



2024-25 School Year Facilities – Grades Kindergarten – 3 Frequently Asked Questions

Why did the District shift to modular classrooms for grades K – 3?

As the District worked through due diligence inspections on the Friedensburg Road building it had hoped to occupy, it became clear that the work required to develop this into a viable, long-term option for the school district would be cost-prohibitive and not fiscally responsible. The owner was not interested in a short-term lease, and we needed to quickly find another solution.

Why has the District decided to move third grade into modular units, instead of having them attend school at the Mount Penn Elementary Center (recent plans suggested this for grades 3 – 8)?

We believe that keeping third grade in this grade grouping will provide consistency for families, teachers, and staff, since a new school will be built for grades K – 3. Additionally, this allows us more space at the Mount Penn Elementary Center for grades 4 – 8.

Will modulares be a long-term solution?

No, modulares will be a short-term solution for these grades, while we explore building a new elementary school on the campus at 100 Antietam Road.

Where will modulares be located?

They will be located on the Middle School/High School campus, well above the flood plane. They will primarily be located behind the softball field and on the tennis courts.

What will modular classrooms be like?

Each classroom is at least 715 square feet, comparable in size to many of our existing classrooms. Each of the units has windows, is bright and clean, and would regularly be cleaned and supplied with individual HVAC units to provide climate control and fresh air. The company supplying the units has been carefully vetted by the State Department of Education, and has been successfully operating for many years. The cafeteria unit would be about 2,000 square feet, and is actually larger than the cafeteria at the Mount Penn Primary Center.

We are planning to relocate playground equipment from the MPPC courtyard to the modular site, and when indoor recess is necessary, this will occur in classrooms and the cafeteria space.

What will happen to the MSHS building?

The MSHS building will be selectively demolished, meaning that parts of the building will be demolished, and other parts will be “reactivated” and renovated as part of the new K-3 building project.

How will you ensure safety of children attending school in the modular classrooms while demolition of the MSHS building is occurring, and construction of a new elementary school is taking place?

The modular units will be placed far enough away from demolition and construction to ensure this will not be a safety issue. It is not unusual for school districts to construct new buildings next to existing, occupied school buildings.

How will bus transportation be affected by the new location of K-3 students?

Our bussing is determined for K-6 students by how far each student lives from the building. Students who live outside a 1.5 mile radius from the building they will be attending, are generally eligible for school bus transportation. This will be the case for the new K-3 location. Bussing information is sent to eligible families each year once bus routes and pick-up/drop-off times are determined.

How will special education services like OT, PT, speech and small group instruction be facilitated in the modulars?

All special education services will be provided within spaces in the modular units, just as they are in the current building. The administration is working hard to ensure each service has a space to service our students.

What about specials?

Specials will be provided to students, mostly in the classroom, with the exception of gym. Gym will take place outside or in the large cafeteria space. While there will not be dedicated classroom space for all specials, students will still be provided with the instruction by their specials teachers.

Will class size be affected?

No. Since the modular classrooms are similar in size to our existing classrooms, we do not anticipate any impact on class size.

Will students need to walk outside between classrooms and the cafeteria?

Yes. Students and teachers will use a system of covered walkways and ramps to move between some of their classes and the cafeteria.

What about safety and security?

All of the modular units lock securely. We will work closely with Central Berks police to make sure that we have put adequate safety measures in place to protect our students and staff. In addition, we will be working to fence-in the entire modular area.

When will parents and students get to see the modulars?

The District will be hosting "open-house" style events for our school community once the modulars are in place. We want to make the transition to this new temporary home a great experience for all of our students, families, and staff. Information will be sent to families as planning continues.