

# **Madison County Public Schools**

## **COVID-19 Mitigation Health Plan**

### **2021 -2022**

Madison County Public Schools has formed a COVID-19 team within the school division and a point person at each building has been assigned.

#### **Division Contacts**

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MCPS has communicated with the local health department and will continue to do so as we plan for the start of the 2021-2022 school year. The lead school nurse for Madison County Public Schools will continue to work with Administrator April Achter and Daisy Banta, Case Investigator and School Mitigation Specialist from the Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District - (540)316-6280 and [april.achter@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:april.achter@vdh.virginia.gov).

**School Operational Decisions**

Per CDC guidance, “Because of the importance of in-person learning, schools should implement physical distancing to the extent possible within their structures but should not exclude students from in-person learning to keep a minimum distance requirement.” Therefore, MCPS will either operate 5 days per week for in-person instruction for all students OR conditions may warrant a TEMPORARY move to virtual instruction.

1. Evaluate the level of community disease transmission
  - Total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days
  - Percentage of NAATs\* that are positive in the past 7 days

Indicator	Low Transmission	Moderate Transmission	Substantial Transmission	High Transmission
Total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days	0-9	10-49	50-99	>+100
Percentage of NAATs* that are positive in the past 7 days	<5.0%	5.0%-7.9%	8.0%-9.9%	>-10.0%

\*NAAT: The former indicators called for use of RT-PCR (reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction) diagnostic tests, while the new thresholds for community transmission recommend using nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs). (Note: This is an update in terminology. RT-PCR is a type of diagnostic test that tests for nucleic acid amplification).

- Review weekly to inform planning.
  - If the two indicators are at different levels, use the indicator with a higher value.
  - Determine the level of community transmission.
  - Work in collaboration with the local health department on whether schools should temporarily move to virtual instruction.
2. Understand community level vaccination coverage
    - <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine-summary/>
    - VDOE/VDH guidance suggests “Since some prevention strategies may vary based on COVID-19 vaccination status, school officials may want to also understand the vaccination coverage at the school level but should only do so in consultation with local school board attorneys.”

3. Consider the level of impact to a school

Criteria to consider	Level of School Impact*		
	Low	Medium	High
Transmission within school	Zero or sporadic cases with no evidence of transmission in school	Two outbreaks within a short time period or sporadic outbreaks in school. Size of outbreaks remains small.	Several outbreaks in school within short time period; size of outbreaks is large or scope of outbreaks is significant (e.g. multiple classrooms or grade levels are impacted).
Student absenteeism	At baseline/Low	Slightly above baseline	High
Staff Capacity**	Normal	Strained	Critical

\*Level of impact to school can only be assessed for those schools that have opened to in-person instruction. Schools should collaborate with local health departments on contact investigations. Depending on the level of COVID-19 transmission in the school and outbreak status, public health may recommend adjustment to prevention strategies. If a school is conducting a COVID-19 testing program, screening testing data can also be helpful.

\*\*This subjective assessment should factor in a school's ability to maintain adequate staff for facility operations, transportation, teaching, and administrative functions. It should include input from teachers/staff regarding their availability to provide in-person instruction.

- To inform these decisions, school officials should consider:
    - i. the number of outbreaks experienced and their proximity in time to each other;
    - ii. the size of any outbreak(s) (number of cases and close contacts identified);
    - iii. the level of spread within the school (e.g., whether cases are confined to a particular classroom or grade level);
    - iv. the level of student and/or staff absenteeism due to illness or necessary isolation/quarantine and the staff capacity
  - MCPS Baseline Determinations for Student Absenteeism
    - i. Low: Less than 5%
    - ii. Medium: 6-10%
    - iii. High: More than 10%
4. Understand community and school capacity and needs
- Decisions will be based on Madison County data.
  - The majority of our community (69%) prefer masks to be optional which should be taken into consideration once CDC guidelines change.
  - School officials will continue to work with special populations such as English learners, students who need special education or mental health services, or students who may not have reliable internet access at home if a school needs to temporarily convert to virtual learning or if individual students need to temporarily convert to virtual learning during necessary quarantine periods.
5. Determine and implement a layered approach with **multiple prevention strategies**.
- MCPS will use the VDH/CDC Nine Key Prevention Strategies.

## Promoting behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19

MCPS will follow the VDH/VDOE 9 key prevention strategies:

1. Promoting vaccination
2. Recommended consistent and correct use of masks
3. Physical distancing
4. Screening testing
5. Ventilation
6. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
7. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities
8. Staying home when sick and getting tested
9. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine.

### 1. Promoting Vaccination

According to the CDC and VDH, vaccinations are an effective prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. MCPS partnered with Madison County local government to offer vaccination clinics for students and staff during the summer of 2021.

- Those interested in getting vaccinated can check with their healthcare provider or find a location to get their free COVID-19 vaccine at [vaccinate.virginia.gov/](https://vaccinate.virginia.gov/)

### 2. Recommended Consistent and Correct Use of Masks\*

During the regularly scheduled January 13, 2022, school board meeting, the Board approved the “**Interim Madison County School Board COVID 19 Mitigation Exception.**” The exception states, “*During this time of transition with a new state administration and a new Madison County school board starting, the Madison County School Board believes it is appropriate to prepare to update our COVID-19 Mitigation Policies. We expect significant changes to state guidance and regulations in the coming weeks and we acknowledge the need to understand those changes before making wholesale changes to our policies in terms of quarantine periods, contact tracing, and testing.*”

*However, the board also acknowledges the need to immediately recognize parental authority and the individual liberties of division staff and teachers. Therefore, the school board authorizes an exception to the current policy; this option allows all Madison County students’ parents, teachers, and staff to request and automatically receive an individual exception to the current policy requiring masks while indoors on school property. This exception is granted immediately upon the student carrying a simple typed or hand-written letter with them to school. This letter must state that the named student is authorized an exception to the current school mask mandate*

*and must be signed by a parent or authorized guardian. These exceptions do not need to be approved by any school official. Parents should include a phone number or email so staff can confirm parental intent if there is a concern by the school principal that the request for exception is not from the parent or guardian. Teachers and staff who choose not to wear a mask are automatically approved for an exception to the current policy requiring masks in schools.*

*The board acknowledges that some students and parents, teachers and staff may want to continue to exercise their right to continue to wear a mask. The district will seek to reenforce parental intent for those students. In addition, the district will seek to provide each student, teacher, and staff with a N95 or similar high-quality mask as often and as soon as is practicable.*

*No student, teacher, or staff will be pressured to make any particular choice on masking. District leadership and principals must ensure that students are not bullied to make any particular choice. Teacher and staff evaluations will not be impacted by individual mask choices nor will student grades or their involvement in extracurricular or athletic activities be impacted by mask choices, unless masking is required by other agencies (i.e. VHSL).*

*Due to federal requirements, students and staff are required to continue to wear masks on school buses. In addition, those students and staff within the ten-day quarantine window as defined by the CDC will be required to wear a mask in school.*

*The school board recognizes that there are currently no COVID 19 vaccine mandates. To re-assure concerned parents, the school board notes that if COVID 19 vaccine mandates are placed on school children or teachers and staff, a similar exception to policy will be allowed for all members of the school community based on individual liberties and parental authority.*

*The school board recognizes that some members of the school community will have concerns with this interim option. Madison County Public Schools will offer students and teachers/staff a one-on-one counseling opportunity with school leadership to discuss options if they believe this option for others endangers individual or family health. On a case-by-case basis, school leadership will seek to accommodate individuals with a medical doctor's written determination that others should wear masks around them due to an identified medical condition. In such cases, students will not be forced to wear masks against a parental choice but may be asked to stay six feet away from such individuals when not masked.*

*The school board directs the superintendent to immediately inform each family and teacher and staff of this exception option and to include a sample letter of exception for students' parents. This sample letter need only state "My child, name of child, is authorized to not wear a mask in school" and be signed by an authorized parent or guardian with contact information.*

- Due to the circulating and highly contagious variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

### 3. Physical Distancing

Guidance from the VDOE and CDC states that physical distancing should be maximized to the greatest extent possible but schools **should not reduce in-person learning** to keep a minimum distance requirement.

The CDC and the VDH recommend schools **maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance** between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing to reduce transmission risk.

A distance of at least 6 feet is recommended between students and teachers/staff, and

MCPS will follow CDC guidance for school meals:

- Maximize physical distance as much as possible when moving through the food service line and while eating (especially indoors).
- Use additional spaces outside of the cafeteria for mealtime seating such as the gymnasium or outdoor seating can help facilitate distancing.
- Given very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, there is no need to limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals.

### 4. Screening Tests

Screening testing is offered at MCPS at this time. Screening testing can help promptly identify and isolate cases, quarantine those who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and are not fully vaccinated, and identify clusters. This can help reduce the risk to students, teachers and staff, and controlling outbreaks before they expand can help limit any disruption to in-person education.

MCPS currently offers screening testing on a voluntary basis to all students and staff members. Please contact Jeanette Alexander ([jalexander@madisonschools.k12.va.us](mailto:jalexander@madisonschools.k12.va.us)) to enroll.

The VDH has a testing site locator which may be helpful in seeking screening testing: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-testing-sites/>

## 5. Ventilation

According to the CDC, “improving ventilation is an important COVID-19 prevention strategy that can reduce the number of virus particles in the air.” All ventilation systems in the schools meet the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) standards compliant for the mixing of outdoor air. Air filters are replaced at least every three months per industry standard. **All air filters have been replaced with the MERV-13 filters in all buildings.**

In alignment with CDC recommendations, during transportation we will open or crack windows in buses and other forms of transportation, if doing so does not pose a safety risk. Keeping windows open a few inches improves air circulation.

Extra ventilation will be added to locker rooms.

## 6. Implement Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

MCPS will continue to train all staff and students on personal hygiene practices that prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as hand washing and covering coughs.

MCPS will display age-appropriate signage in all facilities and provide materials that promote healthy hygiene. Signage will be posted in the entrances, hallways, classrooms, food service areas, restrooms, nurses’ offices and other areas as deemed appropriate by the building principal and district level leadership.

Hand Sanitizing stations will be located throughout the building. Students will also have opportunities to wash hands with soap and water throughout the day. Paper towels will be used as much as possible.

An adequate amount of instructional supplies will be ordered to reduce the need for student sharing of materials.

## 7. Clean and Maintain Healthy Facilities

The Supervisor of Maintenance will maintain records of supplies. The supervisor will work with various vendors to ensure adequate quantities of cleaning and disinfecting

products are in stock and available for use in division facilities. Building administrators will use *School Dude* to request supplies.

Staff members are prohibited from bringing in their own disinfectant products. Disinfection should be conducted by the custodial staff as part of their cleaning and disinfecting protocol, except in special circumstances approved by the principal. If there is a need for disinfection in a classroom, a teacher will contact a trained custodian to do the disinfection. Unlike cleaning which physically removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects by using soap, disinfection requires the use of chemicals to kill germs on surfaces and objects.

- Daily custodial cleaning/disinfecting checklist will be provided to all custodial staff. Supervisor of maintenance maintains inventory of supplies.
- QuatStat, a hospital grade disinfectant, is to be used for disinfecting.
- Disinfection of frequently touched objects occurs based upon CDC recommendations.
- Teachers and other staff members will also have access to cleaning supplies as needed.

## **8. Staying Home when Sick and Getting Tested**

- Students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, will be instructed to stay home from school and see a healthcare provider for testing and care.
  - [MCPS Employee Daily Health Screening Form](#)
- Students and employees will answer the at home screening questions each morning to guide their decision making.
- Hotspots are available for families in the event MCPS must move to all virtual or if a student is out due to illness or quarantine.
- CDC does not currently recommend schools conduct symptom screening for all students in grades K-12 on a routine (e.g., daily) basis. Parents, caregivers, or guardians (“caregivers”) should monitor their children for symptoms of infectious illness every day through home-based symptom screening.
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/symptom-screening.html>

## **9. Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine**

Procedures for contact tracing will follow VDH’s [guide to contact tracing](#) and the [exception to the close contact definition for K-12 students](#). MCPS lead nurse will work



closely with the Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District to determine the safest procedures for MCPS.

## Health and Absenteeism

### Updated Quarantine/Isolation Guidelines from CDC/VDH

- If you have a positive COVID-19 test, the isolation time has been shortened from the prior 10 days to 5 days, as long as:
  - You have no symptoms, or your symptoms are getting better.
  - You wear a well-fitting mask when you are around others for an additional 5 days after your isolation period ends. Note: If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever is gone for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
- If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, the updated requirements for your quarantine period include:
  - If you are unvaccinated or have not yet gotten your recommended booster dose (more than 6 months since your second mRNA dose or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine), you should (1) quarantine for 5 days as long as you do not develop symptoms within that time and (2) wear a well-fitting mask for an additional 5 days when you are around others.
  - If you have received your booster shot or received your second mRNA dose within the last 6 months (or received a single J&J dose within the last 2 months), you do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a wellfitting mask for 10 days after the exposure when you are around others.
  - If you have been exposed, VDH recommends taking a COVID-19 test 5 days after exposure. (Due to testing limitations, a test within 3-5 days after an exposure is acceptable). If you do develop symptoms, you should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not from COVID-19.

School districts may choose to continue more stringent isolation and quarantine requirements or may implement the new CDC guidance. In the absence of updated guidance from CDC, VDH recommends the following interim guidance to address specific situations:

- The new guidelines apply to K-12 settings when individuals can properly and consistently mask for an additional 5 days after ending their 5 day isolation or quarantine.
- For isolation (people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19):

- If an individual is unable to consistently and correctly wear a mask (e.g., young children, developmental issues, etc.), they should isolate at home for the full 10 days.
- For quarantine (certain people exposed to someone with COVID-19):
  - If an individual is unvaccinated or has not yet received their recommended booster dose (more than 6 months since the second mRNA dose or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine), and is unable to consistently and correctly wear a mask, they should quarantine at home for the full 10 days.
  - In the absence of further guidance from CDC, if a child was fully vaccinated more than 6 months ago, but is not currently eligible to receive a booster (specifically children aged 12-15 years), they should follow the previous guidance for fully vaccinated individuals, which does not require them to quarantine after an exposure. They should wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days. VDH is making this interim recommendation balancing disruptions to in-person learning with the risk of transmission.

#### Student Health and Absenteeism:

For students who are on-campus, MCPS will monitor student absenteeism using already established attendance procedures. Should the rate of absenteeism increase in any school or across the division, the Superintendent will be made aware of this by the building level principal or designee. Additionally, the Family Support Worker will monitor student attendance at the district level and report to the Superintendent and MCPS lead nurse any fluctuations in daily attendance rates. The MCPS lead nurse will consult with officials from the Madison County Health Department regarding possible causes and next steps.

For the 2021-2022 school year, students in elementary and middle school choosing 100% distance learning will be enrolled in Virtual Virginia. High School students will be enrolled in a variety of programs to meet graduation requirements. The Virginia Department of Education's guidance on best practices for attendance for distance learners will be followed. If a Virtual Virginia teacher has a concern about a student's inactivity or lack of participation or work completion, they will alert the school mentor who will contact the student and the parent to discuss the situation and what can be done to further support the student. The Family Support Worker will also provide support to schools, as needed, through contacting families of inactive students and making home visits.

Because our school brings so many people together, we need to assume we may see cases of COVID-19 in our school community over the course of the academic year until the vaccinations are available to *all* students and most staff members have been vaccinated. While the practices

outlined in this document are measures to prevent the spread of illness, the following protocols will be in place in the event an individual in our school develops symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day:

1. Teachers have received training to identify symptoms of COVID-19. If a student is identified as symptomatic, they will be escorted to a designated room in our school where they can be kept separate from others.
2. The student will be given a surgical mask to wear, and the school nurse will ask them about their symptoms. If the student is exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19, parents or guardians will be called to pick up their student. **A parent or trusted adult identified on the student's contact information form is required to pick up the student within 1 hour of receiving a phone call.** Decisions regarding siblings and other household members will be made on a case-by-case basis.
3. Upon arrival to school, the parent will call to notify the school that they are in the parking lot. The student and other household members will then be escorted to the car by a staff member.
4. The student will be sent for further medical evaluation. A return to school will be contingent upon health care provider recommendation and made on a case-by-case basis.

#### Employee Health and Absenteeism:

MCPS has the following protocol in place to monitor employee health and absenteeism:

- The following employee absence and notification requirements and action steps will be followed:
  - School Buildings:
    - Employees will leave a note in Absence Management (Frontline) if an absence is related to COVID.
    - When an administrator becomes aware of a COVID related absence, they will alert their school nurse who will contact the employee for additional information. If required, the nurse will contact the VDH.
      - MPS/SBO: Cassandra Gore, Ext. 1530
      - WYES: Linda Lampman, Ext. 2119
      - WWMS: Sarah Moore, Ext. 3530
      - MCHS: Michelle Young, Ext. 4530
  - Other employees not assigned to a building:
    - When a supervisor becomes aware of COVID related absence (through Frontline Absence Management notes) they will contact Michelle Young,

Lead Nurse, to follow-up with the employee for additional information. If required, the nurse will contact the VDH.

- MCPS employees will complete the Daily Health Screening at home and report any “Yes” responses to their school nurse or to Nurse Young (completion of the online form is no longer required).
- The Daily Health Screening consists of the following questions:
  - Do you have a temperature of 100.4 or higher?
  - Have you been exposed to anyone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days?
  - In the last 14 days, have you been exposed to someone who has been recommended for testing or is awaiting results?
  - Have you been recommended for testing or are you awaiting results?
  - Do you have any other symptoms of COVID-19 that have recently developed and cannot be attributed to another illness or pre-existing condition?
    - Fever over 100.4 F
    - Cough
    - Trouble Breathing
    - Shortness of breath
    - Fatigue
    - Headache
    - Chills
    - Body aches
    - Loss of sense of taste or smell
    - Sore throat
    - Congestion or runny nose (not associated with seasonal allergies)
    - Nausea or vomiting
    - Diarrhea

## Communication

As part of the effort to orient, train, and communicate with staff, students, and parents this document has been developed. This document serves as the foundation for all communication regarding health mitigation strategies for employees, students, and parents. Training will be provided to staff prior to and upon return to school during teacher work weeks. This document will be made available through several communication platforms including: school website, social media platforms, and local media.

MCPS will follow standard operating procedures to notify families of an outbreak and a subsequent school closure through our school messenger system (phone, email, and text

messaging). For single positive cases, school nurses will make direct contact with parents. Notifications will be done in a way that protects the confidentiality of the ill individual and clearly explains what the school is doing in response to the diagnosis and what the recommendations are for teachers, staff, and parents.

#### COVID-19 Communication Plan:

- If a student or staff member has a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 and was on school property, all impacted individuals will be notified. Any students who may have come in close contact with the positively testing individuals on the bus will also be notified of their level of exposure. Students and/or teachers identified as close contacts will be sent home and **required to quarantine at home beginning the following day after exposure unless an exception applies.**
- The families can check the status of confirmed cases in schools via the COVID dashboard. Most likely a majority of students and staff school wide will be considered low risk due to the social distancing, use of masks and handwashing in the school. Some students who may be identified as a close contact and may be required to quarantine. Families will be provided with information on how to monitor for symptoms and a reminder of the precautions to prevent the spread of disease.
- In certain circumstances, such as a large outbreak of cases, the school may have to return to an online learning environment for a period of time. Families should have contingency plans in place should the school need to close for several weeks.

### Community Response

MCPS will coordinate with local agencies and organizations to include the Department of Social Services (DSS), the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), the Madison County Emergency Medical Services, Madison County Sheriff's Office, Madison County Administrator, local civic organizations, and local churches in the community response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Student Health Services

MCPS has reviewed current health policies and procedures to ensure alignment with CDC, VDH, and VDOE guidelines, as well as recommendations from the Virginia School Nurse Association and American Academy of Pediatrics. Ongoing training will be provided to all health services staff and designated lay responders to address any health concerns or safety needs while remaining in compliance with all of these guidelines and recommendations. This includes nurse-led training to educate staff on signs and symptoms, any changes in procedures, and what staff should do in the event they suspect an individual is sick.

Medical Grade PPE will be provided to all nurses and the athletic trainer. Each school nurse and the athletic trainer will receive four sets of medical grade PPE. Additional PPE will be stored with the lead nurse and made available to schools to replenish as needed. School nurses and the athletic trainer will be required to maintain three sets of PPE on hand at all times. See Appendix A for proper donning and doffing procedures.

MCPS will continue to provide health services as usual in addition to our COVID-19 response. To prevent exposure to students who may be sick, medications and first aid will be delivered in a separate space from sick children. Designated staff members will be trained by Registered School Nurses to assist should a sick child require isolation to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19. Individual healthcare plans will address COVID-19 for students with health needs.

### **Routine Mental Health Services**

MCPS has developed a plan to implement Tier I trauma-informed practices, including morning meetings and evidence-based social emotional learning (SEL) curricula. MCPS is using the Virginia Tiered System of Supports (VTSS) framework and various other resources to provide social-emotional support to students in each building. School counselors will be available by phone or in person for any student, family or staff member that requires assistance. Home visits will be made as needed with physical distancing prioritized. Referrals to local mental health services will continue as normal, including accessing emergency services through the local Community Services Board and Family Assessment Planning Team (FAPT)-funded services.

Social Emotional Learning in Schools:

- MCPS will be using *Second Step* for grades PK-8 and *Character Strong* for grades 9-12 during the 2021-2022 school year.
- We must address the emerging psychological, social, and emotional needs of students in order to deal with learning loss and gaps extending from this crisis.
- Through our SEL curriculum, classrooms hold frequent class meetings. These meetings give students and teachers time to discuss social emotional learning topics such as understanding and managing emotions, empathy, respect, citizenship, and mindfulness.

### **Food Service**

Meal selection is in compliance with USDA regulations. For students participating in in-person instruction, meals will be student self-selected. Markings on floors will denote appropriate

spacing in line for students waiting to pick up their meals. Students will be served by staff and eat in cafeterias and/or classrooms to follow physical distancing guidelines.

### School-related Sports and Recreational Activities

The plan for athletics follows guidance as set forth by the CDC and VDH and recommendations from the VHSL. Parents must complete the [Extracurricular Voluntary Participation Agreement](#) that provides information for participants including the assumption of potential risks associated with the transmission of COVID-19.

School-sponsored sports and extracurricular activities provide students with enrichment opportunities that can help them learn and achieve, and support their social, emotional, and mental health. Due to increased exhalation that occurs during physical activity, some [sports](#) can put players, coaches, trainers, and others at [increased risk](#) for getting and spreading COVID-19. Close contact sports and indoor sports are particularly risky. Similar risks might exist for other extracurricular activities, such as band, choir, theater, and school clubs that meet indoors.

Prevention strategies in these activities remain important and should comply with school day policies and procedures. People who are fully vaccinated can refrain from quarantine following a known exposure if asymptomatic, facilitating continued participation in in-person learning, sports, and extracurricular activities. Students should refrain from these activities when they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and should be tested.

### VHSL Physical Requirement

MCPS requires all students to have a valid VHSL physical form in order to participate in athletic conditioning and team athletic programs. The physical form must be dated after July 1, 2021 to be valid for the 2021-2022 school year.

Any student athlete testing positive for COVID-19 must have a doctor's release to return to practice/play.

### Outside Organizations

The use of MCPS facilities by outside organizations will follow normal procedures and must be approved by administration by contacting the Supervisor of Maintenance.

### Gatherings, Field Trips and School Visitors.

- MCPS will follow mitigation measures for all field-trips. Field-trips will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Outdoor field trips are preferred. Masks are required while riding school buses on field trips.
- Volunteers, once approved, who will be interacting with students will have to complete the COVID-19 screening process on a daily basis.
- Only essential persons will be allowed in school buildings. MCPS will place signs outside the building instructing visitors to call the office. In-person meetings with parents will be made by appointment only. Virtual meetings will continue as needed.

### Sick Leave

Generally, employees should follow guidance from their family doctor. This document provides all employees with guidance to determine the need to stay home, self-isolate, and/or to communicate with their physicians to seek medical direction or assistance.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) expired December 31, 2020.

### High Risk Staff and Students

All students with health needs will have an Individualized Health Plan to address their specific needs. Virtual learning options will be made available for students for whom it has been determined necessary to meet their health needs.

Employees who have needs that may fall under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), should contact Dr. Cathy Jones, Assistant Superintendent, for assistance.

### Return to Work or Class



Employees or students who have tested positive and have had COVID-19 may return to work or school when told to do so by the MCPS lead nurse.

## **Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick**

### **Isolation Room**

Each building will have a dedicated space for students (isolation room) who present with symptoms of COVID-19 that is separate from areas that may be used regularly. This area will not be used for any other purpose at any time and will be disinfected after use. Staff who assess or care for sick children will be provided with PPE that includes N-95 fitted masks, gown, face shield and gloves.

### **Transportation for Sick Children**

Parents will be responsible for picking up sick children. Parents will provide school administration with several emergency contacts who can pick up the student if they are unavailable or who can reach the parent in the event of illness. Children will be walked outside of the building to parents to go home. Should a student present respiratory distress or medical symptoms that require acute care, emergency services will be notified to transport the child to the hospital.

### **Disinfection After Illness**

When an individual becomes sick or presents with symptoms of COVID-19, custodial staff will be notified immediately. All areas that the individual has come in contact with will be disinfected using EPA-registered disinfectants applied by trained staff.

### **Communication with Local Health Department**

April Achter, MPH, will be the contact person at VDH Rapidan-Rappahannock Virginia Health District. The School Nurse or designee will make the initial contact, and if not present, the building Administrator will do so. Per Rapidan-Rappahannock Virginia Health District, all suspected cases of COVID-19 should contact their family physician by phone to determine next steps and testing. The Virginia Department of Health Community Hotline is available to answer questions related to COVID - 19 and can be reached at 540-316-6302.

### **Closing Schools**

Should the community transmission rate increase, MCPS will collaborate with community partners, including the Rapidan-Rappahannock Virginia Health District, to limit in-person activities and transition students to virtual learning.

These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with our local health department. The size of the class, extent of social distancing in place while the ill persons were present and infectious, extent of interaction and exposure in the area, and location of the case(s) in the class will be assessed to determine the potential risk to others. Recommendations will be based on these assessments of risk and how instruction can continue in as safe a manner as possible.

Areas of the school where ill individuals spent time while infectious might need to be closed temporarily for [cleaning and disinfection](#) while unaffected areas continue to function as usual. Decisions about closure of a section of the school or the entire school will depend on the number of ill persons who have been sent home for a period of isolation and the number of exposed contacts who have been identified and placed into quarantine. The extent of the school facility and teaching staff affected by these factors will be a factor in determining whether educational services can continue to be provided.

Should a high percentage of staff and/or students self-report COVID-19 symptoms, MCPS **may** close schools for as long as recommended by VDH. In addition, this data will be reported to Rapidan-Rappahannock Virginia Health District for ongoing consultation.

Parent Resources:

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/backtoschool/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

## Appendix A

### Personal Protective Equipment

#### Who Needs PPE in the School Setting?

- PPE should be used by school nurses or delegated staff in specific situations, including:
  - Monitoring or assisting a symptomatic person and it is not possible to maintain the recommended distance of six feet.
  - Completing certain breathing-related health care procedures; and
  - Completing health care procedures for a symptomatic person while the person is awaiting transportation to go home .

**PPE should be used with discretion. It should not be used all the time and should not be used with children who are healthy.**

#### How to Put On (Don) PPE Gear (if you are a delegated staff member):

More than one donning method may be acceptable. Below is one example of donning.

1. Identify and gather the proper PPE to don. Ensure choice of gown size is correct (based on training).
2. Perform hand hygiene using hand sanitizer.
3. Put on an isolation gown. Tie all of the ties on the gown. Assistance may be needed by other healthcare personnel.
4. Put on NIOSH-approved N95 filtering facepiece respirator or higher (use a facemask if a respirator is not available). If the respirator has a nosepiece, it should be fitted to the nose with both hands, not bent or tented. Do not pinch the nosepiece with one hand. Respirator/facemask should be extended under chin. Both your mouth and nose should be protected. Do not wear respirator/facemask under your chin or store in scrubs pocket between patients.\*
  - Respirator: Respirator straps should be placed on crown of head (top strap) and base of neck (bottom strap). Perform a user seal check each time you put on the respirator.
  - Facemask: Mask ties should be secured on crown of head (top tie) and base of neck (bottom tie). If mask has loops, hook them appropriately around your ears.
5. Put on face shield or goggles. When wearing an N95 respirator or half facepiece elastomeric respirator, select the proper eye protection to ensure that the respirator does not interfere with the correct positioning of the eye protection, and the eye protection does not affect the fit or seal of the respirator. Face shields provide full face coverage. Goggles also provide excellent protection for eyes, but fogging is common.
6. Put on gloves. Gloves should cover the cuff (wrist) of gown.

7. Healthcare personnel may now enter the patient room.

### **How to Take Off (Doff) PPE Gear (for delegated staff members only):**

More than one doffing method may be acceptable. Below is one example of doffing.

1. Remove gloves. Ensure glove removal does not cause additional contamination of hands. Gloves can be removed using more than one technique (e.g., glove-in-glove or bird beak).
2. Remove gown. Untie all ties (or unsnap all buttons). Some gown ties can be broken rather than untied. Do so in gentle manner, avoiding a forceful movement. Reach up to the shoulders and carefully pull gown down and away from the body. Rolling the gown down is an acceptable approach. Dispose in trash receptacle. \*
3. Healthcare personnel may now exit patient room.
4. Perform hand hygiene.
5. Remove face shield or goggles. Carefully remove face shield or goggles by grabbing the strap and pulling upwards and away from head. Do not touch the front of face shield or goggles.
6. Remove and discard respirator (or facemask if used instead of respirator). Do not touch the front of the respirator or facemask.\*
  - Respirator: Remove the bottom strap by touching only the strap and bring it carefully over the head. Grasp the top strap and bring it carefully over the head, and then pull the respirator away from the face without touching the front of the respirator.
  - Facemask: Carefully untie (or unhook from the ears) and pull away from face without touching the front.
7. Perform hand hygiene after removing the respirator/facemask and before putting it on again if your workplace is practicing reuse.\*

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/using-ppe.html>

<https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/guidance/education/Strong-Schools-NC-Public-Health-Toolkit-PPE-Guidance.pdf>