

Meriwether County School District

Reopening Plan

2020-2021

Every Student Matters, Every Moment Counts

Meriwether County Schools **Reopening Plan** is based on information within **Georgia's Path to Recovery for K-12 Schools**. This plan is not intended to be an exhaustive or detailed list of expectations, but it will provide an overview of the anticipated guidance for re-entry to the traditional setting on August 24, 2020.

We know how important it is for our students and staff to come back to school. We also understand that we are in the midst of a pandemic and realize that some parents will choose a remote learning option. Both the traditional and remote options will be available during the 2020-2021 school year, and we will keep the safety of our students, staff, and the public at the forefront of all our decisions. The partnership between the school and the parents is more important now than ever before. By supporting one another and increasing communication, we can make the best decisions for our students, staff, and community.

The principal and the school nurse will be the school's main COVID-19 point of contact. Temperature checks of students and staff will be conducted prior to school starting and throughout the day if needed. Students and staff with COVID-19 symptoms or a temperature of 100.4°F and above will be immediately isolated and sent home. The Meriwether County Schools is in constant communication with the Department of Public Health regarding guidelines and mandates that address public safety. The Meriwether County Schools is also conducting a thorough cleaning of all facilities, and this cleaning will encompass a treatment of all surfaces against viruses, bacteria, germs, mold and mildew, including COVID-19. Masks, hand sanitizer, and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided as well.



Every Student Matters, Every Moment Counts

Dr. Robert A. Griffin, Superintendent

Bradley Smith, Chairman | Willie A. Hinton, Jr., Vice Chair | Leon Coverson | Bob M. Patterson | Rebecca “Kay” King

July 29, 2020

Dear Meriwether County Families:

I begin by expressing my gratitude to the students, staff, parents and community members who have served and performed diligently despite the challenges we have faced as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. All stakeholders have spent a significant amount of time determining what school will look like when we return and how we can restore learning without jeopardizing the health and safety of students and staff.

Meriwether County residents expect the school system to provide a quality and meaningful learning experience for our students while also ensuring we maintain a safe learning environment so our schools can execute to fidelity. For academic, social-emotional, and economic reasons, we highly support the traditional (in-person) learning model; however, we also cannot ignore the continued threat of the COVID-19 virus. We must take all prudent steps to keep our schools from becoming agents that could spread COVID-19.

We must also anticipate that there could be outbreaks that will require us to be flexible in our learning model to provide an academic continuum for our students. For these reasons, we are prepared to open schools based on the proposed 2020-2021 school calendar with a traditional (on-campus) learning model that involves multiple measures to offset the exposure and spread of the COVID-19 virus. Additionally, there will be a remote (at-home) learning option for families who remain concerned with schools reopening under the protocols we will have in place. In order to be successful, the reopening of schools will require a consistent partnership with parents and guardians to protect students against the spread of this virus.

This Reopening Plan presents our protocols as of the date of this correspondence. This plan is still a work in progress and we believe, through continued candid and constructive feedback from our community, this plan can continuously improve. We recognize that some of the concepts might cause some anxiety; however, we must remain open to all possibilities and consider all options to move forward through this crisis. Our district administrators and school leaders will be available to answer any questions.

We will continue to provide regular communications in the coming weeks as we prepare for a scheduled start of school on Monday, August 24, 2020. I look forward to being back together with our outstanding students and staff. Please continue to stay safe and follow health and safety guidelines to help mitigate the spread of disease in our county.

Robert Griffin, Superintendent
Meriwether County Schools



Traditional School Topics	Procedure
<p>All Students Prior to Departure from Home</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check student(s) temperature (this will help tremendously) • Remind student(s) to bring masks provided by Meriwether County School System (MCSS) or principal-approved customized mask • Teach and reinforce proper hygiene measures to follow throughout the day (handwashing, covering coughs/sneezes, and face coverings) • No sharing of personal belongings • Remind students to report to the nurse if they feel ill • Remind students to keep hands away from their mouth and not to touch others • The Meriwether County Schools will adhere to Department of Public Health (DPH) regulations regarding COVID-19 diagnosis, symptoms, and/or exposure • Please do not send symptomatic students to school (fever 100.4 or higher)
<p>Transporting Students (Bus)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The windows will be down with weather permitting for ventilation • To enhance social distancing, the bus will be loaded from back to front, family members will sit together when applicable, and the bus drivers will require assigned seating • There will be hand sanitizer upon bus entry and exit • Daily disinfecting will take place between routes • Masks will be required on school bus for all drivers and students (provided by MCSS or principal-approved customized mask) • An isolation area will be available for symptomatic riders (preferably behind bus driver)
Traditional School Topics	Procedure
<p>Car Riders / Walkers</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind student(s) of proper hygiene measures to follow throughout the day • Remind student(s) to use hand sanitizer as they enter the building (staff will be present to help as well) • Parents will not enter the building, to assure the public safety for all • Temperature checks will be conducted upon entry into the building
<p>Student Drivers</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once parked on campus, exit the vehicle and report to your designated area in the building • Be aware of any passengers' potential exposure to COVID-19, and limit as much risk as possible • Temperature checks will be conducted upon entry into the building • Remind student(s) to use hand sanitizer as they enter the building (staff will be present to help as well)

<p>Students Entering The Building</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A staff member will be present to encourage students to use the hand sanitizer as they enter the building • Temperature checks will be conducted as students enter the building • Students will be reminded to socially distance at least six (6) feet where applicable • Masks are required upon entry into buildings • Students should follow the flow path provided by the staff when entering or leaving the building or classrooms
<p>Visitors</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations will be limited. • Parents or visitors needing to see the Principal or other staff members will be required to wait in a designated area (temp checked / masks and sign-in required)
<p>Traditional School Topics Procedure</p>	
<p>Classroom Setting</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will teach and reinforce good hygiene practices such as handwashing, covering coughs, sneezing, and face coverings • All students and employees will be reminded to wash their hands throughout the day for a minimum of 20 seconds • Staff members and students will be required to wear masks while moving throughout the building • Students will be required to wear masks in classroom settings • Classroom desks and door handles will be cleaned and disinfected regularly • Based upon classroom configuration and to the extent possible, social distancing will be implemented • Group work will be limited • The school will provide soap and hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Some classrooms have sinks within the room to accommodate hand washing • Students should follow the flow path provided by the staff when entering or leaving the building or classrooms • Administrators will use the master schedule to balance student numbers as much as possible • Unused desks in classrooms will be removed to maximize social distancing to the extent practicable

Traditional School Topics	Procedure
<p>Restrooms</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All restrooms will be disinfected regularly • Soap and towel dispensers will be checked regularly • Students and staff should report issues in regard to restrooms to their teacher or other staff member
<p>Water Fountains</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All water fountains will be disabled • Students are encouraged to bring bottled water from home in clear containers • MCSS plans to have additional water available • Classroom teachers will assist students in refilling water bottles, when applicable
<p>School Nutrition</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwashing prior to meal service • Social distancing will be enhanced by allowing one-half of the students to dine in the cafeteria one week, and the other one-half of the students will pick up their meals in the cafeteria and return to their classrooms to dine. Disposable plates and utensils will be used for meals eaten in the classrooms. This scenario will flip-flop weekly between each one-half group of students so all dine in the cafeteria at least half the time • United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Federal Guidelines will be in place • School Nutrition Program (SNP) staff will wear masks and gloves • Contingent upon the weather, grades (6-12) may be allowed to eat outside on picnic tables • Efforts to assure social distancing in the cafeteria will take place • Bottled water will be available during meal times • Bottled water in clear containers may be brought from home • Multiple-day meals will be available by way of pick up for students who participate in remote learning.
<p>Locker Rooms / Weight Room</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All locker rooms must be disinfected after each class change • All weight room equipment must be disinfected after each use • Georgia High School Association (GHSA) guidelines and mandates will be adhered to

Traditional School Topics	Procedure
<p>Transitioning (class change / departure)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-essential student movement throughout the school day will be limited • Staff will clean/disinfect touched surfaces frequently • Principal will have the flexibility of creating an individualized school plan for class changes and other transitioning periods or settings • Masks required during all class changes and transitioning • Lockers will not be utilized
<p>Recess/ P.E.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor recess will continue • Some playground equipment may be prohibited for student use • After recess, students will be encouraged to wash hands for a minimum of 20 seconds • Recess/P.E. areas and equipment will be disinfected regularly
<p>Instruction and Learning</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Learning: Monday - Friday with a regular schedule. • Remote Learning: The student will be bound for the 1st Semester (Grades 9-12) and 1st 9-weeks (Grades K-8) if remote learning is chosen • Remote Learning: Parents will need to contact the school (on or before Tuesday, August 4, 2020) regarding remote learning options
Traditional School Topics	Procedure
<p>Athletics</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school district will follow Georgia High School Association (GHSA) guidelines for sporting events and practices • Temperature checks at ball games and extracurricular activities.

<p>Large Group Gatherings at School (PTO / Booster Clubs / PLC's, etc.)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school district will abide by the maximum number of people allowed to congregate as defined by the Governor's current statewide Executive Order • Virtual meetings will be used when possible to protect the safety of students, staff, and the community • Masks will be required at all face-to-face group meetings • Temperature checks will be conducted
<p>When a Student, Staff Member, or Visitor becomes sick at school</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school principal and nurse will designate an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms • School nurse will use standard and transmission-based precautions when caring for sick individuals • School nurse will adhere to DPH guidelines and mandates and will advise stakeholders accordingly • The parent/guardian of a sick child will be contacted
<p>School Principal is notified of a Positive Covid-19 Case</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Meriwether County Schools will follow the guidance of local health officials when there is a positive case of COVID-19 identified in a school • Proper Communications will be deployed by the district and appropriate health officials including communication with individual classrooms that have been impacted. All communication will be consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

For additional information, go to

www.mcssga.org