PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

The Tennessee Department of Health states that is it critical that all district and school staff are prepared to help prevent, rapidly identify and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Tennessee schools. The department recommends following the CDC guidelines. CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Children should return to full-time in-person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place.

* In order to minimize exposure to COVID-19, PPE may be needed to prevent certain exposures. PPE can include:

Masks - Face masks are an important part of student and employee protection, as well as personal hygiene, social distancing, and frequent cleaning efforts.

* + All masks MUST follow dress codes.
  + In grades 3-12, masks for students will be required in all environments where social distancing is not feasible.  Masks will be highly recommended for students in grades K-2.  However, masks are required for all students (K-12) when riding the bus.
  + All staff must wear a cloth or disposable mask, covering both the nose and mouth, when in close contact with students or other faculty members and when in common areas.  K – 2 teachers will be allowed to wear a face shield while during literacy instruction. Any staff that cannot wear a mask due to medical or emotional condition may wear a face shield with a letter of recommendation from a medical doctor.  Face shields are not considered a safe replacement for a cloth mask. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html> )
  + Staff may take “mask breaks” and remove their masks during mealtimes, when greater than six feet apart from others, and when outdoors and maintaining appropriate social distance practices.
  + Visitors are required to wear a mask when entering the building during a school day.

Household Contacts

* Any staff or student who is living in the home with a confirmed positive case should remain at home until cleared by the Department of Health.

Vaccinated Individuals

* Per the Department of Health fully vaccinated close contacts are not required to quarantine if they are fully vaccinated and have remained asymptomatic since the exposure to COVID-19. For a definition of fully vaccinated visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html

The Bledsoe County Board of Education reserves the right to review and update these procedures monthly or by executive action.