



Muncie Community Schools

Reopening Plan

Updated August 3, 2021

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Introduction

Muncie Community Schools (MCS) reopened for in-school instruction on August 11, 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Other than a couple of isolated, temporary exceptions, all schools remained open throughout the 2020-21 school year. During the 2021-22 school year, MCS will continue to respond to the pandemic in a manner that promotes the safety of staff, students and visitors while furthering our mission and values. MCS' policies and plans will be formed with guidance from government agencies, public health officials and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Beginning August 10, 2021, MCS buildings will operate with the following schedule:

	Start Time <i>(Breakfast in class)</i>	Tardy	Dismissal
Elementary	7:45 a.m.	8:10 a.m.	2:40 p.m.
Middle Schools	8:40 a.m.	9:00 a.m.	4:00 p.m.
Central HS	7:40 a.m.	8:05 a.m.	3:05 p.m.
MAAC (AM)	--	7:55 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
MAAC (PM)	--	12:25 p.m.	3:00 p.m.

The pandemic continues to present an evolving and dynamic situation, and MCS will review and update our information as needed.

Masks

Wearing a mask while in MCS buildings will be required for all staff, students and visitors in grades Prek-12 unless they have a medical or mental health condition that prevents the wearing of a face covering. Due to federal regulations, *all* students must wear masks while on MCS or MITS buses for as long as this federal mandate remains in effect. Mask guidelines may change based on CDC, State Department of Health and local Department of Health guidelines.

Physical Space

MCS will continue to monitor safety of the workplace and will do this via the following steps, which include all appropriate preventative and precautionary measures to ensure the workplace and school sites are safe for our staff, students and visitors:

1. Staff and students should maintain a distance of at least three feet from other people as often as possible when inside.
2. Signage will remain posted to encourage physical distancing and hand sanitizer will be located throughout each building.
3. Additional floor markings will remain in place where lines or groups potentially form in order to facilitate physical distancing.
4. Locker access will be limited.
5. Hallways will remain marked as two-way traffic to limit interaction.
6. Water fountains and touchless water stations will be available for use, but students are permitted to use individual water bottles.
7. Desks will be separated by at least three feet whenever possible.
8. Students and staff should socially distance in large areas such as the auditorium, gymnasium or cafeteria.
9. Libraries will be opened on a limited basis.
10. Seating charts will be used for each MCS/Auxilio school bus in order to assist with contact tracing.
11. Seating charts will be used in the cafeteria in order to assist with contact tracing.
12. Multiple entrances will be utilized during entry and dismissal in order to alleviate the high congregation of students in one area at the beginning and end of the day.

13. Plexiglas barriers remain in place in high density, public areas that involve regular face-to-face contact with others (e.g., front desk, cafeteria food lines).
14. Rigorous cleaning of high-traffic areas and anywhere someone experiencing COVID-19 symptoms has been will continue throughout all MCS facilities.

Health Monitoring & Vaccinations

In order to provide the safest learning environment possible, MCS expects staff, students, parents and visitors to closely monitor their own health and refrain from attending school if experiencing any COVID-19-related symptoms, including:

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees or above
- Dry, persistent cough
- Shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Severe headaches

MCS will not test for COVID-19, but school nurses will continue to assess and treat people who first experience any of these symptoms while at school. Individuals may be directed to quarantine and follow established and updated protocols if there is reason to believe the person is positive for COVID-19. If the person is not feeling well and there is no reason to believe the symptoms are COVID-related, they should remain home until symptoms improve and they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

MCS will not require vaccinations for staff or students. However, the district strongly encourages everyone eligible (currently all persons age 12 or older) to get vaccinated based on health industry statistics showing the overwhelming number of COVID-19 cases and deaths attributed to unvaccinated people. A person's vaccination status will also play a role in determining their quarantine status based on exposure to someone who tests positive.

Parents may enter a school's office area in order to complete any business regarding their child regardless of vaccination status. BSU student teachers, practicum teachers or faculty will be required to wear a mask. Volunteers, on the other hand, must certify that they have been fully vaccinated to participate in a classroom or during an event. Volunteer applications can be found here: http://muncie.k12.in.us/students_parents.

Quarantine & Contact Tracing

MCS is responsible for conducting contact tracing whenever a positive case of COVID-19 is discovered in a school or at a MCS function. This will be done in a similar manner to last year with MCS staff referring to established seating charts and class schedules. Fully vaccinated staff and students *will not* be required to quarantine if exposed to a positive case, but unvaccinated staff and students will be required to quarantine based on protocols, which can be referenced here: http://muncie.k12.in.us/UserFiles/Servers/Server_109179/File/About%20Us/COVID%20Docs%20'21-'22/Student-Staff%20Return%20Protocols-COVID-Rev.8.5.21.pdf.

Learning Program Options

MCS is committed to offering high quality learning programs where we place learners first. While we strongly believe that in-person instruction by a trained educator is the best option to achieve academic success for the vast majority of students, the district will again offer a virtual learning program for all K-12 students during the 2021-22 school year. We will partner again with K12, a national leader in online education, to provide this service. When choosing either the in-school or virtual learning program, families should consider each to be a semester-long commitment. More information about K12 and the Virtual Learning Program is available here: http://muncie.k12.in.us/students_parents/virtual_learning_program.

Social and Emotional Wellness

Students' social and emotional needs vary, and COVID-19 has impacted those needs greatly. MCS uses the Second Step curriculum as a basis to meet these needs in classrooms. Every school has a Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) Team that works within a framework of strategies to support the individual behavioral and academic needs of students. All students will have access to the district's online social emotional care platform, Ripple Effects. The digital support is a trauma-informed, culturally responsive, evidence-based resource that is personalized for each student through self-exploration or guided interventions. It aligns with both the Second Step core curriculum and the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) competencies. Further, MCS utilizes a variety of professionals, including counselors, student assistance coordinators, other MCS staff and community health partners to support students.

Additional Information & Resources

MCS will continue to proactively share COVID-19 information through a number of different channels. Policies and positive cases will be updated on our website at <http://muncie.k12.in.us/safety/covid-19updates/>. District-wide messages will also be sent to families when circumstances warrant. If a classroom or an entire school gets temporarily shut down due to a COVID-19 outbreak, it will transition to same-day e-learning for the duration of the closure. In addition:

- Anyone needing more information about a COVID-related situation in one of our schools should first contact the school office, but may also reach out to MCS administration at (765) 747-5211.
- Employee leave will return to pre-COVID policies, meaning any MCS employee requiring time off for any COVID-related absences must use their sick days. No additional COVID leave will be granted.
- Afterschool activities like band, theater and athletics will all go on with the same precautions in place as were there at the end of the prior school year. The elementary school sports programs scheduled to start last year, but put on hold due to the virus, will begin this year.
- Family nights will resume but will be limited to one grade level per night. Whenever possible, events will be held outside.

To stay abreast of local trends, helpful information and federal policies, these websites may also be useful:

- <https://educationsupporthub.com/>
- <https://www.co.delaware.in.us/department/?fDD=7-0>
- <https://www.in.gov/health/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/>