

# MARSHALL COUNTY SCHOOLS

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## *Reopening Plan*

Developed: 2021-22 School Year - Latest Update: February 3, 2025

### *Message from the Superintendent, Dr. Cindy Wigley*

The vision and mission of Marshall County Schools has remained unchanged. The health and safety of students and staff is our single highest priority. We have been working diligently to prepare for the upcoming school year based on current COVID-19 guidance from the ADPH, CDC, and the Alabama State Department of Education.

I want to express my appreciation for the hard work and dedication that all of the Marshall County employees have shown during these unique and trying times. In addition, I appreciate staff assistance in providing our students:

- Chromebooks and internet access (hotspots) needed to stay connected with school;
- High-quality instruction for all students through traditional and newly-established virtual learning platforms; **Marshall County Online School established 2024-2025.**
- Meals for our in-person and virtual students;
- The highest standards of COVID-19 safety practices and a comprehensive vaccination opportunity for students.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank our parents for partnering with our schools and teachers. We appreciate your support more than ever.

With that being said, I am looking forward to having all of our students onsite every day when our school year begins in August. We will continue our efforts to have a traditional school year. As you have all heard, the Delta Variant has increased COVID-19 positive cases in our state, with Marshall County being high risk. The single reason for traditional school closure during the last school year was due to the lack of personnel as a result of quarantines, and therefore, not being able to operate a regular school day. I am hopeful that the multiple levels of preventative measures currently in place will mitigate the number of quarantines.

I look forward to a great school year!

### *State Leadership/Covid-19 Guidance*

- Local school systems are referred to as LEA's (local education agencies with local school boards) and operate under the leadership of the State Superintendent, Dr. Eric Mackey, and our state agency, the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), which is governed by the State School Board. The State School Board operates in a partnership with the State Legislature. Superintendent Mackey has worked directly with Dr. Scott Harris, Alabama's State Health Officer, the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), and Governor Kay Ivey in providing Covid-19 related guidance for Alabama's public schools. This plan was developed based on current

guidance, requirements, and mandates set by our state officials who make decisions based on guidance from our state health officer, a professional in the medical field.

Below are links to guidance for COVID-19 prevention in schools and information regarding Public Health Orders announced by Governor Ivey:

- [ADPH Website](#)
- [CDC Website - School Settings | COVID-19](#)
- Governor Ivey’s mask mandate has expired. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend wearing a mask whether an individual is vaccinated or not. Beginning Tuesday, August 10, 2021, masks will be highly recommended for students, employees, parents, and visitors entering school facilities, but are not required at this time. (*See CDC Mask Order for buses in the transportation section*).
- Positive Cases
  - Parents of students who have been identified as “close contacts” (Ex: individuals who are identified to have been within 3 feet of a positive case for 15 minutes, cumulative over a 24-hour period) will be notified by school staff of exposure and should be notified by ADPH of their requirement to isolate/quarantine. According to the CDC, an individual who is fully vaccinated will not be identified as a close contact and will not be required to quarantine unless they are showing symptoms. The same applies to someone who has had Covid-19 within 90 days prior to exposure.
- Regarding routines and schedules, Marshall County Schools will operate as traditional, when possible, with careful attention to strategies which mitigate COVID-19.

#### *Health Screening Guidelines and Expectations*

- Families should conduct a health screening every morning before sending their student to school or the bus stop. School staff will also monitor for symptoms throughout the school day. If your child is exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms, do not send them to school. Report the absence to your child’s school.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 include: fever greater than or equal to 100.4° F, new onset and/or worsening cough, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, OR at least 2 of the following: sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, muscle pain, excessive fatigue, new onset of headache, new onset of nasal congestion or runny nose.

#### *Transportation*

- Per a current CDC Mask [Order](#), the ADPH has upheld that wearing “masks applies to all public transportation including school buses. Regardless of the mask policy at school, passengers and drivers must wear masks on school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems, subject to the exclusion and exemptions in CDC’s Order.”..... “However, certain people with disabilities who, because of their disability, cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely

wear a mask, are exempted from CDC's mask-wearing requirement." (**Public Transportation Mask Mandate no longer in effect starting on April 18, 2022**).

- All buses will be inspected for cleanliness and safety daily. In addition, we will continue our strategic disinfecting schedule utilizing electrostatic sprayers.
- Students will be assigned seats on the bus to assist with contact tracing if needed.

#### *Student Field Trips/Student Travel*

- Like many schools across the country, our teachers are finding creative ways to bring virtual field trips inside the classroom. Conducting off-site field trips in a pandemic is problematic due to safety precautions, shortages of bus drivers and shortages of substitute teachers. All field trips are suspended for the school year. (**No longer in effect starting the 2022-2023 school year.**)
- Currently, student travel will be allowed for academic, athletic, career technical education, and fine art competitions and exhibitions that our students have worked so hard to participate in. Safety protocols have been established for such events.

#### *Traditional Face-to-Face Instruction/Staggered Schedules*

- Virtual learning is not mandated by the ALSDE for the 2021-22 school year and will not be offered as a system-wide learning platform in Marshall County Schools. The state of Alabama provides an online virtual option at no cost. **Marshall County Online School established in 2024.**
- Sloman Primary, Douglas Elementary, Asbury Elementary, Brindlee Primary, Brindlee Elementary, DAR Elementary, and DAR Middle School will begin school on a staggered basis. This will allow teachers to complete beginning of the year assessments and gain insights into the learning strengths/needs of our students. (Optional for those schools to help with acclimatization).
- [2021-2022 School Calendar](#)
- [Staggered Start Schedule](#)
- Students will be assigned seats in the classroom to assist with contact tracing if needed.
- Social distancing guidelines will be observed when possible.
- The district will continue to supply schools and classrooms with approved Covid-19 related supplies of cleaners, sanitizing wipes, and soap.
- Air purification systems have been installed in all 850 HVAC units across the district and cleaning cradles have been purchased to assist with cleaning.
- Deep cleaning, steam-based pressure washers have been purchased for restrooms and locker rooms across the district.

- Additional staff have been secured to conduct routine sanitization with electrostatic sprayers.
- Over 150 water fountains have been flushed and sanitized based on state guidelines and will be open when school starts.

*After School Programs During Fall Semester (Estimated to begin following the Labor Day Holiday)*

- Grades K-5 will offer after school programs at no cost.
- Grades 6-12 will offer tutoring and enrichment opportunities at no cost.

*Athletics*

- Marshall County Schools will follow the most recent guidance from the Alabama High School Athletic Association and the Alabama Department of Public Health for athletic and extracurricular activities.

*Child Nutrition Program*

- All normal operations of the Child Nutrition Program will resume.
- For à la carte and additional items, it is strongly recommended that parents/guardians make student Child Nutrition Program account payments online through [Linq Connect](#).
- Students will be assigned seats to assist with contact tracing if needed; no longer required.

*Input from Students, Parents, Staff, and Community*

- A survey to provide the district with input regarding future planning will be released this week and will also be available on the Marshall County Schools' website.
  - [www.marshallk12.org](http://www.marshallk12.org)

In summary, we are working very hard to ensure we have proper resources, services, and safety measures in place to begin school. We have a tremendous group of educators that are true professionals of their field. They are flexible and committed to student achievement. I am confident that we will not only be prepared, we will be stronger than ever. As previously stated, the single reason for traditional school closure during the last school year was due to lack of personnel as a result of quarantines. As superintendent, every effort will be made to implement best practices for a safe and successful school year.

*This document is considered a working document and may be updated based on additional information regarding COVID-19 as it is released. This document was developed around current guidance from the CDC, Alabama State Department of Education, and ADPH that Marshall County Schools must implement in order to ensure the healthiest and safest environment while mitigating risk throughout the 2021-2022 school year.*