

Montpelier Roxbury Public Schools

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Our schools are caring, creative, and equitable communities that empower all children to build on their talents and passions to grow into engaged citizens and life-long learners.

RETURN TO SCHOOL FAQ #1

1:00 End Time UES/RVS/MSMS

Q: Why is it necessary to end the school day early each day?

1. POD Model

- a. School reopenings in other countries have found success in risk mitigation using the POD model. A POD model involves placing two adults in every classroom for the entirety of the day. This decreases bringing new people into a classroom throughout the day, decreases the reliance on substitutes, and decreases the need for students to leave the classroom thereby lowering the potential of sharing germs. At MSMS, students will stay in their POD with one adult and their two team teachers will rotate throughout the day to teach content. For this reason, each MSMS POD will have three adults assigned to them.
 - i. In order to make the POD model successful, we need all hands on deck. This includes specials teachers (eg. PE, Art, Music). Our specials will be delivered in a much different format this year. We are still planning on what that will look like.
 - ii. We are required by contract to give each teacher a 25 minute duty-free lunch during the hours of 10:30-1:30 and a 40 minute prep time per day. We believe we can accomplish covering the lunch periods within the POD structure, but cannot cover the prep periods because specialists will be in the classrooms. All teachers will be receiving their prep periods at the end of the school day. The teacher work day is defined as 7:30-3:00.
 - iii. We are attempting to significantly limit our use of outside substitute teachers for a variety of reasons--risk mitigation and a significant number of new procedures/protocols/rules being the top two. All staff are also being told to stay home if they or someone in their home has any sign of illness. We fully expect that this will increase absenteeism and put a strain on our POD model. Providing prep periods during kid contact time is nearly impossible with the expected rise in absenteeism.

2. Safety Guidelines and Masks

- a. All students and staff are required to wear masks and maintain 6 feet of distance as much as possible. Teachers will be getting kids outside, however, must do so in a controlled fashion to keep in line with safety guidelines. Even outside, unless separated by 6 feet, the mask mandate remains intact. Our school day will be 5 hours with the early dismissal. This will be 5 hours for kids and adults to be in a mask with few potential breaks--less so in inclement weather. It is a long time to wear a mask for everyone involved.

3. Dismissal Procedures

- a. Dismissal in the afternoon will take significantly longer than a typical year and all staff will be needed to ensure guidelines are followed. Buses will be dismissed one by one. When arriving at the bus, students will need to be lined up in the order of their assigned seat on the bus prior to boarding. Once all busses are dismissed, schools can begin with all other students in a controlled manner. We are expecting this process to take no less than 45 minutes.

4. Afterschool Care

- a. We are working with our afterschool providers, Part 2 and Bridges, with the earlier dismissal time. Both programs know of our POD model. Our afterschool providers follow the [Child Care Guidelines](#) while schools are required to follow the [School Reopening Guidelines](#). The guidelines are different. Both Part 2 and Bridges are equally committed to mitigating risk as much as possible.