

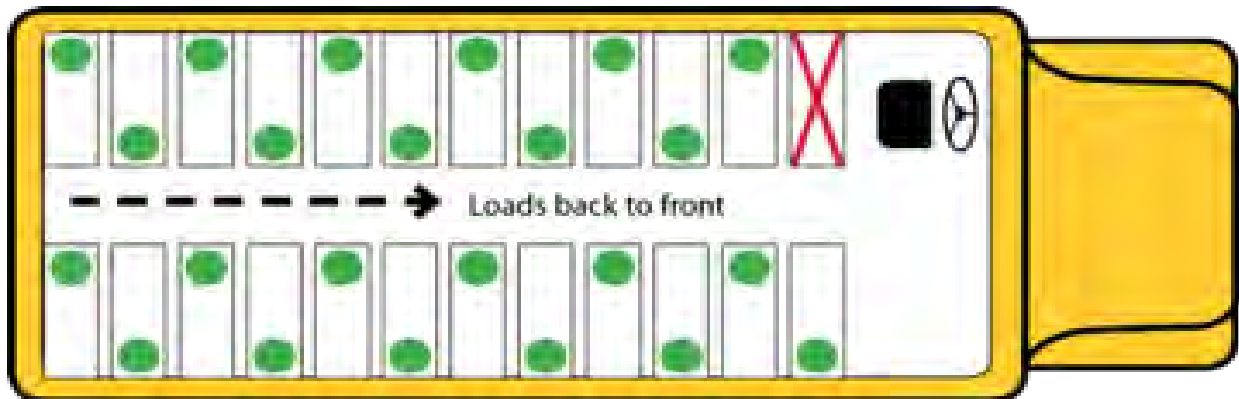
a class to fully virtual instruction if it meets this definition or based on a Howard County Health Department recommendation. In the event that a classroom needs to be closed for an outbreak, the school will communicate with families the details pertaining to the change to virtual instruction.

The Maryland Department of Health defines a school-wide outbreak as three or more classrooms or cohorts with cases from separate households that meet the classroom/cohort outbreak definition that occurs within 14 days or five percent or more unrelated students/teachers/staff have confirmed COVID-19 within a 14-day period (minimum of 10 unrelated students/teachers/staff). HCPSS will move a school to fully virtual instruction if it meets either condition of this definition, if insufficient staff are available for the safe and efficient operation of the school, or based on a Howard County Health Department recommendation. In the event that a school needs to be closed for an outbreak, HCPSS as well as the school will communicate with families the change to virtual instruction.

Transportation Procedures

Loading Buses

Following the Maryland Recovery Plan for Education and the CDC recommendations, HCPSS will limit one student per seat on the bus, while keeping the seat directly behind the driver open. Siblings or students who reside in the same residence may be allowed to sit together. If possible, students will have assigned seats and the seat will be based on the route to minimize contact while entering and exiting the bus. While waiting to exit the bus, students will remain seated and not congregate in the aisle. The adult in charge will dismiss the students one row at a time.



Buses will use a “drop and go” approach to unload students at the school sites rather than waiting for all buses to arrive and offloading simultaneously. This will alleviate any idle time in the bus loop and get the students off the bus quickly and safely in a staggered fashion. This will also assist in getting the buses to their next location sooner to account for the changes in schedule and unloading procedures. Although the ultimate goal is to have no more than one student per seat on the bus, absolutely no students will be denied service and left at a bus stop if the capacity is reached or surpassed.

Bus Air Circulation

Circulation of air through the bus is paramount, therefore all driver and passenger windows and the roof hatches will be fully open, weather permitting, on buses not equipped with air conditioning. On buses

equipped with air conditioning, the driver's window and at least three passenger windows on both sides of the aisle and the roof hatches must be opened slightly. If weather is an issue, the driver's window and at least three windows on each side of the aisle must be opened slightly on all buses. The roof hatches may be opened to the extent possible on all buses. Due to the increased air flow, students should wear clothing that is appropriate for outdoor air temperatures. To reduce cross contamination, students shall not operate the windows. Only the driver or bus attendant shall operate the windows.

Bus Cleaning and Disinfecting

The Maryland Recovery Plan for Education requires increased cleaning and disinfection for buses. For each route bus, the school system will provide one spray bottle of cleaning solution for use on high touch areas. Further description of the cleaning process outlined below:

After each morning, noon, and afternoon route, the driver will clean high touch areas of the bus, following the manufacturer's instructions for the cleaning product being used. These include:

- Bench seats occupied by student
- The backs and tops of seatbacks in front of each occupied seat
- Side walls next to occupied seats
- Handles on all emergency exits and emergency windows where a student was seated adjacently
- Windows, window frames and ledges of occupied seats (again, only driver or bus attendant will open or close)
- Handrails in stepwell

Additional Resources

HCPSS FAQ Site

- [Staff](#)
- [Students/Families](#)

MSDE COVID-19 Resources

- [Maryland School Reopening Guidance](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources for Maryland Schools](#)

CDC Guidelines

- [Schools and Childcare Programs](#)
- [Cleaning, Disinfecting and Ventilation](#)