

Updated 9/22/21



**Rankin County School District  
Smart Restart Plan  
for  
2021-2022 School Year**

**The Rankin County School District Board of Education voted today, 09/22/2021, to change the current mask mandate to masks not required but highly recommended, due to our improved statistics over the last four weeks.**

The Rankin County School District will begin the school year with all students returning to traditional face-to-face learning with enhanced hygiene and disinfection protocols. **(There will be no CHOICE virtual learning option.) \*\*\*If a student has a rare and serious extenuating health circumstance that prevents all public contact, there may be a consideration for alternate services. These will be limited. For more information visit [www.rcsd.ms/ESHGlearning](http://www.rcsd.ms/ESHGlearning).**

\*The RCSD will continue to monitor and adjust plans for the health and safety of our students and employees throughout the school year. We will consult the guidance from the Mississippi Department of Health and will follow Governor Executive Orders as decisions are made.

# IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

## SCHOOL SCHEDULES / HOURS:

- Each Rankin County School District school will begin on Friday, August 6, 2021.
- The Rankin County School District's bell schedules for the 2021-2022 school year will be closely aligned with bell schedules used prior to 2020. The begin and end times for each school will be posted on the websites. The full bell schedules will be shared with parents and students via Google Classroom/Canvas.
- Due to the Mississippi Department of Education ending the one-year waiver on minimum instructional minutes per day, there will not be reduced days on Wednesday during the 2021-2022 school year.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY:

### MASKS:

- Currently, there are no state mandates regarding the wearing of masks for Mississippi school districts. (The RCSD will notify parents/guardians if any mandates are issued by the Governor during the school year.)
- **Indoors:** The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) recommends universal indoor masking for all students, staff, teachers, and visitors regardless of vaccination status. The RCSD highly recommends the wearing of masks but will allow the parents/guardians of students and employees to make the decision related to the wearing of masks. **Exception: See Transportation.**  
  
\* See Quarantining/Close Contact section to learn how masks can limit quarantining and the number of quarantining days.
- **Outdoors:** Per the guidance of MSDH, in general, people do not need to wear masks outdoors, but masks should be considered in crowded outdoor settings or during activities of close prolonged contact with other students/teachers.
- **If a location has more than 10% of their population quarantined, masks while indoors will be required for a minimum of 10 days for that location.**

### SOCIAL DISTANCING:

- Per guidance from the MSDH, schools should maintain at least 3 feet of social distance between students within classrooms settings, when feasible.
- MSDH recommends at least 6 feet of physical distancing in all other indoor circumstances, when feasible.
- This guidance is made with an understanding of the potential physical constraints and other barriers in

classroom settings when providing in-person classes for all students.

## OTHER IMPORTANT HEALTH / SAFETY REMINDERS:

- Parents/guardians should perform a daily at-home screening assessment of their child(ren)'s health before leaving home including:
  - » Check student's temperature before they leave home. When they have a temperature of 100 degrees F (38 degrees C) or higher, they should stay at home. Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
  - ~ If your child feels unwell, or has any of the following symptoms, please do not allow him or her to come to school and contact your healthcare provider:
  - ~ People with these symptoms may have COVID-19: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and/or diarrhea. (When they do not pass the daily at-home screening examination, they should stay at home.)
  - » Employees should perform a daily at-home screening assessment also.
- Families should self-report symptoms of illnesses to the school nurse. Students should stay home if they are sick.
- A nurse will be assigned to every campus.
- Everyone should practice good hygiene measures such as hand washing often with soap and water for 20 seconds, use of hand sanitizer when applicable, and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Faculty and staff will assist in monitoring students for symptoms and will refer anyone with symptoms to the school nurse/school designee for evaluation.
- Hand sanitizer will be available on all buses, in hallways, classrooms, and at school entrances and exits. Hand soap and paper towels will be in bathrooms.
- Teachers will have cleaning supplies in their classrooms for the disinfection of high touch surfaces during the school day.

## ISOLATION, CONTACT TRACING, AND QUARANTINE (PER THE GUIDANCE OF THE MSDH)

### ISOLATION/CONTACT TRACING:

- Isolation areas will be set up to quarantine students with symptoms.
- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should be excluded from the school setting and remain in isolation for a full 10 days from the onset of symptoms and are fever free for 24 hours (or excluded for 10 days from the date of the test if asymptomatic).

- Schools will continue contact tracing to identify all individuals who are in close contact to COVID-19 within the school setting or extracurricular activities.
- Unvaccinated individuals who are close contacts should quarantine and get tested 3-5 days after exposure.
- Fully vaccinated persons in close contact with an infected person do NOT have to quarantine after exposure, unless they have symptoms, but it is recommended by MSDH that they get tested.
- People who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months and recovered do not have to quarantine or get tested again as long as they do not develop new symptoms.
- Any symptomatic student, teacher, or staff member should continue to be excluded from school/work and be evaluated by their primary medical provider.

#### **QUARANTINING:**

- Fully vaccinated students and teachers/staff do not require quarantine after contact with an infected person.
- Unvaccinated individuals who are close contacts should quarantine for a full 14 days. Quarantine can end after 10 days if the individual has no symptoms during the entire 10-day period. Close contact students who were within 3-6 feet of an infected student and both students were correctly wearing a mask, do not have to quarantine.

**Important:** Through the MSDH School Based Screening Initiative, the RCSD nurses can rapid test (with permission from the parent/guardian/employee) close contact students/employees if they have no symptoms on day 5, 6, or 7 of the 10-day quarantine. If the individual has a negative result on day 5, 6, or 7 of the quarantine period, then the quarantine period can be discontinued after 7 days instead of the 10 days.

- Quarantined students will complete assignments via Google Classroom/Canvas. There will be no virtual lessons during this time.

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

- School assemblies, field trips, athletics, and other activities will return to traditional school procedures while following the applicable protocols in this document.
- Schools will follow the RCSD health and safety guidelines and any extra precautions required at opponent facilities for athletics and field trip locations.

#### **VISITORS:**

- All visitors should be symptom-free and follow all school guidelines concerning health and safety.
- Visitors to campus should go directly to the school office area.
- Visitors will have temperatures taken in the office.
- Classroom volunteers and lunchtime visits will be permitted on campuses after the first two weeks of school following the school's guidelines.

#### **TRANSPORTATION:**

- On buses, masks are **REQUIRED** due to the difficulty of 3-foot social distancing. This includes field trips, activities, and athletic event travel.
- We strongly encourage families to bring student(s) to school to help minimize the numbers on buses.
- Hand sanitizer is provided for students and bus drivers.
- Buses are disinfected following both the morning and afternoon routes.

#### **CHILD NUTRITION:**

- All RCSD students will be eligible for free school meals (breakfast, where served, and lunch) under the USDA Seamless Summer Option school food program through the end of the 21-22 school year.
- WE ENCOURAGE ALL FAMILIES TO SUBMIT A SY21/22 FREE/REDUCED MEAL APPLICATION SO THAT THEIR STUDENTS MAY QUALIFY FOR OTHER BENEFITS OFFERED. PLEASE VISIT [www.rcsd.ms](http://www.rcsd.ms) TO FIND THE APPLICATION OR AT <https://zcu.io/1BTn>.
- Depending on limitations of spacing and/or scheduling, some school sites may eat in the cafeteria, classrooms, or other designated areas.

\*\*Refer to the 2021-2022 Student Handbook for information on attendance, policies, etc.

\*\*\*THERE WILL BE NO CHOICE VIRTUAL LEARNING OPTION. If a student has a rare and serious extenuating health circumstance that prevents all public contact, there may be a consideration for alternate services. For more information on the application process visit [www.rcsd.ms/ESHClearning](http://www.rcsd.ms/ESHClearning).

\*\*\*The RCSD Smart Restart Plan will be updated periodically throughout the school year, as needed. Public comment will be taken into consideration. Public comments can be emailed to [RCSD-Covid@rcsd.ms](mailto:RCSD-Covid@rcsd.ms).



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