will continue to receive live instruction at the beginning of each academic section of the day. Remote students will be prompted to log off the zoom meeting once the live instruction has ended and will begin their independent work time. The teacher will indicate the time students are to rejoin the class. The teacher may keep the zoom link open during this time to answer questions as needed. The wait time for a response for remote students may increase as the teacher will be working with the in-person students during the independent time. In-person students will participate in small group instruction and hands-on activities while the remote students work independently.

Best regards,

Nancy L. Gustafson

The Millis Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness.