



July 30, 2020

MBS Family,

The Mountain Brook Board of Education voted this afternoon to postpone the start of the 2020-2021 school year from Tuesday, August 11, to Thursday, August 20.

This decision was made to provide our school system more time to prepare buildings, train employees, and finalize logistics before instruction begins.

In addition to postponing the start date, Mountain Brook Schools has decided to start the school year in accordance with our alternate plan. At the secondary level, this means that students at the junior high and high school who selected the traditional option will be assigned to one of two groups and attend school on continuous, alternating days from week to week as indicated in the chart below.

MBS	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1
Week 2	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2

The alternating schedule aids in density reduction by limiting the number of students in a building simultaneously. When away from campus, students will participate in e-Learning and complete assignments developed by their teachers from home.

The alternating schedule does not apply to students who registered for the full-time virtual option, nor will it apply at the elementary level.

Elementary students who selected the traditional option will attend school five days per week. To reduce the potential for COVID-19 transmission, however, elementary schools will implement non-rotating schedules for grades 4 to 6.

This enables students from Pre-K to 6th grade to remain in their designated classroom throughout the school day, mitigating cross-contamination of virus exposure between and among groups. For this same reason, we will not offer the Extended Day Program for the first nine weeks of the school year.

These decisions were made in consultation with the Alabama State Department of Education, Alabama Department of Public Health, and Jefferson County Department of Health. The plans outlined above will be in place for a minimum of four weeks and have been [updated in our school reopening plan](#).

We are weighing all data variables as they are presented to us and making decisions that we feel best balance the risks and benefits at that moment. That is why we are limiting our plans to finite timelines. We will be re-evaluating those variables regularly and will modify accordingly.

Similar to many of you, we hoped to begin the school year on time under normal circumstances. Due to the recent surge in COVID-19 cases across our county, however, it became evident that we needed to pivot to protect our students, staff, and all of their families.

The well-being of the Mountain Brook community remains our top priority. Thank you for your flexibility and patience.

Sincerely,

Dicky Barlow, Ed. D.
Superintendent
Mountain Brook Schools

July 30 Announcement FAQ

Why will Mountain Brook Schools begin the school year with an alternating schedule for secondary students and not elementary students?

As outlined by the Jefferson County Department of Health, research suggests that children under age 10 are less likely to spread COVID-19 as effectively as older persons. The county health department recommends in-person instruction for elementary students as long as classes remain isolated from one another, maintain strict social distancing, and require facial coverings. Mountain Brook Schools will follow these and other county health department recommendations to protect the health and safety of students and staff.

Why will Mountain Brook Schools not begin the school year with e-Learning?

Mountain Brook Schools has worked closely with the Jefferson County Department of Health to determine its reopening plan. The school system understands the importance of meeting students' health and safety needs along with their social-emotional needs. Bringing secondary students back to campus on an

alternating schedule, as well as keeping elementary students in small groups, allows MBS to address both responsibly.

In light of the announced changes, will Mountain Brook Schools extend the deadline to register for the full-time virtual option?

We understand there may be families who would like to reconsider their instructional options following these updates. Families who registered for the virtual option may opt out by emailing Cory Morris at morriss@mtnbrook.k12.al.us.

What about the Extended Day Program?

The Mountain Brook Schools Extended Day Program will not be offered at the start of the school year but will be reviewed after nine weeks. This will help prevent cross-contamination of virus exposure between and among groups of students from different classrooms.

When will I know what group my student will be in and on what days they will attend school?

Families of secondary students will receive an email shortly from their school. Attendance days will be determined by a student's last name.

When will my student's schedule be available?

Schools are in the process of making final schedule adjustments based on virtual and traditional registration numbers. Families will be notified as soon as they are available.