



# Meridian Public School District Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

May 2021  
Updated July 29, 2021

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**SUPERINTENDENT**

## INTRODUCTION

The Meridian Public School District is committed to the safety and wellbeing of our students, staff, and families. When developing the plan for a safe return to school, the Meridian Public School District consulted with parents, teachers, students, health officials, and community stakeholders to better understand their concerns and seek counsel to ensure we were taking all precautions and following CDC guidelines. We have developed, and continue to refine, our safe return to in-person instruction while ensuring a continuity of services for all students. It is important to understand that the plan set forth by the Meridian Public School District for 2021-2022 could change if Pandemic numbers were to return to levels considered a concern as established by the Mississippi Department of Education, or Health Officials. The District will use guidance from the Mississippi Department of Health, the CDC, and local health officials to determine the safest protocol for students and staff. The goal of this plan is to continue to build on the success of the reopening plan that was developed and approved in July of 2020. While we strive to return to normal operations, many successes implemented during the pandemic will remain in place.

This plan will address how schools will operate beginning in August of 2021. The plan will be reviewed quarterly and revised as necessary.

School will start on August 5th for all students in a traditional in-person learning model.

Back-to-school orientation will be provided to all students the first week of school to ensure they understand how to keep themselves and others safe.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**District Name:** Meridian Public Schools

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

- School will start on August 5th for all students in an in-person traditional learning model.
- Back-to-school orientation will be provided to all students the first week of school to ensure they understand how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Multiple locations for arrival and dismissal to allow for social distancing and temperature checks in the morning.
- Classes on all campuses will begin as scheduled on August 5, 2021.
- The MPSD will follow a pacing guide established by the district curriculum team that not only accelerates learning but also spirals in critical standards necessary for vertical progression.
- Virtual classes will not be an option for students Prek – 12 except for students with significant medical limitations, or when school administrators determine that virtual instruction is the best option for the student at the time.
- In the event of a breakout, the MPSD will follow the guidance of the CDC and the MDE to determine

when to seamlessly move students to the virtual learning platforms if needed during the upcoming school year.

- MPSD will continue to use diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring tools, and benchmark data to monitor student progress throughout the school year.
- Administrators will use the Teacher Growth Rubric to monitor and observe instructional practices in both the traditional and virtual learning environments.
- The Meridian Public School District will provide summer learning opportunities K - 12 in an in-person traditional setting while continuing to keep class sizes at a manageable number. Temperature checks will continue throughout the summer learning period.
- After School learning opportunities will be provided in the fall of 2021 in an in-person traditional classroom setting. Class sizes will be limited to a safe number of students.
- Throughout the year, the MPSD will use staff surveys to monitor the needs for instructional support or other needs of the faculty.

## **Sanitation/Virus Guidelines**

### **Temperature Checks:**

- Temperature checks will no longer be required but the administrator or nurse may determine a temperature check is necessary.
- Employees/Students who are not feeling well should contact their administrator/teacher immediately.
- Employees/Students who have a temperature of 100 or higher will be sent home.
- All temperatures 100 or higher will be checked a second time for confirmation.

### **Mask/Face Coverings**

- On Tuesday, July 27, 2021, the Meridian Public School District (MPSD) Board of Trustees met in a special-called meeting to approve the Universal Masking policy (JGAC). During the 2021-2022 school year, as a preventative measure, all MPSD students, teachers, and staff will be required to wear a mask while indoors in the presence of others.
- If a student/employee is determined to have a temperature at school, they will be required to use a mask until they are off campus

### **Personal Hygiene**

- Employees are expected to wash/sanitize their hands multiple times a day.
- The school district will provide hand sanitizer throughout the facility for students and employees to use frequently.

## **Sanitizing**

- Teachers and assistant teachers will help sanitize surfaces throughout the year.
- Surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Buses will be sanitized at the conclusion of each route.
- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the building and on buses.
- Windows and doors will be opened slightly when possible to create an environment with as much ventilation as possible.
- Custodians will regularly sanitize the building throughout the day.

## **Classroom/Office Distancing**

- Classrooms will be arranged to achieve the greatest level of distancing for students.
- Teachers are encouraged to create as much social distancing as possible.
- Students will have hand sanitizer available to frequently clean hands.
- Each classroom will have spray bottles available for cleaning surfaces.

## **Check In/Out**

- Each school will set up a procedure for students to check-in and out.

Anyone entering the building must call the front office before entering. Temperature screening will be conducted on all visitors, including parents. Each visitor will also be required to wear a mask.

Parents will need to call the office before checking their child in or out of school. If the parent must enter the building, they must have their temperature taken and be wearing a mask.

## **Hallway Procedures**

- School personnel will be in the hallway during class change to monitor transition procedures and encourage social distancing.

## **Nutrition**

- Employees will follow cafeteria guidelines during breakfast and lunch.
- Breakfast/Lunch protocols may differ from school to school-based upon school population and cafeteria size.

#### Water Bottles (No Glass Bottles Allowed)

- Employees/students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to use during the day.
- Elementary teachers will assist students with refilling water bottles as needed.

#### **Technology**

- Computer labs and classroom computers will be sanitized frequently.
- Employees should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before using community devices or machines.

#### **Playgrounds**

- After outside activity, hand sanitizer will be available.

#### **Student/Parent Communication**

- The MPSD will continue to use various methods for parent/ student communication. (PowerSchool, Phone Calls, District website, Social Media, Remind101, Canvas, emails, Newsletters)
- Parent-teacher conferences will be conducted through multiple online platforms to minimize the need for in-person contact. Some face-to-face meetings may be required.

#### **Attendance Policy: Traditional Schedule**

- Current traditional attendance policies will be in place.
- Any student who is required to be isolated at home will be given an opportunity to participate through distance learning during the isolation period.

#### Attendance Policy: Virtual Schedule (only students who meet criteria)

- Students who are allowed to participate in virtual learning will have an established instructional schedule.
- Procedures will be in place to check virtual attendance.

#### **Transportation**

- When possible, windows will be open on buses to create an environment with as much ventilation as possible.
- Students will be separated on the bus where feasible. Siblings or children living in the same household will be

seated together if possible.

- Buses will be sanitized at the conclusion of each route.
- Parents are encouraged to bring children to school and pick them up if possible.
- Bus Notes for change of transportation will NOT be allowed unless an extreme emergency exists. This is for health and safety reasons. Principals will have the final authority on this decision.

### **General Information**

- Visitors will continue to be limited on each campus. Please contact the office before arriving at the school.
- Field Trips will be allowed during 2021-2022 (if allowed by Health Guidance) with district-established restrictions in place.
- Assemblies are permitted with social distancing in mind and in accordance with Health Guidelines.
- All Athletic and activity events will follow the policies of the MHSAA.
- The students will return to the MPSD dress code located in the district handbook.
- Refusal by students, parents, or staff to comply with any of the safety procedures will result in removal from campus.

*This guidance may be adjusted throughout the year. We will communicate any changes as quickly as possible.*

*The district will continue to focus on providing a safe environment while placing an emphasis on providing a strenuous academic program.*

### **Online Learning Platforms**

- **Grades K-5**
  - Teachers in grade K-5 launched Google Classroom on August 10, 2020, and students have worked on the platform for the 2020-2021 school year.
- **Grades 6-12**
  - Teachers in grades 6-12 launched Canvas on August 10, 2020. However, teachers were given 2 months to transition from Google Classroom to Canvas. Full implementation of Canvas was required before December 1, 2020.

### **Technology Support:**

- All students grades K-12th grade will have a technology device available to them at the beginning of the school year.
- Daily sanitation of technology will occur.

- All learning platforms used can be accessed with a single sign-on through PowerSchool Student Portal.
- LMS: Google Classroom (K-5) and Canvas (6-12)
- Additional technology was purchased with CARES funds.
- Devices, starting with the oldest, were replaced with new devices.
  - We are beginning school with devices that are 5 years old.
  - New teacher laptops were needed and have been purchased.

### **Tech Support Team**

- ❖ Tim Boutwell - Director of Technology ([tboutwell@mpsdconnect.org](mailto:tboutwell@mpsdconnect.org))
- ❖ LaToya Atterberry - Canvas and Google Classroom support ([latterberry@mpsdconnect.org](mailto:latterberry@mpsdconnect.org))
- ❖ Amanda Hanegan - Canvas Support ([ahanegan@mpsdconnect.org](mailto:ahanegan@mpsdconnect.org))

### **OPERATIONS**

#### **Transportation:**

- Parents who are able are being encouraged to drop off and pick up their child(ren) from school.
- Regular bus routes
- Bus routes with reduced student capacity
- Adjustments to bus drivers schedules are being made to accommodate the bus stops with large student numbers.
- Parents are encouraged to check their child's temperature before they leave home.
- All students must wear a mask on the bus. If they do not have one, the bus driver will provide a mask before they enter the bus.
- Windows will be down
- Buses will load from the front and the students will proceed all the way to the back of the bus to assist with social distancing and decrease student interaction.
- Buses will be sanitized daily and inbetween drop-off and pick-up routes.

#### **Food Services:**

- Students will be provided hand sanitizer before eating.
- Meals will be provided to all students in the cafeteria at a safe distance and on a rotating schedule.
- All desks will be wiped down with disinfectant wipes before and after each meal.
- Students will be given hand sanitizer before eating.
- When social distancing is not possible, Grab and Go breakfast and lunch will be delivered to the classroom by cafeteria staff. **When social distancing is possible, students will eat in the cafeteria.**
- A plan for feeding students on virtual learning days will be released before the start of school in August.

# MPSD Academic Calendar 2021 - 2022



## 2021-2022

### Academic Calendar

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**August 2021**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**September 2021**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**October 2021**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**November 2021**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

**December 2021**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**January 2022**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**February 2022**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

**March 2022**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**April 2022**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**May 2022**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**Calendar Key**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: orange; margin-right: 5px;"></span> School Closed/Holidays</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: green; margin-right: 5px;"></span> First Day of School</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightblue; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Teacher Professional Development (Students not in school)</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Last Day for Students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: purple; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Last Day for Teachers</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: pink; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Progress Report Dates</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: magenta; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Report Card Dates</li> </ul>
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**Grading Periods**

August 5, 2021-October 8, 2021	January 6, 2022- March 11, 2022
October 11, 2021-December 17, 2021	March 21, 2022-May 25, 2022

Please note: Testing dates are determined by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and will be published for students and parents once available. Calendar may be subject to change.

\*Revised July 23, 2021

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

- All students and staff will not be expected to wear a mask unless guidance from the CDC or the MDE requires the district to do so.

## Social and Emotional Support

- Provide professional development and support during the year that teaches staff how to build relationships, manage emotions, and make responsible decisions during challenging situations.

- Each school develops a SEL team to lead the efforts of addressing the social and emotional needs of students and staff.
- Conduct student, parent, and staff surveys that gather feedback on a variety of topics to help guide planning, policies, practices, resources, support, and professional development programs.
- Continue to employ behavior counselors in every school to conduct mental health interventions.
- Provide support to help teachers establish classroom learning environments that promote student social and emotional well-being. Continue to strengthen the partnership with Weems Community Mental Health Center to reinforce SEL skills with students, parents and staff.
- Implement the Respectful Ways curriculum that addresses specific mental health issues of at-risk students. The curriculum provides a system for working with students, staff, and families to develop skills and competencies by assisting them in the development of strategies to help cope with stress.
- Continue the implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Leader in Me (LIM) to establish consistent language and expectations.
- Implement a district-wide Counselor Crisis Management Plan to use in crisis situations.
- Continue to partner with REACHMS to provide professional development
- The district provides an Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)

### **Air Quality and Facility Updates**

- Increase the run time on our existing fresh air systems as suggested by CDC guidelines.
- Installed air purifiers in common areas and other locations that are susceptible to more easily spread the virus such as choir rooms, band halls and cafeterias.
- Implemented procedures to increase ventilation by opening windows and doors whenever practical in locations without fresh air systems.
- Develop and implement plans to renovate HVAC systems to include fresh air systems installation/repairs in needed locations.

### **Buildings, Classrooms, and Common Areas**

- The district will adhere to the guidelines set forth by the CDC and MDE.
- Additional daily cleaning by all custodial staff members and teachers.
- Deep cleaning will occur periodically throughout the school year.
- Temperature checks done daily when staff and students enter the building.
- Hand sanitizer is available in every classroom and sanitizing stations in the hallways.
- Washing hands multiple times a day.
- Students will be spaced at a healthy length apart from each other in each classroom.
- All necessary school supplies will be provided by the Meridian Public School District. Each student and classroom will be equipped with supplies when school starts in August.
- Parents should discuss with the school administrator if they have concerns with their child(ren) returning to school.
- Daily/Routine Sanitation is mandatory of all common areas (bathrooms, all entrance and exit doors, common walking areas, outside of classroom doors, office area)
- Hand sanitizer station in each hallway.
- Teachers will be expected to wipe down desks during break and transition times, specifically before and

after breakfast and lunch.

### **Food and nutritional service areas**

- All desks will be wiped down with disinfectant wipes before and after each meal.
- Students will be given hand sanitizer before eating.
- When social distancing in the cafeteria is not available, Grab and Go breakfast and lunch will be delivered to the classroom by cafeteria staff. When social distancing is possible, students will eat in the cafeteria.
- A plan for feeding students on online learning days will be released before the start of August.

### **Transportation (buses, service areas, and equipment)**

- Parents are encouraged to check their child's temperature before they leave home.
- Parents who are able are being encouraged to drop-off and pick-up their child(ren) from school.
- Adjustments to bus drivers schedules are being made to accommodate the bus stops with large student numbers.
- Buses will be sanitized daily and inbetween drop-off and pick-up routes.
- Buses will load from the front and the students will proceed all the way to the back of the bus to assist with social distancing and decrease student interaction.

### **Office Procedures**

- To protect the safety of our students and staff, MPSD will not allow visitors in the school building.
- Anyone entering the building must call the front office before entering. Temperature screening will be conducted on all visitors, including parents. Each visitor will also be required to wear a mask.
- Parents will need to call the office before checking their child in or out of school. If the parent must enter the building, they must have their temperature taken and be wearing a mask.

### **Underlying Health Conditions**

- If a staff member has underlying health issues and concerns about returning to work, they would contact the Director of Human Resources, Kimberly Kendrick.
- If parents have concerns about an underlying health condition, they can contact their school administrator and/or the Director of Student Services to discuss learning options available.

### **Overseeing Health and Safety**

- The district has three school-based clinics through a partnership with Greater Meridian Health Clinic to address the immediate needs of staff and students.
- MPSD employs 3 school nurses.
- There will be no large assemblies beyond the number recommended in CDC guidelines. Social distancing practices will be used with any assemblies.
- Social distancing will be encouraged at outdoor events and indoor events
- Sterilization of equipment daily
- We will follow guidelines as outlined by MHSAA
- <https://www.mpsdk12.net/Page/1673>

## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

### Details:

- We will provide virtual parent-teacher conferences by appointments with individual teachers.
- Face-to-face conferences can be scheduled as well, at the comfort level of the parent.
- We have a checkout process for technology devices and consent form parents sign at the beginning of the 2021 school year.
- A district email address and helpline is set up for parents.
- Weekly, if not daily, contact with parents who need assistance.
- The district is working with local partners to establish hot spots throughout the community.

## COMMUNICATIONS

- Via mass email, text, and phone calls that can be pushed out through our automated system
- Personal phone calls by administrators to parents
- Social media
- Local news media
- District Podcasts
- District and School Newsletters will be sent monthly

**Point of contact:** Matt Davis, Public Relations Director

**Hotline or phone number:** 601-483-6271

**Dedicated email address:** [info@mpsdconnect.org](mailto:info@mpsdconnect.org)

**Dedicated website address:** [www.mpsdk12.net](http://www.mpsdk12.net)

<https://www.mpsdk12.net/domain/196>

### Details:

- The District will utilize several different communication methods to alert parents should schools need to be closed.
- We will send out messages through our mass notification system that can send messages to parents via phone call, text message, email, mobile app, and social media channels simultaneously.
- We will relay the message to local media outlets so that they may report the news as well.