



SUPERINTENDENT
Charlotte Seals

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August 31, 2020

Dear MCS Families,

We eagerly anticipate the start of classes this week. Starting school in the midst of a pandemic is not without concerns and difficulties. Getting plans in place for the safest start possible, setting up virtual school, and reworking schedules for teachers and students to enable in-person and virtual learning has been a massive undertaking for our administrators, counselors, and teachers. We continue to ask for your grace and patience as we navigate a new and different start to school.

Once we start school we want to stay in school. To make that happen, we must have your help. If your child feels unwell, keep him or her home. As a reminder, symptoms of Covid-19 include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and/or diarrhea. If your child has had close contact with a Covid-19 patient, keep your child home. In fact, we have removed policies related to perfect attendance from our student handbook in an effort to reinforce the importance of students staying home if there is any question regarding their health. This is not the year to take any chances.

I am asking you to check your children every morning for signs of illness. I am asking faculty and staff to do the same of themselves. The only way we will be able to stay in school is if people who are sick stay home and stop the spread. Page 14 of our reentry guidelines, located here <https://www.madison-schools.com/Page/40005>, provides a decision tree of what to do if a student has symptoms or exposure. Please familiarize yourself with these steps and let the school know if your child has symptoms or a positive diagnosis of Covid-19. It is not an exaggeration to say that it will take everyone working together and following the guidelines for us to be able to continue holding in-person school.

No matter how many precautions we take during the school day, we alone cannot stop the spread of illness if students and families aren't taking precautions during the evening and weekends as well. Make smart decisions. Avoid large gatherings. Keep our community safe.

Thank you for all that you are doing to stop the spread: wearing a mask, washing your hands, and watching your distance. And thank you for carefully checking your children for any signs of illness and keeping them home every time they are feeling unwell.

Sincerely,

Charlotte A. Seals
Superintendent
Madison County Schools