

WORKING DOCUMENT

Madison County Schools Guidelines for Reentry for the 2020-2021 School Year

Madison County Schools strives to promote a safe and caring learning environment. As we plan for the 2020-2021 school year, we seek to fulfill our District's mission during unprecedented circumstances. Our plan will likely evolve to reflect the latest expert guidance from national, state, and local authorities.

Madison County Schools will begin the 2020-2021 school year with our traditional instructional model. To make this return to school possible as we adjust to new health and safety guidelines, the schedule will be modified on August 6-13. Students will alternate days of coming to school with days of distance learning activities. All students will participate in distance learning on August 14. Starting on August 17 and for the remainder of the semester, all students will be present for face-to-face instruction. While our plan includes offering face-to-face, on campus teaching and learning for most students, we will also offer an opt-in virtual learning option for any student who is not ready to return to campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information about this virtual learning option, please visit the Back to School Information and Guidelines section of our website where more details of the virtual learning program are posted.

Depending on the impact of COVID-19, the District will prepare for the possibility of a hybrid model of instruction (combining some aspects of the traditional in-school model with distance learning) and, in the most severe instance, total distance learning.

In light of the different grade levels, school population sizes, and campus layouts of the 23 schools in our District, a detailed plan of action for reentry will be developed by each school based on the guidelines below.

Traditional Instructional Model

The District is working hard to incorporate many safeguards to help keep our students and staff as safe as possible while implementing a traditional instructional model. This document is based on the latest guidance from the CDC, the Mississippi Department of Health, the Mississippi Department of Education, and other authorities. A summary of these safeguards is available below, following an explanation of the hybrid and distance instructional models which may be implemented should the impact of COVID-19 necessitate these alternate models at any point in the school year.

Hybrid Instructional Model

- If the impact of COVID-19 makes the traditional instructional model impracticable, the District will be prepared to move into a hybrid model. Options for hybrid models are as follows:

- Alternating A/B Schedule

Students will be divided into two groups. Groups would alternate face-to-face and virtual instruction during the week.

Distance Learning Model

- If the impact of COVID-19 makes the hybrid instructional model impracticable, the District will be prepared to move into a completely distance learning model.
- Implement a robust Distance Teaching and Learning Plan:
 - Develop distance learning curriculum ahead of time to easily pivot.
 - Train teachers on instruction in a virtual environment for seamless transition to distance learning
 - Develop and deploy virtual trainings for parents/families (video vignettes).
 - Provide access to virtual lessons for students and parents.
 - Establish teaching schedule/office hours and communicate the plan to parents.
- Distribute printed instructional packets/ materials and district/school communications along with meals; designate and communicate collection/drop off points

General Guidelines to Prevent the Spread of Illness

- Students shall wear face coverings; faculty and staff shall wear face coverings and/or face shields.
- Students, faculty and staff should socially distance, i.e., remain six feet apart, to the extent practicable. If possible, seating and desks should be six feet apart and face the same direction.
- Students, faculty and staff should stay home when they are sick, when they have temperature of more than 100.4°F (38°C), or when they do not pass the daily self-screening examination.
- Persons with COVID-19 should isolate for 14 days and also be free of fever for three consecutive days before returning to school.
- Schools must report to COVID-19 point-person in central office the names of all students, faculty, and staff who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or who have been exposed to persons who have COVID-19. Central Office will report such information to the State Department of Health.
- In the event that a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, the parents/guardians of students who have been in direct contact with that individual will be notified.

- Students and staff who live with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 should stay home from school until the risk of transmission has passed.
- Everyone should practice good hygiene measures such as handwashing with soap and warm water for 20 seconds and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Faculty and staff temperatures will be taken daily. Students' temperatures may also be taken.
- Parents are encouraged to bring their students to and from school in their own automobiles.
- Hand sanitizer shall be on all buses, in hallways, classrooms, bathrooms, and at school entrances and exits. Hand soap and paper towels shall be in all bathrooms.
- Schools shall be deep-cleaned consistent with District directives. Classrooms shall be sanitized between classes or as often as practicable. Halls and bathrooms will be sanitized throughout the day.
- Stations will be set up to quarantine students with symptoms.
- Flow of students in halls between classes will be monitored.
- Employees will be advised in cleaning and safety protocols.
- Plexiglas barriers will be installed in school offices.

When Someone Becomes Sick at School

- Each school will have a designated separate sick/isolation room for suspected COVID cases, keeping those students, faculty, and staff away from other types of illness or injury cases that may be seeking treatment or care.
- School nurses and other healthcare providers will use standard precautions and transmission-based precautions when caring for sick people.
- Notify district point-person immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality consistent with applicable federal and state privacy laws. District officials then will communicate with local and state health officials.
- Advise sick staff members and students not to return until they have met criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- Follow the District's specific protocols for notifying exposed individuals of quarantine requirements.

Food Services

- Allow student hand washing before and after meal service.
- Mark spaced lines to enter the cafeteria and serving lines (to the extent practicable); designate entrances and exit flow paths.
- Conduct cleaning of cafeterias and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day
- Consider alternative serving models:
 - Serving meals in classrooms
 - Serving meals in cafeterias with:
 - Spaced serving lines (marked on floors)
 - Spaced seating (utilize outdoor space as practicable and appropriate)

- Longer meal periods for more staggered meal delivery
- Consider pre-packaged boxes or bags for each student instead of traditional serving lines or menu sheets delivered to classrooms each morning for meal delivery selection
- Consider serving meals in multiple socially distanced locations, such as outdoors, in gyms, and in cafeteria to disperse crowds.
- Follow the District's specific protocols for communication in the event of confirmed cases of cafeteria staff.

Transportation

- All students and drivers shall wear face coverings.
- Encourage parents and guardians to bring students to school in order to reduce the number of bus riders.
- Provide hand sanitizer for students and bus drivers.
- Screen bus drivers for symptoms of illness.
- Utilize spaced seating to the extent practicable.
- Eliminate field trips during times of moderate to widespread illness.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on the bus at least daily.
- Establish protocols for bus stops, loading/unloading students to minimize congregation of children from different households.
- Air out busses between uses.

Entering and Leaving School Buildings

- Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as:
 - Provide hand sanitizer for students, faculty, and staff
 - Limit unnecessary congregations of students, faculty and staff
 - Implement social distancing.
 - Designate entrance and exit flow paths.
 - Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread of COVID-19 and its symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols
 - Establish a protocol for students, faculty and staff who feel ill or experience symptoms when they come to school.
 - Isolate and send home if ill or experience symptoms or have temperature of over 100.4°F (38°C)
 - Establish a protocol for visitors: calling front office before entering, screening visitors, use of face coverings, etc.
 - Establish a protocol for student pick/drop off: staggered entry and release (by grade, class, or bus numbers), marked spacing for pickup.
 - Develop a process to take temperatures during school day.
 - Isolate and send home if internal temperature over 100.4°F (38°C).
 - Consider safety and privacy concerns.

Transitioning from Class to Class

- Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as:
 - All students, faculty and staff must wear face coverings between classes or in large group gatherings.
 - Provide additional time for transitions and class changes.
 - Consider staggered class changes, e.g., by hall, odd/even room numbers, grade or subject to decrease numbers in halls at one time.
 - Have same group of students stay with same faculty or staff (all day for elementary students and as much as possible for middle and high school students).
 - Limit mixing of students to extent possible.
 - Keep students static and move faculty to limit interactions to extent practicable.
 - Conduct cleaning of hallways and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day
 - Designate areas of the hallway (i.e. lanes) to keep students separated to the extent practicable.

Groups and Large Gatherings

- Discourage congregation of students in parking lots and common areas.
- Stagger schedule for group gatherings such as recess and meals.
- Use multiple large spaces such as gyms, auditorium, outside spaces as weather permits for social distancing during mealtimes and other gatherings.
- Follow MHSAA guidelines for events and practices.

Guidelines for Supporting Teaching and Learning

- Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as:
 - Use the master schedule to balance class numbers as much as possible and remove unused desks and furniture in classrooms to maximize social distancing.
 - Clean classrooms and high-touch surfaces each day and provide hand sanitizer, tissues, etc., for proper hygiene.
 - Limit physical interaction by curtailing partner or group work.
 - Establish distance between the teacher's desk/board and students' desks.
 - Identify and utilize large spaces (i.e. gymnasiums, auditoriums, outside spaces – as weather permits) for social distancing
- Social and Emotional Support
 - Provide teacher training to help recognize signs of anxiety, concerns with coming back to school.
 - Provide training for counselors on appropriate interventions and supports.
 - Develop strategies at each campus to help students transition back to face-to-face-instruction.

- Establish an academic baseline
 - Administer formative assessments toward the start of the school year.
 - Conduct meetings with teachers to identify where students are academically behind.
- Discuss the shared experience
 - Help children and teachers cope with changes.
 - Plan best ways to talk to children about COVID-19.
- Target interventions and supports
 - Provide additional instructional supports to:
 - students at-risk of not graduating on time
 - students with disabilities (compensatory services)
 - students who struggled in the prior distance/remote learning environment (i.e. early grades, English Learners, etc.)
 - other students identified by teachers and parents as being behind academically.
 - Identify essential concepts/skills/grade levels and provide access to enrichment.
- Address learning loss
 - Help students catch up/get ahead.
 - Provide extended learning opportunities.
- Provide opt-in for distance learning for students who cannot return to the building due to health issues or other concerns. Please refer to Virtual Learning Guidelines for more information.
- Prepare for potential future distance/remote learning by increasing current blended learning:
 - Develop a digital learning plan.
 - Integrate virtual learning practices:
 - digitizing lessons
 - requiring a certain number of online assignments for each grading period
 - Provide virtual learning-specific professional development for educators

Guidelines for Arts and Athletics (recess, physical education, and extracurricular activities)

- Develop protocols to maintain health and safety during arts, chorus, band, and athletics and activities, utilizing the guidelines included throughout this document.