

Hancock County Schools Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan 2021-2022



Hancock County Schools

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The HCS Leadership Team has been working diligently to begin school on time on Monday, August 2. Flexibility will be needed throughout the school year and instructional changes may take place. Thank you for your continued patience, understanding, and flexibility as we try to make decisions that will support student learning. Information regarding school reopening and changes throughout the school year will be communicated via the Hancock County Schools' website (www.hancockcountyschools.com) and HCES's and HCMHS's official social media pages.

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Building, Classroom and Visitor Procedures

- At this time, masks are OPTIONAL for all students, staff and visitors.
- We will continue to monitor the situation. Please keep in mind that this decision may need to be revisited.
- Signage will be posted in all buildings encouraging frequent handwashing and social distancing.
- Frequently touched surfaces will be regularly cleaned and sanitized. This includes door handles, sink handles, bathroom fixtures, desks/tables, and playground equipment.

- We will gradually begin to open up the school to visitors this year. We want our parents and community members to feel welcome in school, but we also want to keep everyone safe.

Improved Ventilation Systems District Wide

- Hancock County Schools will be implementing new ventilation systems in all buildings including HCES, HCMHS, the Vocational Complex, and fieldhouse.
- The new systems will also include ionization (air purification) for all buildings. Ionization has been proven to improve and purify air quality and kill COVID, flu, bacteria, pathogens, mold, etc.
- The ionization system has been proven to reduce odors and air particulates.

Screening Procedures for Student and Staff Arrival

- Following CDC recommendations, we will not take temperatures at arrival.
- Parents are asked to be diligent in monitoring their child's health. Anyone who feels sick should remain home.
- If a student becomes ill during the course of the school day, he or she will be taken to a safe area of isolation while a parent or guardian is contacted.

Diagnostic Screening and Testing/Vaccination Efforts

- Hancock County Schools has a school-based health clinic located on site at the elementary school and at the middle/high school.
- The clinics will provide medical consultation as necessary and will determine if testing is needed. These sites provide rapid testing.
- The Hancock County Health Department has provided multiple opportunities for vaccination for educators and staff as well as children ages 12 and above.
- Each employee of Hancock County Schools and students who are eligible have had and continue to have multiple opportunities to become vaccinated.

Busing Procedures

- All buses will be equipped with hand sanitizing stations.
- 70% of buses will be equipped with seatbelts and students will be expected to wear them at all times.
- Buses will be sanitized daily with the misting sanitation sprayer.

Cafeteria Procedures

- Clickers will be used instead of lunch pins to count students.
- Intensive cleaning/sanitation of the kitchen and seating areas will be completed several times throughout the day and after school.
- Cafeteria lines will be staggered where feasible.
- No visitors will be permitted in the cafeteria.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

- Parents must sign an additional waiver for participation in athletics or extracurricular activities. These waivers will be available at each school.
- Indoor spaces utilized by student groups will be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- We do not plan to place restrictions on the number of spectators for sporting events. We will continue to follow TDOE, TSSAA, and CDC guidance for athletic events.
- Parents and students will be updated as information and changes become available from the TDOE, TSSAA, and CDC.

Isolation, Quarantine and Contact Tracing

- Hancock County Schools will have a more balanced approach to quarantining students this year and will continue to work closely with the local health department. A child will NOT automatically be sent home if he or she is in a classroom with a child who has tested positive. The local health department will take the lead on contact tracing.

- Students who test positive will be required to follow current CDC and Tennessee Department of Health guidance for when to return to school.
- Household contacts will also be required to stay home for the number of days recommended by CDC and Tennessee Department of Health Guidance.
- Please contact the local health department for guidance on quarantine or isolation periods.
- Staff members who have been fully vaccinated 2 weeks prior to the family member testing positive and are not symptomatic can report to work. We will not provide the free ten days we gave to staff last year. Staff will be required to use individual sick leave this year if they are unable to report to work.

Continuity of Services Plan (K-12)

- Hancock County Schools plans to begin school in person this year.
- Make-up work and assignments will be given to students who are quarantined. We will not have a virtual option for students who are quarantined.
- Students will NOT be counted absent if they complete all assignments and do the following requirements. First, students must provide proof they have tested positive, or a member of the family, has tested positive. Second, students must complete all assignments and turn those assignments in by the specified date. Third, students must follow any other requirements established by the individual schools.
- Students will be counted absent if they are unable, or choose not to, adhere to these protocols.