

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

Are masks required in schools this year?

The Tennessee Department of Health recommends the use of face coverings; however, the district recognizes that this is a family decision. The district will not tolerate harassment of students or employees regarding the use of face coverings.

Will visitors be allowed in the school buildings this year?

RCS will limit visitors to schools during the day to visits that are deemed necessary.

How often are surfaces in schools being cleaned/disinfected?

All high traffic areas in schools are wiped down with disinfectant or sprayed with an electrostatic sprayer daily to mitigate the spread of the virus. Buses are also sprayed daily with the electrostatic sprayer.

Will RCS provide metrics regarding COVID-19 cases?

RCS will post the number of districtwide active student and staff cases at <https://www.rheacounty.org/c19dashboard>. This page is updated daily, Monday through Friday. The numbers reported will be confirmed cases. Please note that **there could be a delay** based on lab reporting.

What should I do if my student tests positive for COVID-19?

Students are encouraged to follow the advice of their primary care provider if they receive a positive COVID test result. Families should also notify the school. Unvaccinated siblings in the home are asked to stay at home and observe 10 days of quarantine. Students will follow their school's make-up work policy and consult Google Classroom which will allow them to receive and submit their assignments.

If a student is fully vaccinated, do they need to quarantine if they have been exposed to COVID-19?

No, not unless they are experiencing symptoms.

Will contact tracing take place if there is a positive case at a school?

The RCS will support the Health Department in this process by providing any and all information that they need.

What is required for students or staff to return from a COVID-19 isolation?

Staff and students who are isolated due to COVID-19 will only be allowed to return to school when they have been quarantined for 10 days from the beginning of their symptoms.

Will my student be able to access their assignments if they are in isolation or quarantine?

Teachers will post Google Classroom assignments for students who are in isolation or quarantine, which can be completed while they are away from school. Any work that cannot be completed in Google Classroom will be offered as a makeup assignment when students return to in-person instruction.

Will individual schools be moved to virtual learning if COVID-19 cases increase?

Last year, Rhea County Schools was able to move schools to online learning as needed. The State Board of Education passed a policy effective July 21, 2021 that school districts no longer have the ability to change learning formats within the school year without the Governor specifically declaring a state of emergency allowing districts to do so. Therefore, if schools need to be closed for any reason, TN school districts are required to use their inclement weather days. As in previous years, Rhea County does have 10 inclement weather days to use throughout the school year.

When will schools be closed due to COVID-19?

Districts must use stockpile days when schools are closed due to COVID-19. The Director, with feedback from district and school leaders, will coordinate with the School Board to determine when to use our allotted stockpile days. If we use more than our designated Stockpile Days, we must make-up these instructional days.

What will happen if RCS use more than the 10 inclement weather days in response to illness and weather?

If all inclement weather days are used, those instructional days must be made up using other days such as fall break, winter break, spring break or by extending the school year.