

COVID GUIDANCE for Meade County Schools - 9/14/2021

Governor Beshear and Commissioner of Education Glass have encouraged school leaders to prioritize in-person learning and develop plans in an effort to return to full scale school operations.

Understanding that the global pandemic is still fluid and subject to change, below are the current operational guidelines for the Meade County Schools: MC Schools will continue to modify plans as guidance and/or conditions change. Adjustments/Additions based on SB1 are underlined.

Will my child need to wear a mask?

- **Inside school buildings:** Masks will be required for Students, Staff, and all Visitors until 10/22/21. District officials will announce future masking requirements NLT 10/21/21.
- **On the school bus:** According to CDC and federal mandates, masks are required for individuals riding school buses. We are asking our students and families to partner with us on school buses to wear masks or be transported by parents to and from school..
- *Individuals wearing a mask will be less likely to be quarantined for close contacts.*

Cleaning/Sanitizing/Mitigation Efforts to return to full scale school operations:

- Custodial staff will mist/sanitize rooms and buses daily
- Water fountain bottle fillers may remain open but will be cleaned regularly.
- Allow/Encourage students to bring individual water bottles to school
- Class change cleaning routine by teaching staff is not required
- Plexi-glass barriers will remain in front office and cafeteria front line settings
- Hand sanitizer and stations placed throughout the buildings. Establish routine of regular usage (upon entry to building/ lunchroom, etc.)
- Custodians will clean cafeteria tables between each class rotation

Morning routine: Principals will fine tune for each building

- Students should not report to school if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms such as:
 - Fever or feeling feverish
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - New persistent cough, difficulty breathing, congestion / runny nose or sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Exposure to a known COVID case during the previous 48 hour period if unvaccinated.
- Students experiencing above symptoms during the school day should consider going home.
- Student dropoff will begin at 7:30 am for all school campuses.

Afternoon routine: Principals will fine tune for their building

- Schools are permitted to stage car riders and bus riders. Principals will establish routines to social distance students as much as possible during this time.

Classroom Set Up Considerations:

- Classroom seating charts will be maintained to be used in the event of contact tracing.
- Students are permitted to share instructional materials (PE equipment, books, technology, etc.) as current understanding of COVID19 transmission is more airborne than touch.
- Playgrounds and outdoor learning activities may be used fully.

Visitors:

- Essentials visitors may enter schools as usual.
- Non-Essential Visitors into the building should be limited.

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When **KY Senate Bill 1** became law recently, local school districts were given decision making authority to develop a local COVID-19 response plan. Please read the document below for information regarding our updated quarantine procedures. These changes will help us achieve our goal of keeping children safe while learning through in person instruction in our schools.

For school related contacts who WILL NOT be required to quarantine from school:

GENERALLY, students who are close contacts at school or on the school bus (while appropriately masked) will NOT be required to quarantine. As long as they are NOT experiencing any COVID like symptoms, they are eligible to remain in school. The MC Schools will notify families of close contacts who do NOT have to quarantine with an email to the address that you provided to us at the beginning of the year. If you need to update the email address we have on file, please contact the front office at your child's school.

The email will state:

"This is to inform you that your child may have been recently exposed to a positive COVID-19 individual. Because of our school district's decision to continue wearing masks while at school, your child **WILL NOT** be required to quarantine and is eligible to remain in school. We are sharing this information with you because we want you to pay extra care to your child's health for the next 10 days. Should your child experience any COVID-19 related symptoms (Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, muscle or body aches, congestion or runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea), seek medical attention. If you have any questions, please send them via email to chad.pickering@meade.kyschools.us.

If you would like for your child or anyone else in your household to be tested, we will offer free testing beginning on Monday September 20th. Testing will be available Monday through Friday at Meade County High School (James R Allen Freshman Academy basement) between 4:00 pm and 6:30 pm on days that school is in session to provide testing services. There is no appointment required; simply show up during the timeframe. Signs will be posted to direct you regarding where to park and how to enter the building. The test administered will be a rapid test, and results should be available within 15 minutes. Please be advised that this testing option is only available to Meade County students, staff, and household members of students and staff. Your child is not required to test. This is an optional testing opportunity.

We will update you with any additional pertinent information as we receive it. Please continue to monitor your child for illness every day and keep them home if they become symptomatic. To stay up-to-date on COVID cases in the Meade County School District, please see our [Meade County Schools COVID Dashboard](#) located at meade.kyschools.us.

For school related contacts who WILL be required to quarantine from school:

Some students will still be required to quarantine, even with these changes. GENERALLY, these will be students who were in unmasked situations or in spaces where clusters of individuals tested positive. The MC Schools will notify close contacts who DO have to quarantine and explain the quarantine options.

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Meade County Schools: Optional Testing Program

For students required to quarantine because of a One-Time COVID19 contact, MC Schools will begin an ***optional*** testing protocol to keep children in school during the quarantine period.

Who is Eligible?

- Students and staff members of Meade County Schools who are quarantined due to a one time close contact exposure* to COVID-19 are eligible for the testing program.
- *Individuals directly exposed to COVID-19 in their immediate household are not eligible and will be required to quarantine based on the procedures outlined by the CDC and the Kentucky Department of Public Health.

How does it work?

Quarantines related to exposure currently last for 10 calendar days from the last date the individual was in contact with the positive case. Under the optional testing program, students would be able to take a COVID-19 Rapid Test administered by Pearl Diagnostics Testing Services between 4:00 pm and 6:30 pm.

Each day that the student's test result is NEGATIVE, the student is eligible to return to school the next day. The student would repeat this process until they have met the testing requirements to end their quarantine. If the student tests POSITIVE at any time during this process, a PCR saliva test will be sent off to the lab for verification. The student will be required to quarantine at home until the results are received. If the PCR test is positive, the student will begin a ten day quarantine from the date the rapid test was positive. If the PCR test is negative, the student is eligible to restart the testing protocol. A member of our district COVID team would be in touch to finalize a return date of the positive student.

This option will be explained to you in greater detail if your child is determined to be a close contact and a quarantine is required.

What is the cost of the testing program?

There is NO cost to the families for participating in the COVID-19 testing program.

What are the benefits of this program?

Many individuals who are required to quarantine due to a close contact with a positive individual never experience COVID-19 symptoms. This testing program will permit these healthy children to remain in school and continue learning. The program also helps to identify potentially positive COVID-19 cases earlier.

When/Where is this testing?

Beginning on Monday, September 20, 2021, Pearl Diagnostic Laboratories will be located at Meade County High School (James R Allen Freshman Academy basement) between 4:00 pm and 6:30 pm Monday through Friday on days that school is in session to provide testing services. You will enter through the MC Schools bus garage. There will be signs to direct you in regards to where to park and enter the building.

How will I be notified if my child is quarantined and eligible for testing?

A representative from the MC Schools will contact you to tell you that your child has been identified as a close contact who will need to be quarantined. The quarantine options available to your child will be explained. At that time, you will be able to choose if you would like your child to participate in this optional program. If you do not wish for them to participate in the testing program, you will quarantine based on current CDC guidelines. **We know that there is a LOT of information in this document. Simply keep it for future reference and know that someone will talk you through the quarantine process if/when the need arises. Thanks as always for your support and flexibility during this challenging season!**

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Comparison of Optional Testing Program versus Regular Quarantine:

<u>Optional Testing Program - Students/Staff testing to stay at school/work</u>	<u>Regular Quarantine</u>
<u>Day 0 - Last day of exposure to a positive case. No Testing - Allowed to stay at school</u>	<u>Day 0 - Last day of exposure to positive case</u>
<u>Day 1 - Test - If negative, then go to school. If positive, then must quarantine at home.</u>	<u>Day 1 - Quarantine at home</u>
<u>Day 2 - Test - If negative, then go to school. If positive, then must quarantine at home.</u>	<u>Day 2 - Quarantine at home</u>
<u>Day 3 - Test - If negative, then go to school. If positive, then must quarantine at home.</u>	<u>Day 3 - Quarantine at home</u>
<u>Day 4 - Test - If negative, then go to school. If positive, then must quarantine at home.</u>	<u>Day 4 - Quarantine at home</u>
<u>Day 5 - Test - If negative, then go to school. If positive, then must quarantine at home.</u> <u>**NOTE: If Day 5 falls on a weekend or day that school is not in session, then the individual will be tested the next day that school is in session.</u>	<u>Day 5 - Quarantine at home - Possible test day (Quarantine only requires test on Day 5, 6 or 7)</u>
<u>Day 6 - NO Testing Required- Not Fully Released from Quarantine</u>	<u>Day 6 - Quarantine at home - Possible test day (Quarantine only requires test on Day 5, 6 or 7)</u>
<u>Day 7 - NO Testing Required- Not Fully Released from Quarantine</u>	<u>Day 7 - Quarantine at home - Possible test day (Quarantine only requires test on Day 5, 6 or 7)</u>
<u>Day 8 - No Testing Required - Fully Released from Quarantine</u>	<u>Day 8 - Return to School if test on Day 5, 6 or 7 was negative.</u>

**NOTE: Parents/Families should choose one option.