

Mitchell County Safe Return to School Plan 2022-23 Update

Mitchell County students returned to school on Monday, August 16th, 2021. In th 2022-23 school year our number one priority continues to be the health and safety of our students and staff while being able to provide appropriate academic instruction and meet students' social-emotional needs. Please note that Mitchell County Schools reserves the right to make modifications to this plan as needed; based on conditions in our county and schools. This plan also may be modified by Local, State and Federal orders or laws.

A copy of our original return may be found at the end of this document.

Academics

- The traditional, 5-day a week, daily instructional model provides instruction in person while adhering to additional safety protocols. There will **not** be a virtual school option for students.
- Teachers will assess student's current instructional level and adjust instruction to address students' individual needs.

Health and Hygiene

- Face coverings in schools are recommended for students and staff, but are **not** required.
- Hand sanitation stations will be available in all schools and hand washing will be encouraged.
- Increased cleaning and sanitation of high contact areas are a priority.
- Parents are requested to check temperatures prior to sending students on bus or to school. Screenings will occur at school when the local health department determines outbreak in county or in schools. Screening may occur at school during high absenteeism or widespread sickness (Flu season).
- Training for staff and students on recommended healthy routines will be provided as needed.
- Staff and students are encouraged to stay home if they are sick or running a temperature of 100.4 or greater.

Facilities and Routines

- Although water fountain use is allowed, students are encouraged to bring a water bottle. Water filling stations will be available in all schools.
- Increased cleaning and sanitation of high contact areas are a priority.
- Increased air circulation in classrooms through windows and doors (as feasible).
- Academic field trips that can be conducted safely will be approved.
- Schools will continue the procedure at dismissal of loading car riders and drivers first before loading buses (Please see school opening and closing schedules)
- Mitchell County Schools will stay in contact with the local health department to monitor transmission rates in the county and report to the Board of Education monthly.

Bus Transportation

- Bus drivers will disinfect buses routinely.
- Students will spread out on the bus to the extent possible.

Cafeteria Procedures

- Thorough handwashing and/or hand sanitizing will be completed prior to meals.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of tables will be conducted between lunch periods or after each class is finished.
- Grab and Go Breakfast will be provided (as feasible and practical).

School Nurses and Sick Room

- Every school in the system will have a nurse assigned.
- Students that have a temperature of above 100.4 or exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will be placed in a sick room with a mask available and parents/guardians called.
- Sick rooms will be cleaned thoroughly throughout the day.

Campus Visitors

- Visitors are allowed in the buildings but may be asked to complete COVID-19 symptom screening upon entry to the building. (Local Health Department guidance)
- Volunteers will be allowed in the building with the same screening procedures as staff.

Student Supports

- Quarantined students will have their absences counted as excused.
- Students will be screened as needed for mental health support and referred to the School Counselors.

Extended Learning Programs (After School)

- After School Programs are run through Lamplighters and the YMCA. They have been in session since the beginning of the 2022-23 school year.
- Tutoring Sessions may be scheduled by Individual Teachers or Schools.
- Approved Outside Groups that provide services to students will continue.
- Programs will follow all school safety guidelines.

Athletics

- All athletic teams will follow NCHSAA mandates.
- Updates will be provided by Athletic Directors and Coaches.

Covid-19 Procedures for Confirmed Cases

- School staff will maintain confidentiality in accordance with ADA (American Disabilities Act) and HIPAA (Health Insurances Portability and Accountability Act of 1996).
- Potential school closure will be based on the level of risk as determined by the local health department.
- If the need arises to close schools due to COVID-19, virtual learning will be initiated for impacted students as soon as possible.
- If a closure is needed for intensive cleaning, communication will be provided.

- The Student/Staff with COVID-19 will be allowed to return to school per local health department guidelines.
- Classroom/school/district closures will only occur if significant need warrants the closure by local, state or federal health officials.

Individual school plans will include specifics that are age and space appropriate and may vary from these general district guidelines. As the need lessens, these guidelines will expire allowing programs and procedures to return to normal

Mitchell County Schools Reopening Plan for 2021-22 School Year

Mitchell County students will return to school on Monday, August 16th. Our number one priority continues to be the health and safety of our students and staff while being able to provide appropriate academic instruction and meet students' social-emotional needs. Please note that Mitchell County Schools reserves the right to make modifications to this plan as needed; based on conditions in our county and schools. This plan also may be modified by Local, State and Federal orders or laws.

Academics

- The traditional, 5-day a week, daily instructional model provides instruction in person while adhering to additional safety protocols. There will **not** be a virtual school option for students.
- Teachers will assess student's current instructional level and adjust instruction to address students' individual needs.

Health and Hygiene

- Face coverings in schools are recommended for students and staff, but are **not** required.
- Hand sanitation stations will be available in all schools and hand washing will be encouraged.
- Increased cleaning and sanitation of high contact areas are a priority.
- Parents are requested to check temperatures prior to sending students on bus or to school. Screenings will occur at school when the local health department determines outbreak in county or in schools. Screening may occur at school during high absenteeism or widespread sickness (Flu season).
- Training for staff and students on recommended healthy routines will be provided as needed.
- Staff and students are encouraged to stay home if they are sick or running a temperature of 100.4 or greater.

Facilities and Routines

- No water fountain use: students are encouraged to bring a water bottle. Water filling stations will be available in all schools.
- Increased cleaning and sanitation of high contact areas are a priority.
- Increased air circulation in classrooms through windows and doors (as feasible).
- Academic field trips that can be conducted safely will be approved.
- Social distancing in classrooms and school will be practiced and encouraged where feasible and practical. (3 feet if possible)
- Schools will continue the procedure at dismissal of loading car riders and drivers first before loading buses (Please see school opening and closing schedules)
- Outside Physical Education activities will take place to the extent possible.
- Mitchell County Schools will stay in contact with the local health department to monitor transmission rates in the county and report to the Board of Education monthly.

Bus Transportation

- Bus drivers will disinfect buses routinely.
- Students will spread out on the bus to the extent possible.

- Bus unloading will be from the front to back.
- Face coverings are required by a CDC federal order (January 29, 2021) on buses.
- Masks will be provided for students that do not have a face covering when boarding the bus.

Cafeteria Procedures

- Thorough handwashing and/or hand sanitizing will be completed prior to meals.
- Lunch periods will be adjusted and seating arrangements to promote student separation as much as possible.
- Student groups may eat in places other than the cafeteria (where feasible and practical) at the discretion of school administration.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of tables will be conducted between lunch periods or after each class is finished.
- Grab and Go Breakfast will be provided (as feasible and practical).

School Nurses and Sick Room

- Every school in the system will have a nurse assigned.
- Students that have a temperature of above 100.4 or exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will be placed in a sick room with a mask available and parents/guardians called.
- Sick rooms will be cleaned thoroughly throughout the day.

Campus Visitors

- Visitors to buildings during normal operating hours will be limited to appointment only. Exceptions will be made for Open House, New Student Orientation, Athletic Events etc.
- Visitors may be asked to complete COVID-19 symptom screening upon entry to the building. (Local Health Department guidance)
- Use of facilities from outside groups may be limited depending on current conditions in the county and school. (Local Health Department guidance)
- Volunteers will be allowed in the building with the same screening procedures as staff.

Student Supports

- Attendance modifications for quarantined students will be made, as necessary, to support students.
- Students will be screened as needed for mental health support and referred to the School Counselors.

Extended Learning Programs (After School)

- After School Programs will begin in Elementary Schools after Labor Day.
- Tutoring Sessions may be scheduled by Individual Teachers or Schools.
- Approved Outside Groups that provide services to students will continue.
- Programs will follow all school safety guidelines.

Athletics

- All athletic teams will follow NCHSAA mandates.
- Updates will be provided by Athletic Directors and Coaches.

Covid-19 Procedures for Confirmed Cases

- If a positive test for COVID-19 occurs in a school with a student or staff member, the district and school (Nurses) will work with the local health department and school nurses will take the lead in notification and contact tracing.
- School staff will maintain confidentiality in accordance with ADA (American Disabilities Act) and HIPAA (Health Insurances Portability and Accountability Act of 1996).
- Students and Staff who are fully vaccinated will not be required to quarantine if they are identified as a close contact.
- Potential school closure will be based on the level of risk as determined by the local health department.
- If the need arises to close schools due to COVID-19, virtual learning will be initiated for impacted students as soon as possible.
- If a closure is needed for intensive cleaning, communication will be provided.
- The Student/Staff with COVID-19 will be allowed to return to school per local health department guidelines.
- Classroom/school/district closures will only occur if significant need warrants the closure by local, state or federal health officials.

Individual school plans will include specifics that are age and space appropriate and may vary from these general district guidelines. As the need lessens, these guidelines will expire allowing programs and procedures to return to normal