



## Tom Reed-Swale, Principal Bethany Community School

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August 12, 2020

BCS Families,

I hope this letter finds you safe and with power. If it isn't one thing, it's another. But the people of Bethany are strong. We've endured a tornado, managed a pandemic, and I'm sure we're resilient enough to handle a few days without power. We're BCS Strong!

Below I have listed several important dates as well as some updates regarding our work for reopening BCS. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of our entire plan for reopening. Please refer to our [BCS Reopen Website](#) for greater details. There are quite a few updates below. They are shared in an effort to help you start conversations with your child about some of the changes we are making at BCS. Please use these as a way to help prepare your child for the start of the school year and discuss how things will be both the same in some ways and different in others. Additional updates will be forthcoming as well. Additionally, as with anything during these times, this is sent with the best information we have **at this time**. Based on changes from the Governor, the Federal Government, or health officials, our plans may change.

### Important Dates:

- **Wednesday, August 19th:** 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. Kindergarten Meet The Teachers Event.
- **Thursday, August 20th - August 27th:** Staff Professional Learning Days. We are taking this time to ensure that all staff are prepared for the reopening of BCS.
- **Friday, August 28th:** Chromebook and Go Bag pickup for all Remote Learning students.
- **Monday, August 31st:** In-Person Orientation - Student last names A-K. Early dismissal.
- **Tuesday, September 1st:** In-Person Orientation - Student last names L-Z. Early dismissal.
- **September 2nd-4th:** In-person learning for all students. Early dismissal.
- **September 8th-11th:** In-person learning for all students. Full day.

### Additional Updates:

- **Class Assignment Letters** - Based on the survey results, we are sending out class placement letters to all families on August 13th. You should receive them soon. They will have a letter from your child's teacher, a letter from me, and a suggested supplies list.
- **School Supplies** - In the letter you will receive with teacher assignments, there will be a list of suggested supplies for your child. Any supplies on this list are suggested to help us lower the level of contact between students and help us maintain safety.



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- **Staggered Start:** While normally, students come in for full days right away, this year will be different. Luckily we will have our first two days to utilize our hybrid model and our first week created to be a staggered start with all five days being early dismissal days.
  - Students whose last name starts with A-K will arrive in person and have a chance to learn spaces and procedures on the 31st of August.
    - All Remote Learning students with last names of A-K will be able to login and participate in the morning meeting part of the day.
  - Students with a last name starting with L-Z will have the same opportunity to get acquainted in-person in the same manner on September 1st.
    - Remote Learning students with the last name of L-Z will be able to login on September 1st to participate in the morning meeting period as well.
  - The alphabetical organization of students was done in coordination with Amity School District. Any families with children with different last names should follow the youngest child's last name schedule.
  - During this orientation week, for students attending BCS in-person, on the day they are not attending school, they can access activities and assignments from the [CT Learning Hub](#).
  - During this orientation week, for students who are Remote Learning students, during the times both after morning meeting and on the opposite day of their last name, they can access activities and assignments on the CT Learning Hub.
  - September 2nd-4th will have all in-person and remote learners attending all three days will be early dismissal days.
  - After Labor Day on September 8th, we will start in-person and remote learning with all students for full days.
- **Morning Arrival** - In an effort to have students travel in the hallways as little as possible and to keep students socially distanced, we have updated our arrival procedures. Please review the [linked](#) and attached maps of our school for the procedures we will follow.
- **Afternoon Dismissal**- All student pick up will now take place out of the gym. Students will wait in family groups socially distanced and will be dismissed to approved family members. Please ensure that anyone who comes to pick up your child(ren) has proper ID and is confirmed through the Parent Portal. Afternoon dismissal will undoubtedly take longer than previous years as we work to implement new procedures. We will need everyone to be patient as we do our best to ensure the safety of students and staff.



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- **Mask Breaks** - While wearing masks is both mandatory and essential for safety reasons, we recognize that students will need mask breaks. We are building these breaks into the day through both travel to classes like PE and Music in the gym by walking outside, and by holding some instruction outdoors when possible, during lunch, and at recess.
- **Specials Schedule** - To better support cohorting our students, we have altered the specials schedule. This means that the year will be broken into five semesters of approximately seven weeks. Each semester, your child's class will have one of the following specials classes five days a week: Art, Music, PE, Spanish, and Library. Classes for Library, Art, and Spanish will take place in your child's classroom. PE and Music will take place in the gym due to the social distancing needs of those classes.
- **Student Devices** - Students in K-2 will be "Mobile on the Moment" which means that should we go to Remote Learning, they will have a device assigned to them at home. Students in 3-6 will be issued a school device for 24/7 use. This device will be required to be used for both in school and at home learning on a daily basis. All Remote Learning student work must be completed using a school-issued device. This is necessary for attendance, student access to classroom broadcasts, and secure student to teacher chat functions through our Go Guardian monitoring software.
- **Water Bottles** - Please send your child with a water bottle each day clearly marked with their name. We have turned off the water fountains in the school but the sinks in the classrooms and the bottle filling stations in the hallways remain on for use. Water will be provided to children who don't have a water bottle, but it will be much easier for them to each have their own water bottle.
- **BCS Reopen Videos** - We will have several videos available for families soon that will showcase our new procedures. These will be a great way to review expectations and will support those visual learners at our school.
- **Lunch** - For in-person students, lunch will take place in the classroom. There will be several cold options to start offered by the cafeteria staff. Please ensure that your "My Payments Plus" account has the necessary funds available for student lunch purchase. Any family participating in Remote Learning will be able to pick up a lunch for their child from 12:30-1:00 p.m. under the bus canopy. This lunch order must be received at the office by 9:00 a.m.
- **Classroom Social Distancing** - All non-essential classroom furniture is being removed so accommodate social distancing needs. Additionally, all group tables are being put in storage as well to ensure the maximum distance possible between students in classrooms.



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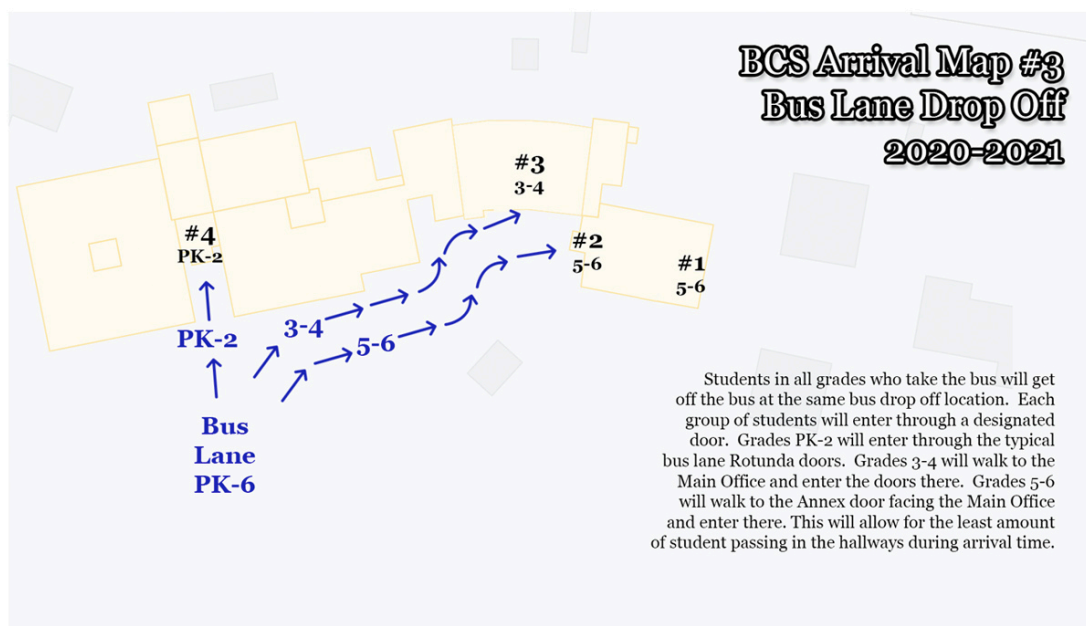
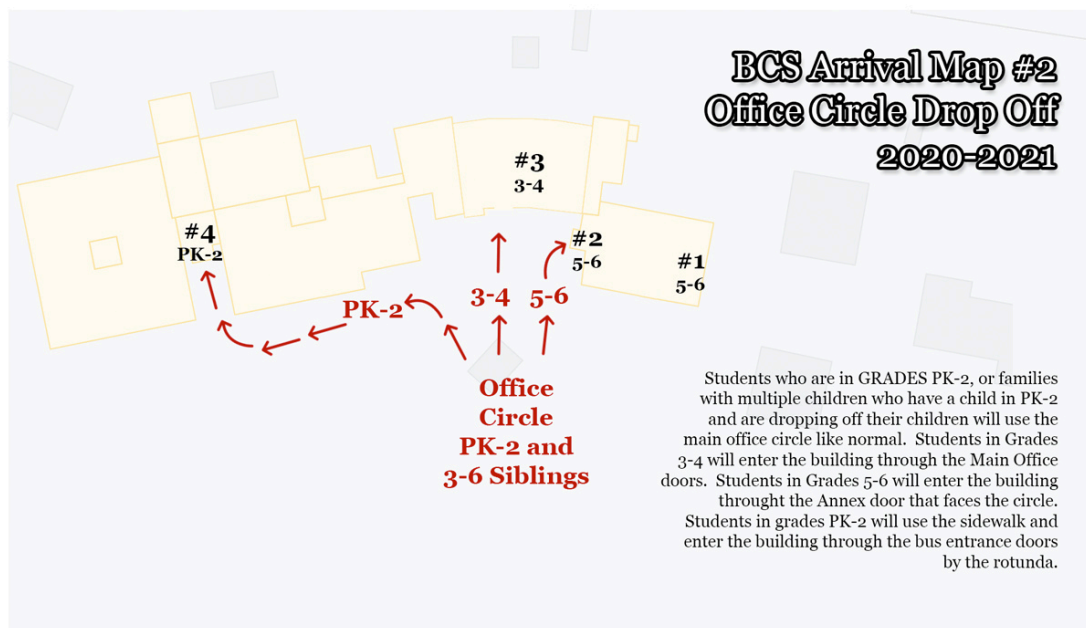
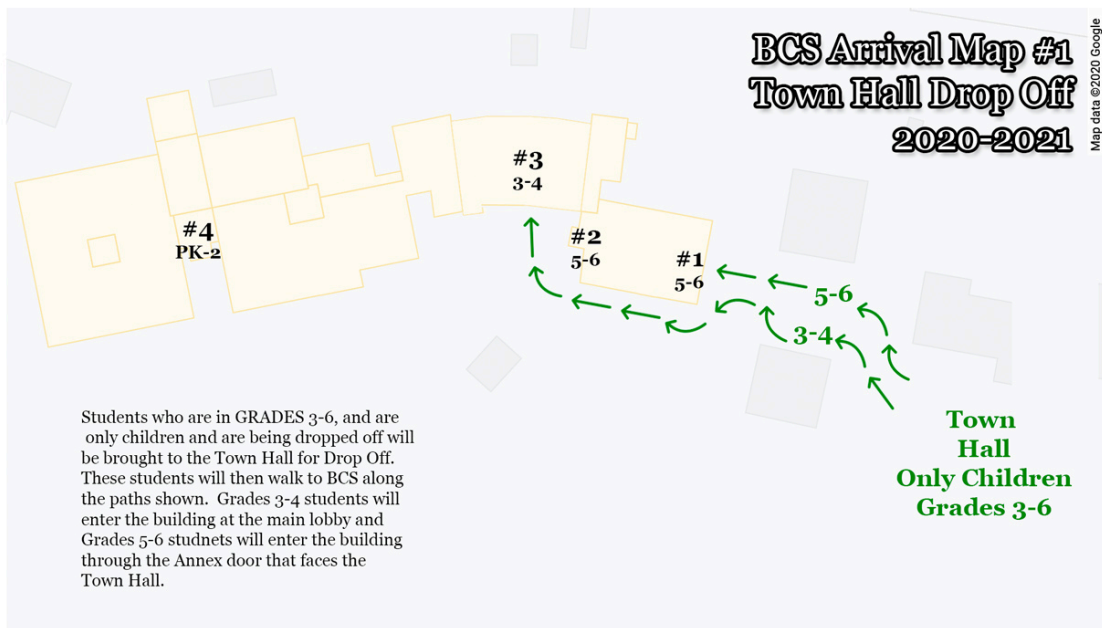
- **Go Bags** - In order to be prepared for a sudden shift to Hybrid or Remote Learning should health and safety require it, we are creating "Go Bags" for each student. These bags will have general supplies for learning as well as content specific materials that students will use to complete assignments. Should we enter a longer period of Remote Learning, we will establish a procedure for refilling and updating the Go Bags.
- **BCS Visitors** - Non-essential and unscheduled visitors will not be permitted. Parents who are attending required meetings like a PPT or 504 must follow office protocols that include a COVID-19 Questionnaire and temperature check before entering and the use of hand sanitizer. Additional siblings or other family members will not be permitted to wait in the office during these meetings. Any parent wishing to speak with a teacher, staff member should call, video conference, or email. Any meeting with school administration must make an appointment through the main office and follow the above procedures as well.
- **Bus Seating** - All students will have an assigned seat and siblings will need to sit together. Buses will load from the back to the front and will unload from the front to the back. All students are expected to remain seated in their assigned seat with a mask on for the duration of the bus ride. Bus monitors will support this work during the first week of school.

We know that restarting BCS with all these changes will be different. Our hope is that with everyone in our community working together, we can continue to provide the safest and best education possible for each and every child that is a part of Bethany Community School.

Please feel free to contact me via email [treed-swale@bethany-ed.org](mailto:treed-swale@bethany-ed.org) or on my cell phone 860-933-2381 if you would like to discuss it further.

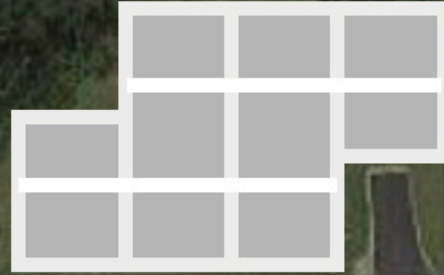
All the best,

Tom Reed-Swale





**8-10 Classroom  
Spaces**



**3 Classroom  
Spaces**



**3 Classroom  
Spaces**



Bethany  
Elementary School  
Temporarily closed



Bethany  
Community School



Team of Bethany  
Community School  
Newsstand

