

Hinds County School District

An Overview for Redesigning Educational Delivery

SY 2021-2022



Introduction

During the 2020-2021 school year, the leadership of the Hinds County School District (HCSD) worked daily to develop a plan of what the return to school will look and feel like for our students, staff, and families. Ensuring the health and safety of our school community continues to be our top priority as we plan for a full return to in person learning 2021-2022 school year. With this in mind, HCSD's Task Force has thoroughly reviewed the current guidance from state and national public health officials.

We are committed to ensuring health and safety for all of our students, faculty, and staff.

Now that we understand more about COVID-19, our plans have evolved. We continue to be committed to these guiding principles:

- Maintaining the health, wellness, and safety of the entire school community
 - Compliance with recommendations from the CDC and MSDH
 - Preparedness for responding to local, state, and federal orders
- Committing to developing equitable and innovative approaches that meet the academic and social-emotional needs of all students
- Supporting all staff to adapt and respond to the instructional needs of all students
- Sustaining open communication with the HCSD community

As we continue to navigate these uncharted waters due to COVID-19, the district is taking additional steps to support our students, teachers, schools and community. The leadership of the Hinds County School District has outlined these five areas for planning:

- Operations (Encompasses MDE's Health and Safety)
- Academic Programming
- Student, Family, and Staff Support Plan (Encompasses MDE's Family and Community Support & Communications)
- Technology / Learning Management Systems
- Professional Development

Academic Calendar

We will begin the 2021-2022 school year on August 11, 2021 (See *Appendix A* for the board-approved district calendar). If we need to suspend classes due to health and safety conditions, teaching and learning will continue online. For the most updated information, please refer to our COVID-19 webpage on the district website. We look forward to welcoming students and families on the first day of school.

Instructional Continuity

The primary objective of this Instructional Continuity section is to provide guidance and support for continual instruction across each of the scenarios we will face in the Fall of 2021 and beyond, which include:

1. **Scenario #1: Traditional Schedules** will be provided in PK-12th Grade ([All students are attending school in-person](#))
2. **Scenario #2:** A parent may submit a **Distance/ Virtual Learning** application to the district for students deemed by physicians as being "medically fragile". The doctor's note must accompany the application. Applications must be received by the child's school on or before May 14, 2021.

We have included information about the District's communications platform of choice, Google Classroom, which is provided through the HCSD's Google Accounts and accessible through the Clever portal. This technology enables teachers and students to communicate securely. We have also shared information about Zoom Video Conferencing, which will be used for video and audio conferencing. Teachers will use the District's Remind account as a private mobile messaging platform to help teachers, parents, students, and administrators communicate with the entire school community, small groups, or individuals. We have also started to use [Flip Grid](#), which is a tool teachers may use to send brief video messages to students and parents via Remind or Google Classroom.

The District will continue to offer teachers opportunities for professional development in alignment with needs as time, situations, and responses develop.

How will the 2021-2022 schedules look for students?

- **TRADITIONAL IN-PERSON SCHEDULE FOR PK – 12TH GRADE**
 - Attend school 5 full days per week
 - HCSD will follow public health guidelines for safety while students are together in school

How will instructional content be delivered?

Instruction will be provided in the following delivery methods.

TRADITIONAL TEACHER-DIRECTED INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL IN GRADEK PK – 12TH (Via collaboration and communication tools)

- Implementation of the HCSO Instructional Pacing Guides
- In-person instruction daily
- Utilization of Google Classroom as an instructional tool (grades K- 12)
- Use of teacher-selected materials (e.g., digital links, print materials, district-adopted textbooks)
- Instruction provided through district-licensed online content resources (e.g., i-Ready, Waterford, etc.)

What instructional pacing will be followed?

The HCSO Instructional Pacing Guides are written in the traditional face-to-face delivery mode.

Health Protocols

COVID-19 is a disease caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2. The virus is thought to be spread easily from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets. Identifiable symptoms include cough, shortness of breath, fever, new loss of taste or smell, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.

Our parameters and protocols are based upon recommended preventive measures issued from the public health community. Follow these CDC guidelines to protect yourself and others:

- Maintain safe distance from other people.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit. Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.
- Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.
- Take your temperature if symptoms develop.

What types of screening will be implemented?

The HCSO has implemented screening protocols for anyone that enters District buildings, which may include asking questions about symptoms and examining people who appear healthy and asymptomatic. We will also communicate information to parents and employees about the symptoms of COVID-19 and require them to self- screen prior to coming to school. Students and employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 without other obvious explanations are prohibited from coming to school, and, if they do come to school, they will be sent home immediately.

• **Temperature-Based Screening**

HCSO will require employees to take their own temperatures prior to coming to school each day. The District is requesting that parents and students do the same. Student temperatures will be checked prior to their entering the building.

• **Medical Inquiries**

Given the nature of the pandemic, HCSO will make additional medical inquiries of staff and students than we otherwise would have. Please note that federal law typically limits the type of medical inquiries that can be made, but given the nature of the pandemic, more leeway has been given by federal agencies.

What will happen when a student or employee returns to school after exclusion?

- Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC. Currently those guidelines are:

People who have been in [close contact](#) with someone who has COVID-19—excluding people who have had COVID-19 within the past 3 months or [who are fully vaccinated](#).

- People who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months and recovered do not have to quarantine or get tested again as long as they do not develop new symptoms.
- People who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.
- People who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they have been [fully vaccinated](#) against the disease and show no symptoms.

What counts as [close contact](#)?

- You were within 3 feet of someone who has COVID-19 and neither were wearing a mask.
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them)
- You shared eating or drinking utensils
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you

Options to reduce quarantine

Reducing the length of quarantine may make it easier for people to quarantine by reducing the time they cannot work. Options we will consider include stopping quarantine

- After day 10 without testing
- After day 7 after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later)

After stopping quarantine, you should:

- Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
- If you have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.
- Wear a mask, stay at least 3 feet from others, wash your hands, avoid crowds, and take other steps to [prevent the spread of COVID-19](#).

How will students/ staff be separated while in school if exhibiting symptoms?

Each school will have a room or space separate from the nurse's office where students or employees who may have COVID-19 or another communicable disease will wait to be evaluated or for pickup.

What will happen when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school building?

When there is confirmation that a person infected with COVID-19 was in a school building, the building level administrator will notify Central Office immediately. The HCSO will notify parents, students, and employees of close contacts to inform them of the confirmed case of COVID-19.

Are face masks required?

The HCSO will require all employees, students, and visitors to wear masks or face coverings while on school property to minimize spread of COVID-19. In addition, persons who are coughing or sneezing due to reasons other than potential COVID-19 infections (allergies, etc.) may be asked to leave.

Parent Responsibilities

Practice and reinforce good prevention habits with your family

- All children are expected to wear face masks / face coverings, so parents should ensure students wear them to school.
- Wash the students' face masks / face coverings daily to further ensure cleanliness.
- It is advised that parents take their children's temperature before leaving home. School staff will meet students at their cars/buses in order to conduct temperature checks before allowing students to enter the building.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Keep your child at home if sick with any illness.

If your child is sick, keep them at home and contact your healthcare provider.

Safety Protocols

HCSO continues to focus on the health and safety of our school community. We are designing health and safety protocols to minimize the exposure and spread of COVID-19 to students and staff, such as managing student and staff arrivals at school, maintaining safe social distancing, and increasing other healthy habits while in school buildings.

What health and safety measures will be implemented in our schools?

- Jackson Hinds Comprehensive Health Center clinics on each campus - COVID testing is available for staff and students.
- Staff are trained on CDC guidance to reduce likelihood of COVID-19 transmission.
- Conduct temperature checks and health screenings upon arrival for each student and staff daily.
- All students, staff, services providers and visitors will be required to wear a mask/face covering at their own cost. The cover will need to fully cover the mouth and nose.
- Promote frequent 20-second hand washing practices among staff and students.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided and frequently used in each classroom.
- Disinfect commonly used surfaces and areas frequently
- Enhanced nightly cleaning in all schools
- Place tape markings demonstrating 6-foot social distancing in all common areas and walkways
- Identify isolation space for students who do not pass arrival screenings and/or become ill with COVID-19-related symptoms and must wait for parent pick up
- Require students and staff to stay home if they, or anyone in their household, have tested positive for COVID-19 and/or are showing any symptoms
- Bipolar Ionization will be mounted inside the HVAC systems, which has been proven 99.4% effective against SARS-CoV2—the virus that causes COVID-19. This technology cleans the air and surfaces without the use of chemicals, heavy metals or mercury, and produces no harmful by-products such as ozone or ultra-violet light.

Transportation Safety Protocols

The current transportation protocols are outlined below:

- Transportation will be provided and buses will run at full capacity.
- Bus drivers will wear a face mask/covering at all times while driving the bus.
- Face coverings will be mandatory when students enter and during transport.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided on the buses
- Bus drivers will use disinfectant on high touched surfaces after each route.
- Keep windows open at all times or as much as possible

We will also work closely with local after school care programs who will pick up students from school at the end of each day to implement appropriate safety measures. However, it should be noted that all safety measures for children are the responsibility of those facilities after students leave the school campus.

Child Nutrition Safety Protocols

In accordance with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations to ensure safety for students and staff, breakfast and lunch will be offered in the classroom and cafeteria at all HCSD schools for the 2021-2022 school year. Protocols for safe and sanitary meal service will be put in place at all schools. These protocols include:

- Require food service staff to have their temperature checked and go through a health screening each day
- Require food services staff to wear facial coverings and gloves during all food preparation and service
- Sanitize the food serving table prior to, during, and after each meal service

School Health Services Protocol

Jackson Hinds Comprehensive Health Center will operate clinics at each school. Jackson Hinds is dedicated to meeting the health care needs of the school community and will continue serving students, faculty, and staff via in-person and virtual visits.

COVID-19 Testing

- Students, faculty, and staff who develop symptoms of COVID-19 or who have been exposed to someone suspected of or confirmed with COVID-19 should call Jackson Hinds Comprehensive Health Services at **601-362-5321** or contact their medical provider immediately. At Jackson Hinds Comprehensive Health Services, a provider will assess and determine if you need to be tested at the clinic.
- You will be asked to quarantine until you receive your test results from a Health Care provider. You will be given instructions for what to expect next along with CDC guidance for at home care.

Reporting COVID-19 Positive Cases

- Parents must report positive tests to principal.
- The District COVID-19 Response Task Force will be activated to communicate with the appropriate campus departments to ensure that proper safety precautions, including but not limited to, contact tracing, isolation procedures, and disinfecting of workspaces/departments can be conducted.
- The anonymity and confidentiality of persons with COVID-19 will be protected, and their identity will not be disclosed publicly.

Travel Protocol

All school-affiliated international and domestic air travel is prohibited until further notice. This information will be updated as CDC guidance changes.

Athletics / Extracurricular Activities Protocol

Athletics planning has expanded to focus on events, based on guidance from the CDC, MSDH, state and local authorities, and other government agencies. Athletics is working hard to ensure our stadiums can accommodate student athletes, fans, and game personnel while adhering to the recommendations by experts.

*Students who enroll under the Distance Learning/Virtual option will not participate in extracurricular activities.

Communication Protocol

Throughout this process, hearing from multiple viewpoints has been a priority, and sustaining open communication with the HCSD community is one of our guiding principles. We have received valuable feedback from stakeholders through surveys, phone calls, and planning communities. We will continue to encourage parents, teachers, students, and community members to share their concerns and ideas with us throughout this process. We recognize as we learn more about COVID-19 and our guidelines from local, state and federal agencies change, so may our plans for the 2021-2022 school year.

Our Hotline will remain open to receive your questions and feedback. As the virus and guidelines change, we will adjust to keep our community safe. For the most updated information, please refer to our [COVID-19](#) webpage. We will continue to use the Remind app as a means of communicating two-way messages to parents as well as sending short videos and messages to students as warranted.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) / <http://www.cdc.gov>