

Blatchley Middle School

“Smart Start”



Student/Parent Handbook

2020/2021

Welcome to BMS & the 2020/2021 Academic Year

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Hello BMS Families,

The 2020-21 school year presents us with many new situations and challenges. As everyone knows, Covid-19 has forced significant changes on our schools, society, and world. Blatchley staff are excited to get this unique school year underway. We know that there will be bumps along the way. We also know we will be able to figure out and find solutions to these issues when they arise. ***There are a few VERY CRITICAL items we need families to help us with.***

In the past, students were frequently encouraged to attend school if they were not feeling “one hundred percent.” **This can no longer be the case!! If a student exhibits ANY, even one, of the following symptoms they are to stay at home for the day and return to school as soon as symptom(s) abate but no sooner than 24 hours**

Headache
Fever
Chills
New cough
Night Sweats
Sore Throat
Body Aches
Joint Pain
Headache
Confusion
Vomiting
Diarrhea
Abdominal Pain

We ask everyone to consider the implication of a student coming to school ill and having the potential of a Covid-19 outbreak which will likely result in one or more of the following scenarios:

- 1) A given cohort of students, having been potentially exposed to Covid-19, would quarantine for 10 days. This means not being able to physically be present in class. Since teachers rotate through rooms, this might mean an entire grade having to do remote lessons only, as all 5 grade level teachers would also be quarantined!!!
- 2) A complete school closure for 14 days, all staff and students.

While these two above scenarios are worst case scenarios, they are actual and real scenarios! We need, to the best of our abilities, to ensure we all take the appropriate preventative steps to help ensure our school(s) remain open. ***Please remember, if a student has been in close contact with an individual who is diagnosed as having an active case of COVID-19, he/she may not return to school for 10 days, even if the student does not exhibit symptoms.***

With that said, teachers will be offering online classes each afternoon that cover the same content that students are receiving in the classroom. Any student may participate in these classes if they are not able to attend in person. We know there will be questions and concerns and want to be as helpful and available as possible. Please feel free to call or email.

Principal Ben White: whiteb@sitkaschools.org 966-1403 cell: 738-0956
Asst. Princ. Laura Rogers: rogersla@sitkaschools.org 966-1404
Counselor Matt Potter: potterm@sitkaschools.org 966-1468
Main Office: 747-8672

Start of Day

Riding the Bus

Prewitt's Enterprises/Island Bus will continue to provide bus service for the SSD and the families of Sitka. Island Bus is committed to working collaboratively with school administrators and parents in order to provide students with safe, dependable transportation between school and home for our students. Because of COVID-19, the following practices will be in place:

- Bus capacity will be limited to 21 students.
- There will be a bus monitor on every bus who will take temperatures and direct students to their seats.
- Both the bus driver and the monitor will wear masks.
- Students in grades 6-12 will be required to wear masks on the bus.
- Students will sit in assigned spaces in every other row.
- Windows will be cracked to improve bus air flow.
- Absolutely no eating or drinking will be allowed on buses.
- Given the limited bus capacity, there is a likelihood that a second bus run may be necessary. Student assignments to first or second run will be made based on home locations and will be made by the school and bus company.
Students will not be allowed to adjust the bus assignment or the run.

Island Bus is committed to working cooperatively with families and the administration of BMS to provide safe, convenient transportation for students. These rules and expectations have been developed by the District and Island Bus to conform to CDC and Alaska DEED guidelines. Given the situation, students who are unable and/or unwilling to follow the expectations outlined above will need to find alternative transportation.

Drop-off, Pick-up and Traffic Patterns

Our drop-off and pick-up times have changed. Adult screeners will be greeting students at each entrance, each morning. Students can be dropped off at any of the three entrances, but please try to drop your student off at the entrance closest to his/her classroom. Please review the information below and call Mr. White or Mrs. Rogers if you have questions.

- Students who are being dropped off or who are walking to school will be admitted to the building **beginning at 8:00**. **Students should not be dropped off early as there will be no supervision available. Please note: Traffic coming toward BMS from Petro and the bus lane will be ONE WAY, exiting at HPR.**
 - The front of the school/covered area:
 - Will be used for all buses.
 - Parents dropping off here must exit up the drive to HPR.
 - This is the suggested drop-off area for parents transporting 8th grade students.
 - The rear entrance near the shop
 - Is the suggested drop-off point for families who are transporting 7th graders.
 - Will have a looping pattern that allows for vehicles to enter/exit easily.
 - Exit will be toward the front of the school and out HPR.
 - 6th grade classrooms will be located in the back hallway of the top floor. All drop off points work equally well for 6th graders.
 - The pool entrance will be open, but larger vehicles may have challenges turning around in the smaller parking lot.
 - Again, students can be dropped off at any of the three entrances, but please try to drop your student off at the entrance closest to his/her classroom.
- All students who are being dropped off should exit the vehicle and wait to answer screening questions and have their temperature checked. We will attempt to screen students BEFORE parents exit the parking lot, but traffic flow may not allow for that. Students need to stand on the designated, marked spots, six feet apart, until they have been screened. The questions are as follows:
 - Within the last 14 days, have you had a positive COVID-19 test, or do you live in a household or have you had close contact with someone who has COVID-19?

- Have you experienced any of the following symptoms of COVID-19 in the last three days: fever, new cough, shortness of breath, night chills or sweats, sore throat, body or muscle aches, joint pain, loss of taste or smell, headache, confusion, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain?
- Students arriving after 8:30 should enter through the front doors. All other doors will be locked.

Student Procedures Before School

Students should proceed directly to their assigned classrooms as soon as they enter the building. Teachers will be present in classrooms to monitor students. Students who need to use the restroom must check in to their assigned classroom before stopping. Students may not visit friends in other classrooms.

Release Procedures

Beginning at 12:45, there will be a structured dismissal. Walkers, “bussers” and students being picked up by parents/guardians will be dismissed separately in order to avoid hallway crowding. Parents/guardians are encouraged to pick up their student at the rear or pool side entrances, if possible. **Students will be dismissed for family pick up at 12:50.** Bussers will be dismissed when the busses have arrived. Walkers will be dismissed as a group, as soon as hallways are clear. Walkers must leave school grounds as soon as they are dismissed. Students who are walkers will be instructed during the first day of school which exit should be utilized.

During The Academic Day

Schedule

	Period 1 8:30-9:20	Breakfast 9:20-9:30	Period 2 9:30-10:20	Period 3 10:20-11:10	Period 4 11:10-12:00	Period 5 12:00-12:50	Lunch
Cohort A (Bears)	English	Break	Movement/PE	Math	Science	Social Studies	Grab & Go
Cohort B (Eagles)	Social Studies	Break	English	Movement/PE	Math	Science	Grab & Go
Cohort C (Otters)	Science	Break	Social Studies	English	Movement/PE	Math	Grab & Go
Cohort D (Ravens)	Math	Break	Science	Social Studies	English	Movement/PE	Grab & Go
Cohort E (Seals)	Movement/PE	Break	Math	Science	Social Studies	English	Grab & Go

Live, Online Class for homebound students	1-1:35 1:35-2:10 2:10-2:45 2:45-3:20	English Math Science Soc. St.	Every student will be enrolled in an elective that Meets every other afternoon (M/W and T/TH), online. Participation will be reflected on student report cards, etc.
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Please Note: Passing times for teachers are not delineated. Times may need to be adjusted based on busing, etc.

Cohorts

In order to minimize the number of points of contact, students will be grouped into cohorts of 14-18 members (depending on grade level and room size) for the academic day. Students will remain in the same classroom, and teachers will move from room to room, washing/sanitizing hands and materials between classes.

Materials and Supplies

Materials and supplies will remain in the classroom in gallon-sized Ziploc bags labeled with student names. iPads, binders and pens/pencils will be the only things traveling home with students. Scissors, glue sticks, colored pencils, etc. will remain in the classroom. Students will not be sharing supplies. Supply bags will be sprayed/sanitized each evening. Supply lists are available on the school website. At BMS, we will do our best to make sure that every student has the supplies they need in order to be successful. Please let us know if you are unable to find something your student needs locally and we will be happy to help.

Movement/PE classes

The administration and teachers at BMS deeply believe that middle school students need physical activity in order to burn off restless energy, maintain focus, and develop healthy habits. During “green” and “yellow” days, students will leave the room as a group to go to a PE/movement class that will emphasize stretching, walking and non-contact activities that do not require children to have a change of clothing. During the period immediately following a “red” period, PE/Movement classes will take place in the classroom.

Technology-iPad use/rules

Each student will be issued an iPad, to be used for academic learning throughout the year. iPads issued by the BMS will travel from home to school with students, but are the property of the Sitka School District. More information about iPad usage and rules will be sent home with students during BMS Student Orientation on August 27th and 28th.

Sanitizing Procedures

Rooms will be cleaned at the end of the day, including sanitizing of surfaces. Teachers will have disinfectant at their disposal and will have the ability to “fine mist” sanitize surfaces during the academic day. Students will be expected to use the sanitizer/disinfectant provided to clean their desk after Breakfast Break.

Food Service- Breakfast Break/Grab-N-Go Lunch

Each day, there will be a breakfast break between periods 1 and 2. Students can have breakfast (which will be delivered to classrooms) from the cafeteria, or can bring a snack from home. During this time each day, the teacher will review the menu for breakfast and lunch for the following day and will ask students if they plan to take either meal from the café. Lunch will be “grab and go”. It will be delivered to the student’s classroom and is to be eaten after the student arrives at home. No eating on the bus will be allowed.

Breakfast (\$1.95) and lunch (\$3.75) will be billed to student accounts, as usual. Parents are encouraged to apply to the federal school lunch subsidy program if there is any chance they will qualify. Higher participant numbers leads to more financial support in many areas for BMS. Online registration is available at <https://www.schoolcafe.com>

Restroom Access

Teachers and administrators will be monitoring student restrooms to ensure that there is as little contact of students who are part of different cohorts as is possible. This means that students may be asked to wait to use the restroom until it is available, and will not be allowed to go in groups. Students will be monitored periodically and handwashing and good hygiene will be reinforced.

Cell Phone Rules

Students will not be allowed access to cell phones, smart watches or other electronics (other than the district provided iPad) during the academic day. Each classroom will have a phone caddy where students will place their powered down devices in an individual pocket. The phone caddy will be spray sanitized at the beginning and end of each day. Phones will remain in the caddy until the end of the day. In an emergency situation, the office will contact families on behalf of a student and/or ensure messages from home are delivered to the student in the classroom.

Behavioral Expectations & Procedures

Unfortunately, these are challenging times that will not allow us to tailor our response to students who are struggling to follow school rules. Students who are unable to respond to teacher requests or participate in class will continue to meet with an administrator when the principal, assistant principal and/or the counselor is available. Students who are unable to return to class will have the opportunity to get a “restart” in the Americorps Tutorial Center. However, if they are not able to return to class and participate after a one period “time out”, parents will be called to come and pick the student up from school.

Students Who Become Ill

Blatchley is fortunate to have areas where a student who becomes ill can be isolated until a family member can come and pick him/her up. Given the threat of COVID-19, any student who feels ill will be escorted to the office by an administrator, placed in an isolation space (Nurse’s Office, Office Cubicles) and guardians will be called to come for the student. Please do not send children to school if they are complaining of any type of illness. Remote learning (on a day-to-day or long-term basis) is possible for any child who is not feeling well enough to attend school in person.

Communication

Contacting BMS

The staff of Blatchley Middle School is focused on working collaboratively with families to do what is best for our students. If you have questions about your student's experience at school, we want to answer them. In addition, we welcome any information you would like to share about what is working or not working for your student.

BMS Main number: 747-8672
Mr. White: 966-1403
Mrs. Rogers: 966-1404
Mr. Potter: 966-1468

Attendance Notice

Please notify the school by calling 747-8672 if your student will not be attending or will be arriving late to school. The office is staffed each day from 7:30 until 4:00 if you need to speak to someone and provide details about a student absence. **You can also text absence notification to 623-8183.** The school calls parents/guardians of students who have not arrived by 9:15 if contact hasn't already been made. Timely notification is greatly appreciated!

Picking up Your Student Before the Close of School

Students must be picked up for appointments from the front entrance of the building. Please contact the main office and we will have the student waiting for you, or we can call him/her from class for dismissal. School personnel will you're your student out and escort students to the front door for dismissal.

Public Access to the Building

In an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, we are asking parents to call to schedule an appointment, whenever possible, before visiting the school. All visitors to the school need to register electronically and complete a COVID screening questionnaire before entering the building. QR codes for the screening questions are posted at all entrances. Visitors coming for appointments who cannot complete the screening electronically will be asked to complete a paper version once entering the building, but before their appointment.

Communicating with Teachers

Our schedule during COVID-19 requires teachers to be with students steadily from 8:30-12:50. In addition, each teacher will be teaching an online class during the afternoon. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact teachers via email as opposed to calling. Teachers will connect, either through email or by phone, as soon as possible. If you need information immediately and a teacher is unlikely to be available, please call the main office and a secretary or administrator will speak with you.

End of Academic Day

Electives

Students will have the opportunity to learn about our new electives during Orientation on August 27th and 28th. Electives will be offered on-line, in the afternoon. Students will be expected to log in for in-person instruction twice a week, (Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday) and will complete activities and practice sessions when not meeting in person. Electives will be graded on a P/F basis and will last for 8-9 weeks). Grade specific elective offerings are as follows:

Grade 6: All students will be enrolled in Computers/Keyboarding during BOTH 9-week sessions of Semester I. Second semester, they will be able to choose two 9-week classes from the general list.

Grade 7: All students will be enrolled in one semester of Health (two 9-week sessions) and will be able to choose two electives for the other semester. Students who are not in Health will choose their electives during Orientation.

Grade 8: Students will be able to choose two 9-week electives during Orientation.

Elective Offerings: Art, Music, Tlingit, PE elective (taught by Mr. Hirai), STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), Computers/Keyboarding (grade 6 only), Health (Grade 7 only), and Online tutorial support (w/Americorps volunteers Emma and/or Britlynn).

Please note- Electives for Semester II will be chosen by all students after the Thanksgiving Break. Students are allowed to take the same elective for multiple 9-week sessions (for example, 4 sessions of Music or Art= full year).

Extracurricular Activities

Blatchley Middle School believes deeply that middle school students need to be engaged in extracurricular challenge in order to create friendships, learn to work cooperatively and gain new skills. While these are challenging times, we will be looking for ways to keep our students engaged in physical activity and/or intellectual growth after school. While there are no plans for travel to other communities during the 2020/21 academic year, we will try to offer intermural athletic opportunities (cross country, pickleball, kickball, track and field, softball) and online extracurricular experiences like Trivia Club, Junior DDF, and Chess Club. Information will be posted on the BMS Facebook page and emailed to families before seasons begin.