



Rankin County School District Smart Restart Plan 2020 / 2021 School Year

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS

- Great to BEST as we continue our tradition of excellence!
- DO WHAT'S RIGHT FOR OUR STUDENTS!
- DO WHAT'S RIGHT FOR OUR EDUCATORS!

MISSION

Bring Everyone's Strengths Together! We will all intentionally focus on empowering our students to reach their maximum potential by embracing opportunities and challenges while cultivating a tradition of distinction in education.

Vision: Continue a tradition of excellence by providing a world-class education that empowers all to grow through curiosity, discovery, and learning.

Goal #1: We will experience a safe, healthy and inclusive environment.

Rankin County School District (RCSD)—in partnership with the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), school administrators and staff, local stakeholders from the fields of education, healthcare, business experts, and city/county/state leaders—has developed this plan for our schools and community to reopen and educate our students safely in the school year 2020-2021.

This document outlines RCSD's plans to reopen on August 10, 2020. Parents will have two options as described in this document for school scheduling to meet the one hundred eighty (180) teaching day requirement (MS Code §37-13-63; MDE Process Standard 13). The two options are: 1. Enhanced Traditional 2. CHOICE Distance Learning Program. Pending the Governor's Executive Order and corresponding Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) requirements, if we need to social distance more or suspend face-to-face classes due to health and safety conditions, enhanced traditional teaching and learning will continue in the HYBRID scenario or Brick2Click distance learning online scenario. Students will be held accountable for attendance and assignments during the online learning time.





LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents,

The Rankin County School District team has been working diligently on a **Smart Restart** plan for opening school for the 2020-2021 school year. With approximately 19,000 students, 40,000 parents, and 2,600 employees, many difficult decisions have been made while knowing we will not be able to please all due to the uniqueness of everyone's personal situation related to COVID-19. However, we want you to know the health and safety of our students and employees has always been our top priority. The first goal of the RCSD Strategic Plan reads, "We will all experience a safe, healthy, and inclusive learning environment." Of course, COVID-19 has shed a whole new light on this year's health and safety planning process. We have intentionally and conscientiously dissected the possibilities, processes and procedures of a school day in order to develop a plan that would meet the needs of the majority of our families.

Many stakeholders have been involved in the planning process. The RCSD Board of Trustees, district leadership, principals, teachers, custodians, bus drivers, and many other employees have played a huge role in the development of the **Smart Restart** Plan. We have also created a **Smart Restart** Task Force whose mission is to problem solve and to provide insight and advice related to reopening. The task force consists of representatives from each of our eight communities such as parents, teachers, special education teachers and parents, principals, medical professionals, daycare directors, law enforcement officers, local and national public officials, and business leaders. Within this task force, a Medical Team was formed consisting of two pediatricians (one is also an internal medicine physician), a family practice physician, a nurse practitioner, a school nurse, a pediatric occupational therapist, a Rankin County Health Department nurse, a Region 8 Mental Health director, and our district counselor. They have committed to assisting us throughout the year to support a safe reopening of our schools. (SEE THE ATTACHED SMART RESTART TASK FORCE LIST.) Parent and employee surveys were also collected and analyzed which provided us with the highest number of responses in the history of this administration. This valuable information was used to guide us as we made decisions. The district also continues to stay updated on the guidance provided by local, state, and national public health officials.

As you can see, we are taking the reopening of our schools during the COVID-19 pandemic very seriously. We are committed to **doing what's right for our students and educators**. Know that all RCSD employees and the Board of Trustees are passionate about their professional purpose, which is to protect and educate our most valuable assets—YOUR CHILDREN.

In closing, as you know, people move to Rankin County because of its amazing communities and excellent schools. While we may have different opinions and you also have some difficult decisions to make, we can all agree our children are watching and learning from us during this incredibly challenging, historical time. It is imperative that we all join together during these difficult times to support our children. We may be social distancing, but we can do this while modeling patience, flexibility, grace and love as we move forward TOGETHER.

**The following pages will explain how we plan to reopen our schools. Frequent changes could be made throughout the school year based on COVID-19 concerns, or hopefully, its mitigation in our schools and communities guided by the directions from the Governor's Office, the Mississippi State Department of Health, and the Mississippi Department of Education. Individual schools will provide policies, procedures, and processes for their specific and varied environment.

Serving you,

Sue Townsend, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Education
Rankin County School District

OVERVIEW

The RCSD *Smart Restart Plan* consists of six areas for planning:

1. SCHEDULING & ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING



2. HEALTH & SAFETY



3. OPERATIONS



4. TECHNOLOGY



5. FAMILY & COMMUNITY SUPPORT



6. COMMUNICATIONS



APPENDICES



1. SCHEDULING & ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING



The RCSD plans to begin the school year on Monday, August 10, 2020, with the enhanced traditional scenario with a second option for distance learning.

OPTION 1: ENHANCED TRADITIONAL Pre-Kindergarten through 12th Grade students will attend school in a traditional model everyday with as much social distancing as practical, enhanced hygiene/disinfection protocols, and scheduling modifications as determined by state and local officials and/or Governor's Executive Order.

OPTION 2: CHOICE Distance Learning (Only for Kindergarten-12th Grade) for those parents who are concerned about face-to-face instruction for their student due to COVID-19. **DISCLAIMER:** As educators, we feel it is important to share that we strongly believe face-to-face instruction is the most beneficial academic and social emotional instructional model and careful consideration should be taken when making the decision to participate in CHOICE. PLEASE READ THE CHOICE REQUIREMENTS THOROUGHLY BEFORE APPLYING. NOTE: Students who enroll under the CHOICE option will not qualify to participate in athletics/extracurricular activities because they are working full time off campus.

*Special Education Services will be determined on the individual needs of the child.

OPTION 1 DESCRIPTION:

ENHANCED TRADITIONAL SCENARIO

Again, we will begin the school year on **Monday, August 10, 2020** in an **enhanced traditional model** for the 2020 / 2021 school year. However, everyone must be prepared for all three potential scenarios (enhanced traditional, hybrid, full distance learning) to be utilized during the school year, as needed. Please begin creating a family plan for how you will adjust if we have to move in and out of the various scenarios.

Pre-Kindergarten through 12th Grade students will attend school in a traditional model every day with as much social distancing as practical, enhanced hygiene/disinfection protocols, and scheduling modifications as determined by state and local officials and/or Governor's Executive Order. Modifications will include the following:

- Daily screening protocols
- Transportation adjustments
- Adjustments to campus arrival/dismissal procedures.
- Student transition modifications
- Routine disinfection protocols
- Limited gatherings in school buildings to achieve social distancing guidelines
- Adjustments for serving meals

- Limited access to school campuses for visitors/guests/vendors/parents, including mealtime
- Suspension of the policy and/or procedures for exam exemption for attendance and for perfect attendance awards
- Encouraging teachers to eat lunch or teach class outside when practical

NOTE: Social distancing will be a challenge in many building situations with the enhanced traditional school model. RCSD has a limited number of buses, limited square footage in classrooms, and other related obstacles. Social distancing will be maintained to the greatest extent possible, and strategies will be implemented by school officials based on the feasibility related to the varied space availability at each school.

OPTION 2 DESCRIPTION:

CHOICE DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM SCENARIO (ONLY FOR KINDERGARTEN-12TH GRADE)

Parents of medically fragile students or parents with reservations concerning their child returning to in person learning on school campuses are given the opportunity to apply for the CHOICE Distance Learning Program. You may apply, in lieu of the enhanced traditional scenario, by completing the [CHOICE application](#) on the RCSD website. * Expressing intent to participate in CHOICE constitutes a commitment to virtual learning and acknowledgment to all the statements in this document. See The Rankin County School District CHOICE Distance Learning Program Description and Considerations below.

Please consider the following when determining if applying for distance learning is the best option for your child:

- Students in CHOICE will be enrolled at their regular school, but they will participate in virtual learning and complete their assignments at home.
- Teachers will assist students in working through weekly assignments using interactive and independent activities.
- The content and the pace will match traditional school curriculum experiences.
- Distance learning students must be committed to online learning.
- While distance learning is an option for students in unique situations, distance learning does not serve as an equitable alternative to the traditional classroom setting.
- Students who are enrolled in the CHOICE DISTANCE LEARNING Program will not participate in athletics/extracurricular activities and there is no guarantee that all programs, courses, or electives will be available.

DISCLAIMER: As educators, we feel it is important to share that we strongly believe face-to-face instruction is the most beneficial and effective academic and social emotional instructional delivery model and careful consideration should be taken when making the decision to participate in CHOICE. PLEASE

READ THE CHOICE REQUIREMENTS THOROUGHLY BEFORE APPLYING.

NOTE: In order for us to support the optional CHOICE DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM, parents **MUST** be able to meet the requirements outlined below:

- Students must have been promoted during the previous school year and received Tier 1 or Tier 2 instruction.
- Approved applications will be in effect on a semester-by-semester basis. Students choosing the CHOICE model must complete nine-weeks of online instruction. There will be an opportunity to transfer from CHOICE to the school/enhanced traditional classroom setting at the end of each nine-week period. When moving from CHOICE to Enhanced Traditional, there is a chance a student's schedule may change due to course availability.
- CHOICE students will follow the academic calendar approved by the school board. **SEE Calendar in Appendix**
- Students must strictly adhere to the traditional schedule five and a half (5 ½) hours a day for five (5) days per week. Students will access learning daily through distance learning on Monday through Friday using interactive and independent activities. Students will use Zoom Video Conferencing with their teacher/s.
- Normal attendance is mandatory including required seat time. Attendance will be taken for each period.
- Students are required to be on time and fully present for each class and engaged at all times.
- Students must be able to access instructional materials using the RCSD Learning Management Systems (Google Classroom/Canvas) and technology-free tools, where needed.
- Students will be responsible for new material using the regular pacing guide, graded assignments and other assessments.
- Students will adhere to all RCSD grading policies and procedures during distance learning.
- Parents must be able to transport their child/children to their home school as required for proctored assessments at least 2 times a month, as needed.
- RCSD has been a 1 to 1 device district in grades 7 through 12 for seven years. Students in 8th-12th grade will have a device checked out to them when CHOICE begins. Seventh grade devices have been purchased but haven't been delivered yet. **SEVENTH GRADE CHOICE STUDENTS WILL NEED TO PROVIDE THEIR OWN DEVICE UNTIL THE NEW RCSD DEVICES ARRIVE. AT THAT TIME, THE PARENT AND STUDENT CAN CHECK OUT A DEVICE.**
- RCSD is in the process of purchasing technology devices with CARES COVID money for Kindergarten through 6th grade to be used for CHOICE. The Mississippi Department of Education requirements have not allowed districts to place orders yet. Therefore, Kindergarten through 6th grade students will need to use their own device until the district devices are delivered. When these devices arrive, there will be a device checkout process and fee assessment.
- All Kindergarten through 6th grade students must pay a \$25 usage fee for the use of a district device during the 2020-2021 school year.

- All 7th through 12th grade students must pay a \$50 usage fee for the device during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Parents and students must sign the RCSD Internet/Computer Usage Policy prior to issuance of the device.
- Parents must sign the RCSD Zoom Consent Form.

- **NOTE:** Some elective courses and opportunities may not be offered to CHOICE distance learning students. For example, extracurricular activities such as athletics and fine arts will not be available because CHOICE distance learning students will be working off-campus.

IMPORTANT WiFi REQUIREMENTS: Online/digital learning will be the primary method of working towards competency in a grade level and/or content area. **Because CHOICE will not be delivered through paper packets, students must have access to adequate internet service.** Families must have high-speed WiFi access available in their homes that will allow all students in the household to work online simultaneously for up to 5 ½ hours per day if choosing this option.

- A reliable, high-speed Internet connection should be at least DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) with minimum speeds of 3 to 8 Mbps.
- Dial-up and satellite Internet do not qualify as high-speed Internet.
- The Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Household Broadband Guide provides recommended service for basic, medium, and advanced use.
 - » Based on the FCC guidelines, you will need basic service (3 to 8 Mbps) for one child participating in virtual learning activities,
 - » Medium service (12 to 25 Mbps) for two or three children, and
 - » Advanced service (25 Mbps or higher) for four or more children.

DISCLAIMER: If at any point, the school or district determines that distance learning is not the most effective learning approach for a student due to lack of attendance, participation, or academic growth, a conference will be held with the parent and principal to determine a potential change of delivery scenario.

As indicated above, the district has selected two learning management platforms for online learning:

- Google Classroom for elementary schools, which is provided through the RCSD's Google Accounts and accessible through the Clever portal
- Canvas for middle and high schools
- Technology platforms enable teachers and students to communicate securely.

RCSD is also using a variety of tools to support digital learning including:

- Zoom Video Conferencing, which will be used for video and audio conferencing
- Flip Grid, which is a tool teachers may use to send brief video messages to students and parents

- RCSD will continue to offer teachers opportunities for professional development and resources that support the diverse needs of our learning community.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The CHOICE application on the RCSD website must be completed by Friday, July 24 at noon, in order for the district to plan for staffing. If your application is not received by this date, your child will be expected to attend school on campus.

TRANSITIONS FOR ENHANCED TRADITIONAL STUDENTS

If schools must achieve social distancing guidelines to reduce the number of students in the schools or close schools/district as determined by state and local health officials and/or the Governor's Executive Order, we will move from ENHANCED TRADITIONAL to the HYBRID scenario or the BRICK2CLICK Distance Learning scenario.

HYBRID/SOCIAL DISTANCING DESCRIPTION

If schools must achieve social distancing guidelines to reduce the number of students in the schools each day as determined by state and local officials and/or the Governor's Executive Order, we will move to the HYBRID scenario. If the school or district must move to a HYBRID scenario, the school will notify families. Students will attend using the following schedule:

PRE-K THROUGH 12TH GRADES

- » Instruction will be a combination of face-to-face and distance learning/virtual learning for students.
- » Grades PK-12 students will meet face-to-face in school on alternating days following social distancing guidelines and participate in distance learning on the days they are not face-to-face.
- ~ Students will be sorted alphabetically and assigned to a cohort by last name to allow siblings to have the same schedule; the cohort alphabetical sort will vary by school zone to ensure that approximately 50% of the students are in each cohort. Schools will inform you of your assigned cohort and will work with blended families having siblings who may have different last names in order for them to be in the same cohort.
 - o **Cohort 1:** Face-to-face in school on Monday and Thursday; Distance learning on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday
 - o **Cohort 2:** Face-to-face in school on Tuesday and Friday; Distance learning on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday
 - o *Note: All students will participate in distance learning on Wednesdays to allow for enhanced cleaning and disinfecting weekly, planning, and professional development.*
 - o *On distance learning days, students will participate in interactive and independent activities.*
- ~ **EXCEPTION: Self-Contained Special Education students will meet face-to-face in school Monday through Friday, if possible.**

BRICK2CLICK DISTANCE LEARNING DESCRIPTION

We will move to this scenario if school or district closure is necessary, as determined by state and local officials and/or the Governor's Executive Order.

- If the school or district must move to the Brick2Click Distance Learning scenario, your school will notify families. Students will:
 - » Continue learning with their same teacher/s and classmates as they did in the enhanced traditional scenario.
 - » Will use RCSD Learning Management Systems (Google Classroom/Canvas) and technology-free tools, where needed.
 - » Will access learning daily through distance learning on Monday through Friday using interactive and independent activities. Students will use Zoom Video Conferencing with their teacher/s.
 - » Will continue instruction including the teaching of new material using the course pacing guide, graded assignments, and other assessments.
 - » Will meet same attendance and seat time requirements as face-to-face classes.

Questions about Brick2Click Distance Learning can be answered by emailing your teacher, principal, or Lakeisha Maxer, District Parent Engagement and Distance Learning Liaison, at DistanceLearning@rcsd.ms.

NOTE: RCSD has been a 1 to 1 device district for grade 7-12 for the past 7 years. We are in the process of purchasing technology devices with CARES (COVID) money for Pre-K through 6th grade students to use at school. There is a delay due to MDE purchasing guidelines. When these devices arrive, if we must move to distance learning, there will be a checkout process and fee assessed for devices in order for devices to be taken home. (\$25 for Pre-K through 6th grades)

ATHLETICS / EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Planning for athletics/extracurricular activities has involved many phases. The initial phase focused on establishing parameters and protocols needed to begin a return to campus/fields for workouts/practices for students and coaches participating in fall sports. Planning for athletics/extracurricular activities has expanded to focus on the actual events. RCSD is following the guidance of the Governor's Office, the Mississippi State Department of Health, and Mississippi High School Athletic Association (MSHAA).

RCSD is working to ensure our athletic facilities can accommodate student athletes, fans, and necessary game personnel while regarding Athletics/Extracurricular Activities will adhere to the decisions made and guidelines established by MSHAA.

NOTE: Students who enroll under the CHOICE Distance Learning Program option will not qualify to participate in athletics/extracurricular activities because they are working full time off of their campus.

2. HEALTH & SAFETY



To mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our schools, we will identify possible cases, isolate positive cases, and conduct contact tracing in collaboration with the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH).

We are asking all to follow these CDC guidelines to protect yourself and others:

- Stay at least six feet from other people, when feasible.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a mask/covering when around others.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit. Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.
- Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.
- Take your temperature if symptoms develop.

HOW DO WE DETERMINE WHEN A STUDENT OR EMPLOYEE SHOULD BE QUARANTINED?

Students and employees will be asked to self-quarantine if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 based on CDC guidance that is not otherwise explained:

- Fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea

WHAT TYPES OF SCREENING WILL BE IMPLEMENTED?

RCSD has implemented screening protocols for anyone that enters RCSD buildings, which may include asking questions about symptoms and examining people who appear healthy and asymptomatic.

- **Self-Screening:** We will require students, parents, and employees to **self-screen** for COVID-19 prior to coming to school. The first self-screening process begins AT HOME.

Assess for COVID-19 using the following CDC protocol every morning before coming to school:

- » Has the student had a fever of 100.4° F or greater within the last 24 hours?
- » Does the student currently have one or more of the following that cannot be otherwise explained?
 - ~ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - ~ Unexplained fatigue
 - ~ New or worsening cough, runny nose, congestion, or headache
 - ~ Chills
 - ~ Muscle pain
 - ~ Sore throat
 - ~ New loss of sense of smell and/or taste
 - ~ Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- » Has the student come into close contact with anyone that has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days, with anyone that is currently awaiting a COVID-19 test result, or anyone who has exhibited more than one of the symptoms listed above?

If the answer to any of these questions is “Yes,” families should keep the student at home, and notify the school of your child’s absence. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

***Students and employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 without other obvious explanations are prohibited from coming to school, and if they do come to school, they will be sent home immediately.

- **Temperature Screening:** *1st Check-* Parents are required to check their child’s temperature before they leave home. Employees are required to check their temperature before they leave home. *2nd Check-* Student and employee temperatures will be checked when they arrive to school.

HOW WILL STUDENTS/STAFF BE SEPARATED WHILE IN SCHOOL IF EXHIBITING SYMPTOMS?

Each school will have an isolation room or space separate from the nurse’s office where students or employees who may have COVID-19 will wait to be evaluated or for pickup. Only essential staff and students assigned to the room may enter. Each person who enters the room will sign in to create a record for potential contact tracing, and the room will be disinfected several times throughout the day. Strict social distancing is required, and staff will wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Students who are ill will be walked out of the building to their parents.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN THERE IS A CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19 IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING?

When there is confirmation that a person infected with COVID-19 was in a school building, RCSD will contact the local health

department immediately. RCSD will notify parents, students, and employees of close contacts to inform them of the confirmed case of COVID-19 and encourage cooperation with the RCSD and the local health department to trace contacts with the individual. The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the health department.

WHAT ARE THE FACE MASK / COVERING REQUIREMENTS?

In order to protect our students and employees, face masks/coverings are strongly encouraged, if age appropriate. Our Medical Team Advisors feel masks/coverings are beneficial in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Wearing a face mask/covering could prevent us from having to move to a HYBRID or BRICK2CLICK DISTANCE LEARNING scenario.

- All are strongly encouraged to wear a mask
- We will have “mask down” times and areas where 6 ft. social distancing is possible and where the students and employees are seated.
- Teachers will have a “mask down” instructional area in the classroom with at least 6 ft. social distancing to be used when the teacher needs to remove his/her mask for instructional purposes.
- Masks shall be worn in common areas, transitions, class changes, and holding areas.
- EXCEPTION: Face masks/coverings will be **REQUIRED** on buses due to the inability to social distance.

FACE MASK/COVERING INFORMATION

- The district asks students and employees to provide their own face mask/covering for each day.
- The district will provide one washable mask per student and employee to begin school.
- We will keep masks on hand for those who may forget periodically.

FACE MASKS/COVERING REQUIREMENTS

- Must NOT HAVE WRITING.
- May have appropriate designs such as the school mascot.
- May have writing if it is a school/college mascot name or school name.
- Can be monogrammed with the student’s name or name initials.
- Must follow the RCSD Dress Code for Students policy, which includes no inappropriate designs, pictures, symbols, slogans, offensive language or political statements.

OTHER HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES

RCSD continues to focus on the health and safety of our school community. We have designed health and safety protocols to minimize the exposure and spread of COVID-19 to students

and staff, such as managing student and staff arrivals at school, maintaining safe social distancing, and increasing other healthy habits while in school buildings.

- School nurses will be available on each campus to support health needs.
- All employees will be trained on CDC guidance to reduce the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission.
- Daily screening protocols will include symptom screenings for employees and students.
- Face masks/coverings are strongly encouraged for employees and students, at this time. There will be “mask down” times and areas.
- Face masks/coverings are **REQUIRED** for students riding school buses since social distancing is not possible.
- Hand sanitizer and tissue will be available and frequently used throughout the school day.
- Soap and paper towels in restrooms will be replenished throughout the day.
- Hand-washing instructions and regular reminders will be reviewed.
- Daily health screenings will be implemented for all students and employees.
- A system to signify students who have had their daily health screening will be implemented.
- Social distancing in hallways and common areas will be maintained.
- Students and employees should socially distance by remaining six feet apart to the extent possible.
- Schools will identify isolation space for students who do not pass arrival screenings and/or become ill with COVID-19-related symptoms and must wait for parent pick up.
- Schools will require students and employees to stay home if they, or anyone in their household, have tested positive for COVID-19 and/or are showing any symptoms.
- Schools will implement site-specific student registration procedures to maintain building safety, social distancing guidelines, and sanitation. Please contact the school office/website for more details.

PLANT MANAGEMENT SAFETY MEASURES

- Remove soft furnishings, toys that are hard to disinfect, and personal items that reduce usable class space.
- Arrange classrooms to ensure the most social distancing footage possible is utilized between student seating areas. Tables and desks should face the same direction.
- Provide each classroom with hand sanitizer and disinfectant cleansers.
- Ensure all campuses have an allotment of PPE and cleaning disinfection material on site each week.
- Train all RCSD employees to follow health safety protocols.
- Conduct enhanced daily cleaning of high touch areas throughout the day.
- Modify daily cleaning schedules to ensure each space is sanitized and disinfected multiple times a day.
- Conduct enhanced after school cleaning.
- Disinfect classrooms between classes or as often as feasible.
- Provide all campuses with no-touch thermometers.

- Use only water bottle fillers. Regular water fountains will be disabled.
- Provide hand sanitizer stations.
- Install Plexi-Glass sneeze guards in various locations.

COVID-19 TESTING

- Students, faculty, and staff who develop symptoms of COVID-19 or who have been exposed to someone suspected of or confirmed with COVID-19 should contact their medical provider immediately.
- Tested individuals will be asked to quarantine until receiving test results from a Health Care provider. They will be given instructions from their doctor on what to expect next along with CDC guidance for at home care.

REPORTING COVID-19 POSITIVE CASES

- Parents must report a student's positive test to the school principal or school nurse.
- Employees must report positive tests to their supervisors.
- Schools must report the names of all students and employees who have tested positive for COVID-19, or who have been exposed to persons who have tested positive for COVID-19 to the designated district personnel.
- The District COVID-19 Contact Person will communicate with the MSDH and appropriate campus departments to ensure that proper safety precautions, including but not limited to, contact tracing, isolation procedures, and disinfecting of workspaces/departments can be conducted.
- The anonymity and confidentiality of persons with COVID-19 will be protected and their identity will not be disclosed publicly.

3. OPERATIONS



TRANSPORTATION

RCSD's transportation scheduling team will collaborate with campuses to determine family transportation needs and coordinate bus routes based on route capacity and needed accommodations. Safety remains at the forefront of this effort. The current transportation safety protocols are outlined below:

- Transportation will be provided, but social distancing will be harder on buses. For this reason, we encourage parents to use private transportation if possible.
- Each transportation zone will implement procedures for the health check of employees.
- Transportation staff will practice RCSD's Protocol/Precautions for COVID-19.
- Bus drivers will wear a face mask/covering at all times while driving the bus.
- Face coverings will be mandatory when students enter and during transport.
- Upon exiting the bus, students should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol as soon as possible and before removing their face mask/covering.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided on the buses.
- Bus drivers will use EPA/CDC approved products to disinfect hand rails, bars, seats, and other frequently touched surfaces after each route.
- Students will be seated starting at the rear of the bus and will exit starting from the front of the bus. Students will remain in their seats until it is their seat's turn to exit.
- Students will be assigned a seat on a seating chart.
- Buses will keep windows open as much as possible.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMS

We will also work closely with local after-school care programs that will pick up students from school at the end of each day to implement appropriate safety measures. However, it should be noted that all safety measures for children are the responsibility of those facilities after students leave the school campus.

CHILD NUTRITION

In accordance with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations to ensure safety for students and staff, breakfast and lunch will be offered in the classroom or flexible eating areas at all RCSD schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Protocols for safe and sanitary meal service will be put in place at all schools. These protocols include:

- Requiring food service staff to have their temperature checked and go through a health screening each day prior to beginning work.
- Requiring food services staff to wear facial coverings and gloves during all food.

- Having students pick up a pre-packed breakfast when students enter the building each morning, if they purchase breakfast.
- Delivering pre-packed lunches to classrooms or picking up by students who are eating outside.
- Picking up prepared hot lunch through serving line, following CDC guidelines for social distancing, and return to classroom or flexible eating area.
- Implementing hand washing with soap and water for 20 seconds by students and staff before and after meal service (hand sanitizer may be used when soap and water is not available).
- Sanitizing the food serving table prior to, during, and after each meal service.
- Maintaining 6 feet of distance between staff and students during meal service.
- No sharing of food/drink or desks/tables.
- Disposing of all perishable food items.

NOTE: During HYBRID, BRICK2CLICK, and CHOICE scenarios, grab-and-go meal opportunities will be provided by placing an order for pick up either online or via phone no later than the night before. Please contact your individual school for the correct phone number. Student lunch status (free, reduced, or full pay) will be in effect for this program. MyPaymentsPlus can be used in this program.

4. TECHNOLOGY



RCSD has been a 1 to 1 device district for grade 7th through 12th for the past 7 years.

We are in the process of purchasing technology devices with CARES (COVID) money for Pre-K through 6th grade students to use at school. There is a delay due to MDE purchasing guidelines. When these devices arrive, if we must move to distance learning, there will be a checkout process and fee assessed for devices in order for devices to be taken home. (\$25 for Pre-K through 6th grades and \$50 for 7th through 12th grades).

RCSD's Instructional Technology Department provides a variety of supports for our learning community, including the following services that can be accessed through an online work order system and/or the HelpDesk (601-825-8324):

- WiFi Parking Lot Coverage: If families are having problems with home Internet access, all schools have coverage within the parking lot.
- Centralized Repair Room for district owned devices.
- School-based Student Tech Teams to troubleshoot student and teacher work orders.

5. FAMILY & COMMUNITY SUPPORT



For the most updated information, please refer to our [COVID-19 Coronavirus](#) webpage.

In order to support our families, we will continue to be available for your questions and concerns. Contact your teacher/s and administrators as needed via phone or email. You may also go to our [RCSD Website](#) to complete a CONTACT Form. Someone will get back with you as soon as possible.

DISTANCE LEARNING AND PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Questions about distance learning and other parental engagement needs can be answered by emailing Lakeisha Maxer, District Coordinator of Parent Engagement and Distance Learning Liaison, at distancelearning@rcsd.ms.

FRONTIERS AFTER-SCHOOL CHILDCARE

Due to Frontiers being a tuition-funded program, which does not receive any public monies, details can not be determined until the final Smart Restart decisions have been made. You will be receiving specific information early next week.

PARENT/STUDENT RESOURCES:

- Mental Health Resources on our RCSD Website
- See Something/Say Something Hotline 1-844-5-SayNow
- CHOICE Distance learning questions can be answered by emailing Lakeisha Maxer, District Parent Engagement and Distance Learning Liaison, at distancelearning@rcsd.ms.
- Revised 2020-2021 School Calendar and A/B Calendar
- RCSD 2020-2021 Smart Restart Task Force
- Digital Tools and Applications Contacts
- Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- 10 Things You Can Do to Manage Your COVID-19 Symptoms at Home
- When You Can be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19
- Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives

6. COMMUNICATIONS

For the most updated information, please refer to our *Smart Restart* documents on the district website. (See *Appendix A* for the board-approved district calendar, as revised on July 8, 2020). Please be sure your contact information is updated and correct in order for the school to contact you if changes become necessary.

We will continue to use the SwiftK-12 platform as a means of communicating two-way messages to parents as well as sending short videos and messages to students as warranted. Please be sure the school has your correct contact information including your email address.

NOTE: Frequent changes could be made throughout the school year based on potential spreading of COVID in our schools and communities and based on orders from the Governor's Office, the Mississippi State Department of Health, and the Mississippi Department of Education.



Rankin County School District

TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

AMENDMENT TO DISTRICT CALENDAR

Amendment to the district calendar due to COVID-19.

RANKIN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 2020-2021 DISTRICT CALENDAR AEA-E

2020

July 29-30	New Teacher Orientation
August 3,4, 5, 6, & 7	Professional Development
August 10	First Day of School
September 7	School Holiday
September 10.....	Progress Reports
October 9	End of First Term (44 Days)
October 12.....	School Holiday
October 15	Report Cards Go Home
November 12.....	Progress Reports
November 23-27.....	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 15-18	Exams
*December 18	Reduced Day/End of Second Term (44 Days) (End of Sem.88 Days)
December 21-31.....	Christmas Holiday

2021

January 1	Christmas Holiday
January 4.....	Professional Development/Student Holiday
January 5.....	Students Return/Begin Third Term
January 7.....	Report Cards Go Home
January 18	School Holiday
February 4.....	Progress Reports
February 15.....	School Holiday
March 12.....	End of Third Term (47 Days)
March 15-19.....	Spring Break
March 22	Begin Fourth Term
March 25	Reports Cards Go Home
April 2, 5	School Holiday
April 15.....	Progress Reports
May 20-21, 24-25	Exams
*May 25	Reduced Day/Student Last Day/End of Fourth Term (45 Days) (End of Sem. 92 Days)
May 26.....	Last Teacher Day

*Denotes Reduced Day

Upon a motion by Mr. Dyess, second by Dr. Burgess, the Board voted unanimously to approve the amendment to the 2020-2021 calendar as presented.

A | B SCHEDULE
2020 / 2021

AUGUST

Monday	10 / A	17 / B	24 / A	31 / B
Tuesday	11 / B	18 / A	25 / B	
Wednesday	12 / A	19 / B	26 / A	
Thursday	6 /	13 / B	20 / A	27 / B
Friday	7 /	14 / A	21 / B	28 / A

SEPTEMBER

Monday	7 / HOLIDAY	14 / A	21 / B	28 / A
Tuesday	1 / A	8 / A	15 / B	22 / A
Wednesday	2 / B	9 / B	16 / A	23 / B
Thursday	3 / A	10 / A	17 / B	24 / A
Friday	4 / B	11 / B	18 / A	25 / B

OCTOBER

Monday	5 / B	12 / HOLIDAY	19 / A	26 / B
Tuesday	6 / A	13 / A	20 / B	27 / A
Wednesday	7 / B	14 / B	21 / A	28 / B
Thursday	1 / B	8 / A	15 / A	22 / B
Friday	2 / A	9 / B	16 / B	23 / A

NOVEMBER

Monday	2 / A	9 / B	16 / A	23 / HOLIDAY	30 / B
Tuesday	3 / B	10 / A	17 / B	24 / HOLIDAY	
Wednesday	4 / A	11 / B	18 / A	25 / HOLIDAY	
Thursday	5 / B	12 / A	19 / B	26 / HOLIDAY	
Friday	6 / A	13 / B	20 / A	27 / HOLIDAY	

DECEMBER

Monday	7 / A	14 / B	21 / HOLIDAY	28 / HOLIDAY
Tuesday	1 / A	8 / B	15 / A	22 / HOLIDAY
Wednesday	2 / B	9 / A	16 / B	23 / HOLIDAY
Thursday	3 / A	10 / B	17 / A	24 / HOLIDAY
Friday	4 / B	11 / A	18 / B	25 / HOLIDAY

A | B SCHEDULE
2020 / 2021

JANUARY

Monday	4 / PD	11 / A	18 / HOLIDAY	25 / B
Tuesday	5 / A	12 / B	19 / B	26 / A
Wednesday	6 / B	13 / A	20 / A	27 / B
Thursday	7 / A	14 / B	21 / B	28 / A
Friday	1 / HOLIDAY	8 / B	15 / A	22 / A

FEBRUARY

Monday	1 / A	8 / B	15 / HOLIDAY	22 / A
Tuesday	2 / B	9 / A	16 / A	23 / B
Wednesday	3 / A	10 / B	17 / B	24 / A
Thursday	4 / B	11 / A	18 / A	25 / B
Friday	5 / A	12 / B	19 / B	26 / A

MARCH

Monday	1 / B	8 / A	15 / HOLIDAY	22 / B	29 / A
Tuesday	2 / A	9 / B	16 / HOLIDAY	23 / A	30 / B
Wednesday	3 / B	10 / A	17 / HOLIDAY	24 / B	31 / A
Thursday	4 / A	11 / B	18 / HOLIDAY	25 / A	
Friday	5 / B	12 / A	19 / HOLIDAY	26 / B	

APRIL

Monday	5 / HOLIDAY	12 / A	19 / B	26 / A	
Tuesday	6 / A	13 / B	20 / A	27 / B	
Wednesday	7 / B	14 / A	21 / B	28 / A	
Thursday	1 / B	8 / A	15 / B	22 / A	29 / B
Friday	2 / HOLIDAY	9 / B	16 / A	23 / B	30 / A

MAY

Monday	3 / B	10 / A	17 / B	24 / A
Tuesday	4 / A	11 / B	18 / A	25 / B
Wednesday	5 / B	12 / A	19 / B	
Thursday	6 / A	13 / B	20 / A	
Friday	7 / B	14 / A	21 / B	

RCSD 20-21 SMART RESTART TASK FORCE

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

*BOLDED NAMES ARE MEMBERS OF THE MEDICAL TEAM

Congressman Michael Guest – National/State/County/Parent
Sheriff Bryan Bailey - County
Jill Gordon- CEO of Enrich MS & RCSD Overall Parent of the Year
Rachel Bilbro- Elementary Parent of the Year
Tara Harrist- Secondary Parent of the Year
Noel Daniels- President of Rankin First Foundation/Business Owner
Charisse Myers- Parent
Mandy Still- Owner, Miss Mandy's Christian Childcare Center
Nena Williams- Region 8 Clinical Director/County
Dr. Jennifer Bryan- Family Medicine Specialist/Parent
Kenley Smith- Pediatric Occupational Therapist/Parent
David Caulfield- Administrator for the MS Central Region Department of Health
Valerie Brewer- Coordinating Nurse for the Rankin County Health Department
Dr. Dennis Rowlen – Pediatrician
Ashley Shivers – Nurse Practitioner/Parent
Dr. Telitha Grant-Spencer- Pediatrician/Parent
Chief Joseph Daughtry- Pelahatchie Police Department
Colleen Smith- Director, Crossgates Methodist Children's Center

ADMINISTRATORS OF THE YEAR

Vallerie Lacey
Marcus Stewart
Melissa McCray
Shea Taylor

TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

Becky Farnham
Faith Fewell
Alexis Gray
Kati Winningham

DISTRICT

Dr. Sue Townsend- Superintendent
Dr. Undray Scott- SSS
Ginger Jones- Director of Student Support Services
Emily Stingley- RCSD Nurse
Sharon Patrick- Public Relations Manager
Martha Hollingsworth- Mental Health District Counselor
Justin Hallett- Safety

DIGITAL TOOLS AND APPLICATIONS CONTACTS

TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT APPLICATIONS

Instructional Technologists	Help for Teachers	<p>Jenna Gaines: jen213@rcsd.ms Rouse, Stonebridge, BES, Steen's Creek, Florence El, NWE, Northshore, Oakdale, Flowood, and Highland Bluff</p> <p>Erin Barrios: eri508@rcsd.ms McLaurin Elementary/High, Pelahatchie Elementary/High, Pisgah Elementary, Puckett Elementary, Richland Elementary, Richland Upper Elementary, and Richland High School</p> <p>Stephanie Cotnam: ste207@rcsd.ms Brandon Middle, Brandon High, Florence High, JDC, Learning Center, Northwest Rankin Middle, Northwest Rankin High, Pisgah High, and Puckett High</p>
Canvas	Learning Management System for grades 7-12 (6th at BMS and FMS)	Instructional Technologists 601-825-8626 ste207@rcsd.ms eri508@rcsd.ms
Clever	Single Sign On for District Applications	Ginger McKenzie and Elanie Low 601-825-8324 (Help Desk) ela201@rcsd.ms ginger.mckenzie@rcsd.ms
Google Classroom	Learning Management System for grades pre-K through 6th	Instructional Technologists 601-825-8626 jen213@rcsd.ms eri508@rcsd.ms
PowerSchool	Student Information System	Ginger McKenzie 601-825-8626 ginger.mckenzie@rcsd.ms
Solar Winds (formally Samanage)	RCSD Employee Technology Support Ticket system. NOT for use by students.	Elanie Low 601-825-8324 (Help Desk) ela201@rcsd.ms
Zoom	Interactive online instruction tool	Instructional Technologists 601-825-8626
1:1	Overall management questions, payment processing help, etc.	Elanie Low 601-825-8324 (Help Desk) ela201@rcsd.ms
Password/Login Help	If you are unable to get into your account or need assistance with a new login account	Amber Allen Technology Department 601-825-8626 amber.allen@rcsd.ms
Tech Teams	Overall questions and first point of contact	Elanie Low Technology Department 601-825-8324 (Help Desk) ela201@rcsd.ms
STUDENT/PARENT technology questions		Email the student's teacher FIRST. If the teacher cannot resolve the issue, point the student/parent to the student technology work order form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf4gsX7t_sPrArYKeB-PDCF9EuAhYhzh6Llm1c3WgHqYE5rA/viewform

PUBLIC RELATIONS APPLICATIONS

FinalSite	RCSD Webpage	Local school webmaster OR Greg Walker 601-825-5590 greg.walker@rcsd.ms
Swift K-12	Communication with Staff and Parents	Sharon Patrick 601-825-5590 sharon.patrick@rcsd.ms

ELEMENTARY ONLY APPLICATIONS

i-Ready	Online assessment and lessons	Lisa McCoy Student Support Services 601-825-2300 lmccoy@rcsd.ms
Fountas and Pinnell Classroom Collection Online Resources	Digital Resources	Mindy Stevens Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 mindy.stevens@rcsd.ms
Units of Study and Writing Lessons	Online Video Lessons	Carmen Frantom Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 carmen.frantom@rcsd.ms
McGraw Hill Science Elementary 6th Grade	Online Resources	Brian Smith Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 brian.smith@rcsd.ms
FOSS Science	Ebooks and Virtual Labs	Brian Smith Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 brian.smith@rcsd.ms
Envision Math	Online Resources	Marcy McDonald Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 mar502@rcsd.ms
Eureka Math Great Minds, Affirm, Equip, inSync	Online Resources	Brittany Lindley Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 bri209@rcsd.ms
Elementary Distance Learning Liaison	Distance Learning Liaison between administrators/ teachers and County Office	Marco Walker Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 marcoe.walker@rcsd.ms

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY APPLICATIONS

Edulastic	Testing Item Bank Platform	Elementary Marcy McDonald Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 mar502@rcsd.ms Secondary Dr. Rhonda Kilgo Secondary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 rho201@rcsd.ms
NewsELA - Elementary		Elementary Cassie Weaver Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 cassie.weaver@rcsd.ms
NewsELA - Secondary		Secondary Catherine Beasley Secondary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 catherine.beasley@rcsd.ms
Gizmos		Elementary Brian Smith Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 brian.smith@rcsd.ms Secondary Lorie Yates Secondary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 lor200@rcsd.ms

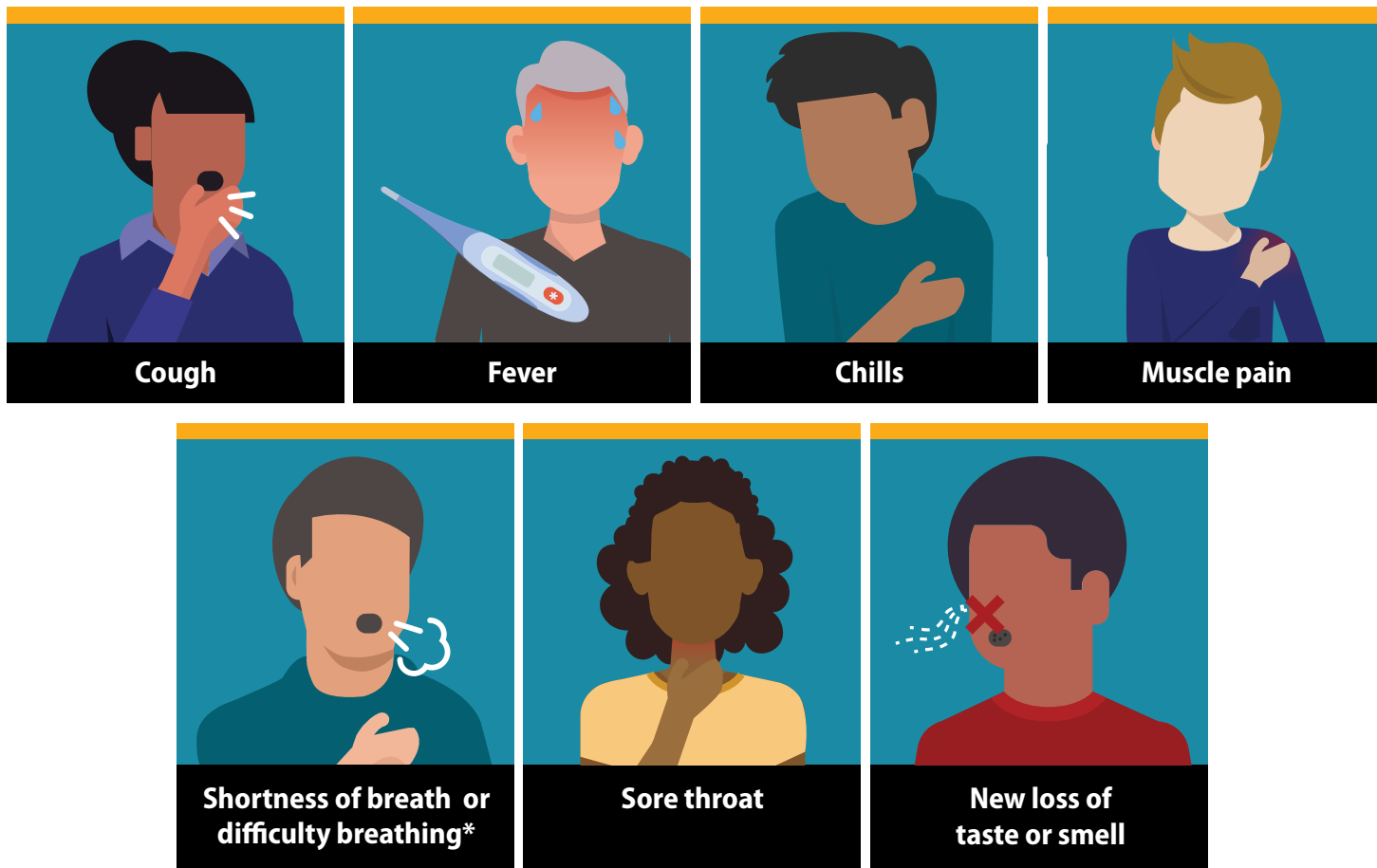
SECONDARY ONLY APPLICATIONS

Algebra Nation		Dr. Rhonda Kilgo rho201@rcsd.ms Jasmine Rosemon jas505@rcsd.ms Secondary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590
Edgenuity	Credit Recovery and Online First Time Credit Platform	Dr. Cassondra Vanderford Director of Career Technical Education/Acceleration 601-825-5590 cvanderford@rcsd.ms
EVERFI		Dr. Cassondra Vanderford Director of Career Technical Education/Acceleration 601-825-5590 cvanderford@rcsd.ms
Math XL		Dr. Rhonda Kilgo rho201@rcsd.ms Jasmine Rosemon jas505@rcsd.ms Secondary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590
Method ACT Test Prep		Montgomery Hinton Secondary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 mhinton@rcs.ms
TI Nspire for Networked Computers		Dr. Rhonda Kilgo rho201@rcsd.ms Jasmine Rosemon jas505@rcsd.ms Secondary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590
Elementary Distance Learning Liaison	Distance Learning Liaison for Teachers and Administrators	Marcoe Walker Elementary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 marcoe.walker@rcsd.ms
Secondary Distance Learning Liaison	Distance Learning Liaison for Teachers and Administrators	Dr. LaVonda White Secondary Curriculum Department 601-825-5590 white@rcsd.ms
Coordinator of Family Engagement and Parent/Student Distance Learning Liaison	Family Engagement/Distance Learning Liaison for Parents and Students	Lakeisha Maxer lakeisha.maxer@rcsd.ms distancelearning@rcsd.ms 601-825-5590

*This list is subject to change.

Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

***Seek medical care immediately if someone has emergency warning signs of COVID-19.**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

10 things you can do to manage your COVID-19 symptoms at home

Accessible Version: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

If you have possible or confirmed COVID-19:

1. **Stay home** from work and school. And stay away from other public places. If you must go out, avoid using any kind of public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.



6. **Cover your cough and sneezes.**



2. **Monitor your symptoms** carefully. If your symptoms get worse, call your healthcare provider immediately.



7. **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



3. **Get rest and stay hydrated.**



8. As much as possible, **stay** in a specific room and **away from other people** in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available. If you need to be around other people in or outside of the home, wear a cloth face covering.



4. If you have a medical appointment, **call the healthcare provider** ahead of time and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19.



9. **Avoid sharing personal items** with other people in your household, like dishes, towels, and bedding.



5. For medical emergencies, call 911 and **notify the dispatch personnel** that you have or may have COVID-19.



10. **Clean all surfaces** that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

When You Can be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19

Updated May 26, 2020

If you have or think you might have COVID-19, it is important to stay home and away from other people. Staying away from others helps stop the spread of COVID-19. **If you have an emergency warning sign (including trouble breathing), get emergency medical care immediately.**



When you can be around others (end home isolation) depends on different factors for different situations.

Find CDC's recommendations for your situation below.

I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms

You can be with others after

- 3 days with no fever **and**
- Respiratory symptoms have improved (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) **and**
- 10 days since symptoms first appeared



Depending on your healthcare provider's advice and availability of testing, you might get tested to see if you still have COVID-19. If you will be tested, you can be around others when you have no fever, respiratory symptoms have improved, and you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

I tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after:

- 10 days have passed since test



Depending on your healthcare provider's advice and availability of testing, you might get tested to see if you still have COVID-19. If you will be tested, you can be around others after you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for "I think or know I had COVID, and I had symptoms."

I have a weakened immune system (immunocompromised) due to a health condition or medication. When can I be around others?

[People with conditions that weaken their immune system](#) might need to stay home longer than 10 days. Talk to your healthcare provider for more information. If testing is available in your community, it may be recommended by your healthcare provider. You can be with others after you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

If testing is not available in your area, your doctor should work with [an infectious disease expert at your local health department](#) to determine if you are likely to spread COVID-19 to others and need to stay home longer.

For Anyone Who Has Been Around a Person with COVID-19

It is important to remember that anyone who has close contact with someone with COVID-19 should stay home for 14 days **after exposure** based on the time it takes to develop illness.



Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives

Show Me the Science – How to Wash Your Hands

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water. CDC recommends cleaning hands in a specific way to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. The guidance for effective handwashing and use of hand sanitizer was developed based on data from a number of studies.

Microbes are all tiny living organisms that may or may not cause disease.

Germs, or pathogens, are types of microbes that can cause disease.

Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.

Why? Because hands could become recontaminated if placed in a basin of standing water that has been contaminated through previous use, clean running water should be used ¹. However, washing with non-potable water when necessary may still improve health ³. The temperature of the water does not appear to affect microbe removal; however, warmer water may cause more skin irritation and is more environmentally costly ⁴⁻⁶.

Turning off the faucet after wetting hands saves water, and there are few data to prove whether significant numbers of germs are transferred between hands and the faucet.

Using soap to wash hands is more effective than using water alone because the surfactants in soap lift soil and microbes from skin, and people tend to scrub hands more thoroughly when using soap, which further removes germs ^{2,3,7,8}.

To date, studies have shown that there is no added health benefit for consumers (this does not include professionals in the healthcare setting) using soaps containing antibacterial ingredients compared with using plain soap ^{9, 10}. As a result, FDA issued a final rule in September 2016 that 19 ingredients in common “antibacterial” soaps, including triclosan, were no more effective than non-antibacterial soap and water and thus these products are no longer able to be marketed to the general public. This rule does not affect hand sanitizers, wipes, or antibacterial products used in healthcare settings.






Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

Why? Lathering and scrubbing hands creates friction, which helps lift dirt, grease, and microbes from skin. Microbes are present on all surfaces of the hand, often in particularly high concentration under the nails, so the entire hand should be scrubbed ¹¹⁻¹⁵.

Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.

Why? Determining the optimal length of time for handwashing is difficult because few studies about the health impacts of altering handwashing times have been done. Of those that exist, nearly all have measured reductions in overall numbers of microbes, only a small proportion of which can cause illness, and have not measured impacts on health. Solely reducing numbers of microbes on hands is not necessarily linked to better health ¹⁶. The optimal length of time for handwashing is also likely to depend on many factors, including the type and amount of soil on the hands and the setting of the person washing hands. For example, surgeons are likely to come into contact with disease-causing germs and risk spreading serious infections to vulnerable patients, so they may need to wash hands longer than a woman before she prepares her own lunch at home. Nonetheless, evidence suggests that washing hands for about 15-30 seconds removes more germs from hands than washing for shorter periods ^{15, 17, 18}.

Accordingly, many countries and global organizations have adopted recommendations to wash hands for about 20 seconds (some recommend an additional 20-30 seconds for drying):

- [The Benefits of Hand Washing](#) 
- [New Zealand. Step-by-Step Guide to Hand Washing](#) 
- [The Global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing. Why Handwashing?](#) 
- [World Health Organization. Guidelines on Hygiene in Health Care: A Summary](#)  [PDF – 64 pages] 

Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.

Why? Soap and friction help lift dirt, grease, and microbes—including disease-causing germs—from skin so they can then be rinsed off of hands. Rinsing the soap away also minimizes skin irritation ¹⁵. Because hands could become recontaminated if rinsed in a basin of standing water that has been contaminated through previous use, clean running water should be used ^{1, 12}. While some recommendations include using a paper towel to turn off the faucet after hands have been rinsed, this practice leads to increased use of water and paper towels, and there are no studies to show that it improves health.

Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Why? Germs can be transferred more easily to and from wet hands; therefore, hands should be dried after washing ^{15, 19}. However, the best way to dry hands remains unclear because few studies about hand drying exist, and the results of these studies conflict. Additionally, most of these studies compare overall concentrations of microbes, not just disease-causing germs, on hands following different hand-drying methods. It has not been shown that removing microbes from hands is linked to better health ¹⁶. Nonetheless, studies suggest that using a clean towel or air drying hands are best ^{18, 20, 21}.