**MADISON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 2021 – 2022**

**RETURN-TO-SCHOOL SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

**and LEARNING OPTIONS**

**INTRODUCTION**

To prepare for the re-opening of schools in the Madison County School District, the School Board has developed this re-opening plan to provide guidance to its schools, district parents, students, and community on the full reopening of school facilities and to ensure continuity of instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan is a resource intended to inform decisions and support actions, policies, procedures, and protocols that ensure the best education possible for our students.

The school district will continue to work with our local health department, the State Department of Education, and community stakeholders to implement the necessary health and safety measures required to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

# Preparing for Brick and Mortar Instruction

## Screenings

Schools will employ a combination of self-screening and observational screening protocols for universal screening of illness of staff and students. The district and schools will communicate information to parents and staff about the symptoms of COVID-19 and ask them to self-screen before coming to school. Students and staff exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home and may return with a negative test or 24 hours after the COVID-19 symptoms have dissipated.

In addition, the district/school will take the temperature of students and staff who display other COVID like symptoms. Touch-free thermometers will be utilized and will be provided for use in clinics, at front desks, to food service staff, and any other school area where a team has determined a specific need.

## Masks

Wearing of masks by students and staff will be recommended and highly encouraged, but not mandated.

##

## Classrooms

The importance of washing hands frequently and using hand sanitizer will be emphasized on an ongoing basis. Hand sanitizer will be available in all classrooms.

While six feet of distance between students will not be possible in most classrooms, desks and other furniture will be arranged to allow for as much distance as possible between students.

Classrooms and high touch/high traffic surfaces/areas will be cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected daily. After-hours disinfection with hand-held, misting machine for high touch surface disinfection conducted by school custodial staff.

Elementary cohorts of students will remain together throughout the day to reduce the number of interactions. All efforts will be made to keep small groups consistent, to minimize the number of students each student interacts with. However, there are some support services for education, related services, and mental health that will require students to leave or join other cohort groups during the school day. These student groupings will be tracked, and attendance will be kept.

Schools will limit the use of water fountains that are not fill stations. Each student in the district will receive a personal water bottle to use at water filling stations.

## Cafeteria

Social distancing will be difficult in the cafeteria at lunch due to the number of students and limited space and seating. Every effort will be made to maximize the distance between students. Students will sit at cafeteria tables facing one direction and with at least one seat between students. Outdoor areas and other spaces will be utilized as much as possible to increase social distancing and close contact.

Tables and seats will be cleaned and sanitized between service with assistance from custodians.

The Department of Food & Nutrition Services will be making extensive changes to day-to-day operations to help ensure the safety of students and staff:

* All food service personnel will be pre-screened and strongly encouraged to wear a mask and will receive additional training related to COVID-19 and proper cleaning, sanitation, and hand washing.
* Additional cleaning & sanitation in the kitchen and common areas have been added.
* Signage is posted in the kitchen and cafeteria for COVID-19 prevention and to encourage social distancing.
* Social distancing will be practiced in the kitchen as much as possible.
* Hand sanitizer will be available at start of serving line/entry doors of cafeteria.
* No self-service bars or shared utensils or condiment stations for students. All pre- packaged cutlery and disposable trays will be used.
* All food items will be individually portioned or handed directly to the student from the food service employee.

## Buses

* Buses will be deep cleaned, disinfected, and/or misted with a viricide on a regular basis.
* Hand sanitizer will be located at the entrance of each bus.
* Students will be assigned to specific seats.
* Students who become sick during the day will not use group transportation to return home.
* Drivers will receive specific training on cleaning/disinfection procedures, the safe usage and storage of cleaning/ disinfection products, and COVID-19 safety.

## Isolation Rooms

* A room will be designated for students who are waiting for parent pick-up due to COVID-19 symptoms or other reasons.
* Enhanced training will be provided to isolation room staff.
* Isolation room staff must wear a mask and gloves when interacting with students and staff.
* The isolation room will be fogged at the end of each day.

## Hallways, Restrooms, and Common Areas

* Hallway traffic will be one way in areas where social distancing cannot occur.
* Hand sanitizing stations will be available throughout all buildings.
* Students and staff will be discouraged from gathering in common areas.
* Restrooms will be disinfected throughout the day.
* Signage will be installed in appropriate areas with CDC or local health department safety recommendations.

Routine cleaning and disinfection of school facilities will occur daily.

* Custodial staff will conduct after-hours disinfection with hand-held, misting machine for high touch surfaces.

## Responding to a Positive Case of COVID-19

Once an individual is confirmed positive for COVID-19, the Health Department will be notified, and contact tracing will be conducted. If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 they will not return to work or school until cleared by the Health Department.

A Health Department letter will be sent home with all students having close contact with a confirmed case. In consultation with the Health Department, a decision will be made regarding which individuals should quarantine and for how many days.

### Isolation from School and Protocols to Return to School After Home Isolation

Students and staff should be isolated from school if they test positive for COVID-19. Determinations about the need for home isolation and the length of the isolation period will be made in collaboration with families, the school-based administrator, the health services team, and the Madison County Health Department. Once a student or employee is isolated from the school environment, he/she may return if he/she satisfies the recommendations of the Madison County Health Department. The district and the Madison County Health Department will continue to collaborate to refine and implement COVID-19 protocols to assess risk and respond to school-specific matters based on all relevant factors and current information.

When there is a confirmed positive COVID-19 test result for an employee, he/she will contact their Supervisor.

The Principal or Supervisor will immediately determine the areas of the school that need sanitization.

An identified member of the school staff will assist Madison County Health department personnel with contact tracing.

It is the responsibility of the Madison County Health Department to contact the person confirmed with COVID-19, inform direct contacts of their possible exposure, and provide instructions to those involved with the confirmed case, including siblings and other household members, regarding self-quarantine and exclusions. The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications to the school community at large but will be identified to the Madison County Health Department for contact tracing.

As soon as the district/school becomes aware of a student or employee who has been exposed to or has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the custodial staff will be informed, so that impacted building or bus areas, furnishings, and equipment can be thoroughly disinfected.

## Visitors, Volunteers, and Vendors

Visitors, volunteers, and vendors will be approved on a very limited basis until further notice. To minimize outside influence into the school, any person entering campus will be escorted to their destination. All will complete a COVID-19 questionnaire.

All parent visits for the purpose of having lunch with their children will be suspended until further notice. PreK– 1 parents may escort their student(s) to the door of their classroom for the first two days of school only.

## Athletics, Extracurricular Activities, and Clubs

School sponsored athletic teams, clubs, and other extracurricular activities serve a vital role on our school campuses. Our ability to allow these activities during this time will require careful adherence to the safety protocols put in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.

### Athletics

* Madison County athletics will adhere to the Florida High School Athletic Association guidelines.
* Hand sanitizer stands will be placed at the entry/exit of all venues and concession stands.
* Schools will establish sanitization procedures for shared equipment.
* Spectators are permitted to attend events, but limitations may apply based on social distancing guidelines as issued by state and local officials.

### Band and Fine Arts

* Rehearsals will be outdoors when appropriate.
* Hand sanitizer stands will be placed at the entry/exit of all venues and concession stands.
* Band uniforms will be cleaned and sanitized following the manufacturers’ guidelines.
* As feasible, students will limit the sharing of materials and equipment.

##

## Medically Vulnerable Students

All medically vulnerable students and those students who live with medically vulnerable family members should consult with their family doctor and develop a plan for their safe participation in schooling. For medically vulnerable students who come to school, school health staff will develop school health plans in consultation with the county health department. Our schools will consider accommodations for these students on a case-by-case basis.

## Students with Disabilities

If a parent of a student(s) with a disability believes the established procedures are not appropriate for their student(s) they should contact their healthcare provider to discuss their child’s health risk in school. After the parent consults with their health care provider, they should contact the school to arrange a meeting to address their child’s specific needs.

**Student Attendance**

# Students who are quarantined due to contact tracing will be provided with their work to complete at home. The attendance code will count as a school related absence and will not negatively impact the student. If students are not able to continue their education at home, they will receive an excused absence and be given time to make up the work.

# ACADEMICS

**Traditional School (Brick and Mortar)**

K-12 students will go to school as normal, five days a week. The School District will collaborate with schools to plan diagnostic testing and progress monitoring to determine learning gaps. Professional Learning Communities will be organized to prioritize training related to unfinished learning/learning gaps.

The District’s new ELA curriculum will be reviewed and strategically planned to emphasize critical prerequisite sills and knowledge that need to be addressed. Student progress will be monitored and adjustments made based on monitoring results.

A major focus of the district is providing students and teachers with access to the resources needed to guarantee acceleration of learning. One of those resources will be access to curriculum at home. Not only will that be crucial for students who have to be at home for an extended period of time, but also for those students who have developed learning gaps. Providing parents with access to their children’s instructional materials will aid them in the process of accelerating their children’s learning.