



Director of Schools
Mike Winstead, Ph.D.
mike.winstead@maryville-schools.org

833 Lawrence Avenue, Maryville, Tennessee 37803
Tel (865) 982-7121 | Fax (865) 977-5055

Assistant Director of Schools
Amy Vagnier, Ed.S.
amy.vagnier@maryville-schools.org

February 26, 2020

MCS RESPONSE TO CONCERNS ABOUT A POSSIBLE PANDEMIC AFFECTING OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

As standard practice in response to seasonal viruses (such as influenza), staff in the Maryville City Schools regularly work within the school community on preventive strategies such as washing hands and covering coughs. Environmental strategies include surface and object cleaning to remove germs. School administrators also monitor absences and regularly communicate with community health agencies and district administrators. Students and staff are always asked to stay at home to recover from confirmed cases of flu – helping to limit the virus from spreading to classmates and district employees. Other strategies include temporary school closures and cancellation of after-school activities as needed.

A pandemic occurs when a new virus that is different from seasonal flu emerges and spreads quickly, causing illness worldwide. In such cases, it may take months for a vaccine to become available. For most communities, the nonpharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) noted above for seasonal flu are recommended as a first defense – helping to slow the spread of the new virus.

In the event our community is quickly overrun with cases of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), it is possible that the CDC and other authorities could declare a public health emergency and recommend that all schools close. Students and staff would only return to the school setting after the risk of infection was minimized. The time period in which students would be asked to stay at home for their own health and safety could be relatively short or as long as weeks or months. As a technology-enabled school district in a 1:1 student-to-device environment, our plan is to offer uninterrupted teaching and learning for all students during a possible pandemic. In grades 4 through 12, instruction could easily be delivered to the desktop of each student via our learning management platform (Canvas). In grades K-3 where devices are issued to students for use in the classroom, instructional strategies would be varied and might include take-home packets, use of numerous online services and reading sites, as well as the option to borrow a device for home use where necessary.

As part of our overall safety and security plan, parents and guardians can expect to receive regular communication from the district or school – before, during, and after any crisis. In addition to email, voicemail, and SMS (text) messages, families will receive information via our websites, on social media, and through traditional communication channels such as television and print media. We always encourage parents/guardians to keep contact information, including phone numbers and email addresses, up-to-date by contacting the school immediately with any changes or corrections. Having accurate contact data allows us to keep in touch and share important information with all families as quickly as possible.

Any questions regarding our planned response to a pandemic should be directed to Dr. Heather Ledbetter, Coordinated School Health, at (865) 982-7121 or Sharon Anglim (District Communications) at the same number. You may also email us at mcs@maryville-schools.org.

www.maryville-schools.org

MARYVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Nick Black, Chairman

Julie Elder, Vice-Chairman

Chad Hampton

Candy Morgan

Bethany Pope