Hello BMS families,

We have answered some of the questions you submitted here (see below). If you still have questions regarding the hybrid transition, you are welcome to join us at 5:00PM tonight (Mon., Oct. 26) for a Q & A session. Much of the information can be found in my loom video. If you have not yet seen it, here is the link to the video.

We will not be presenting a formal presentation today, but will be available if you have questions that you would like answered. This Q & A session pertains to the plans for hybrid and is not for individual questions about your child. Any questions regarding programming or needs of your own child should be directed to administrators, teachers or counselors either by phone or email.

Here is the link to the zoom:

**Zoom Link for parent Q&A session:**
Kim Lysaght (she/her) is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

- **Topic:** BMS Parent Hybrid Q & A
- **Time:** Oct 26, 2020 05:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
[https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/85923250441](https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/85923250441)
Meeting ID: 859 2325 0441
Passcode: 540415

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**Answers to Questions submitted by parents:**

If you start out doing distance learning on 11/16 for the rest of this year, can you go to hybrid in January when school resumes after the holiday break?

Requests for changes beyond November 16 are possible, but will involve adjustments that may take a number of weeks. We are building a program based on the numbers that we are given and adjustments can be difficult in a situation where we need to keep class sizes small.

If there are kids that go away for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, and they have to quarantine or if kids get a sickness, would they be able to zoom into class for the hybrid model if they can’t be there in person? If a family member gets sick and the student can’t go into school due to quarantine rules, and they are hybrid student, how can they keep current with the work if they can’t go into the classroom?
Students would be able to zoom into all afternoon and Wednesday classes. Teachers would be able to invite these students into their distance blocks as well. We would individualize a plan based on the particular needs of the student.

I don’t think I received an email with the link to the form to confirm or change distance / hybrid for my middle schooler.

David Fleishman sent out a letter to parents last week. Please check your spam folder and contact the main office if you would like to make a change and can not find the email.

Please explain why team teachers cannot Zoom with the cohort that is home on the mornings they are not teaching in person? What other virtual support can students receive during "independent work at home" mornings?

We want our teachers to be able to fully focus on the students who are in front of them on their in-person days. If teachers are spending time logging students into zoom and working through the tech issues that arise, it takes away from the in-person experience for those students in the classroom.

It appears the time set for independent study is double for hybrid students, compared to distance learning students. It seems hybrid students are significantly disadvantaged as they spend two entire mornings a week on their own with no supervision or support. How do you explain that this arrangement is equitable?

Because in-person instruction is more efficient and effective, we are balancing that for our distance students with the opportunity to zoom in to their teachers. The work they will be asked to do is the same as the students who are in-person. We have found that distance learning takes longer than in-person and we believe this will balance that.

Will there be changes to homebase/core subject classmates now that distance learning students are regrouping across the team? Will they be separated from the current classmates for zoom classes in the afternoon and on Wednesdays? If so, is my understanding correct that the proposed distance learning model under hybrid is similar to elementary schools' distance academy?

The distance model is not the same as the elementary because our students will remain with all of their team teachers and will be in classes with their teammates. They will have some classmates the same and they will have the opportunity to meet other students that are also on their team.

Will there be some teachers who teach from home remotely for hybrid students who are in the building?

Yes, there are some teachers who will need medical accommodations and will be teaching from home. This is a small percentage of the teachers in the school. The vast majority of teachers will be in-person.
How will the teachers check hybrid students' attendance, engagement and learning during the independent study? I fear students may not learn or academically challenged enough through independent study like this past spring. I do not wish to repeat the missed learning opportunities again this fall in any fashion. How do you assure us that it won’t happen again?

Teachers will be checking for work completion and will be in frequent contact with students as opposed to the spring. Students are responsible for completing their work and attending all of their zoom classes.

Will the students enter and exit the building through different access points so there is not a large group moving through one entrance point? Also, how will crowds of kids be managed before school starts and once school ends?

Students should not be dropped off at school before 8:00. Students arriving before 8:05 will either wait outside (masked and distanced) or sit in the cafeteria at designated spots. Staff will be on hand starting at 8:00 to help with this. At 8:05 students will proceed to their classrooms. The buses are arriving between 8:00 and 8:15. Students will be entering at specific entries by grade level:

- 8th graders enter at cafeteria doors
- 7th graders enter at front entrance
- 6th graders enter at door to the far right of the building when facing the building (up the side drive)

Although each class will only have 12-13 kids, how many different classmates will each child have throughout the day as they move between classes with different combinations of students? Should I assume my son will have exposure to every child in the Team A Cohort or are other color teams commingled with one another through FAA and languages? Thanks for helping to clarify.

Students will be with one cohort of 12(ish) students on their team. They will also be with another cohort of 12(ish) students for their multi-team classes. These will have students who are on different teams. We are unable to keep students in their team cohorts for all classes because they take different language classes. Exposure or close contact is defined as someone who has been within 6 feet of a person diagnosed with Covid-19 for 10 minutes or more. Students will be spaced out in their classrooms to limit this. Students will not have exposure to every student on their team.

Why aren't lockers being used? I can see this being a burden when the winter gets here and kids are carrying a heavy coat and boots in addition to their school bags.
Lockers cause students to congregate and are close together. If we are to encourage physical distancing, we cannot use the lockers. Students will have an assigned seat for their team classes and be able to keep their coat and backpacks there for most of the day.

In the hybrid model, will teachers go back to doing teaching on Wednesdays? In the current version of Wednesdays, teachers are just having students work on independent work. In the hybrid model, they will already be doing independent work two mornings per week (e.g., Thurs/Fri if Coh A), so it would seem that they would miss out on a lot of teaching if Wednesdays stayed as they are. Thank you!

Wednesdays classes will be 40 minutes long and considered a full teaching block by teachers. Asynchronous work will not happen on Wednesday.

In what ways will the independent work done on two mornings per week in the hybrid model be different from typical homework assignments? I am trying to better understand how this asynchronous time will be best optimized to make sure students learn as much as possible. Depending on the specific subject area, the asynchronous time will be spent practicing the skills that are taught in the in-person and remote classes. Students will be expected to complete the work assigned for these times. Extension is a time when they can access help from their teachers if they are struggling with any of the assignments.

How will the in-person extension time be used and will the extension be taught by the student’s home base teacher or a monitor? In the elementary school model, the in-person half days are packed with academics to maximize that very valuable time. It seems surprising that the only class that meets twice in-person is extension, unless there will be some curriculum delivered during that time.

Extension is with one of the student’s team teachers. The teachers will be able to rotate from room to room so that students can get help from them if they need it. This time will also be used to provide services and interventions for students.

More of us will be driving for drop off and pick up, any changes to how we should do that? Drop off and pick should take place in the blue zones (blue curbing). It would be helpful if parents could arrange to pick up students around the block from the school to avoid traffic in the front of the school. Parents will not be able to drive up in the driveway to pick up their students when we are in hybrid.

Can you clarify what the bus transportation options will be to school when Hybrid begins? Will a communication be forthcoming with more information and asking if we want to use the bus? Also, will there be a cost for bus transportation?
The transportation department is sending out information regarding bus passes. Students must have a pass to ride the bus and seats are assigned. For information on cost and details about routes, visit the transportation department's website by clicking [here](#).

**How many times a day will students be switching classrooms/cohorts?**

It depends on what grade students are in and what blocks meet on a particular day. Therefore it is a little different for each grade. 6th graders will switch rooms twice on their first in-person day and not at all on their second in-person day. 7th graders will switch classrooms twice on their first in-person day and once on the second in-person day. 8th graders will not switch rooms on their first in-person day and will switch rooms 3 times on their second in-person day.

**What happens during hybrid with vacation days since now not all days are equal.** For example, Cohort B will miss their second week of in-person days, so their schedule would be out of sync with the rest of their class as they would have missed two key in-person days. We will work to balance off the number of days each cohort is in the building. Notifications will be sent out to teachers and families regarding these changes.

**Can you clarify...if a child is in Hybrid will they have a different mix of kids in their in-person classes than they currently see on Zoom or is it a subset?** If I heard correctly it is 12 kids per in-person class and then wondering is that subset of the kids they already see in Zoom class or a new group of kids that then will remain the same? And finally, will those 12 kids be the same kids that move from class to class together or will they be mixed moving between in-person classes?

We will be making some adjustments to the classes so there will be some changes to which students are in a specific class, but they will all be part of the same team. This is to allow our hybrid students to have time together in a group of 12. This group of 12 will remain the same group of 12 for all team class meetings (i.e. math, science, ELA, social studies). Students will be in another cohort of about 12 students for their multi-team classes (FAA, PE and world language).

Please click the following link for information about other specifics regarding Brown Middle School's transition to hybrid:
School-Specific COVID-19 Procedures
Brown Middle School