

TALBOT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board Approved August 12, 2020

TCPS RECOVERY



OUR PLAN TO
RE-OPEN
SCHOOLS



Recovery Plan: School Opening 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	<u>2</u>
SCHOOL SAFETY AND OPERATIONS	
Overview.....	<u>6</u>
School Operations	<u>7</u>
Safety & Protection of Students	<u>10</u>
Dealing with Illness	<u>11</u>
Maintaining a Healthy Environment	<u>12</u>
Student Services	<u>13</u>
Extracurricular Activities	<u>15</u>
Food Service Safety Measures	<u>16</u>
Athletics	<u>18</u>
Student Transportation	<u>22</u>
INSTRUCTION	
Overview.....	<u>24</u>
Continuity of Learning.....	<u>25</u>
Technology.....	<u>25</u>
Assessment, Curriculum, and Scheduling Considerations.....	<u>26</u>
Social Emotional Well-being.....	<u>27</u>
Monitor Progress and Grading.....	<u>28</u>
Return to School Models	
Remote Synchronous Learning (Stage 1 Red).....	<u>29</u>
Blended Synchronous Learning (Stage 2 & 3 Yellow & Orange).....	<u>32</u>
In-Person Synchronous Learning (Stage 3 Green).....	<u>35</u>
Assessment/Learning Plan.....	<u>36</u>
Attendance.....	<u>38</u>
Curriculum and Digital Tools.....	<u>39</u>
Equity and Access.....	<u>39</u>
ESMEC Blended Virtual Program.....	<u>45</u>
COMMUNICATIONS	
Overview.....	<u>46</u>
APPENDIX	



P.O. Box 1029
Easton, MD 21601
Phone: (410) 822-0330

July 2020

MESSAGE FROM DR. KELLY GRIFFITH, TCPS SUPERINTENDENT

As schools abruptly closed on March 13th, we worked swiftly to set up operations for feeding children, identifying sheltering locations for children of essential employees, sanitizing our school buildings thoroughly, and developing virtual learning opportunities for our children. Through a collaborative effort by many educators, we rolled out our initial Continuity of Learning guidance to parents, staff, and students on March 30th. Broad parameters were taken from MSDE and transformed into powerful learning opportunities for our students in less than two weeks which is nothing short of extraordinary. From the start, we have known that our plan would evolve as our circumstances did. With the news that our remote learning efforts would continue for the remainder of the school year we moved forward with some additional components to support our Continuity of Learning plan.

Now is the time to address the eventual reopening of schools, with the understanding that the safety, health, and well-being of students and staff remain a priority. Every facet of the school may have to be altered to maintain social distancing including transportation, extra-curricular activities, schedules, and building logistics. As the risk management of COVID-19 evolves, we totally understand while risks cannot be eliminated, they can be reduced. The school system's response will also need to evolve until a vaccine or treatment is available.

The Maryland Together: Recovery Plan for Education and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to provide guidelines as we work to create and to assemble this TCPS Recovery Plan. We must first begin by understanding that synchronous learning is crucial for each child to have their needs met. Equity considerations are even more paramount as we design various models of instructional delivery. Access to learning materials, technology devices, connectivity, nutrition, and additional supports will be reviewed and addressed on an equitable basis. Communication with parents and wrap around services must also be consistent and prioritized during this time.

This TCPS Recovery Plan will remain fluid as we monitor the COVID-19 situation daily. To say that this upcoming school year has presented unique challenges for our school district would be an understatement. In light of all that has taken place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the support of the community truly is more important than ever. We appreciate everyone's patience and vote of confidence as we work together to provide a high-quality education and support services for our children. We will be ready for the 2020-2021 school year whatever may come our way! That is my commitment to our community!

Kelly L. Griffith, Ed.D.

Talbot County Public Schools Board of Education

Juanita Hopkins, Esq., President
Michael Garman, Vice President
Susan DeLean-Botkin
Emily Jackson
April Motovidlak
Otis Sampson
Mary Wheeler
Zoe Pochron, EHS Student Board Member
Hannah Seek, SMHS Student Board Member

The Talbot County Board of Education is committed to promoting the worth and dignity of all individuals. The Board will not tolerate nor condone any act of bias, discrimination, insensitivity, or disrespect toward any person on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion, socio-economic status, sex, ancestry, marital status, gender identity, genetic information or disabling condition. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Title IX/504 Coordinator, 12 Magnolia Street Easton, MD 21601, 410-822-0330.

Talbot County Public Schools Work Groups:

Operational & Safety

Lynne Duncan, Chair
Kevin Shafer, Operations
Darlene Spurrier, Student Services
Donald Cooper, Safety
Eugenia Lewis, Transportation
Liz Whitby, Talbot Health County Department

Instructional

Helga Einhorn, Chair

Elementary Group:

Christine Davis, ESOL, World Language
Sherry Sutton, Gifted & Talented
Tracy Elzey, Math K-8
Liz Haslup, Early Childhood, ELA PreK-5
James Redman, Fine Arts, Title I
Indra Bullock, Principal, SMES
Lisa Devaric, Principal, EES

Secondary Group:

Rachel Strang, Social Studies K-12
Bill Keswick, Science, Health & PE K-12
Shannon Beatty, ELA 6-12
Kristin Mentges, Special Education
Lee Neild, Math 9-12
Robin Werner, CTE, LAC
Jodi Colman, Principal, EMS
Theresa Vener, Principal, SMMHS

Communication

Kelly Griffith, Chair
Debbie Gardner
Charlene Gould
Sally Moore

The goals of the work groups:

- To identify and address the “non-negotiables” from MSDE Recovery Plan (pages 5-12) in each work group. <http://marylandpublicschools.org/newsroom/Documents/MSDERecoveryPlan.pdf>
- To establish consistent protocols for operations and safety.
- To develop models of learning for various stages and scenarios. These models must include for a full course load and supportive services.
- To include stakeholder feedback on draft plan before taking to the Board in July 2020.
- To formulate a communication strategy with stakeholders and the larger community via surveys or meetings during the summer of 2020.

TCPS Recovery Stakeholder Committee

Certified Staff

Andy Burke, President of TCEA (EHS)
Katie Curry (EHS)
Tish Blessing (WMES)
David Cherry (EHS and TOY 2020)
Trish Weise (SMES)
Charlene DeShields (EES)
Angie Nestel (SMMHS)

Support Staff

Tonya Hayman, TCEA Support Staff (EMS)
Sindy Reyes (EES)
Tasha Aikens (EHS and SSOY 2020)

Building Administrators

Theresa Vener, Principal (SMMHS)
Jodi Colman, Principal (EMS)
Kim Seidel, Principal (WMES)

TCPS Board member

Emily Jackson

TCPS Parents

Sarah Mosslih (EHS)
Paola Arguello (EES/WMES)
Jill Sherwood (EMS)
Erinne Lewis (EMS)
Leah Schultz (TES)
Ayonna Hayman (SMES)
Megan McDaniel (SMES/SMMHS)
Lyn Brennan (SMMHS)
Terry Fike (CDES)

TCPS Students

Hannah Seek (TCPS Board, SMHS)
Zoe Pochron (TCPS Board, EHS)
Andre Davis (SMHS – Jr. Class Pres.)
Tyler Redman(EHS – BEST Pres.)

Community Members

Pete Leshar (TCC Liaison)
Marlene Thomas (SM Daycare)
Cristy Morell (Critchlow Adkins)
Laura Heikes (Ed Foundation Chair & Shore United Bank)
Matthew Peters (CHESMRC)
Deborah Short (BAAM)
John Horner (EU)
Marilyn Neal (Neighborhood Service Center)
Brandy Frampton (TAYA Representative)

The responsibilities of the Stakeholder Committee:

- To familiarize yourself with the Maryland Recovery Plan;
- To analyze data from parent survey;
- To review draft from work group, and;
- To provide feedback to the Chairs for a plan to be presented to the Board of Education in July 2020.

Timeline of Implementation

- **Week of June 8th** – Research surrounding state and county surveys then develop a parent survey to obtain data for planning.
- **Week of June 15th** – Survey Parents and start with an internal workgroup to prepare a framework.
- **Week of June 22nd** - Schedule for Stakeholder Committee google call about Parent survey results and structure of recovery planning.
- **Week of June 29th** - Create a draft to send out to the Stakeholder Committee for consideration and ask for comments to be sent prior to the meeting.
- **Week of July 6th** – Schedule a second Stakeholder Committee meeting with Work Group Chairs to provide additional feedback.
- **Week of July 13th** – Work Groups fine tune a plan for re-opening in the fall for the Board to review on July 15th.
- **Weeks of July 20th and 27th** – Continue to receive feedback on the plan from the community.
- **Week of August 3rd** – Revisions made to Draft for Board to review for the August 12th meeting.

STAGE 2 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING SCHOOLS IN MARYLAND



Local School System: Talbot County Public Schools

Directions: Please check the box for completion. For each item, please indicate the link and/or page number(s) where the item can be found in the Plan.

Check for Completion	Requirement	Link to the item and/or page number(s) in the Plan
	1. Recovery plan is complete and posted to the website.	Yes
	2. Equity plan is reflected throughout the local recovery plan.	Pages: 13, 14, 26, 27, 32, 35, 38, 39
	3. Membership of the Recovery Plan Stakeholder Group is posted.	Page: 4
	4. Method for determination of where students are instructionally, identification of the gaps in learning, and the path for instructional success and recovery is explained.	Page: 26, 27
	5. Explanation provided that MD College and Career Ready Standards PreK-12 are taught in all content areas and state frameworks are followed for each content.	Page: 27
	6. Guidance that schools must follow the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is included.	Appendix
	7. Procedures for an individual who tests positive for COVID-19 are described.	Pages: 9, 10, 11
	8. Safety protocols for collection of materials, cleaning of schools and other facilities, daily cleaning, and nutrition are described.	Pages: 7, 8, 16
	9. Protocols for the safe transportation of students to and from schools are described.	Pages: 22
	10. System for tracking attendance when students are engaged in distance learning is described.	Page: 13, 38
	11. Plan for communication is included.	Pages: 46
	12. Utilization of COVID-19 checklist in the development of the recovery plan is described.	Pages: 5 and 6
	13. Roadmap forward for interscholastic athletics and activities is posted.	Pages: 18



Recovery Plan: School Safety and Operations

OVERVIEW

Talbot County Public Schools (TCPS) Safety and Operations staff has developed this recovery and re-opening plan with the primary objective of providing for the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff as they begin to return to our school facilities during the current recovery stage (Stage 2 - Yellow). The TCPS plan is also meant to adhere to and align with the guidance provided by the Maryland State Department of Education's, Maryland Together Recovery Plan, the Talbot County Health Department, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

TCPS and our local stakeholders have taken significant time to develop and review this working document that provides a framework for the return of our staff and students, while considering the changing landscape surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. As TCPS moves forward to the start of our school year and the return of students and staff, this plan will remain fluid so as to meet the evolving circumstances. If the Governor's Office, in conjunction with the State Superintendent, moves into the next recovery stage (Stage 3), TCPS will adhere to the guidance that is given at that time.

In summary, the TCPS leadership team and stakeholder committee members respectfully submit this document that outlines our plan to manage the safe re-opening of our school operations and look forward to the feedback resulting from the review process.

The following plan provides District Guidelines. Individual schools will determine class schedules and all building logistics.

SCHOOL SAFETY AND OPERATIONS ACTION PLANS

TCPS COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN SCHOOL OPERATIONS

The following action plans are meant to provide TCPS families assurance regarding the implementation of facility management and cleaning protocols that will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff during the COVID-19 epidemic. The following safety protocols are meant to adhere to and align with the requirements and recommendations associated with the Maryland State Department of Education's, MARYLAND TOGETHER Recovery Plan, which includes guidance from Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Maryland Department of Health:

SCHOOL OPERATIONS		
Topic:	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan:
Classroom Capacity with Social Distancing - Student to Teacher Ratio	Consider modified classroom layouts that allow for six (6) feet between seats, when applicable.	TCPS is currently planning for a maximum operational capacity of 50% at the start of the school year. With that plan in mind, all of our facilities would be adapted to have each classroom operate with a socially distanced capacity of between twelve (12) and fifteen (15) occupants, depending on the specific building and classrooms. Classrooms will be arranged in a grid pattern to provide one directional seating with 6' between desks when possible. The TCPS plan to require age appropriate students to wear face coverings would allow for larger class sizes (beyond the 6' social distancing recommendation), if needed to accommodate the 50% student return rate. (appx. pp. 33)
Cleaning of Facilities	Implement strategies to maintain healthy environments through appropriate cleaning measures, including the cleaning of high traffic surfaces more frequently.	TCPS is planning to provide additional daytime custodial staff to implement the necessary cleaning of high traffic surfaces (e.g., door handles, sinks, railings, etc.). Consistently throughout the school day, TCPS will utilize COVID-19 rated cleaning products across all of our facilities. Through our standard cleaning processes, the appropriate chemical application, and the purchase of innovative cleaning equipment, our custodial staff will be capable of cleaning all the necessary surfaces each evening, after the school day. TCPS will also provide our staff the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to utilize while applying the necessary chemicals to disinfect all areas of our school buildings. Guidance from the Talbot County Health Department will be considered if enhanced cleaning is required due to situational changes surrounding COVID-19.
Cleaning of Facilities - Chemical Storage	Ensure safe storage of cleaning and disinfectant products.	Cleaning and disinfectant chemicals used in our school buildings will be stored in a secure locations (custodial closets), which are always locked and only accessible by staff.
Lockers and Cubbies	Consider avoiding the use of student lockers and cubbies.	TCPS will not allow students to utilize lockers or cubbies. Students will be required to utilize backpacks at all grade levels.
Entering and Exiting School Buildings	Develop and implement a plan to encourage social distancing when students enter and exit the building.	Administrative staff at each building will develop a plan that will utilize various tools (building layout, schedule, school communities, etc.) To encourage social distancing when entering and exiting the building.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS		
Topic:	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary)	TCPS Action Plan:
Face Coverings (Staff)	All staff members are required to wear face coverings. Please refer to Appendix #90 for additional information.	TCPS staff members are required to wear face coverings throughout the school day. Individuals should be frequently reminded to not touch the face covering and be provided information on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
Face Coverings (Student)	All students are required to wear face coverings. Please refer to Appendix #90 for additional information.	All students will be required to wear a face covering while on school grounds. Special exceptions will be made for students on an individual basis.
Hand Sanitizer	Encourage students to wash hands or use hand sanitizer frequently throughout the school day. Provide hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) to support healthy hygiene behaviors.	Appropriate hand sanitizer will be available at all TCPS buildings. Hand sanitizer stations will be placed strategically throughout the common areas of the school buildings, and teachers will be provided hand sanitizer bottles for their classrooms. Frequent hand washing will also be encouraged and appropriate posters will be placed throughout the building to emphasize hand washing protocols.
HVAC Systems	Ensure building mechanical systems are functioning properly to ensure appropriate ventilation.	As part of the TCPS comprehensive maintenance plan, the TCPS maintenance department will ensure that all building mechanical systems, including the HVAC systems, will function properly to allow for appropriate airflow in all school buildings. TCPS will provide HVAC equipment filters with the greatest Minimum Efficiency Rating Value (MERV) allowed by the product specifications, which will vary by system..
Physical Barriers (sneeze guards)	Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart (e.g., reception desks).	Physical barriers will be installed in all main office/reception areas to protect our staff, students, and visitors.
Shared Objects	Consider methods that will reduce the use of shared objects within the school building.	TCPS will require teachers to minimize the items in their classrooms that would be considered shared, and TCPS will utilize available resources to provide for those instructional tools that are required, and implement the necessary cleaning regimen. (e.g., gym equipment, art supplies, electronic devices, etc.)
Staff Illness (during the work day)	Develop and implement a plan to accommodate staff that become ill during the work day.	Please refer to the "Safety and Protection of Students/Staff" section for the associated information.
Student Illness (during the school day)	Develop and implement a plan for a student illness during the school day.	Please refer to the "Safety and Protection of Students/Staff" section for the associated information.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS		
Topic:	Maryland State Public Health Guidance	TCPS Action Plan:
Student Transitions & Physical Guides	Develop and implement a plan that will minimize interactions during student transition times.	TCPS will require School Administrations to develop a plan that considers only allowing one-way traffic through certain portions of their buildings. In addition, the use of floor markings that designate walk areas that encourage social distancing will also be implemented (appx. pp. 47). A formal evaluation has been completed for each school and an individual plan has been developed that addresses the specific safety needs, relating to transitioning within the building.
Symptom Screening (Staff)	Staff should be screened for temperature prior to active duty.	Immediately upon entering the building and before reporting to designated work assignment, all staff will be screened for temperature.
Symptom Screening (Student)	Student health screenings should be considered by each jurisdiction.	TCPS is currently considering a process that will require students to be temperature checked prior to entering the school building. Due to a number of complicating factors surrounding student safety, this process will be implemented after further consultation with the Talbot County Health Department.
Water Fountains	Encourage staff and students to bring their own water bottles to avoid use of common area fountains, and disinfect the fountains regularly.	TCPS will be capping the bubbler on each of our common area water fountain stations and installing a bottle filler function in an effort to prevent the spread of infection. All water sources for consumption within our school buildings will be flushed appropriately prior to school occupation.
Windows/Doors	Consider allowing windows and doors open to allow greater airflow, so long as doing so does not pose a safety risk.	TCPS plans to allow teachers to open the windows in their classrooms if the weather permits. Exterior doors cannot be opened without creating a safety risk for the building occupants.

TCPS COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF STUDENTS/STAFF

PREPARING FOR AND ACTION WHEN STAFF, STUDENTS OR FAMILY MEMBERS BECOME ILL

The following protocols are meant to adhere to and align with the requirements and recommendations associated with the Maryland State Department of Education's Maryland Recovery Plan, the CDC, and The Talbot County Health Department. The following action plans are designed to secure the safety and protection of students and staff in the educational setting who may have come in contact with someone confirmed to have Covid-19, may be exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19, or have tested positive for Covid-19 (*Special note: All TCPS nurses are employees of the Talbot County Health Department (TCHD)).

SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF STUDENTS/STAFF PREPARING FOR AND ACTION WHEN STAFF, STUDENTS OR FAMILY MEMBERS BECOME ILL		
Topic:	Maryland State Public Health Guidance	Talbot County Health Department/Talbot County Public Schools Action Plan
Students or Staff present without symptoms but were in contact with person diagnosed with Covid-19.	Remain home 14 days from point of contact before returning to work/school unless testing positive for Covid-19. Appendix #89	School Based Staff - If already home, remain there and report results to appropriate administrator immediately •If at work, report situation to appropriate administrator and return home immediately • Participate in distance learning or working from home if applicable. Talbot County Education Center Staff •If already home, remain there (contact supervisor). •If at work, return home immediately. •Human Resources will notify Talbot County Health Department and follow their procedures. All staff participate in distance learning or working from home if applicable. Student • If already at home, remain there (parent contacts school) •In school: If appropriate wear face mask •Move student to predesignated area in nurses's office or other designated area. Remain 6' apart. •Call parent to pick up immediately •Staff not to transport student home. Participate in distance learning while home. •When exposure to a positive case occurs, the appropriate supervisor/administrator is responsible for contacting the Health Department immediately. The Health Department is then responsible for proceeding with the necessary Contact Tracing. Any student or staff member who is determined to have been a close contact of the positive case will be notified as soon as reasonably possible. •Please reference the Talbot County Health Department for additional information: https://health.maryland.gov/talbotcounty/Pages/home.aspx
Student or Staff report that they have tested positive for Covid-19 less than 10 days ago	The person should stay home at least 10 days since the symptoms first appeared AND until no fever is present for at least 24 hours without medication AND improvement of other symptoms. Appendix #90	School Based Staff - If already home, remain there and report results to appropriate administrator immediately •If at work, report result to appropriate administrator and return home immediately • Participate in distance learning or working from home if applicable. TCEC Staff - If already home, remain there (contact Supervisor) •If at work, return home immediately and contact supervisor • All staff participate in distance learning or working from home if applicable. Student - If already at home, remain there •Parent(s) should contact school immediately upon receiving test results •Move student to predesignated area in nurses's office or other designated area. Remain 6' apart. •Call parent to pick up immediately •Staff is not to transport student home. •Participate in distance learning while home. Please see Guidance on Interpreting Covid-19 test results (appx. pp. 53) • When a positive case occurs, the appropriate supervisor/administrator is responsible for contacting the Health Department immediately. The Health Department will then proceed with the necessary Contact Tracing. Any student or staff member who is determined to have been a close contact of the positive case will be notified as soon as reasonably possible. •Please reference the Talbot County Health Department for additional information: https://health.maryland.gov/talbotcounty/Pages/home.aspx

SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF STUDENTS/STAFF PREPARING FOR AND ACTION WHEN STAFF, STUDENTS OR FAMILY MEMBERS BECOME ILL		
Topic:	Maryland State Public Health Guidance	Talbot County Health Department/Talbot County Public Schools Action Plan
Staff or Student exhibits the symptoms of COVID-19:	If staff or student is not tested but has had symptoms, they can return to work/school under the following conditions: • at least 3 days (72 hrs) have passed since no fever without the use of fever reducing medication and: improvement in symptoms and: at least 10 days have passed since symptoms began. • If student or staff has negative Covid-19 test they may return to work/school once there is no fever without the use of fever reducing medications and have felt well for 24 hours.	Symptoms of COVID-19 or like illness include the following criteria: new onset of shortness of breath; OR at least two of the following: fever of 100.4 or higher, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, headache, loss of sense of taste or smell, and gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea) School Based Staff •If already home, remain there (contact appropriate administrator). •If at school, apply mask (if not already wearing one), report illness to appropriate administrator, and go home immediately and seek medical care. (Do not report to nurse's office. Can call for advice.) •If not well enough, isolate until able to get home or to medical assistance •The appropriate administrator will notify the school nurse for possible preliminary contact tracing. • Close off and ventilate area used by sick staff member, wait 24 hours then clean and disinfect. •All staff participate in distance learning or working from home if applicable. TCEC Staff •If already home, remain there (contact appropriate supervisor). •If at work, apply mask (if not already wearing one), report illness to appropriate supervisor, and go home immediately. •If not well enough, isolate in designated area until able to get home or receive medical assistance. •Close off and ventilate area used by sick staff member, wait 24 hours then clean and disinfect. •All staff participate in distance learning or working from home if applicable. Student • If already at home, remain there (parent contacts school). •Isolate student in predetermined area with supervision while remaining 6' away. •Arrange transportation home (not TCPS vehicle) • Close off and ventilate area used by student. Wait 24 hours to clean and disinfect, if applicable •Participate in distance learning while home. TCHD will advise on the need for testing based on the specific situation. If student tests positive then refer to the positive test section for more information.
Staff's children (families) become sick with COVID-19 symptoms, test positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case.	Advise not to come to school and immediately contact Human Resources.	HR will notify contact person at the TCHD and follow their procedures. When a positive case occurs, the Health Department is then responsible for and proceeding with the necessary Contact Tracing. Any student or staff member who is determined to have been a close contact of the positive case will be notified immediately, or as soon as reasonably possible.
Staff or students hesitant to report for work/school due to underlying health conditions.		Each case will be considered on an individual basis. Staff will contact the HR Department. Students will be referred to the Student Services Department.
*In accordance with State and Local Laws and Regulations, school administration will notify the appropriate health officials, staff, and families immediately of any case of Covid-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the American Disability Act (ADA). TCPS will follow the instructions from the local health department for all matters regarding quarantine, exclusion, and return to school for persons with a positive test for COVID-19 and those who had close contact with the COVID-19 like illness.		

TCPS COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN

SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF STUDENTS/STAFF

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF STUDENTS AND STAFF- MAINTAINING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT		
Topic:	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan:
Social Distancing	Ensure sufficient social distancing with at least 6' between people at all times in school buildings and on school buses/vans. Limit number of people in any given room or vehicle to no more than 50% capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Mark waiting area, classrooms, rest rooms, etc. To keep people 6' apart. •Limit visitors to building •Monitor and restrict to only necessary movement of students. • Frequently remind students to stay 6' apart.
Reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus by the contamination of the persons eyes, nose and mouth.	Wearing a face cover is required to prevent the spread of Covid-19. It is especially important when a 6' distance between people can't be maintained. Droplets from a persons cough, sneeze, or breathing can travel through the air. Wear a face mask and don't touch your face. When removing a mask, pull it away from the face by grasping the ear loops and fold the outside corners together. Do not touch the surface of the mask. If the mask is cloth, wash it in the washing machine with other clothing using regular detergent on warmest appropriate setting. Masks may also be soaked in a bleach solution of 4 teaspoons per quart of water for 5 minutes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Check temps of all staff entering the building. • All staff are required to wear a face covering. •All students are required to wear a face covering (with special exceptions on an individual basis). •Masks should be used on buses, vans, inside and outside of school building. •TCPS will provide masks to those who need them.
Reducing the spread of infection through touch.	The covid-19 virus can remain on a surface up to 72 hours.	Limit the use of shared objects, e.g. Physical Education equipment, art supplies, toys and games. Keep children's belongings separate. Don't share electronic devices, toys, books, games or learning aides. Have students use book bags rather than lockers.
*Safe Schools has videos available for staff that address PPE, cleaning and disinfecting your workplace, managing stress and anxiety and transition to a remote work force.		

TCPS COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN

STUDENT SERVICES

The following action plans are meant to provide Talbot County Public School families assurance regarding the implementation of response protocols that will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff during the COVID-19 epidemic. The following safety protocols are meant to adhere to and align with the requirements and recommendations associated with the Maryland State Department of Education's, MARYLAND TOGETHER Recovery Plan, which includes guidance from Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Maryland Department of Health:

STUDENT SERVICES		
Topic:	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan:
Academic and School Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with student scheduling • Monitor Student attendance and intervene as needed • Provide audience for post secondary planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Counselors will provide whole and small group sessions to address the adjusted learning environments, tips for success in those environments, and skill development for learning in those adjusted environments. • School counselors will register/enroll and transfer students as needed. • School counselors, Pupil Personnel Workers, and Social Workers will provide individual case management for students and monitor academic success/needs and progress toward graduation. • High School Counselors will assist students with various processes that include, but are not limited to: college search, scholarship applications, college applications, post-secondary planning, career exploration, and dual enrollment. • Dropout Prevention & Re-engagement Specialists will provide case management of progress toward graduation for targeted population of students. • School Counselors will facilitate Multi Level Intervention Plan meetings to address academic concerns for students through a process that involves tiered interventions. • Student Services staff will provide wrap around services to students to assist with the return to school, and the development of coping/resiliency skills needed to successfully respond to circumstances resulting from COVID 19.
Attendance	Recording and monitoring student attendance, and intervening with student attendance issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we return to school as normal, students' attendance will be recorded as normal. • If we return to school in a 100% virtual manner (asynchronous), students' attendance will be recorded by documenting student access and use of the learning management system. • If we return to school in a 100% virtual manner (synchronous), students' attendance will be recorded as normal for physical attendance. • If we return to school in some type of hybrid manner (virtual and physical), students' attendance will be recorded using a combination of the above methods. School staff, school counselors, and PPW's will monitor and intervene with student attendance issues as outlined in TCPS policy and procedure.
Family Supports	Support families as needed in a variety of ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Personnel Workers and School Social Workers will work with families to address the needs of the whole family and access necessary services as needed. • Pupil Personnel Workers and School Social Workers will conduct limited home visits as necessary to meet the needs of students and families. • They will Strategically address the needs specific to our special populations that include, but are not limited to: McKinney-Vento, Foster Care, Informal Kinship, and Home/Hospital Instruction.

STUDENT SERVICES		
Topic:	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan:
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School counselors will provide age appropriate classroom guidance lessons to address various student needs • Build student skills for coping and resiliency • Provide whole group, small group and individual counseling as necessary. • Refer students to community agency resources as needed. • Work with administrators to plan for sudden school closures. • Collaborate and consult with staff to meet student needs. • Assist staff in accessing resources to meet their own needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Counselors will facilitate Multi Level Intervention Plan meetings to address any student concern, develop appropriate interventions, and make referrals to outside agencies as needed. • Mental Health Coordinator will facilitate referrals to community agencies for care, and assist parents with management of insurance coverage. • Mental Health Coordinator will assist student services staff with assessment for threat or suicide. • School counselors, Pupil Personnel Workers and School Social Workers will consult with staff and administrators to assess the individual needs of students and access the resources to meet those needs. • School Counselors will provide whole and small group sessions as needed to address student issues that include, but are not limited too: mindfulness, trauma, coping skills, and resiliency. • School Counselors will coordinate Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons with classroom teachers using the Second Step program. • Pupil Personnel Workers and Social Workers will monitor students as they return to school and provide follow up to parent concerns.
Transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold virtual meetings for transitions • Share transitioning materials • Collaborate among schools for transitioning • Conduct student sessions to assist with preparing for transitions • Prepare to offer building tours and meetings when safe to do so. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Counselors and Pupil Personnel Workers will hold virtual transition meetings among staff to assist with students moving to new schools (rising 6th and 9th graders). The purpose of the meetings will be to facilitate the transfer of information necessary for student to meet success in new school. • School Counselors will meet with students (in person or virtually) to facilitate the transition to a new school, answer any questions, address an concerns, and problem solve any issues related to transition. • School Counselors will conduct building tours virtually or in person. • School Counselors will conduct parent information sessions virtually.

TCPS COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The following action plans are meant to provide Talbot County Public School families assurance regarding the implementation of extracurricular activity protocols that will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff during the COVID-19 epidemic. The following action plans are meant to adhere to and align with the requirements and recommendations associated with the Maryland State Department of Education's, MARYLAND TOGETHER Recovery Plan, which includes guidance from Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Maryland Department of Health:

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES		
TOPIC	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan
Out of School Time for Clubs and Organizations	Ensure sufficient social distancing with at least 6' between people at all times in school buildings and on school buses/vans. Limit number of people in any given room or vehicle to no more than 50% capacity.	TCPS is still considering the appropriateness of allowing in person after school clubs and organizational meetings. Virtual meetings will be encouraged and in person meetings must follow the "Safety and Protection of Students and Staff" section protocols, specifically the social distancing guidance (pp. 2). Sponsors must consider how all students can participate if attending on A days/B days schedule, since all students will not be on campus at the same time.
Band Performances	Ensure sufficient social distancing with at least 6' between people at all times in school buildings and on school buses/vans. Limit number of people in any given room or vehicle to no more than 50% capacity.	TCPS is recommending a virtual performance option until which time social distancing and the wearing of masks is no longer required. When possible, performances will be recorded in advance and allow for at-home viewing/streaming. The following guidelines will pertain to any in-person band performances: reduced performance times, e-tickets and online ticket sales only, staggered check-in times, extended arrival time for audience, publicize safety and protection protocols in advance of the performance, ask audience and band performers to adhere to the precautions, social distance performers across the entire stage, provide appropriate isolation around each performer.
Choral Performances	Ensure sufficient social distancing with at least 6' between people at all times in school buildings and on school buses/vans. Limit number of people in any given room or vehicle to no more than 50% capacity.	TCPS is recommending a virtual performance option until which time social distancing and the wearing of masks is no longer required. When possible, performances will be recorded in advance and allow for at-home viewing/streaming. The following guidelines will pertain to any in-person band performances: reduced performance times, e-tickets and online ticket sales only, staggered check-in times, extended arrival time for audience, publicize safety and protection protocols in advance of the performance, ask audience and band performers to adhere to the precautions, social distance performers across the entire stage, provide appropriate isolation around each performer.
Theatrical Performances	Ensure sufficient social distancing with at least 6' between people at all times in school buildings. Limit number of people in any given room to no more than 50% capacity.	TCPS is recommending that theatrical performances be placed on hold until health concern restrictions have been relaxed by the CDC, the Maryland Department of Health, and the Talbot County Health Department.

TCPS COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN

FOOD SERVICE SAFETY

The following action plans are meant to provide Talbot County Public School families assurance regarding the implementation of food and nutrition operations, that will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff during the COVID-19 epidemic. The following safety protocols are meant to adhere to and align with the requirements and recommendations associated with the Maryland State Department of Education's, MARYLAND TOGETHER Recovery Plan, which includes guidance from Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Maryland Department of Health:

FOOD SERVICE SAFETY		
TOPIC	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan
Meals - Children Bring Their Own	Have children bring their own meals as feasible.	Children are allowed to bring their own meals with a no sharing policy strictly enforced.
Meals - Children Purchase at School	Serve individually plated meals in classrooms instead of in a communal dining hall or cafeteria, while ensuring the safety of children with food allergies.	Food service will prepare and label meals for those students with dietary restrictions. Before school resumes teachers and school leaders shall review food allergy and 504 plans for all children with food allergies. Classroom teachers would need to ensure that individual students receive their assigned meal with a no sharing policy strictly enforced. Lunches provided in the classroom would be served in closed disposable containers.
Disinfect Surfaces	Disinfect surfaces after food contact is made.	If students are required to eat in their classrooms, TCPS staff will disinfect desks after meals. If students are permitted to eat in the cafeteria, food service staff would disinfect all food service areas between each lunch. A no touch POS system will be implemented, providing students with a bar code scan card. Physical barriers will be installed between servers and cashiers.
Disposable Food Service Items	Use disposable food service items.	TCPS will only utilize disposable products including closed disposable containers for food and utensils.
Drinking Fountains	Drinking fountains should be cleaned and sanitized, but encourage staff and students to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains.	TCPS will be capping the bubbler on each of our common area water fountain stations and installing a bottle filler function in an effort to prevent the spread of infection. All water sources for consumption within our school buildings will be flushed appropriately prior to school occupation.
Enhanced Sanitation Measures	Address enhanced sanitation measures related to student meals service, including student hand washing, appropriate sanitation measures for touch-contact surfaces used by students during meal service in schools (such as point of service touch pads, tables and chairs, carts used in transportation, etc).	TCPS will encourage students to wash their hands prior to eating. Free standing touchless hand sanitizers need to be placed at each serving line if served in the cafeteria. If served in the classroom each space will have a hand washing or hand sanitizer station available for students. If visiting the cafeteria all lines would be cleaned and sanitized between each lunch/class. The POS would be touchless as we would provide a scan card for students to use. If allowed to sit in the cafeteria TCPS custodial staff would have to clean and sanitize tables between each lunch/class. If meals are served in the classroom all equipment and carts utilized will be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

FOOD SERVICE SAFETY		
TOPIC	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan
Face Coverings (staff)	Required that staff wear face coverings.	Sodexo will provide all employees two cloth face coverings and will have disposable masks if needed. Please refer to the "Safety and Protection of Student/Staff" section for additional guidance.
Feeding Students - Distance Learning or Altered Schedule	Develop plan to provide school meals to students not attending school.	TCPS will develop a meal pickup plan at each of our schools for those students taking part in distance learning or are not attending due to an altered school schedule.
Food Offered at Any Event	If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee instead of a buffet or family style meal.	TCPS sponsored events that require meals will be provided in closed disposable containers.
Food Safety Protocols	Food Safety protocols and staff training, modified package, and sanitation.	The TCPS food service contractor, Sodexo, has a very rigorous food and environmental safety program. Sodexo has policies and procedures pertaining to employee safety requirements surrounding COVID 19. Sodexo began using closed containers for many of our food products at the end of February and March. Sodexo ensures all food is served in closed disposable containers. Sodexo has trained current staff to clean and disinfect and would continue to train any additional staff that return.
Food Service Model	Feasibility for food service model shift from traditional cafeteria line model to other potential models.	TCPS will implement a food service model that is dictated by the requirements associated with the pandemic at the time of re-opening schools.
Food Supply Chain/ Logistics and Operation	Address capacity factors such as the food supply chain, hot and/or cold holding equipment, dry food storage area, food preparation space, equipment for transportation of meals inside a school building (such as carts and racks), and equipment for transportation of food and meals between building (such as refrigerated truck, hot and cold holding equipment, food storage bins, etc).	The TCPS food service contractor, Sodexo, currently has all vendors ready for the new school year including Sysco, Cloverland Dairy, Schmidt Bakery, DOD, Keany produce, Teddy Bear produce, and Dori Foods. If meals are served in the classroom, Sodexo would need to purchase hot and cold holding equipment in order to ensure food is served at the correct temperatures. Sodexo currently has enough dry food storage area and food preparation areas. Based on student volume, Sodexo would only deliver food between buildings if the volume at certain schools was so low it would not pay to operate the kitchen. If Sodexo did that, they would need to have a vehicle for transporting the meals. This would also require them to purchase hot holding and cold holding equipment for the vehicle. Current dry storage and food preparation space is adequate.
Hand Washing (staff)	Individuals should wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.	TCPS cafeteria staff wash their hands between each task. Gloves are worn but not a substitute for washing hands. Staff must follow the washing for 20 seconds rule, rinse, dry with paper towel, turn faucet off with paper towel then throw towel away. Sanitize hands. No other staff is allowed in the cafeteria.
Hand Washing (student)	Enforce strict hand washing with soap and water after food contact.	TCPS staff will require students to wash their hands before and after meals.

FOOD SERVICE SAFETY		
TOPIC	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan
Health and Safety measures for Nutrition Staff	Determine health and safety measures for School Nutrition Staff, such as daily temperature check and a schedule for virus testing, protocols for isolation and containment for prevention of virus outbreak, access to and maintenance of PPE, etc.	Please refer to the "Safety and Protection of Student/Staff" section for guidance.
No Share Policy	Ensure that there is a "do not share" food policy among students.	A no share policy will be enforced by TCPS staff if meals are served in the classroom or in the cafeteria. Teachers should refresh their understanding of food allergies, including symptoms of allergic reactions to food.
Plans In event of Positive Cases	Plan in the event of positive cases of COVID 19 in the food and nutrition staff and /or increased volume of staff absenteeism.	The TCPS food service contractor, Sodexo, will address each situation on an individual basis. Staffing levels are sufficient to accommodate moderate staff absenteeism related to COVID-19.
Staff at Higher Risk	Offer options for staff at higher risk for severe illness (including older adults and people of all ages with certain underlying medical conditions) that limit their exposure risk (e.g., telework, modified job responsibilities that limit exposure risk).	The TCPS food service contractor, Sodexo, will address each situation on an individual basis.
Water Supply	Prior to reopening take steps to: Minimize the risk of diseases associated with water, by ensuring that all water systems and features (e.g. sink faucets, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.	All water sources for consumption within our school buildings will be flushed appropriately prior to school occupation.

TCPS COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN ATHLETICS

The MPSSAA in consultation with the State Superintendent of Schools, the MD Department of Health, and the Public School Superintendent Association of Maryland has **postponed the 2020 high school fall and winter competition season during the first semester.**

The following action plans are meant to provide Talbot County Public School families assurance regarding the implementation of student athletic related protocols that will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff during the COVID-19 epidemic. The following action plans are meant to adhere to and align with the requirements and recommendations associated with the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) Road map for Return to Interscholastic Athletics, which includes guidance from the Maryland Department of Health:

VOLUNTARY OFF-SEASON CONDITIONING		
TOPIC	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan
Accommodations	Exceptions may be needed for some of these conditions based on circumstances. Water bottles that can be clearly marked for individuals should be made available. Daily cleaning should occur after an individual uses them.	Accommodations for students with special needs will be made on a case by case basis through coordination between the coach and the building Athletic Director.
Communication		Aspects of the plan will be posted on the school web page. Coaches will be required to participate in training regarding restrictions prior to working with students.
Entrance Exit Strategies	Conditioning session time should be spread out to decrease the number of individuals and going at the same time to facilitate social distancing •Limit Spectators allowed at workouts	Coaches will work with school Athletic Directors to create a schedule for all sports and small group arrivals •Parents will only be permitted to remain at sessions in their personal vehicle.
Face Coverings	Schools should be in compliance with the latest CDC, local, and state regulations on face coverings •To the extent possible, individuals engaged in the sport and at the venue shall wear a face covering, especially when social distancing is not feasible	Coaches will wear a face covering at all times •Participants on the sideline are required to use face coverings.
Facility Assessment, Preparation & Equipment Needs	CDC guidance for cleaning & disinfecting should be followed •Plans & forms should be developed to ensure daily equipment & facility disinfection needs	The head of physical plant, the County Athletic Director, school Athletic Director's and building managers will evaluate the facilities for cleaning and disinfecting capabilities. Based on the results of these discussions a date will be set to open the weight rooms. •Plans and forms will be created for the cleaning of high traffic surfaces and weight equipment during training sessions.
Health-Related Items	Local School Systems should use the preparation phase to ensure all students have an up-to-date physical on file •Students will have signed a COVID- 19 Risk Acknowledgment	Coaches will confirm with the building Athletic Director to ensure that all students have a current physical and COVID- 19 Risk Acknowledgment on file (appx. pp. 37) •Attendance will be recorded to assist with contact tracing •COVID-19 informational documents will be shared with all student athletes (appx. pp. 38-41)
Hydration	No sharing of water bottles. An individual athlete should use their own clearly marked bottle	Participants will be required to bring their own labeled water bottle.
Limitations on Gatherings	Follow local and state health department guidance on the size of gatherings	Groups will be limited to 15 participants including supervisory personnel
Locker Rooms & Training Areas	The use of locker rooms is not recommended during these phases	All locker rooms will be closed during this phase
Timeline	Each LSS needs to decide what timeline makes the most sense for their community	Outdoor activities with appropriate social distancing may begin on July 1, 2020 at the earliest •Indoor activities will be allowed after cleaning and disinfecting procedures are established and the necessary cleaning supplies are available.

BEGINNING OF ORGANIZED TEAM PRACTICES~ DURING THIS PHASE TEAM PRACTICES WILL OCCUR AS WELL AS INTRA-SQUAD COMPETITIONS.		
TOPIC	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan
Accommodations	Exceptions may be needed for some of these conditions based on circumstances. Water bottles that can be clearly marked for individuals should be made available. Daily cleaning should occur after an individual uses them.	Accommodations for students with special needs will be made on a case by case basis through coordination between the coach and the building Athletic Director.
Communication		Aspects of the plan will be posted on the school web page. Coaches will be instructed in prevention and disinfecting plans as a part of the required annual coaches training.
Competitions	The re-socialization of sport to increased practice and competition between a larger squad that may incur limited contact.	Intra-squad competitions will be permitted with considerations given to social distancing.
Entrance Exit Strategies	Practices should be spread out to decrease the number of individuals going at the same time to facilitate social distancing •Limit Spectators allowed at workouts.	Coaches will work with school Athletic Directors to create a schedule for all sports to reduce the number of athletes in an area at a time. Parents will only be permitted to remain at sessions in their personal vehicle."
Face Coverings	Schools should be in compliance with the latest CDC, local, and state regulations on face coverings •To the extent possible, individuals engaged in the sport and at the venue shall wear a face covering, especially when social distancing is not feasible.	Coaches will wear a face covering at all times. •Participants on the sideline are required to use face coverings.
Facility Assessment, Preparation & Equipment Needs	CDC guidance for cleaning & disinfecting should be followed. •Plans & forms should be developed to ensure daily equipment & facility disinfection needs.	The head of physical plant, the County Athletic Director, school Athletic Director's and building managers will evaluate the facilities for cleaning and disinfecting capabilities. •Plans and forms will be created for the cleaning of high traffic surfaces and weight equipment during training sessions. •Plans will be created using guidance from the CDC for cleaning of materials such as pads for football and team articles such as soccer balls.
Health-Related Items	Local School Systems should use the preparation phase to ensure all students have an up-to-date physical on file •Students will have signed a COVID- 19 Risk Acknowledgment.	Coaches will confirm with the building Athletic Director to ensure that all students have a current physical and COVID- 19 Risk Acknowledgment on file. •Attendance will be recorded to assist with contact tracing.
Hydration	No sharing of water bottles. An individual athlete should use their own clearly marked bottle.	Participants will be required to bring their own labeled water bottle.
Limitations on Gatherings	Follow local and state health department guidance on the size of gatherings.	Groups will be limited to 50 participants including supervisory personnel.
Locker Rooms & Training Areas	The use of locker rooms is not recommended during these phases. •Proper area for equipment storage and cleaning is recommended as well as appropriately spaced individual areas for athletes to store their personal belongings during activity.	Prior to the opening of school all locker rooms will be closed. •Once schools have reopened the Athletic Director's will work with the building managers to develop a plan based on CDC recommendations to allow for limited use of locker rooms for changing.
Timeline	Fall Sports begin the sixth Wednesday after the first Sunday in July.	The date, August 12th, is set by the MPSSAA.

**BEGINNING OF INTER SCHOLASTIC COMPETITIONS.
DURING THIS PHASE COMPETITIONS BETWEEN SCHOOLS MAY BEGIN**

TOPIC	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan
Accommodations	Exceptions may be needed for some of these conditions based on circumstances. Water bottles that can be clearly marked for individuals should be made available. Daily cleaning should occur after an individual uses them.	Accommodations for students with special needs will be made on a case by case basis through coordination between the coach and the building Athletic Director.
Communications		Aspects of the plan will be posted on the school web page. Coaches will be instructed in prevention and disinfecting plans as a part of the required annual coaches training.
Competitions	The re-socialization of sport to increased practice and competition between a larger squad that may incur limited contact.	Based on the current conditions decisions will be made by all systems in the Bayside Conference on returning to interscholastic competition.
Entrance Exit Strategies	Practices should be spread out to decrease the number of individuals going at the same time to facilitate social distancing •Limit Spectators allowed at workouts.	Coaches will work with school Athletic Directors to create a schedule for all sports to reduce the number of athletes in an area at a time. Parents will only be permitted to remain at sessions in their personal vehicle.
Face Coverings	Schools should be in compliance with the latest CDC, local, and state regulations on face coverings •To the extent possible, individuals engaged in the sport and at the venue shall wear a face covering, especially when social distancing is not feasible.	Coaches will wear a face covering at all times. •Participants on the sideline are required to use face coverings.
Facility Assessment, Preparation & Equipment Needs	CDC guidance for cleaning & disinfecting should be followed •Plans & forms should be developed to ensure daily equipment & facility disinfection needs.	The head of physical plant, the County Athletic Director, school Athletic Director's and building managers will evaluate the facilities for cleaning and disinfecting capabilities. •Plans and forms will be created for the cleaning of high traffic surfaces and weight equipment during training sessions. •Plans will be created using guidance from the CDC for cleaning of materials such as pads for football and team articles such as soccer balls.
Health-Related Items	Local School Systems should use the preparation phase to ensure all students have an up-to-date physical on file •Students will have signed a COVID- 19 Risk Acknowledgment.	Coaches will confirm with the building Athletic Director to ensure that all students have a current physical and COVID- 19 Risk Acknowledgment on file. •Attendance will be recorded to assist with contact tracing.
Hydration	No sharing of water bottles. An individual athlete should use their own clearly marked bottle.	Participants will be required to bring their own labeled water bottle.
Limitations on Gatherings	Follow local and state health department guidance on the size of gatherings.	Groups will be limited to coaching staff, participants, and necessary personnel.
Locker Rooms & Training Areas	The use of locker rooms is not recommended during these phases. •Proper area for equipment storage and cleaning is recommended as well as appropriately spaced individual areas for athletes to store their personal belongings during activity .	Prior to the opening of school all locker rooms will be closed. •Once schools have reopened the Athletic Director's will work with the building managers to develop a plan based on CDC recommendations to allow for limited use of locker rooms for changing.
Timeline	The first possible play date is 21 days after the first practice.	The beginning of multiple school competition will require agreement between MPSSAA and Bayside Conference member schools as to required levels of distancing and acceptable range of travel for competitions.
Transportation	See Transportation Plan	See Transportation Plan

TCPS COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

The following action plans are meant to provide Talbot County Public School families assurance regarding the implementation of transportation department protocols that will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff during the COVID-19 epidemic. The following safety protocols are meant to adhere to and align with the requirements and recommendations associated with the Maryland State Department of Education's, MARYLAND TOGETHER Recovery Plan, and to best utilize the resources available to Talbot County Public Schools (TCPS):

TRANSPORTATION		
Topic:	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan:
Bus Cleaning - Chemical Storage	Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products. Provide secure storage of products away from children and may not be stored in a transportation vehicle.	Chemicals used for cleaning transportation vehicles will be stored in a secure location at the Talbot County Education Center, which serves as the location of the bus yard.
Bus Cleaning	Buses must be thoroughly cleaned with a COVID-19 rated chemical at least once per day with a focus on high traffic surfaces.	All buses will be thoroughly cleaned with a COVID-19 rated cleaning product two (2) times each day, once after the morning run and then after the afternoon run. A designated bus cleaning crew will be established that has been trained to perform the necessary cleaning twice a day. High traffic surfaces (e.g., driver cockpit surfaces, seats, armrests, door handles, seat belts, doors and windows, grab handles, etc.) will be disinfected in between middle/high and elementary school runs in both the morning and afternoon by the individual bus drivers and assistants. Children will not be present when the cleaning is performed. School start/dismissal times will need to be evaluated to allow the necessary cleaning.
Bus Safety Inspections	Adhere to COMAR required safety inspections for school bus and other student transportation vehicles.	All required safety and inspection requirements associated with COMAR will be complete prior to the start of school. This includes a well trained, licensed and certified driving staff.
Face Coverings (Staff)	All students are required to wear face coverings. Please refer to Appendix #90 for additional information.	TCPS drivers and assistants will be required to wear a face covering. Plastic face shields and latex gloves will be available to drivers when transporting students.
Face Coverings (Student)	All students are required to wear face coverings. Please refer to Appendix #90 for additional information.	All students will be required to wear a face covering while on the bus. Special exceptions will be made for students on an individual basis.
Hand Sanitizer	Encourage students to wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to entering the bus. Provide appropriate hand sanitizer to support healthy hygiene behaviors on all transportation vehicles.	Appropriate hand sanitizer will be available on all transportation vehicles and will be part of the pre-service bus check for drivers. Use of hand sanitizer will be administered by the bus assistant. Hand sanitizer will not be stored on the vehicle while not in use.
Loading and Unloading	Encourage social distancing while loading and unloading students.	All drivers will require students to load from the back to the front and from the front to the back when unloading, when applicable.

TRANSPORTATION		
Topic:	MSDE and/or Public Health Guidance (summary):	TCPS Action Plan:
Siblings:	Consider allowing siblings to sit together.	TCPS plans to allow relaxation of social distancing requirements for siblings.
Staff Illness (during the work day)	Local jurisdictions must create a plan that determines a protocol for dealing with staff that become ill during the work day.	Please refer to the "Safety and Protection of Students/Staff" section for the associated information.
Student Attendance		TCPS requires drivers to record daily student attendance, which will help support contact tracing, if needed.
Student Illness (during the school day)	Local jurisdictions must create a plan that determines the protocol for dealing with students that become ill during the school day.	TCPS will mandate that if a student becomes sick during the school day, he/she will not be allowed to utilize group bus transportation to return home; instead, the student will be cared for and remain isolated in the designated location, and will be transported home by a parent/guardian. Please refer to the "Safety and Protection of Students/Staff" section for additional information.
Student Seating	The various public health agencies recommend implementing some form of social distancing on the school bus. The recommendations as to implementation vary.	TCPS is proposing a plan that will balance safety and functionality. Depending on the rate of student return at the start of school, TCPS will limit buses to between 7 and 27 students (72 passenger 23 students/2 staff and 84 passenger 27 students/2 staff). Students will sit in appropriately spaced and assigned seats (appx. pp. 36).
Symptom Screening (Staff)	Consider developing and implementing a plan for a staff screening process.	Immediately upon entering the bus yard and before reporting to designated work assignment, all staff will be screened for temperature.
Walk Zones	N/A	TCPS Student Transportation Policy (5.9-AR) regarding walk zone designations will play an important role in defining ridership.
Windows	Consider having bus windows open to allow greater airflow.	TCPS plans to allow drivers to direct students to open the windows if the weather permits.



RECOVERY PLAN: INSTRUCTION

OVERVIEW

The TCPS Recovery Plan provides District Guidelines. Individual schools will determine class schedules and all building logistics.

Talbot County Public Schools instructional program is grounded in prioritizing the brilliance of each student, promoting equity, and operating from an asset-based perspective. School closures due to COVID-19 have challenged our efforts to meet that imperative but have not deterred our commitment to stand strong in centering student needs.

The decision as to which instructional reopening model will be implemented as we begin the 2020-2021 school year and be in place as we progress through the year will be dependent upon the requirements associated with the pandemic and the guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and state and local Health Department protocols. Anticipating this has required that the recovery plan be broad enough to address the various stages that may be present. Having to anticipate all possibilities, the recovery team operated from a perspective that all models be informed by the following non-negotiables:

- Prioritizing the safety and health of students, employees, and families.
- Making all decisions through an equity lens.
- Providing high quality instruction and maximizing face-to-face interaction to the greatest extent possible.
- Supporting the social-emotional well-being of students and staff

All of the proposed models present challenges that will take a concerted, collaborative effort to address. It is important to recognize that the plans outlined in the document represent a framework for meeting the different challenges to schooling imposed by COVID-19. Models will invariably need to be revised as we progress through the school year and encounter changing dynamics and guidance regarding the pandemic. In addition, models will be adjusted as needed to improve teaching and learning as their implementation leads to new challenges and opportunities.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The shift in instruction precipitated by the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic has brought with it the adoption of new language to describe our teaching and learning efforts. The explanation of terms here is meant to help create a shared understanding of what these terms mean and how they apply in our reopening of school plans.

Distance/Remote Learning: the overarching term for a variety of learning modalities involving virtual experiences whether they are asynchronous or synchronous

Asynchronous: learning that occurs online without real-time interaction or instruction by an educator. Examples may include but not limited to pre-recorded video lessons, resource videos, assigned readings, and posted assignments.

Synchronous: remote learning that happens in real-time with the interaction between the teacher and students that occurs in a face to face environment or in a virtual classroom setting, ie. access from home via web conferencing.

Blended Learning/Hybrid Model: TCPS's designation for learning that is offered both in-person and remotely in the yellow return to school model.

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING

Talbot County Public Schools' (TCPS) Continuity of Learning Plan was crafted to maintain our focus on the needs of all students even while learning in our traditional model was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Foundational to our Continuity of Learning plan was an effort to reconnect students to their teachers and learning in the hopes of providing some sense of normalcy in this uncertain and stressful time. It is important to note that Talbot County's plan focused on the key standards, not the entire scope and sequence of a course or grade level. The plan was not intended to replicate the regular classroom experience as students did not have the benefit of real-time teacher instruction to the extent that they did on a regular, in-person school day. The plan did provide course or grade level learning activities that are aligned with the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards and that were designed to be accessible to all students. While these activities were constructed to be completed more independently than regular classroom assignments, our plan provided opportunity for students to ask questions and engage with their teacher(s) remotely during scheduled "office hour" times, included access to directions and models for the learning, incorporated instructional videos, and provided additional online resources to support student learning.

Talbot County's Continuity of Learning plan was never intended to be a long-term, sustainable model for student learning. As initially developed, it was designed for a few weeks of interim learning opportunities but ultimately became extended as our instructional model for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Given the disconnect between its initial purpose and its ultimate implementation, there were significant shortcomings in TCPS's Continuity of Learning as a sustainable model for teaching and learning. However, in the spirit of continuous improvement, a reflection on the challenges and success of Continuity of Learning proved valuable to the Recovery Planning team in informing the models for school re-opening. Continuity of Learning was imperfect, but embracing those imperfections will lead to improvements in our instructional practices and thus in student learning.

Several themes emerged in reflections of Continuity of Learning. What emerged from the Planning Team's analysis of the challenges and successes was that equity was at the crux of each lesson learned. Continuity of Learning exposed what is working and for whom, and how we must be more equitable in our practices in whatever re-opening model is implemented. Below is a summary of key issues and a brief description of how TCPS is addressing each issue to be more equitable in our practices.

TECHNOLOGY

Access and Connectivity: TCPS is fortunate to have made an investment in our students' learning by employing technology devices for all students in kindergarten through grade 12 in a 1:1 environment. All students grade 6-12 had access to a school issued laptop. iPads for Kindergarten through grade 5 students were distributed for home use during Continuity of Learning with 92% of elementary students Kindergarten through grade 5 having access to their school issued iPads at home. Having access to devices and being able to use them effectively for learning emerged as a disconnect for many students and families. The lack of access to reliable internet in our county prohibited some students from having access to online opportunities such as instructional videos, class meets, instructional technology, etc. While they received paper packets of essential tasks and learning notes, this created a significant gap in access to learning and in some cases exacerbated already existing learning opportunity gaps perpetuated in our regular instructional program.

- TCPS has engaged with community partners to provide low cost/no cost internet to qualifying students.
- TCPS has purchased and distributed hotspots to students and families. In addition, community

partners have provided additional hotspots for distribution to promote online engagement and access to digital resources.

- TCPS repositioned hubs in school buildings to extend access to internet outside of each school. Community partners have installed hotspots in community locations for greater access.
- TCPS is using ESSER CARES Grant to purchase additional devices to ensure that 100% of students and staff have technology devices as well as to improve technology infrastructure.

Learning Management System: Teacher capacity with technology and their ability to quickly pivot to full use of FROG, the TCPS Learning Management System, was another significant challenge with the initiation of Continuity of Learning. While TCPS has implemented this platform for several years, it was not used consistently, especially at the early grade levels. This presented a problem not only for teachers, but also for students and families who had to begin to navigate an unfamiliar platform to access learning. Additionally, FROG offers so many ways to customize an individual teacher/class page that navigating multiple teacher pages proved to be challenging for students and families.

- TCPS Instructional Technology Team has created learning modules for staff on the use of FROG. They are developing consistent protocols for setting up FROG pages that will be implemented at the start of the 2020-2021 school year to facilitate easier access for students and families.
- FROG use parent communications are being developed and will be available prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year to include quick reference sheets and online tutorials. Resources will be provided in multiple languages to support family access to information. TCPS will enlist the support of community partners to disseminate the information broadly to families.

Instructional Technology: Technology was also identified as a positive as teachers learned new skills for presenting learning. While technology issues impeded some students' engagement, it offered others a more relevant learning environment and provided students with novel ways to engage in learning. Invariably teachers noted that there were some students who were reluctant learners in the regular classroom setting but thrived in the online environment.

- TCPS teachers, instructional assistants, and administration will continue to receive professional learning in the use of digital resources to support teaching and learning, creating blended learning environments, and effective synchronous learning strategies.
- TCPS supervisors will provide additional training on implementing the digital platforms associated with curriculum materials.

ASSESSMENT, CURRICULUM, AND SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS

Assessment Plan: Despite TCPS's best efforts to engage students during Continuity of Learning, we are keenly aware that this model of schooling was not optimal for all of our students. While the lack of reliable access to internet is one tangible reason for this, TCPS recognizes that the myriad of challenges many of our students experienced associated with COVID-19 and school closures have taken a significant toll on student learning progress. We know this to be most perilous for our students who were already experiencing a learning opportunity gap in our traditional instruction, disproportionately our students of color, low income students, students with special needs, and our English Learner students. The limits of Continuity of Learning may also have adversely impacted students who had previously been on grade level.

- TCPS will implement a comprehensive assessment plan to diagnose lost learning. Assessments will be designed to provide teachers with quick, accessible information about what students know and can do relative to the most critical prerequisite skills and content knowledge.

- TCPS will focus on a shift from our traditional practice of remediation to leveraging strategies to accelerate student learning to avoid exacerbating opportunity gaps in engaging in grade level standards. This will include providing teachers with ongoing professional learning in how to address learning gaps as they relate to grade level material, high impact teaching strategies, differentiating instruction to focus on an asset rather than deficit model of student mastery, and strategies for responding to the cultural, social and emotional needs of students

Maryland College and Career Ready Standards: By design, Continuity of Learning prioritized key standards rather than the entire scope and sequence. In planning the Must Do tasks for students at each grade level and course, the curriculum team identified the high leverage standards essential for the next grade level/course as the focus. TCPS acknowledges that the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS) are essential in ensuring that students have a strong command of the skills and understandings associated with the critical areas. These skills and understandings are critical to building the foundational knowledge needed for the success of students.

- TCPS is revising curriculum guides at elementary, middle, and high school levels to highlight essential standards for the grade level or course, as well as the prerequisite knowledge and skills learners need in order to be successful with new content.
- Teachers will be provided support from curriculum supervisors in implementing grade level standards and how to address gaps in learning “in real time.”

Scheduling: Continuity of Learning highlighted that there are some students who may need priority consideration in our recovery planning models, especially in the plans that do not reflect a full time return to in-person instruction. Data from Continuity of Learning highlights the gap in access and engagement in authentic learning that has been pervasive in our traditional school program and exacerbated by the challenges of remote learning. Students of color, low income students, and our English Learner students were least likely to engage during Continuity of Learning. In addition, students without reliable access to internet were at a disadvantage during Continuity of Learning

- TCPS has expanded traditional summer school programs to more expansive summer learning opportunities. This includes the addition of small group mentoring and instruction to reconcile incompletes from COL, small group interventions for elementary students, and individual and small group EL language and academic support. While the majority of these are provided via remote learning, TCPS is piloting small group opportunities for in-person instruction
- TCPS recovery planning includes opportunities for more individual synchronous learning during all reopening prioritizing in-person learning opportunities for students disproportionately impacted by school closure including: students of color, low income students, students with special needs, and our English Learner students. during all reopening models and the possibility of small group face-to-face instruction as possible in the orange model and for a three or four day in-person schedule as allowable by safety guidelines in the yellow model.
- TCPS recognizes that there was a significant burden placed on parents for implementing instruction in Continuity of Learning, especially at the early grade levels. In the event of an all remote learning model during the 2020-2021 school year, TCPS plans will include greater synchronous learning at all grade bands.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Relationships: School staff identified the genuine relationships they developed with students and families during Continuity of Learning. They described how they were “invited into homes (virtually)” to meet with families in ways that had not been present previously. They also noted that teachers and parents/families had to

forge a shared responsibility for student learning and came to “rely on each other in ways we never had to before schools closed. We needed each other.” While school staff felt that they were able to do so with the majority of students and families, they worried about those with whom that was more difficult. This challenge was often associated with student and family access to reliable internet, language barriers, and the demands placed on families with essential workers.

- The start of every school year is important. Reopening plans will focus on how to maximize perception of school as a welcoming, helpful, and caring environment for all students and families.
- Schools will implement transition activities for new students and families

Trauma and Social Emotional Learning (SEL): The COVID-19 crisis has caused unprecedented disruption to our education system and every aspect of family and community life. The direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic will invariably have a lasting impact on all, including our students, families, and staff.

- Provide professional learning to staff to build capacity from trauma-informed to trauma-skilled practices
- Incorporate SEL strategies and techniques in classroom instruction, reinforcing safety, well-being and engagement within the learning community.
- Administer an assessment tool and implement processes to monitor students’ progress along a social and emotional learning continuum.
- Provide all staff with professional development that reinforces educators’ understanding of the importance of SEL in promoting student learning and strategies to reinforce students’ SEL development during their K-12 education.
- Engage parents, community members and stakeholder groups in activities and partnerships designed to promote SEL awareness and reinforce its value for student learning.

MONITORING PROGRESS AND GRADING

Due to the nature of Continuity of Learning, TCPS grading procedures were modified to reflect a Pass or Incomplete for quarter 4 of the 2019-20 school year. This was implemented in response to the uncertainty of the initial school closure and the need to “err on the side of students” in such an unprecedented time.

- TCPS grading policy and administrative regulations will be reinstated at the start of the 2020-2021 school year.
- TCPS staff will engage in professional learning that focus on equitable grading practices and providing meaningful feedback to improve student learning
- Curriculum supervisors will work in content teams to identify opportunities to incorporate performance and project-based assessments to measure student learning

Return to School Models

TCPS instructional re-opening plan includes multiple scenarios in an effort to anticipate the uncertainties for the fall. This includes in-person models where all students attend school each day, remote synchronous learning where students attend school from home with a required daily schedule, and a hybrid model where students attend school both in-person and remotely based on an established, predictable schedule.

In developing the models, TCPS also recognizes the importance in being able to move between models as required by changes in community health needs. For this reason, we have focused on coherence in our models so we can adapt as needed to ensure the health and safety of students and staff as conditions may change.

Flexibility to transition between the proposed models quickly and with minimal impact on student learning was an essential consideration in the development of our plan.

Instructional recovery models outlined below have been informed by initial surveys of families and staff to estimate the number of students and staff who are willing and able to attend in-person, those who prefer a hybrid model, and those who prefer maintaining a fully remote learning model. In addition, in alignment with our equity focus, identifying students' priority needs for in-person instruction in the event of a limited capacity.

With so many variables still unknown, the TCPS Instructional group engaged in its planning from the belief that the setting of the instruction is not the determining factor for learning. Instead, regardless of which model is in place, all staff, families, and community partners must use what we know works best for students and apply it to create an effective learning environment for our students. TCPS also acknowledges and respects that families have different situations and comfort levels with being in public venues at this time. For this reason, there will be aspects of choice built into our reopening models, when allowable, to honor family circumstances and preference for their child's learning. This choice will be further described within each of the models.

Remote Synchronous Learning (Stage 1 Red)

Families will elect an a.m. vs. p.m. option during parent-teacher conferences. Two full days are built in for conferences before the start of school on September 8, and each school has its own schedule to ensure that every family is contacted.

In this return-to-school model, all students will be engaging in learning from home or other non-school locations. It is a fully remote learning plan in which students will log on to FROG at a specified time using their school issued device (iPad or laptop). During this specified time all students will receive real-time instruction on grade level or course standards from their assigned classroom teacher. All PreK-12 students will receive remote instruction with a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning four days per week and asynchronous only learning one day per week. Asynchronous learning will be on Wednesday for all students PreK-12 to align across elementary, middle, and high schools to offer consistency for families with children at different school levels. This day will allow for staff planning and professional learning time to support teaching in a remote learning environment.

Schedules for specific grade level bands have been constructed to be mindful of students' developmental needs. Schedules have also been designed to offer families an option for the time of day for their child to participate in synchronous learning that best suits their individual needs. Students may engage in synchronous learning either in the morning or in the afternoon, indicating their choice at the start of the year during pre-start-of-school conferences so teachers can plan appropriately to meet student learning needs. Teachers will teach the same lesson in both the am and pm. The choice will allow the teacher to work with a smaller group online to better engage students and monitor their learning. When the red model is in place, all students will engage in remote learning. There will be no other TCPS model available for families to choose when the red model is activated for the start of the school year.

PreK-2 Students will have opportunities to engage in up to two hours of core content (English Language Arts and Mathematics) instruction each day. This will include a combination of whole class, small group, and individual synchronous learning as appropriate for effective engagement. Additionally, up to two hours per day will be choice activities for the student that reinforce core content skills and include related arts activities: music, art, PE, and health. Related arts may also be integrated as a component of the synchronous learning as teachers collaborate on planning instruction. Students who need specialized instruction, such as additional ESOL, special education, Gifted and Talented (GT) and intervention supports will be provided these learning opportunities scheduled for synchronous individual or small group sessions during the choice activity time in

addition to the core content time as appropriate for their individual plans. The schedule below is a sample; each school will be advising parents of the specific schedule for their child.

PreK-Grade 2	A.M. Options	P.M. Options
Monday	9:00-11:00 Core Content Instruction 11:15-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Student Choice Activities	9:00-11:00 Student Choice Activities 11:15-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Core Content Instruction
Tuesday	9:00-11:00 Core content Instruction 11:15-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Student Choice Activities	9:00-11:00 Student Choice Activities 11:15-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Core content Instruction
Wednesday	Asynchronous Learning	Asynchronous Learning
Thursday	9:00-11:00 Core content Instruction 11:15-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Student Choice Activities	9:00-11:00 Student Choice Activities 11:15-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Core content Instruction
Friday	9:00-11:00 Core content Instruction 11:15-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Student Choice Activities	9:00-11:00 Student Choice Activities 11:15-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Core content Instruction

The two-hour synchronous learning for students in PreK-2 will begin each day with 15 minutes of direct focus on social emotional learning followed by 60 minutes of English Language Arts, and 45 minutes of math instruction. Assignments will be assigned to provide practice of current learning of skills and strategies. These will often be started with teacher guidance in the synchronous time and may be completed by your child in asynchronous time.

Additionally, since younger children often learn through play, students be provided with a variety of choice activities to practice previous learning and build on social-emotional and foundational skills through structured play activities. These student choice activities will be asynchronous and are designed to reinforce skills taught in the synchronous learning.

Because students in these grades are learning foundational skills and often need more direct assistance, teacher schedules include time for scheduling small group and individual supports during the asynchronous time. Teachers will contact families directly regarding these opportunities as needed to meet individual student learning needs.

Grades 3-5 Students will engage in up to three hours of teacher-directed instruction in the core content areas per day. This will include a combination of whole class, small group, and individual synchronous learning as appropriate for effective engagement. Two hours per day will be asynchronous learning activities for the student that reinforce core content skills and include related arts activities: music, art, PE, and health. Related arts teachers will also provide synchronous learning opportunities at specified times during the learning activity time. Students who need specialized instruction, such as additional ESOL, special education, Gifted and Talented (GT) and intervention supports will be provided these learning opportunities scheduled for synchronous individual or small group sessions during the learning activity time in addition to the core content time as appropriate for their individual plans. The schedule below is a sample; each school will be advising parents of the specific schedule for their child.

Grades 3-5	A.M. Options	P.M. Options
Monday	8:30-11:30 Core Content Instruction 11:30-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Student Learning Activities	9:00-11:00 Student Learning Activities 11:30-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-3:30 Core Content Instruction
Tuesday	8:30-11:30 Core Content Instruction 11:30-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Student Learning Activities	9:00-11:00 Student Learning Activities 11:30-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-3:30 Core Content Instruction
Wednesday	Asynchronous Learning	Asynchronous Learning
Thursday	8:30-11:30 Core Content Instruction 11:30-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Student Learning Activities	9:00-11:00 Student Learning Activities 11:30-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-3:30 Core Content Instruction
Friday	8:30-11:30 Core Content Instruction 11:30-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-2:30 Student Learning Activities	9:00-11:00 Student Learning Activities 11:30-12:30 Lunch Break 12:30-3:30 Core Content Instruction

The three-hour synchronous learning for students in grades 3-5 will include 15 minutes of direct focus on social emotional learning included in either the social studies or science block, 45 minutes of science/social studies, 60 minutes of English Language Arts, and 60 minutes of math instruction. Students will only need to log into one Zoom session for instruction in all of their core content subjects. Teacher teams will coordinate so that each content teacher joins the meeting to ensure a more simplified login for students and families.

Students in grades 3-5 will be expected to complete the activities assigned during the asynchronous student learning activity component. These activities will include tasks to reinforce knowledge and skills presented during the synchronous time and are essential for students to be prepared for learning the next day. Some activities assigned may be independent practice, guided video instruction, or tasks assigned to assess student mastery of content.

Additionally, students in grades 3-5 will be provided with additional choice activities to practice previous learning.

Grades 6-12 Students will be provided synchronous learning four days per week for each course in the student's schedule. Students will be expected to log on for their assigned course at the designated time in order to be considered present for the class. The synchronous time is intended for teachers to directly engage with students on course standards and to offer guided practice for the class. Asynchronous learning time is intended for students to practice their new skills, receive instruction through pre-recorded videos (flipped model classroom), use instructional technology (IXL, MobyMax, etc), do additional reading, complete homework, etc. There will be clearly linked expectations established by each teacher for the connections between the synchronous and asynchronous learning times so that these experiences work in conjunction to build student mastery of standards.

Grades 6-12	A.M. Options	P.M. Options
Monday	8:00-8:40 Period 1 8:40-9:20 Period 2 9:25-10:05 Period 3 10:05-10:45 Period 4 10:45-11:25 Period 5 11:30-12:00 Lunch Break 12:00-2:30 Asynchronous Learning	9:00-11:30 Asynchronous Learning 11:30-12:00 Lunch Break 12:00-12:40 Period 1 12:40-1:20 Period 2 1:25-2:05 Period 3 2:05-2:45 Period 4 2:45-3:25 Period 5
Tuesday	8:00-8:40 Period 1 8:40-9:20 Period 2 9:25-10:05 Period 3 10:05-10:45 Period 4 10:45-11:25 Period 5 11:30-12:00 Lunch Break 12:00-2:30 Asynchronous Learning	9:00-11:30 Asynchronous Learning 11:30-12:00 Lunch Break 12:00-12:40 Period 1 12:40-1:20 Period 2 1:25-2:05 Period 3 2:05-2:45 Period 4 2:45-3:25 Period 5
Wednesday	Asynchronous Learning	Asynchronous Learning
Thursday	8:00-8:40 Period 1 8:40-9:20 Period 2 9:25-10:05 Period 3 10:05-10:45 Period 4 10:45-11:25 Period 5 11:30-12:00 Lunch Break 12:00-2:30 Asynchronous Learning	9:00-11:30 Asynchronous Learning 11:30-12:00 Lunch Break 12:00-12:40 Period 1 12:40-1:20 Period 2 1:25-2:05 Period 3 2:05-2:45 Period 4 2:45-3:25 Period 5
Friday	8:00-8:40 Period 1 8:40-9:20 Period 2 9:25-10:05 Period 3 10:05-10:45 Period 4 10:45-11:25 Period 5 11:30-12:00 Lunch Break 12:00-2:30 Asynchronous Learning	9:00-11:30 Asynchronous Learning 11:30-12:00 Lunch Break 12:00-12:40 Period 1 12:40-1:20 Period 2 1:25-2:05 Period 3 2:05-2:45 Period 4 2:45-3:25 Period 5

Blended Synchronous Learning (Stage 2 and 3 Orange)

Schools or individual teachers will extend invitations to students in special population groups to participate in face-to-face instruction in small groups. Availability of face-to-face instruction will depend upon staff commitment and family response.

While school closures have impacted all students, some students have been disproportionately affected by school closures and the unanticipated, rushed switch to distance learning. It is essential to ensure that each and every student has equitable access to engaging grade-level content and instructional rigor. The orange model is meant to address this by offering additional supports that expand student access to rigorous, grade-level content.

In this return to school model, all students will be participating in learning in the fully remote red model described above. Some students from priority special population groups will be offered the opportunity for face-to-face instruction in a small group. This will be in addition to the remote synchronous and asynchronous learning they will be engaging in within the red model and will focus on meeting their specific learning and/or social emotional needs.

The schedule for these in-person learning opportunities will be dependent on individual student needs and will thus be communicated by schools. All decisions about student participation in face-to-face instruction in the orange model will be directed by parental choice; once offered by the school, the parent may choose to accept or decline the opportunity based on their decision about what is best for their child and family circumstances.

Small group opportunities in the orange model will be limited in terms of the number of students who are eligible to participate. It is anticipated that the majority of students needing additional supports will continue to receive them remotely through individual or small group opportunities.

Blended Synchronous Learning (Stage 2 and 3 Yellow)

Families may elect to continue virtual instruction in lieu of face-to-face hybrid instruction if they choose.

This return-to-school model offers a reduced student capacity for in-school learning with virtual learning opportunities for students when they are not scheduled to be present in the school building. This model is predicated on 50% of students being allowed to return at any given time with health and social distancing protocols in effect, per the current CDC, state, and local health department guidance.

All students in PreK- 12 will be scheduled for in-person learning in either an A or B schedule. Students assigned the A schedule will attend school in-person on Monday and Tuesdays for direct instruction from their assigned classroom/course teacher. Students assigned a B schedule will attend school in-person on Thursday and Friday for direct instruction from their assigned classroom/course teacher. While the daily schedule for in-person and asynchronous learning will be different for elementary and secondary students as noted in the schedules below, students in different grade band in the same family will be scheduled for the same group (A or B). This means students in the same family will attend school in-person on the same days and have asynchronous learning on the same days.

When TCPS moves to the yellow model, parents will have a choice for their child to remain in the fully remote (red model) or participate in the face-to-face learning opportunities in the yellow hybrid model. Parents will have the opportunity to declare their choice prior to the transition between models. Once that decision is made, the student will be expected to remain in that model for the remainder of the semester in which the parent declares their choice.

PreK-Grade 5 Students will receive two days of in-person instruction in the school building. Face-to face instruction will focus on the core content areas: English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Students assigned to the A group will attend in school on Monday and Tuesday and students assigned to the B group will attend in school on Thursday and Friday. The days students are not attending face-to face instruction, they will be engaging in asynchronous learning aligned with their core content areas and will have the opportunity to participate in synchronous related arts instruction. Students who need specialized instruction, such as additional ESOL, special education, GT, and intervention supports will be provided these learning opportunities scheduled as appropriate for their individualized plan on the in-person school days and will participate in synchronous individual or small group sessions as appropriate for their individual plans on the days they are scheduled for asynchronous learning. In some cases, based on students' individual plans, students receiving special services or identified for priority instruction may be scheduled to attend in-person school three or four days per week.

Pre-K-Grade 5	A Group	B Group
Monday	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school schedule. Instructional focus will be on core content areas.	Asynchronous Learning Activities. Opportunity for synchronous related arts classes.
Tuesday	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school schedule. Instructional focus will be on core content areas.	Asynchronous Learning Activities. Opportunity for synchronous related arts classes.
Wednesday	Asynchronous Learning	Asynchronous Learning
Thursday	Asynchronous Learning Activities. Opportunity for synchronous related arts classes	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school schedule. Instructional focus will be on core content areas.
Friday	Asynchronous Learning Activities. Opportunity for synchronous related arts classes	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school schedule. Instructional focus will be on core content areas.

A student's schedule in this model will follow the established start and end times for the school they attend on the days they are participating in the face-to-face instruction. Schedules for asynchronous days will be communicated by individual schools and content teachers as appropriate to meet the grade level standards.

Grade 6-12 Students will receive two days of in-person instruction in the school building following their regular school schedule. Students assigned to the A group will attend in school on Monday and Tuesday and students assigned to the B group will attend in school on Thursday and Friday. The days students are not attending face-to face instruction, they will be engaging in asynchronous learning specific to their assigned class schedule. Students who need specialized instruction, such as additional ESOL, special education, and intervention supports will be provided these learning opportunities scheduled as appropriate for their individualized plan on the in-person school days and will participate in synchronous individual or small group sessions as appropriate for their individual plans on the days they are scheduled for asynchronous learning. In some cases, based on students' individual plans, students receiving special services or identified for priority instruction may be scheduled to attend in-person school three or four days per week.

Grades 6-12	A Group	B Group
Monday	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school and student course schedule	Asynchronous Learning
Tuesday	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school and student course schedule	Asynchronous Learning
Wednesday	Asynchronous Learning	Asynchronous Learning
Thursday	Asynchronous Learning	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school and student course schedule
Friday	Asynchronous Learning	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school and student course schedule

A student's schedule in this model will follow the established start and end times for the school they attend on the days they are participating in the face-to-face instruction. Schedules for asynchronous days will be communicated by individual schools and content teachers as appropriate to meet the grade level standards.

In-Person Synchronous Learning (Stage 3)

Families may elect to continue virtual instruction in lieu of face-to-face instruction if they choose.

This return to school model has most students returning to their assigned school buildings for in-person, traditional face-to-face instruction. The difference between this model and pre-COVID-19 operations is that appropriate health and safety measures as deemed appropriate by the CDC, State and local officials will be in place to promote student and staff safety.

Pre-K - Grade 12	All Students
Monday	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school and student course schedule
Tuesday	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school and student course schedule
Wednesday	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school and student course schedule
Thursday	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school and student course schedule
Friday	In person, in school instruction for a full day based on individual school and student course schedule

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

School will look very different in TCPS as we start the 2020-2021 academic year. At the July 30, 2020 meeting the TCPS Board of Education endorsed the recommendation to start school on September 8 in the red model with full remote learning for all students. The recovery recommendations presented to the Board included a timeline for progressing through the stages for reopening schools. This timeline suggests the belief that most students learn best in a face-to-face environment and that schools provide a valuable service to students, families, and the overall well-being of the community. The timeline, however, is by necessity a projection that will need to be continuously re-evaluated based on recommendations from state and local health officials and will incorporate the option for families to make decisions about the return to in-person instruction that are most appropriate for their circumstances.

While there are still many uncertainties that make planning for the 2020-2021 difficult, there are guiding principles and practices that are imperative for promoting student success. TCPS recognizes that despite our efforts, our traditional model of schooling works well for most, but not all of our students. We are engaging in the 2020-2021 school year from the perspective that while challenging, provides an opportunity to improve our efforts.

- TCPS is committed to beginning the school year with a focus on creating learning environments that are welcoming and feel safe for all students. Our goal will be to reengage students in school, emphasizing the importance of the school community and the joy of learning.
- All staff will engage with students from an equity perspective that prioritizes students' social/emotional needs, creating a trauma-informed, racially and culturally conscious classroom environment in all models.
- All staff will maintain an asset-based perspective of students, honoring the multiple competencies and brilliance that they bring to our classroom environments.
- Parents and guardians will be valued as partners in their child's success, offering significant insights into the strengths the student has

ASSESSMENT/LEARNING PLAN

Requirement # 4 in the “Maryland Together: Maryland’s Recovery Plan for Education” outlined by the Maryland State Department of Education is that “Early in the school year, schools must determine where their students are instructionally, identify the gaps in learning and prepare a pathway for instructional success and recovery.”

In order to plan instruction targeting these learning gaps and to decrease significant learning loss due to the spring 2020 closure, TCPS plans to implement a comprehensive assessment plan. TCPS is mindful that administering assessments too soon or too many at once could undermine our efforts to create a welcoming environment by overburdening students. We are also committed to implementing a process that does not inadvertently place the onus of learning losses on students, resulting in the label of academically behind which can alienate students rather than engaging them in a meaningful way.

The TCPS assessment plan incorporates short diagnostic assessments that are aligned with the MCCRS. TCPS staff is well versed in what was not taught in Spring 2020 so short screeners that provide actionable data will be more valuable than an omnibus assessment that could erroneously lead to remediation that would further distance students from instruction in grade level standards. The chart below delineates the assessments that will be administered.

Grade	Content	Assessment/Readiness Screener
K-8	Math	Eureka Math Equip : a research-based tool that is designed to provide students with pre-module assessments to assist in determining if a gap exists and where misunderstandings remain due to the recent school closures. Assessment data provides teachers the opportunity to utilize supporting lessons with individuals, small groups or the whole class. The pacing guide allows all students to remain on track with grade level material while catching up on missed skills from school closures.
8-12	Algebra, Algebra II, Geometry	EnVision: assessments for Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 aligned with the MCCRS will be administered to measure prior knowledge of course content. Results will be analyzed with a diagnostic component to identify possible gaps in learning due to the COL period
9-12	Math	Course Specific pre-assessments: assessments for courses that follow Algebra 2 in the course sequence will assess foundational skills to be successful in the course and include a diagnostic analysis tool to identify gaps in learning due to the COL period
K-1	ELA	DIBELS: Universal reading screener to determine student reading needs. Assist in identifying students who need instructional supports and those who need more targeted interventions
K-5	ELA	MAP Reading Fluency: measures oral reading fluency with an online adaptive benchmark and progress monitoring assessment. In addition, it measures foundational skills and literal comprehension.

K-5	ELA	MAP Growth: measures what students know and their readiness for grade level standards. It offers a personalized assessment to measure whether students are performing on, below, or above grade level.
6-12	ELA	StudySync Readiness Screener: assesses students' preparedness with relation to standards-aligned skills and content from the previous grade level. Teachers can use this assessment to determine student strengths as well as reteaching and remediation needs
4-8, US Hist, Govt, World History	Social Studies	Evidence Based Argument Set (EBAS) - Document based assessment with a culminating writing assessment

TCPS curriculum staff has been working to be proactive in matching missed standards from the previous grade level/course to where they align with new grade level/course standards. This has allowed them to revise curriculum guides so pre-requisite skills are taught when most appropriate to support new learning. This focus on grade-level content and rigor and addressing learning gaps as needed within the context of grade-level work will assist in creating a clear path to instructional recovery. MSDE guidance has informed all prioritizing of standards in specific content areas. Throughout the year, curriculum supervisors will facilitate content/grade level teams in developing strategies for addressing gaps in learning in “real-time.” This process will ensure that that Maryland College and Career Ready Standards, prekindergarten through grade 12, are taught in all content areas and the state frameworks are followed for each content.

TCPS also has full confidence in teachers to identify where the gaps in essential learning exist using the early screener assessments and the knowledge they gain regarding their learners in the course of their instruction and informal assessment. TCPS teachers have the skills and curriculum resources to infuse additional scaffolding and support that is required for student success. Through appropriate instruction, with embedded formative assessment, teachers will respond to student needs in real-time, and in the context of grade-level standards, rather than defaulting to wholesale remediation. The focus will be on accelerating learning rather than traditional remediation efforts. This will be accomplished by teachers implementing formative assessment through daily synchronous instruction, including standards-based exit tickets and the implementation of pre- and end-of-unit assessments aligned with grade and course level standards.

All content areas are enhancing support for student learning including leveraging new tools, targeting learning loss, and providing guidance to maximize face-to-face instructional time.

GRADING

The goal of grading should not be to sort students but rather provide students a way to measure their learning based on grade-level or course standards.

TCPS will follow its existing grading policy and regulations in the 2020/2021 school year regardless of which recovery model is in place. Whether remote or in person instruction is occurring, teachers will still monitor and informally evaluate student work, regularly providing oral and written feedback throughout the learning process to promote student mastery of standards. The expectation is that throughout the instructional process, learning activities will be designed to both challenge and support students and account for the varied needs of students. These learning activities will prepare students for formative assessment that will guide teacher planning for additional instruction if needed prior to summative assessment of student learning.

While the TCPS grading policy and administrative regulations will be in place, it will be imperative to carefully consider the inequities that may exist in a remote or hybrid model that prevent a student from demonstrating the true measure of learning that has occurred either leading up to the assessment or during the assessment. This will include considerations for the following:

- Fewer graded assessments and more informal feedback to improve student learning
- Greater flexibility in deadlines to honor the different challenges some students may encounter and the variances in their pace of learning
- More opportunities for project-based assessments that allow for students to demonstrate their mastery of standards
- Revision of unit assessments to reflect student learning environment and identified needs
- Increased collaboration between and among classroom teachers and case managers for students with special needs to provide a more comprehensive assessment of student learning

Grades will still be recorded using PowerSchool and will be updated weekly to provide timely feedback to students and parents.

ATTENDANCE

The most effective strategies to promote school attendance are not punitive. Instead, improving the educational experience of all students is essential for supporting students' attendance. This includes incorporating instruction that is relevant to students' lives, establishing and maintaining a welcoming school climate, and fostering positive relationships between students and teachers/school staff. Given the challenges of remote and hybrid learning models, this focus will be more imperative than ever as these models challenge what has traditionally accounted for as "present." There are a myriad of issues and concerns students and families face due to the pandemic that jeopardize the ability to "attend."

Student attendance in both the red and yellow model will include a combination of actual presence in scheduled synchronous learning or in-person learning as well as accessing asynchronous learning through FROG. In some extenuating circumstances (such as technology issue), "present" may need to be determined using additional measures such as email or phone correspondence or home visits as examples. The definition of "present" must provide equitable opportunities for all students. As such, a student being marked as "present" for learning may need to be recorded using multiple measures for students and families who face significant barriers. Student attendance will continue to be collected through PowerSchool.

TCPS has a structure in place, utilized this past spring, involving student support teams. Key staff, including administrators, counselors, and other special service providers monitored students' participation in the instructional program and made every effort, in some cases, daily or weekly, to engage students. This model will continue during the 2020/2021 school year.

CURRICULUM AND DIGITAL TOOLS

FROG:- Talbot County Public Schools learning management system. This is the platform students will use to access their learning opportunities, during both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

ZOOM: A technology platform that allows for synchronous distance learning through online meetings

ZEARN: A math intervention for grades K-5. Zearn provides built-in support on concepts from previous grades, so that students can strengthen foundational understanding while staying on-track to complete grade-level content

MOBY MAX: MobyMax is used in grades 6-8. It identifies learning gaps and its adaptive curriculum creates an individualized education plan for each student, allowing students who show readiness to progress quickly while simultaneously ensuring that students who need it get the extra instruction and practice with skills.

IXL: IXL is for students in grades 9-12. It builds fluency and confidence in math, helping students master essential skills at their own pace through interactive questions, built in support, and motivating awards. The IXL platform has been developed and adapted with alignments to the core mathematics programs used in TCPS. iXL Spanish is available for all students currently enrolled in Spanish I & II. iXL Language Arts is available for middle school ELs for additional supplemental support

STUDYSYNC : StudySync is the digital curriculum TCPS students engage with in grades 6-1- English Language Arts. All StudySync lessons and assessments are aligned with the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards and include research-based reading routine that instructs students toward mastery. StudySync provides multiple opportunities for students to engage with texts, embedding choice, scaffolds, and collaboration into each lesson.

STEMSCOPES: StemScopes is the digital curriculum for science grades 3-8. It includes a series of presentations, activities, web-based games, simulations and assessments to engage students in science learning aligned with the MCCRS and Next Generation Science Standards.

CONNECT ED: A digital platform housing all elementary ELA content; students can access for assignments, readings, and games to reinforce learning.

POWERSCHOOL: the management system TCPS uses to record all student information. Parents and students can access to view attendance, assignment grades, and report cards.

EDOCTRINA: online testing platform

EQUITY AND ACCESS

TCPS is committed to academic excellence for all students as evident in our county strategic plan. Goal one of the TCPS Strategic Plan is to provide every student with equitable access to high quality and culturally relevant instruction, curriculum, support and other educational resources to insure college and career readiness for all students. The equity imperative at the center of all TCPS efforts informed the development of our recovery plan. TCPS recognizes that all students will have been impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic and the associated school closures and will need levels of support for accessing learning opportunities. To address this, teachers will work with other support staff and administrators to develop and moderate learning environments that engage all learners and support their growth. At all levels, considerations will be made for accessibility for learners and manageability for families in each of the return to school models.

School staff are well-versed in differentiating instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners which will continue to be an expectation and needed support for all students. Addressing social-emotional needs and skills will be an equally important component of recovery that will be necessary for academic achievement and success. Social-emotional difficulties should be anticipated upon the reopening of schools, regardless of the format. School staff must be prepared to adjust routines as well as balance academic curricula with time to help students readjust socially and emotionally to the heightened demands, rigor, social interactions and atypical schedule upon re-entry. A primary focus on building positive relationships with teachers and peers will be the most powerful tool for helping students increase their readiness to learn.

Student's social and emotional needs will be met both through social-emotional learning. TCPS will continue to use Conscious Discipline and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to support students' social

and emotional well-being. Through these supports, students will be able to: understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. This will be incorporated in the instruction in all classrooms. Small group and individual support will also be available when needed through the school counseling program and student service programs. Concerns regarding students will continue to be addressed and managed through the MLIP process. Referrals for services like mental health and social services will continue to be made through that process as well.

The Covid 19 pandemic crisis has exacerbated impact on the operations of schools and educational programs during the 2020/2021 school year, especially for students who fall into one or more special populations of students. Students in special populations include those with mental health needs, with disabilities (IEP/504), English learners (EL), those accessing interventions, those identified as homeless, those accessing home/hospital teaching and all of whom have individual family, personal, and academic special needs that may have been further intensified by the pandemic school closure.

Deliberate consideration will be given to students who fall within a special population along with strategic and careful reflection to address the unique needs of each special population. Students who fall in one or more of the aforementioned special populations have an increasing risk of achievement and opportunity gaps. TCPS will provide fair and inclusive learning environments by taking all aspects of education for our special populations into consideration from both a systems-perspective and an individual student perspective. We will address the unique challenges and provide equitable access to appropriate services to ensure each student has the support, accommodations, and scaffolding needed to optimize their educational progress created by the change in the modality of instruction.

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Throughout the mandatory school closure in the spring, resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, special educators, general educators, and service providers continued to create meaningful lessons and activities, as well as provide support to all students with disabilities. Individualized Education Programs (IEP) for students with disabilities have continued to be implemented through Individualized Continuity of Learning Plans. During this time, students were provided their services through virtual sessions, telephone, individualized materials that were emailed or posted online or materials that were mailed home to families. Students continued to receive their special education services and accommodations through the virtual environment according to the Individual Continuity of Learning Plan (ICLP) that was developed in collaboration with the family and providers. If there were specific concerns, the IEP teams met virtually to determine the need for additional support. Case managers tracked progress during the fourth quarter based on the goals identified on the ICLP. For students who did not make progress, as they did not access IEP services or were not able to be provided with all of their services through their ICLP, these students will be the first group of students invited into the schools when small groups return in the fall offered prioritized small group instruction in the orange model.

This summer Extended School Year (ESY) services were provided virtually to all students who were found eligible for ESY services. Most services were provided on a one to one basis, although there were a few students who received services within a small group via Google Meet.

Prior to the school year ending, case managers contacted parents/guardians for those students whom assessments had been requested to determine if they would want to bring their child into the school building over the summer for in-person testing. Also, at this time the case manager explained the in-person testing procedures that would be followed related to COVID-19. Over the summer once schools re-opened for small groups, any student whose parent/guardian expressed agreement to have their child assessed in-person has had

assessments completed at the school.

Both IEP and Section 504 meetings continued in a virtual format through Google Meets during the COVID-19 school closure. At this time, the plan is for IEP meetings and 504 meetings to continue to take place virtually.

CONTINUED INSTRUCTION

For the 2020-21 SY regardless of the model, students with disabilities will continue to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Talbot County Public Schools will provide comparable opportunities to students with disabilities as students without disabilities. Services for students with disabilities will be tailored to their individual needs. Some considerations in special education include:

- Students with the most significant disabilities benefit from attending in-person, as much as possible. These students will be prioritized in our return plan.
- Students who have significant medical needs may need to continue with virtual special education services to ensure their safety.
- Special Education staff will continue to collaborate with each parent/guardian regarding how special education and related services will be provided to each child during each model. Amendments will be made to IEPs based on this collaboration and agreement with parents/guardians.

Students with disabilities will continue to receive their accommodations and modifications on assignments and assessments during this time as indicated in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Students will continue to receive academic and related services that are similar and comparable to the maximum extent possible during this time. Talbot County Public Schools will work with parents to determine the appropriateness of delivery and service time on an individual student basis. Case managers will continuously monitor student progress to ensure that all students are making progress, regardless of the phase. Case managers will also work with general education teachers to support specially designed instruction. Parents will be updated on student progress on IEP goals at least quarterly.

The Talbot County Public Schools is committed to the delivery of effective special education programs and services provided to students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. All students must have available to them a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment, post-secondary education, and independent living. In order ensure equity for students receiving special education services, the following will be in place for each return-to-school model:

- TCPS will continue to provide students with disabilities their services and accommodations.
- IEP Coordinators will continue to schedule and hold IEP annual review and re-eval meetings in the safest means possible for staff and parents/guardians. These meetings will continue to take place virtually until further notice.
- All services will continue, to the maximum extent possible, during all phases. Services will be provided in-person, by phone, virtually, or through individualized learning materials. Special education teachers and other service providers will reach out to families to schedule sessions.
- Case managers are continuing to track the quarterly progress of IEP goals and objectives.
- In addition to specialized instruction provided by the case managers, students are also included in virtual classrooms with their non-disabled peers. Accommodations and modifications to general education assignments will be made as indicated by the IEP.
- In addition, IEP meetings are continuing during this time to ensure that students are continuously monitored and that IEP goals, objectives, services, and accommodations remain appropriate. Adjustments are being made through the IEP team, as needed. Amendments can also be made without an IEP meeting if parents/guardians are in agreement with that taking place.

- Upon return, students' progress, services received/accessed, etc. will be assessed to determine if there was a regression of skills. If students have shown regression, the IEP team will determine a plan to implement restoration services. This may be seen as additional services during the regular school day, during the summer months, and/or make-up services in the evening, depending on the individual family and student needs.

ENGLISH LEARNERS (EL)

Students are identified as EL based on a home language survey and an English proficiency screening assessment. The goal of these services is to promote successful English language acquisition through concurrent language and content learning. Throughout the school closure due to COVID 19, ESOL teachers have extended any means possible to engage EL students including working beyond official "office hours," to connect with students through online meetings, email, text messaging, and phone calls to assist with academic tasks and language supports. This effort continued throughout the summer to maintain connections with students and families. All reopening models include the following to address the needs of EL students to provide equitable access to learning:

- ESOL teachers will provide services to their assigned students on their caseload whether virtual or in person instruction is occurring. This may include providing additional synchronous learning opportunities for EL students (especially newcomer students) in the red model and priority face-to-face opportunities in the orange and yellow model. Decisions regarding in person opportunities will be at the discretion of families.
- Instructional sessions and other learning opportunities provided by content teachers K-12 will have a consistent framework and concise language accessible by ELs. Opportunities for students' demonstration of knowledge and learning will be presented in clear, concise formatting & language. These considerations in instruction and demonstration of knowledge will improve equitable access for ELs to virtual learning.
- Learning activities will be designed to both challenge and support the EL student's individual needs. ESOL teachers will collaborate with their student's content teachers to assist in modifying lessons/projects/activities/materials as needed.
- ESOL teachers will also aid in monitoring their student's progress and evaluation as he/she advances through the curriculum. This will promote a more accurate reflection of student learning.
- ESOL teachers will provide ELs with materials and resources for use to supplement their at-home learning.
- ESOL IAs and tutors will support both virtual and in-person learning, as guided by the most current needs of students and their attendance/engagement in both learning environments.
- With a consistent virtual learning plan (with clear expectations and goals for student learning) communicated by the district, ESOL teachers will work with students/families in order to facilitate the best synchronous and asynchronous instructional times for students. This plan would honor unique student learning preferences/needs, as well as daily family schedules that do not align with a traditional school day schedule that may be offered through a synchronous virtual environment.
- Contact with families will be ongoing as needed and communication will be in the family's native language. This includes a specific FROG page for EL students and their families regarding how to navigate the technology platform, information on whom to contact with questions or needs, how to secure a translator, and where to access community resources. Remote assistance will be available to students and families with an interpreter available at designated times to assist with FROG issues to improve access.

MCKINNEY VENTO STUDENTS

TCPS currently provides services to students identified as homeless using the criteria established by the McKinney Vento (MV) Act. The current economic realities as a result of the COVID19 pandemic are having adverse impacts on families, including additional challenges for those already experiencing homelessness and the possibility of an increase in the number of students attending or enrolling in TCPS identified as homeless

students. This reality requires a greater level of support regardless of which reopening model is employed. The most effective way to eliminate many resource and instructional needs is to encourage homeless students to engage in school, with provisions to accommodate their learning, social, emotional, and physical needs, on a daily basis. To address the needs of homeless students, TCPS will

- Develop communication plans for families regarding supports and services available to them. Student Services workers and assigned counselors will continue weekly check ins with students/families. During the check ins, staff is discussing any additional needs the student and family may have so that we can access resources needed and appropriate to support them during this time.
- Provide additional synchronous learning opportunities for homeless students in the red model and priority face-to-face opportunities in the orange and yellow model. Decisions regarding in person opportunities will be at the discretion of families.
- Provide access to digital learning tools and other tools necessary tools for instruction.
- Provide access to school health and counseling, including social-emotional support for homeless students.
- Provide awareness and instructional training for staff regarding impacts of homeless on student's attendance and performance.

GIFTED STUDENTS

Students identified for GT services will engage in program supports in all reopening models.

- GT teachers will conduct synchronous twice weekly lessons with their caseloads in grades 3-5. Teachers will teach 30 – 45 minute lessons from the TCPS approved GT curriculum based upon William and Mary Science and Social Studies units. See the TCPS GT webpage for more information.
- Middle School Red Phase: The GT teacher will conduct daily 30-minute, synchronous lessons for 1 quarter as a related arts class so that all identified students will receive at least 1 quarter of instruction from the approved 6th and 7h grade problem based curriculum. See the TCPS GT webpage for more information.
- Middle School Yellow Phase: Students who do not attend school in person- The GT teacher will conduct daily 30-minute, synchronous lessons for 1 quarter as a related arts so that all identified students will receive at least 1 quarter of instruction from the approved 6th and 7th grade problem based curriculum. See the TCPS GT webpage for more information. Students who are attending school- The GT teacher will conduct daily 30-minute, small group lessons for 1 quarter as a related arts class, so that all identified students will receive at least 1 quarter of instruction from the approved 6th and 7h grade problem based curriculum. See the TCPS GT webpage for more information.
- High School Red and Yellow Phase: Synchronous yearlong Advanced Placement courses will be offered as well as Project Lead the Way Stem course opportunities. Dual enrollment through Chesapeake College will be offered according to the Chesapeake College Recovery plan.

SECTION 504

Students who have a Section 504 Plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act will continue to receive those services in the fully remote, blended, or face-to-face learning models. Students' Section 504 plans are shared with staff members to ensure accessibility during the school year and the COVID-19 closure. Required Section 504 meetings following federal timelines will continue to be completed virtually or via phone until in-person meetings are deemed safe. This allows for the Section 504 process to continue uninterrupted during the physical closure of school buildings. Evaluations for the purposes of initial eligibility and reevaluation will continue specified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. and any face-to-face assessments needed will be completed in a manner consistent with the health and safety needs of students and staff.

INTERVENTION

TCPS offers services to students based on a multi- tiered system of supports. These supports begin with students receiving supplemental supports in the general education classroom, and based on need, students may require

additional supplemental instruction in small groups or individually at varying levels of intensity in order to provide explicit instruction on content below grade level standards. In order to meet student needs TCPS will

- Continue to implement intervention with fidelity to the extent possible given the stage of recovery model in place
- Provide additional face-to-face and/or remote learning opportunities for intervention students, to the extent possible at elementary and secondary schools.
- Facilitate collaboration between classroom teacher and intervention teacher to support application of learning

NIGHT SCHOOL STUDENTS

Students who were enrolled in the TCPS Night School program will continue their progress in Edmentum courses approved by MSDE. All students have a district issued laptop to engage in their learning. Night School teachers will continue to monitor student progress and provide weekly check-ins to support academic success.

HOME HOSPITAL STUDENTS

TCPS students on home/hospital instruction will receive services commensurate to other students. They will receive an additional hour of tutoring support weekly.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR STAFF

TCPS is committed to continuing to enhance the ability of staff to skillfully instruct students in ever- changing conditions and environments. As a result, a full complement of professional learning models and opportunities will be implemented during the 2020-2021 school year. This includes priorities that existed prior to COVID-19: equity and culturally responsive teaching, high quality instruction, and meeting diverse learner needs in addition to the immediate need for additional professional learning opportunities related to remote teaching. Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, professional learning will need to be informed by data and be responsive to the changing needs of staff and students as conditions warrant.

The TCPS Technology Team has developed multiple modes for staff to engage in learning focused on building capacity in the use of FROG. While this was a priority in the spring, additional training is needed to address the components such as new formats for consistent templates and assigning and tracking tasks. Learning will be inclusive of school and district administration as well as teachers and support staff to ensure consistency in use and expectations for the learning management system. These opportunities will be available to teachers to complete through modules that are self-paced and can be revisited as needed. To provide on-going support, the tech team will host virtual “office hours” and have written materials to support effective implementation of the learning management system.

Staff will also have the opportunity to engage in personal professional learning to support effective teaching and learning. This will include engagement in technology tutorials on digital tools, supporting social emotional needs, and equity.

All certified staff and instructional assistants will participate in professional learning for remote teaching around these four areas:

- Supporting Special Populations in a Remote Learning Environment
- Establishing Norms & Expectations in a Remote Learning Environment
- Building Relationships in a Remote Learning Environment
- Management & Student Engagement in a Remote Learning Environment

This will be provided in a synchronous, remote environment that will model effective strategies teachers can adapt to their own remote classroom. Teachers will engage in on-going learning in this area through specific content meetings with curriculum supervisors and school-based teams that apply the strategies within that

context to offer greater application.

Curriculum teams will also engage in professional learning specific to curriculum materials to support student learning, pacing and assessment expectations for monitoring student learning, and how to strategically determine which learning activities are appropriate for synchronous vs. asynchronous work in order to maximize learning.

Collaboration for teachers and instructional staff is essential in meeting the needs of students and addressing academic and logistical challenges. All scheduling models allow for time for instructional staff to collaborate, particularly to create efficiencies and maximize expertise. In addition to in-person or video conferencing as collaboration options, teachers will have the opportunity to work with curriculum teams to develop and share resources and tools, creating supportive instructional networks for teachers while enhancing expertise for students.

EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOVERY MODELS

Since each model will present new challenges, TCPS is committed to monitoring and evaluating implementation of the recovery models to determine what is working and how they might be improved to support student success. Instructionally, this will focus on measures that evaluate student engagement in learning as well as growth towards meeting/exceeding grade level standards for learning. Grade level teams and content teachers will be evaluating student progress on multiple measures throughout the instructional interval, but district progress monitoring will include quarterly data reviews disaggregated by academic/instructional levels as well as by student groups.

ESMEC BLENDED VIRTUAL PROGRAM

This has been placed on HOLD pending the hiring of a Coordinator and the vetting of curriculum with MSDE. It should be up and running by second semester.

Recovery Plan: Communications

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The health and safety of our students and staff is always our highest priority.
- All students, educators, and staff should feel comfortable and safe in their learning environment.
- Student learning must include full accountability for students and staff
- Reflection on recent experiences with Continuity of Learning has informed our planning for recovery.
- The situation is dynamic, so we must remain flexible and continuously evaluate.

COORDINATION

Communications will be coordinated by the Coordinator of Public Relations and Special Programs, Communications Facilitator, and the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Coordinator of Public Relations and Special Programs

- Press Releases
- Social Media
- Monthly Superintendent's Updates
- District Level emails and text messages
- Response to Inquiries from parents, media and the general public
- FAQs
- School Level Communications support

Communications Facilitator

- District and School Webpages
- Printed Publications
- Social Media
- Surveys
- Monthly Superintendent's Updates
- Community Presentations
- School Level Communications support

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

- Communications with and regarding the Board of Education
- Communications to staff from Superintendent
- Response to inquiries from parents and the general public

STAKEHOLDERS

The Superintendent has convened a Recovery Plan Stakeholder group comprised of Teachers, Support Staff, Parents, Students, Administrators, County Government, County Board and various Community Partners. This group is reviewing survey results and other data to inform and help to refine planning for a safe return of both students and staff to schools in the fall.

TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS AND SUPPORT STAFF

Responsibilities for each reopening scenario will be outlined to the Leadership Team in July.

Changes/revisions to the plan will be communicated to Principals and central headquarters staff. Principals will communicate with school staff.

FAMILIES/STUDENTS

All district level communications will be sent in both English and Spanish

Comprehensive plan will be shared with families and students when finalized. This should include specific information about schedule, social distancing, transportation, food services, building sanitation, deadlines and safety protocols. This will be shared using the following communication methods:

- Email, and Text Link
- Website
- Social media
- Press release
- Weekly Updates/Reminders and well as posting on FROG and signage in school buildings
- Schedules
- Safety protocols
- Quarterly Surveys to obtain feedback regarding
- Virtual learning platforms
- Teacher Accessibility
- Quarterly meeting with Parent Advisory and Teacher of the Year committees
- Superintendent's Roundtable with staff at all schools
- Feedback Form available on website and managed by Coordinator of Public Relations and Special Programs

COMMUNITY

- Individual
- Business
- Public Sector
- Non-Profit
- Internship

The frequency and type of communication with Community Partners will depend upon their relationship with the district.

- TCPS will continue sharing monthly Superintendent's Updates with all Stakeholders.
- Superintendent and Coordinator of Public Relations and Special Programs will continue participating in weekly Emergency Operations Center calls.
- Superintendent will have ongoing calls with partners including but not limited to:
- Talbot County Health Officer
- Childcare Partners
- Talbot County Council
- Maryland Superintendents
- MSDE
- Coordinator of Public Relations and Special Programs (with support from Receptionist) will be responsible for scanning for news and other reports to address or respond to any incorrect information.

METHODS AND FREQUENCY

In general TCPS will utilize its existing communications strategy and guidelines (attached) using the following tools:

SchoolMessenger Communications Platform - Parents and Community

Website - Families, Staff, Community

Social Media - Families, Staff, Community

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

Media (print, television, radio, digital)

FROG Learning Management System - Students/Families

The Communications Team will document all district level communications throughout the year. Method and frequency of communication may be adjusted as necessitated by changes in the status of the pandemic.

APPENDIX

TCPS referenced the following resources when preparing our recovery plan:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Considerations for Schools

[Handling Positive Cases](#) of COVID-19

[Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)

[Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread](#) of COVID-19

[Maintaining Healthy Environments](#)

[Healthy Operations](#)

Maryland State Department of Education

Maryland State Department of Education **Maryland Together**

[Maryland Recovery Plan for Education](#)

Maryland State Government

[Maryland Strong: Roadmap for Recovery](#)

Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA)



Roadmap for Return to Interscholastic Athletics

Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA)

Roadmap for Return to Interscholastic Athletics

Table of Contents

3	Introduction, Where We Are	
4	I. Guiding Principles	
	• Maximizing Participation Opportunities	4
4	II. MPSSAA Roadmap Forward	
	• Cancellation of All Activities	5
	• Modified and Gradual Resumption of Athletics and Activities	5
	• Full Resumption and Administration of Activities	5
	• Seasonal Planning and Preparation	6
6	III. MPSSAA Guidance	
	• LSS COVID-19 Return to Play Considerations	7
	• LSS Return to Play Team	8
8	IV. Preparation, Preseason, Participation, Postseason	
	• Preparation	8
	• Health-related Items	8
	• Operational Guidelines	10
	• Preseason	13
	• Lowest Risk Assessment - At Home Training	13
	• Increasing Risk Assessment - Team Practices	14
	• More Risk Assessment - Within Team Competition	15
	• Participation	15
	• Even More Risk Assessment - Local Geographic Competition	15
	• Highest Risk Assessment - Expanded and Statewide Competition	16
	• Postseason	16
17	School and Student Outcomes	
18	Appendices	
	• Appendix A – MPSSAA COMAR Waivers	18
	• Appendix B – Parent/Student-Athlete Participation Acknowledgement Statements	22
	• Appendix C – Sample School Attendance Tracking Sheet	26
27	Resources	
29	Contributors	

INTRODUCTION

The Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) is committed to providing guidance and recommendations to assist all interscholastic athletics' stakeholder groups with recovery from the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic. The MPSSAA *Roadmap for Return to Interscholastic Athletics* provides a framework of action items from the MPSSAA, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the 24 Local School Systems (LSSs), and the 198 MPSSAA member schools.

This guidance is built specifically for education-based athletic programs by high school athletic administrators based on the fundamental values, structure, competition level, and logistical frameworks that separate interscholastic athletics from all other levels of sport offerings. The recommended guidelines found in this document represent options for LSSs to gradually resume interaction between student-athletes based on local, state, and federal guidelines. All coaches, athletic directors, and principals should consult with their LSS on criteria in place that allow for increased socialization and use of facilities. This document is intended to be fluid and will adapt as needed based on guidance from the MSDE and the Maryland Department of Health (MDH).

WHERE WE ARE

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and state of emergency declared by Governor Larry Hogan, Maryland schools have been closed since March 16, 2020, and will remain closed through the end of the school year. On April 28, 2020, the MPSSAA announced the cancellation of the remainder of the 2020 state basketball tournaments, the entire 2020 spring sports season, the 2020 Minds in Motion Scholarship Banquet, and the 2020 Student-Athlete Leadership Conference.

On April 24, 2020, Governor Larry Hogan announced the [*Maryland Strong: Roadmap to Recovery*](#) that details a three-phased approach to reopening Maryland. On May 6, 2020, Dr. Karen Salmon, Maryland State Superintendent of Schools, released [*The Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education*](#) to guide LSSs and school communities on the path forward. The guide was drafted in collaboration with the Maryland State Board of Education, local school superintendents, and with input from a wide array of stakeholders through the state. The plan, updated on June 10, 2020, establishes a foundation of options for school systems as they begin to consider how they will bring students and educators back into buildings in a safe environment.

The MPSSAA, after its announcement to cancel all athletic-related activities for the remainder of the current school year, has convened numerous statewide meetings with LSS, medical professionals, and fellow state athletic associations. The MPSSAA has shifted all focus and resources to aligning the return of interscholastic athletics and activities with the State of Maryland's recovery plans.

I. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Annually over 111,000 student-athletes participate in interscholastic athletic competitions administered by the MPSSAA with an additional 6,500 in corollary sports and over 10,000 additional participants in other extracurricular activities and middle school athletic programs. Education-based athletics distinguishes itself from youth sports as an extension of the classroom that supports the educational mission of our LSS. Research on student participation in interscholastic athletics and activities shows the undeniable enhancement they bring to the academic mission of schools as an inherent educational extension to the classroom that keeps students more engaged in academics which in turn fosters post-graduate success. Research has also shown that interscholastic athletics and activities promote the health and well-being of students mentally, emotionally, and physically creating positive psychological and academic outcomes. With a focus on students' mental health and social and emotional well-being, research has shown the benefits of exercise, social interaction, and sense of belonging - all components of interscholastic athletics participation. Additionally, coaches play an integral role in mentoring students' social and emotional growth and development.

In this regard, the MPSSAA roadmap forward for interscholastic athletics and activities embodies these guiding principles, while gradually aligning with the MSDE and the LSS educational and health and safety decisions in order for education-based athletics and activities to resume during Stage one and Stage two of the Governor's [*Maryland Strong: Roadmap to Recovery*](#). As such, the staged reopening of interscholastic athletics should mirror LSS instructional and logistical decisions by allowing for an incremental return of participation, using factual data and aligning with local and state health department recommendations and restrictions.

MAXIMIZING PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

The MPSSAA believes it is crucial not only to the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of our high school students across the state to return to physical activity and athletic competition but for attaining a high level of academic engagement as well. The MPSSAA recognizes that it is likely that ALL students will not be able to return to – and sustain – athletic activity at the same time in all schools, regions, counties, and cities. There will also likely be variation in what sports and activities are allowed to be played and held based on LSS protocols and procedures.

II. ROADMAP FORWARD

The MPSSAA, in aligning to MSDE's [*Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education*](#), envisions that interscholastic athletics will be reimaged as each LSS determines the needs for their locale. In order to successfully administer a safe, education-based athletics program during the current COVID-19 pandemic, the MPSSAA recognizes that there will be varying degrees of participation across sports and geographic areas of the state. There are three possible states of athletic activities, based on the guidance of MPSSAA, each LSS, and local and state health departments. These states incorporate instructional decisions, social distancing requirements, size of gatherings, transportation, and many other factors that would be deemed locally necessary to administer interscholastic athletic activities. The three states are as follows:

Cancellation of All Activities

Cancellation of all athletics and activities may take place in various geographic areas or statewide at any given time based on local and state health department decisions. LSSs should be prepared for interruptions to athletic schedules and operations during the course of a season.

Modified and Gradual Resumption and Administration of Athletic and Activities

Modified and gradual resumption and administration of athletics and activities are aligned with the [*Maryland Strong: Roadmap to Recovery*](#) stages one and two and with the instructional options found within [*Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education*](#). The MPSSAA envisions LSSs to operate within the modified and gradual resumption until reaching stage three of the Governor's recovery efforts.

Within stages one and two of the Governor's recovery plan there will be segmented approaches for gradual resumption and administration of athletics and activities. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) describes the segmented approach through a risk assessment.

- Lowest Risk: Performing skill-building drills or conditioning at home, alone or with family members.
- Increasing Risk: Summer out-of-season school-based open conditioning, exercise, weight training, and non-sport specific student gatherings/In-Season Team Based Practices
- More Risk: Within-team competition.
- Even More Risk: Full competition between teams from the same local geographic area.
- Highest Risk: Full competition between teams from different geographic areas.

The health and safety of student-athletes, coaches, athletic administrators, event staff, spectators, and officials is of paramount importance to the MPSSAA. Guidance in conjunction with medical experts and athletic administrators will be developed to fully implement the staged approach. Schools must be mindful that different sports could be operating at different risk assessment levels. Each sport carries its own risk based on the ability of social distancing to be maintained, indoor versus outdoor participation, duration of contact, face-to-face contact, and shared equipment.

Full Resumption and Administration of Activities

Full resumption and administration of athletics and activities coincides with the Governor's stage three, which includes the resumption of large scale events and LSSs engaging students at full capacity and functionality. The MPSSAA will issue additional detailed guidance periodically, as deemed necessary by the state's movement toward phase three and schools operating under a new modified sense of normalcy.

SEASONAL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Planning in advance and establishing dates and timelines has been a hallmark of the MPSSAA and LSS interscholastic athletics programs. The entire MPSSAA community for generations has set their cyclical calendar to evolve around first practice dates, first play dates, and state championships. The MPSSAA recognizes that this calendar notion needs to be reimaged given the unknown in this instance and instituting best practices to avoid COVID-19 spread. LSS athletics programs and stakeholders are encouraged to embrace the notion that the safe return of interscholastic athletics will need to be administered on an incremental basis, using the latest national, state, and local health recommendations and operational procedures.

As schools reopen and considerations are made to meet the needs of current health and safety standards, including social distancing, face mask coverings, and size of gathering, the following are some options for instituting participation opportunities:

- Team-based and skill development practices with no competition for extended periods of time.
- Intra-school competitions utilizing multiple varsity teams or intramurals. Examples include limits on roster sizes and the creation of multiple teams.
- Competition confined to a set number of schools in the same geographic area. Multiple competitions against the same schools may take place within this scenario.
- Modifications of seasonal schedules.
- City/County/Conference competition only.
- Modified culminating events, tournaments, or invitational events.

III. MPSSAA GUIDANCE

The MPSSAA is committed to providing guidance and recommendations to assist all interscholastic athletics' stakeholder groups with recovery from the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic. The MPSSAA has been working with the heads of athletics from all 24 LSSs, the MPSSAA Medical Advisory Committee, and a cohort of sports medicine and pediatric infectious diseases professionals from the University of Maryland Medical System, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Medstar Health, and Lifebridge Health as well as contributors from U.S. Lacrosse and the Maryland Athletic Trainers Association to provide recommendations as it relates to the resocialization of high school sports and physical activity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The MPSSAA has created an update page on www.mpssaa.org. This page will focus on the latest information on the stage of the Maryland Recovery Plan, size of gatherings allowed by state ordered guidance, up-to-date resources for implementation of athletic practices and contests, expectation dates, and other pertinent information to assist and direct LSS in the return of interscholastic athletics. This page will also serve for continued resources related to the preparation, preseason, participation, and postseason phases.

On June 23, 2020, the Maryland State Board of Education approved a request of waiver to certain regulations for the specific use of LSS navigating delayed, modified, or interruptions during the course of the 2020-2021 academic year. These regulations, at the request of the

MPSSAA and local Superintendent of Schools, will give the LSS the flexibility to navigate county COVID-19 restrictions and administer interscholastic athletic opportunities based on local conditions.

MPSSAA member schools are reminded these waiver requests have been identified for specific purposes to assist schools related to delayed or modified instructional decisions. MPSSAA member schools are expected to be in full compliance with COMAR 13A.06.03 unless specific needs arise that require LSS to implement plans with the flexibility found in the waiver requests.

Please note the following important points regarding the waiver requests (APPENDIX A).

- As MPSSAA members, the LSS agrees to institute schedules that adhere to defined practice and seasonal structure based on MPSSAA decisions. The MPSSAA maintains authority on defining sport seasons. The waiver request provides flexibility for athletic administrators to modify in-season sport schedules related to increased or decreased participation opportunities.
- MPSSAA does not seek a waiver of the requirements for B(1)(a) through (q) for seasonal and weekly limitations for the number of contests allowed per school athletic team and student participation during the course of a season. MPSSAA member schools in any scheduling must adhere to the seasonal and weekly limitations on the number of contests.
- As MPSSAA members, the LSS agree to institute a set out-of-season practice time frame per sport before operating any out-of-season practices and obtain approval from the MPSSAA Executive Director for the out-of-season practice time frame. These requests must be school system based requests through the LSS administrator for interscholastic athletics and be directly related to specific purposes regarding the LSS response to COVID-19. The intent of the out-of-season regulation waiver is for the specific purpose of LSS operating participation opportunities within an intra-school setting for an extended period of time or for the reconditioning of the deconditioned athlete.
- MPSSAA member schools must continue to follow all regulations regarding sanctioning. The waiver request gives the MPSSAA office flexibility in approving sanction requests after deadlines.

LSS COVID-19 RETURN TO PLAY CONSIDERATIONS

Since District Athletic Administrators in each LSS are the well-respected voices for safety issues involving interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities, the MPSSAA strongly urges that these individuals engage with their local authorities and health departments to develop coordinated policies and procedures with positive approaches for the return of interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities, the other half of education.

LSS RETURN TO PLAY TEAM

An LSS Return to Play Team should consider the following as members:

- Superintendent - Designee
- School District Athletic Administrator(s)
- Principal Representative
- System Health Coordinator/Nurse
- Sports Medicine/Primary Care Provider
- Transportation
- LSS Risk Management
- LSS Operation/Facility Managers
- Lead Athletic Trainer
- Athletic Director Representative
- Coach Representatives
- Open communication with local health department

IV. PREPARATION, PRESEASON, PARTICIPATION, POSTSEASON

The MPSSAA has broken each season into four time frames based on the cyclical operations member schools face throughout the course of an interscholastic season. Under these timeframes are specific guidance to assist LSS systematically implement interscholastic athletics.

PREPARATION

LSSs should begin the preparation phase as soon as possible, assembling a return to play team to assess upcoming guidance from the MPSSAA and begin to implement policies and procedures related to health and safety measures and operational measures for the return of interscholastic athletics. This section has been divided into health related and operational related guidance.

Health-Related Items - Each LSS should communicate effectively and implement plans for addressing the following areas:

PreParticipation Physicals - Athletes must continue to follow the state regulations regarding completion of an annual pre-participation physical examination. The MPSSAA Medical Advisory Committee has added a supplementary sheet to this physical form for the use of appropriate health care providers. This form is attached to the linked PPE form below. LSSs should use the preparation phase to ensure all students have an up-to-date physical on file. Recommended preparticipation physical form may be found at: <https://www.mpssaa.org/membership-services/health-and-safety/health-and-safety-recommended-forms-and-resources/>

The MPSSAA Medical Advisory Committee Recommends:

- If parents think their child is immunocompromised, please check with your child's healthcare provider (Physician (MD/DO), Nurse Practitioner (NP), Physician Assistant (PA)) before returning them to sports.

- Athletes who have been hospitalized as a result of COVID-19 or multi-system inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) should have a thorough cardiovascular evaluation or cardiology consultation prior to return.
- Athletes, coaches, and officials who should consider delaying their participation in sports and activities are those with any of the following:
 1. Age Greater than 65;
 2. Diabetes;
 3. Chronic lung disease including moderate to severe asthma;
 4. Severe obesity (Body Mass Index >40 kg/m²);
 5. Chronic kidney disease treated with dialysis;
 6. Chronic liver disease (cirrhosis);
 7. Heart conditions (coronary artery disease, hypertension, heart rhythm problems (arrhythmia), and heart defects you are born with (congenital heart defects);
 8. Immunocompromised (e.g. any transplant recipient, needing immunosuppressant medications (e.g. steroids, biologics, etc.), patients receiving chemotherapy, etc.);
 9. Nursing home resident or long term care resident;
 10. Thalassemia or sickle cell disease.

[CDC People Who Are at High Risk For Severe Illness](#)

Parent/Student-Athlete Participation Acknowledgement Statements - Included among pre-participation forms, it is recommended LSS implement a sign off acknowledging both parent/guardian and student athlete has read provided information on the risk of COVID-19 as it relates to their participation in interscholastic athletics and activities. This form also includes acknowledgement of the symptom free requirements from the CDC for attendance at any gathering or event. (APPENDIX B)

Attendance Tracking Sheet - Athletes, coaches, officials/referees/umpires, and other essential athletic administrators (i.e. athletic trainers, facility managers, grounds crew, etc.) MUST be listed on an attendance tracking sheet. These documents should be saved to document attendance at events for contact tracing if it should become necessary. (APPENDIX C)

School Health Service and Athletic Administration Communication – It is imperative that schools ensure appropriate communication between school-based health service staff and athletic administration staff. This communication is necessary to ensure properly administered, athletic health decisions are aligned with everyday instructional decisions and schools are prepared to handle a positive case.

Communication & Social Media - Schools should communicate the game plan and framework for student-athletes to be eligible for participation.

- Communicating the game plan/framework effectively
- Promoting expectations
- Separating facts from myths - quote sources
- Sell the safety of sports

Positive Cases - LSS Planning teams should be prepared for handling a positive test within their teams or schools. LSS protocol should be followed and aligned with protocol if a positive case was found during the normal course of the school day. The CDC provides additional guidance on handling positive cases.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html#preparing>

Operational Guidelines - Each LSS should communicate effectively and implement plans for addressing the following areas:

Facility Assessment, Preparation, and Equipment Needs

- LSSs and schools should assess each facility and prepare for various athletic opportunities. [CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfecting should be followed.](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html#reduce)
- Plans and forms should be developed to ensure daily equipment and facility disinfection needs. School systems should assess personal protection equipment, sanitizers, face masks and other needs. These items should be a high priority due to the limited availability and supply of some items.
 - CDC Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html#reduce>
 - CDC Maintaining Health Environments
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html#environments>
 - CDC Health Operations
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html#operations>

Entrance/Exit Strategies

- Practice or games times should be spaced out to decrease the number of individuals coming and going at the same time and facilitate social distancing.
- Limit spectators allowed at any workouts or practices. Parents/caregivers can remain in their cars during this time. No congregating should be allowed in the parking lot or fields. A drop-off line for practices is recommended to avoid unnecessary exposure.
- Carpooling should not be allowed unless only members of immediate family

Limitations on Gatherings

- Follow most recent state ordered guidance on the size of gatherings.
- During competitions, spectators should practice social distancing as permissible and spectators should wear masks/face covering. Limits on the number of spectators should be determined by organizations and schools based on multiple factors (i.e. gym size, indoor/outdoor) to promote social distancing. The maximum number of spectators should be posted at all gates, along with reminders of 6 ft. social distancing.
- Only essential individuals should be present on the field for games. Schools should limit the presence of managers and student assistants to on-field exposure.

Face Coverings

- To the extent possible, individuals engaged in the sport and at the venue shall wear a face covering, especially when social distancing is not feasible. (Maryland Health Department Order: 6.12.01)
- Participants on the sideline are recommended to use face coverings.
- The MPSSAA Medical Advisory Committee recommends any participants wearing a face mask cover should:
 - Be aware of the face mask will increase CO2 retention;
 - Be aware of increased concerns of heat illness;
 - Be disinfected daily by the user;
 - Take additional water and rest breaks;
 - Find social distancing areas of six or more feet from other participants during recovery; and,
 - Designate a set area for intermittent removal and storage.

Hygiene Practices

- Hand hygiene is essential. Organizations and facilities need to promote frequent and effective, hand hygiene with ample hand sanitizer (>60% ethanol or >70% isopropanol) dispensers and areas with soap and water in many different locations. Families may be asked to provide their own.

Hydration and Nutrition

- No sharing of water bottles. An individual athlete should use their own clearly marked bottle.
- Coolers, which should be limited in use, should be properly sanitized after each use, and a new cooler should be used for each team or group. [CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfecting should be followed.](#)
- Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) are not recommended. If used, they should be utilized only for the refilling of personal water bottles and must be cleaned after every practice/contest.
- If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee instead of a buffet or family-style meal. Avoid sharing food and utensils. Offer hand sanitizer or encourage hand washing
- Ice towels should be marked for individual use only, then discarded or washed properly.
- No whirlpool or cold/hot tubs should be used during any of the listed phases. Best practice for emergency use still applies.
- Have a cold water immersion tub on-site or within 5 minutes of the field.
- On field, having ice towels ready in addition to the cold tub is recommended for cooling during breaks and for covering the head in the event that an athlete has an exertional heatstroke and needs to be immersed.

Locker Rooms and Training Areas

- The use of locker rooms is not recommended during these stages. Proper area for equipment storage and cleaning is recommended as well as appropriately spaced

individual areas for athletes to store their personal belongings during activity.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment

- No handshakes or fist bumps should take place.
- No team huddles.
- No spitting or sunflower seeds
- Any equipment used during activities should be disinfected with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certified products as able.
- Any jerseys used during these workouts should be washed daily and not switched to different players during workout. No sharing of pennies should be permitted.

Return to Exercise, Conditioning, and Weight Training

- Athletes have had a prolonged break from organized sports and conditioning. Although some athletes may have continued independent strength and conditioning and cardiovascular training, some athletes may return deconditioned. Coaches need to reassess the physical conditioning status of all athletes on their return and plan for a graduated return in duration, frequency, and intensity of athletics. Please reference the National Federation of High Schools joint statement with other appropriate health and sport national organizations on the [Return to Sports and Exercise during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Guidance for High School and Collegiate Athletic Programs](#).
- All policies of the [MPSSAA regarding heat acclimatization and heat related illnesses](#) must be followed. Duration and heat indexes must be monitored during non-season conditioning sessions.

Accommodations for students with special needs

- Exceptions may be needed for some of these conditions based on circumstances.
- Showers may be needed after practice in some circumstances (eg. working after practice, homeless). Coaches and administrators can make these exceptions. Social distancing should be maximized and proper cleaning should occur.
- Water bottles that can be clearly marked for individuals should be made available. Daily cleaning should occur after an individual uses them.
- For parents/caregivers that rely on public transportation or walk, an area away from practice should be set aside that allows for social distancing.
- Schools and organizations should attempt to have extra masks/face coverings available. These should be washed after each use if cloth-based.
- For athletes not able to wash workout clothes attempts should be made by the school and organizations to help in providing this for them.
- Additional situations may arise based on social vulnerabilities. Schools and organizations should attempt to think of these situations and develop solutions that continue to practice the key elements of preventing COVID-19 transmission.

PRESEASON

The preseason timeframe focuses on the re-engagement of students and coaches throughout the first three CDC described risk assessments.

- Lowest Risk: Performing skill-building drills or conditioning at home, alone or with family members.
- Increasing Risk: Team-based practice.
- More Risk: Within-team competition.

Lowest Risk: Performing skill-building drills or conditioning at home, alone or with family members.

Goals: Re-engagement of student-athletes and the reintroduction of athletics and activities for the betterment of the social, emotional, and physical well-being.

LSS Recommendations:

- School systems operating during the lowest risk are recommended to reframe any form of in-person contact with students.
- Regarding the well-being of students during the global pandemic, schools and coaches are recommended to virtually engage students through controlled and safe measures put into place by the LSS.
 - Virtual sessions may be for student check ins, virtual conditioning workouts for students on their own time,
 - Virtual sessions may not be considered as a prerequisite for team tryouts and voluntary.
 - Any virtual contact with students must occur on approved platforms through the LSS.
 - LSS are recommended to have a submitted parent permission and have a current physical on file for any conditioning instructions of students.
- Coaches may not conduct virtual team-specific practices in-person or virtually.
- School coaching staffs may meet virtually regarding sport-specific instruction with up to two returning student-athletes per day, per MPSSAA regulations.
- Any virtual engagement by coaches with students must be communicated to athletic directors.

Increasing Risk: Summer out-of-season school-based open conditioning, exercise, weight training, and non-sport specific student gatherings/In-Season Team Based Practices

Goals: The resocialization of sport to increased physical activity and practice while being mindful of the health and safety of our youth and high school athletes, coaches/personnel, parents/caregivers and spectators.

LSS Recommendations: LSS may be operating in the Increasing Risk category during Summer out-of-season timeframe through school-based open conditioning, exercise, weight training, and non-sport specific student gatherings or in-season through team based practices. The following recommendations apply to both in and out-of-season student and coach contact.

- LSS operating during the increasing risk stage are recommended to have the procedures outlined in the preparation phase in place before interactions begin.
- LSS should have a communication strategy in place to handle determinations of returning to the Lowest Risk Stage or what to do in regards to a positive case.
- During this phase, individual workouts are allowed to begin on campus or at the organization's facility. However, groups must be in compliance with the most recent state order and protocols on social gathering sizes.
 - It is recommended schools begin with inclusion of small groups. The space should be separated by a barrier or large enough distance that individuals can maximize social distance and no players/coaches should be within 6 feet of each other.
 - State ordered guidance may permit gradual increase in the size of gatherings while maintaining social distancing.
 - Athletes should not interact with anyone outside the area where their individual workout is located.
 - Any equipment used during activities should be disinfected with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certified products between each use.
 - Gathering limitations and cleaning to be enforced by school administration, not the athletic trainer.
- LSS may allow for coaching staffs to work with two players per day with all precautions in place.
- General concept: Get in, Get out and complete essential training.
- In-Season
 - Practices must be in compliance with heat acclimatization policies.
 - Minimal protective equipment (i.e. helmets only for football) should be used during initial stages and gradually increase.
 - Team drills can occur where players are less than 6 feet apart, but this should be minimized to brief one-on-one drills. LSS may choose to allow certain sports to begin based on the individual risk of each sport.
 - No two teams should be in the same location at one time. If the same field or gym will be used back to back, allow ample time between sessions to clean the area between teams. Half field use is permitted. Be sure that there is no interaction between teams.

More Risk: Within Team Competitions

Goals: The resocialization of sport to increased practice and competition between a larger squad that may incur limited contact while being mindful of the health and safety of our youth and high school athletes, coaches/personnel, parents/caregivers and spectators.

LSS Recommendations:

- LSS operating during the more risk stage are recommended to have the procedures outlined in the preparation phase in place.
- LSS should have a communication strategy in place to handle determinations of returning to the previous Risk Stages or what to do in regards to a positive case.
- LSS should focus on this phase of continuing all precautions in the previous phase with specified game-like simulations that may incur contact based on the nature of the sport to specified times.
- At the conclusion or during breaks of game-like simulations or within team competitions, proper disinfection should be used on all equipment and proper hand hygiene should be used by all participants.
- Participants on the sidelines or taking breaks should continue to use social distancing.
- During competitions, spectators should practice social distancing as permissible.

PARTICIPATION

Even More Risk: Full Competition between teams from the same local geographic area

Goal: To increase competition opportunities for schools through expanding their geographic area to include local schools in competition and scrimmages within a set boundary. Communication between athletic administrators is paramount during this phase.

LSS Recommendations:

- LSS operating during the more risk stage are recommended to have the procedures outlined in the preparation phase in place.
- LSS should have a communication strategy in place to handle determinations of returning to the previous Risk Stages or what to do in regards to a positive case.
- LSS should align transportation decisions with LSS policy for instructional purposes.
- Hosting schools must communicate effectively on their school's facility plan, entrance/exit strategies, and all logistics to schools and officials. (A recommended resource will be developed on mpssaa.org).
- Number of spectators may be limited based on size of the facility and the

- promotion of social distancing by organizations and schools.
- Regular Public Address Announcements during the course of competitions. (A recommended resource will be developed on mpssaa.org).

Highest Risk: Full Competition between teams from different geographic areas

Goals: The increased competition opportunities for schools through expanding their geographic area to include competition and scrimmages from larger geographic areas. Communication between athletic administrators is paramount during this phase.

LSS Recommendations:

- LSS operating during the more risk stage are recommended to have the procedures outlined in the preparation phase in place.
- LSS should have a communication strategy in place to handle determinations of returning to the previous Risk Stages or what to do in regards to a positive case.
- LSS should align transportation decisions with LSS policy for instructional purposes.
- Hosting schools must communicate effectively on their school's facility plan, entrance/exit strategies, and all logistics to schools and officials. (A recommended resource will be developed on mpssaa.org).
- LSS may incrementally increase the geographic areas of competition allowed during this phase based on local and state health department guidance.
- Number of spectators may be limited based on size of the facility and the promotion of social distancing by organizations and schools.
- Regular Public Address Announcements during the course of competitions. (A recommended resource will be developed on mpssaa.org).

POSTSEASON - MPSSAA STATE TOURNAMENTS AND CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

The MPSSAA recognizes the highest risk, according to the CDC, is increased participation opportunities that includes statewide competitions among different geographic areas. This reality places state championships or culminating events in jeopardy depending on the sport. Each respective sport will be evaluated by the MPSSAA on an individual basis to make calculated and informed decisions dependent on the characteristics of the MPSSAA-administered sport, the number of programs being administered by member schools, and local and state health department guidance on the status quo of statewide participation.

V. SCHOOL AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

This guidance is built specifically for education-based athletic programs based on the fundamental values, structure, competition level, and logistical frameworks that separate interscholastic athletics from all other levels of sport offerings. Interscholastic athletics and activities benefit the

physical and social-emotional well-being of participants and their communities statewide. These programs instill a sense of pride in school and community, teach lifelong lessons and skills of teamwork and self-discipline, and facilitate the physical and emotional development of our state's high school students.

Through participating in extracurricular activities, students learn lifelong lessons that complement the academic lessons taught in the classroom, therefore, school athletic and activity programs are one of the most effective investments made in secondary school education programs. The benefits of education based athletics, or co-curricular activities, are inimitable. These well-known benefits are based on research regarding social, emotional, and physical well-being focusing on the student-athlete and the mission of the school.

As stated earlier in this document, students who participate in athletic programs generally tend to have higher grade-point averages, better attendance records, lower dropout rates, and fewer discipline problems. Evidence that interscholastic athletics supports the academic mission of the school, or school system, and is not a diversion, but rather an extension of a great educational program. Mental and physical health are improved through interscholastic athletics. Self-concept, self-image, physical activity, and weight management are a few of these health benefits realized through activity participation. Athletics provide valuable lessons and skills for practical situations like leadership, teamwork, fair play, and hard work.

Through participation in athletic programs, student-athletes learn self-discipline, build self-confidence, empathy, and develop skills to handle competitive situations. These are qualities students need if they are to become responsible adults, productive citizens, and skilled professionals. Furthermore, participation in high school athletics is often a predictor of later success in college, a career, and becoming a contributing healthy member of society. Education-based athletics support the academic mission of schools, are inherently educational, and are a significant part of the school, or education system.

When the experience of participating in interscholastic athletics is paired with what a student learns throughout the school day, that's the point where we impact our students' lives in a positive way, an impact beyond the sole purpose of winning. The purpose of interscholastic athletics is education, human growth, and development of young people. These benefits are the reason education-based athletics are imperative to the 111,000 students who participate in the athletic programs offered by the MPSSAA, as well as the 6,500 students who partake in the corollary athletic programs, and more than 10,000 participants who are involved in other extracurricular activities in our LSS.

APPENDIX - A

ORGANIZED 1946

MEMBER OF THE
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF
STATE HIGH SCHOOL
ASSOCIATIONS



Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

TELEPHONE: (410) 767-0376
FAX: (410) 333-3111

R. ANDREW WARNER

To: Local School System Supervisors of Athletics

From: R. Andrew Warner, Executive Director, MPSSAA

Date: June 23, 2020

Subject: Interscholastic Athletics Update

The Maryland State Board of Education at their June 23, 2020 meeting supported the request for waiver of interscholastic athletic regulations found in COMAR 13A.06.03. These regulations, at the request of the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) and local Superintendent of Schools, will give the local school systems (LSS) the flexibility to navigate county COVID-19 restrictions and administer interscholastic athletic opportunities based on local conditions.

MPSSAA member schools are reminded these waiver requests have been identified for specific purposes to assist schools related to delayed or modified instructional decisions. MPSSAA member schools are expected to be in full compliance with COMAR 13A.06.03 unless specific needs arise that require LSS to implement plans with the flexibility found in the waiver requests.

Please note the following important points regarding the waiver requests.

- As MPSSAA members, the LSS agrees to institute schedules that adhere to defined practice and seasonal structure based on MPSSAA decisions. The MPSSAA maintains authority on defining sport seasons. The waiver request provides flexibility for athletic administrators to modify in-season sport schedules related to increased or decreased participation opportunities.
- MPSSAA does not seek a waiver of the requirements for B(1)(a) through (q) for seasonal and weekly limitations for the number of contests allowed per school athletic team and student participation during the course of a season. MPSSAA member schools in any scheduling must adhere to the seasonal and weekly limitations on the number of contests.
- As MPSSAA members, the LSS agree to institute a set out-of-season practice time frame per sport before operating any out-of-season practices and obtain approval from the MPSSAA Executive Director for the out-of-season practice time frame. These requests must be school system based requests through the LSS administrator for interscholastic athletics and be directly related to specific purposes regarding the LSS response to COVID-19. The intent of the out-of-season regulation waiver is for the specific purpose of LSS operating participation opportunities within an intra-school setting for an extended period of time or for the reconditioning of the deconditioned athlete.
- MPSSAA member schools must continue to follow all regulations regarding sanctioning. The waiver request gives the MPSSAA office flexibility in approving sanction requests after deadlines.

www.mpssaa.org



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
Maryland State Superintendent of Schools

DATE: June 23, 2020

SUBJECT: Request for Waivers Related to Interscholastic Athletics due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

PURPOSE:

To review waiver recommendations related to requirements for interscholastic athletics as a result of the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting school closures. The waiver recommendations would apply to interscholastic athletics from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and state of emergency declared by Governor Larry Hogan, Maryland schools have been closed since March 16, 2020, and will be closed through the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. On April 28, 2020, the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) announced the cancellation of the remainder of the Spring Sports season and all in person interscholastic athletic and activities. The MPSSAA has focused all efforts on aligning the return of interscholastic athletics and activities with the Maryland State Department of Education *Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education* and the Governor's *Maryland Strong: Roadmap to Recovery*. Some of the most common and fundamental statewide regulations for interscholastic athletic participation as found in COMAR 13A.06.03 require set scheduling, set practice dates, length of preseason practice, out-of-season practice, and other limits of participation that present logistical barriers as it relates to delayed or modified instructional decisions. Based on the ongoing emergency, the superintendents of the 24 Maryland local school systems jointly request through the MPSSAA waiving certain regulations while the State of Emergency continues. Waiver of the regulations will give the local school systems the flexibility to navigate

county COVID-19 restrictions and administer interscholastic athletic opportunities based on local conditions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The designees for interscholastic athletics for the local school system superintendents have been meeting regularly with the MPSSAA Executive Director to address issues related to COVID-19, such as identifying concerns, sharing best practices, and making recommendations for the return of interscholastic athletics and activities aligned with the *Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education*. The MPSSAA Executive Council with support from all 24 local school system superintendents has identified certain waivers of Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) pursuant to the State Board's authority under COMAR 13A.01.01.02-1 that would alleviate logistical barriers related to delayed or modified instructional decisions. Through the MPSSAA, the local superintendents of schools on behalf of the local school systems have collectively requested the following waivers of COMAR for good cause, as necessary and justifiable, arising from the state of emergency:

COMAR 13A.01.01.02-1 *Waivers from Regulations* – Request a waiver from the requirement that each local superintendent of schools on behalf of the school system file a waiver request with the State Superintendent of School regarding statewide interscholastic athletics governed under COMAR 13A.06.03 *Interscholastic Athletics in the State*.

COMAR 13A.06.03.03 A - *Sports Season* - Request waiver of the defined sport seasons. The waiver request allows the MPSSAA to modify the length and timeframes of sports seasons. This allows local school systems to administer interscholastic athletic participation based on local county conditions and orders and allows the MPSSAA to work with individual local school systems to safely operate interscholastic athletics consistent with the latest county, State, and federal information, and to make calculated decisions to best support safe student, school personnel, and referee participation. **NOTE:** As MPSSAA members, the local school systems agree to institute schedules that adhere to defined practice and seasonal structure based on MPSSAA decisions. The MPSSAA maintains authority on defining sport seasons.

COMAR 13A.06.03.03 B(1) - *Maximum Number of Contests During a Sports Season* - Request waiver of the requirement that all sports schedules must be set by the first allowable playdate. This allows local school systems the flexibility to reschedule and adapt to the latest local and State health department COVID-19 guidance and orders. Some areas of the State may see interruptions during the course of the year or their local health department may implement stricter requirements that would affect intercountry and statewide contests. **NOTE:** MPSSAA does not seek a waiver of the requirements for B(1)(a) through (q) for seasonal and weekly limitations for the number of contests allowed per school athletic team and student participation during the course of a season.

COMAR 13A.06.03.04C(9) - *Limits of Participation* - Request waiver of the limit of participation to permit students who play on junior varsity and varsity teams in the previous season to participate in interscholastic competition and in intramurals or school sponsored

athletic programs in the same sport outside the sport season. Intramural programs may be one of the earlier stages to create student participation before expanding into interscholastic and multi-school participation.

COMAR 13A.06.03.04E - *Out-of-Season Practice* - Request waiver of the regulations related to school participation in practice outside the defined seasonal limitations or beyond the regular sports season. This waiver allows for the MPSSAA and local school systems to re-engage coach and student interaction for the social-emotional and physical well-being of the student. Moreover, it permits coaches to conduct teaching and training beyond the regular sports seasons to help students' athletic conditioning and skill development after the long layoff from interscholastic sports. Flexibility for allowing coaches to conduct reconditioning and training is necessary for student safety and to permit schools to safely operate practices and individual student drills. **NOTE:** As MPSSAA members, the local school systems agree to institute a set out-of-season practice time frame per sport before operating any out-of-season practices and obtain approval from the MPSSAA Executive Director for the out-of-season practice time frame.

COMAR 13A.06.03.08(1)(b) - *Sanctioning for Interstate Competition* - Request waiver of the sanction request deadline date for interstate competition. The waiver does not change the requirement to request sanction approval from the MPSSAA, but provides flexibility to make necessary modifications during the course of the year.

COMAR 13A.06.03.08(2)(c) - *Sanctioning for Intrastate Competition* - Request waiver of the sanction request deadline date for intrastate competition. The waiver does not change the requirement to request sanction approval from the MPSSAA, but provides flexibility to make necessary modifications during the course of the year.

APPENDIX - B

COVID-19 Awareness Parent/Student-Athlete Participation Acknowledgement Statements

I _____, the parent/guardian of _____, acknowledge that I have received information on all of the following:

- What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others
- Share facts about COVID-19
- Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)
- COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions from the Maryland State Health Department.
<https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/#FAQ>

I _____, the parent/guardian of _____, will follow the requirements for in-person attendance at any extracurricular athletic and activity event.

- I will not send my child to extracurricular athletic and activities if they are exhibiting any signs/symptoms of COVID 19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID 19 (or presumed to have COVID 19) in the past 14 days.
- I will review symptoms with my child and monitor my child's symptoms every day that my child attends in-person activities/events.
- If my child becomes ill during any in-person activity/event, I will ensure they are picked up promptly. I will follow-up with an authorized health care provider/health department and comply with recommended quarantine or isolation as directed. If my child is ill, I understand that a release to return to in-person activity from an authorized health care provider will be required.

Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19:

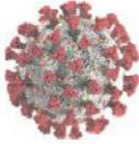
- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| • Fever (100.4°F or greater) or chills | • Headache |
| • Cough | • New loss of taste or smell |
| • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | • Sore throat |
| • Fatigue | • Congestion or runny nose |
| • Muscle or body aches | • Nausea or vomiting |
| | • Diarrhea |

Students must be free of fever without the use of fever reducing medications.

Parent/Guardian _____ Parent/Guardian _____
Print Name Signature and Date

Student Athlete _____ Student Athlete _____
Print Name Signature and Date

What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others



Know about COVID-19

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.



Know how COVID-19 is spread

- You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person.
- You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.



Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

- There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Practice social distancing

- Buy groceries and medicine, go to the doctor, and complete banking activities online when possible.
- If you must go in person, stay at least 6 feet away from others and disinfect items you must touch.
- Get deliveries and takeout, and limit in-person contact as much as possible.



Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.
- There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but you can seek medical care to help relieve your symptoms.
- If you need medical attention, call ahead.



Know your risk for severe illness

- Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19.
- Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more severe illness.



CS 1140137A 04/15/2020

cdc.gov/coronavirus

Share facts about COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

**FACT
1**

Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

**FACT
2**

For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

**FACT
3**

Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.



CS 316439-A 04/14/2020

**FACT
4**

There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- When in public, wear a cloth face covering that covers your mouth and nose.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

**FACT
5**

You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms, which can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Seek medical attention immediately if you or someone you love has emergency warning signs, including:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or not able to be woken
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)



Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)

Updated May 20, 2020

MIS-C is a severe inflammatory syndrome where pediatric patients present with features similar to Kawasaki disease and toxic shock syndrome. The condition can cause problems with the heart and other organs and may result in hospitalization.

MIS-C appears to be rare and most children who get COVID-19 will not develop MIS-C, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). However, children with this syndrome may become seriously ill. If you have any concerns about your child's health, please call your child's doctor.

What are the symptoms of MIS-C?

Symptoms of MIS-C might include persistent fever (temperature of 100.4 degrees F or 38.0 degrees C or greater), a rash or changes in skin color, red eyes or conjunctivitis, red cracked lips or red, bumpy tongue that looks like a strawberry, swollen hands and feet, abdominal pain or swollen lymph nodes.

When should I get emergency care?

Call your child's doctor and seek immediate care if your child has:

- Persistent fever for several days
- Difficulty feeding (infants) or is too sick to drink fluids
- Severe abdominal pain, diarrhea or vomiting
- Dehydration with decreased frequency of urination
- Change in skin color or appearance — becoming pale, patchy or blue, swelling
- Trouble breathing, breathing is painful or breathing very quickly
- Racing heart or chest pain
- Acting unusually sleepy, dizzy or confused

If your child is severely ill, go to the nearest emergency room or call 911 immediately.

Is MIS-C contagious?

MIS-C is not contagious, but it is possible that your child has COVID-19 or another infection that may be contagious.

Is there a treatment for MIS-C?

Children with MIS-C are being treated with therapeutic medications to support the body's immune system and inflammatory response. Children may also receive medications to protect their heart, kidneys and other organs.

How can I prevent my child from getting MIS-C?

You should take steps to prevent your child from being exposed to COVID-19. Stay home when you can, practice social distancing and wear a mask if you must go out and wash hands frequently. Children with underlying medical conditions can be at higher risk for poor outcomes of COVID-19.

For more information about COVID-19 in Maryland, visit coronavirus.maryland.gov.

APPENDIX - C

Sample School Attendance Tracking Sheet

School/Team:

Date:

Person Completing Form:

Name	Athlete	Coach	Official	Other Essential Staff

RESOURCES

Centers For Disease Control and Prevention

CDC Guidance for [Handling Positive Cases](#) of Covid-19

CDC Guidance for [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) of public spaces, workplaces, businesses, schools, and homes

CDC Guidance for [Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread](#) of COVID-19

CDC Guidance for [Maintaining Healthy Environments](#). This document outlines ways in which sports organizations may consider implementing several strategies to maintain healthy environments.

CDC Guidance for [Healthy Operations](#). This document outlines ways in which sports organizations may consider implementing several strategies to maintain healthy operations.

Maryland State Department of Education

Maryland State Department of Education Maryland Together [Maryland Recovery Plan for Education](#). This document outlines the MSDE plan for return to school.

Maryland State Government

[Maryland Strong: Roadmap for Recovery](#)

Governor Hogan's [Executive Orders for COVID-19 Pandemic](#) guidance and orders currently in effect.

Directive and Order Regarding Community, Recreational, Leisure, Cultural, and Sporting Gatherings and Events from the Maryland Department of Health [Maryland Department of Health Guidelines for Size of Gatherings](#) updated June 10, 2020

Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association Health Forms

American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Sports Medicine, American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, American Orthopedic Society for Sports Medicine, and American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine. [Pre-Participation Physical](#)

MPSSAA [Model Policy for Heat Acclimatization](#) to be followed upon a return to athletic practices and competitions

National Federation of State High School Associations

NFHS article [The Case for High School Activities](#) which lays out the rationale and guiding principles for high school athletics and activities

[Guidance for Return to High School and Collegiate Athletic Programs](#). Endorsed by: American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Coaches Association (CSCCA), Gatorade Sports Science Institute (GSSI), Korey Stringer Institute (KSI), National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA), National Center for Catastrophic Sport Injury Research (NCCSIR), National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA). June 2, 2020

NFHS Guidance document for state associations regarding the [Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities](#)

CONTRIBUTORS

Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association Staff

R. Andrew Warner, Executive Director
Jason Bursick, Assistant Director
Jill Masterman, Program Specialist
Ken Kazmarek, Coordinator of Officials

Local School System Administrators for Systemwide Athletics

Tracey Leonard - Allegany County
Clayton Culp - Anne Arundel County
Brian Layman - Anne Arundel County
Tiffany Byrd - Baltimore City
Michael Sye - Baltimore County
Lynette Mitzel - Baltimore County
Kevin Hook - Calvert County
Dr. Derek Simmons - Caroline County
Michael Duffy - Carroll County
Matt Roberts - Cecil County
Steve Lee - Charles County
Sam Slacum - Dorchester County
Kevin Kendro - Frederick County
Paul Edwards - Garrett County
Debbie Basler - Harford County
John Davis - Howard County
Kevin Taylor - Kent County
Dr. Jeffrey Sullivan - Montgomery County
Kathy Green - Montgomery County
Earl Hawkins - Prince George's County
O'Shay Watson - Prince George's County
Sidney Pinder - Queen Anne's County
Michael Watson - St. Mary's County
Keith O'Neal - Somerset County
William Keswick - Talbot County
Eric Michael - Washington County
Bryan Ashby - Wicomico County
Tyrone Mills - Worcester County

Local School System Administrators

Dan Harding - Kent Island High School
Stosh Schtierman - Wicomico High School
Troy Warehime - Francis Scott Key High School
Dana Johnson - Dunbar High School
Brandon Lauer - River Hill High School
Patrick Saunderson - Principal's Representative to MPSSAA Executive Council - Howard County

Resocialization of Sports in Maryland Report

Teri McCambridge, MD, CAQSM
Primary Care Sports Medicine,
University of Maryland St. Joseph
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics And
Orthopedics, University of Maryland
Andrew Tucker, MD
Primary Care Sports Medicine
Medical Director of MedStar Union
Memorial Sports Medicine
Head team physician Baltimore Ravens
Chairman, Medical Committee NFL
John H. Wilckens, MD
Associate Professor of Orthopaedics
Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
Director of Sports Medicine Johns
Hopkins Hospital.
Aaron Milstone, MD, MHS
Pediatric Lead for Infection prevention
for Johns Hopkins Health System
Professor of Pediatric Infectious Disease
and Epidemiology Johns Hopkins
University
Karen Kotloff, MD
Professor of Pediatrics, Medicine,
Epidemiology and Public Health and
Head, Division of Infectious Disease and
Tropical Pediatrics

Richard Hinton, MD, MPH, PT, Med
 Medical Director MedStar Sports
 Medicine
 Adult and Pediatric Sports Orthopedic
 Surgeon
 Team Physician US Lacrosse, Baltimore
 Ravens

Yvette Rooks, MD, FAAFP
 Assistant Director of the
 University Health Center for
 Sports Medicine University of
 Maryland College Park
 Board of College Athletic
 Trainers Association
 Medical Advisory board
 NFHS

Craig H. Bennett, MD, FFAOS
 Co-Founder and Medical Director of the
 Lifebridge Heath Sports Medicine
 Institute
 Team Physician Loyola University of
 Maryland
 Medical Director of Catholic Athletic
 Association

Wes Robinson, ATC, MPT
 President of the Maryland Athletic
 Trainers Association
 Dual credentialed Athletic Trainer and
 Physical Therapist

Steve Stenersen
 CEO of US Lacrosse
 Board Vice President of World Lacrosse

Steve Kinsey, LAT, ATC
 Hereford Physical Therapy & Sports
 Medicine

Andrew Lincoln, ScD, MS
 Scientific Director of Orthopedic and
 Sports Medicine Research for the
 Medstar
 Health Research Institute and Associate
 Professor in the Department of
 Rehabilitation Medicine for
 Georgetown University Medical Center

MPSSAA Medical Advisory Committee

Teri McCambridge, MD, CAQSM –Chair
 Yvette Rooks, MD, FAAFP
 Wendell McKay, MD, FAAP
 James Baronas, MD, CAQ
 James Dreese, MD
 Matthew Jepson, MD, CAQSM
 Debbie Somerville
 Coordinator, Office of Health
 Services, Baltimore County
 Public Schools

Mary Nasuta
 Supervisor of Health Services, Harford
 County Public Schools

Wes Robinson, ATC, MPT
 President of the Maryland Athletic
 Trainers Association

Chris Hartman, ATC
 Supervisor, ATI

Amy Magladry, ATC
 Maryland Athletic Trainers Association

Terri Richter, ATC
 Maryland Athletic Trainers Association

Tiffany Byrd
 Coordinator of Athletics, Baltimore City
 Public Schools

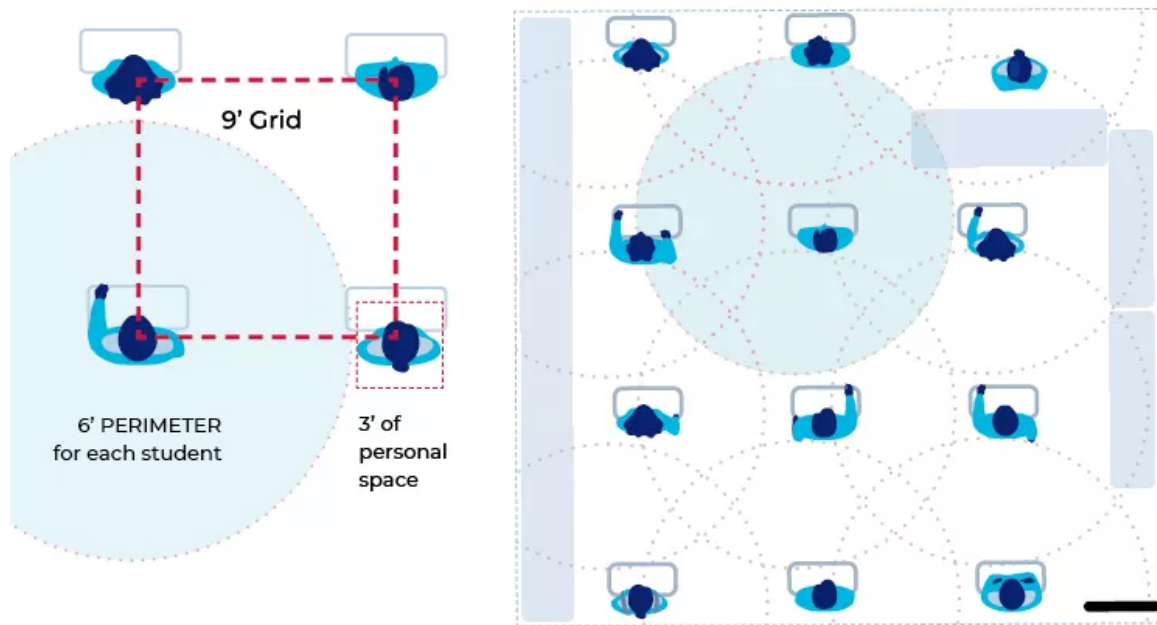
Michael Sye
 Coordinator of Athletics, Baltimore
 County Public Schools

John Davis
 Coordinator of Athletics, Howard
 County Public Schools

Dennis Rivenburgh, P.A.-C.
 Johns Hopkins

STUDENTS

Arranging Instructional Spaces



Example: 960 square feet
(30' x 32' room, with furniture)

Normal
capacity

Socially distanced
capacity

31

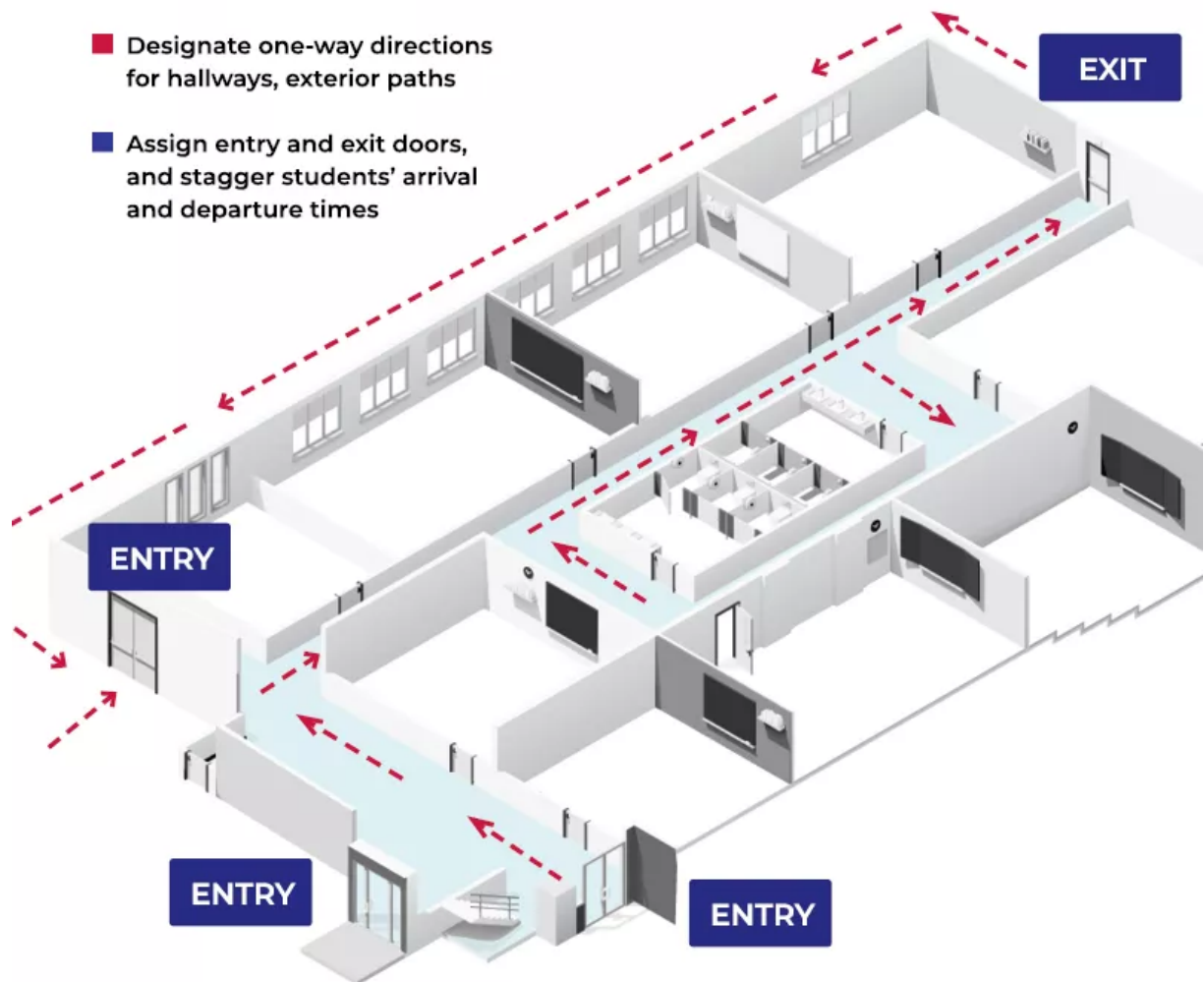
12

SOURCE: National Council on School Facilities and Cooperative Strategies

Icons: iStock/Getty

BUILDING LAYOUTS

Minimizing Congestion



SOURCE: National Council on School Facilities and Cooperative Strategies
Image: iStock/Getty



GUIDANCE ON INTERPRETING COVID-19 TEST RESULTS

	RESULT	INTERPRETATION	RECOMMENDED ACTION
VIRAL TESTING† (testing for current infection)	Positive	<i>Most likely*</i> you DO currently have an active COVID-19 infection and can give the virus to others.	<u>Stay home*</u> and follow CDC guidance on steps to take if you are sick. *If you are a healthcare or critical infrastructure worker, notify your work of your test result.
	Negative	<i>Most likely*</i> you DO NOT currently have an active COVID-19 infection.	If you have symptoms, you should keep monitoring symptoms and seek medical advice about staying home and if you need to get tested again. If you don't have symptoms, you should get tested again only if your medical provider and/or workplace tells you to. <u>Take steps to protect yourself and others.</u>
ANTIBODY TESTING‡ (testing for past infection with the virus)	Positive:	You <i>likely*</i> have HAD a COVID-19 infection.	You may be protected from re-infection (have immunity), but this cannot be said with certainty. Scientists are conducting studies now to provide more information. <u>Take steps to protect yourself and others.</u>
	Negative	You <i>likely*</i> NEVER HAD (or have not yet developed antibodies to) COVID-19 infection.	You could still get COVID-19. <u>Take steps to protect yourself and others.</u>
BOTH (antibody and viral testing)	Viral Positive, Antibody Positive:	<i>Most likely*</i> you DO currently have an active COVID-19 infection and can give the virus to others.	<u>Stay home*</u> and follow CDC guidance on steps to take if you are sick. *If you are a healthcare or critical infrastructure worker, notify your work of your test result.
	Viral Positive, Antibody Negative	<i>Most likely*</i> you DO currently have an active COVID-19 infection and can give the virus to others.	<u>Stay home*</u> and follow CDC guidance on steps to take if you are sick. *If you are a healthcare or critical infrastructure worker, notify your work of your test result.
	Viral Negative, Antibody Positive	You <i>likely*</i> have HAD and RECOVERED FROM a COVID-19 infection.	You may be protected from re-infection (have immunity), but this cannot be said with certainty. Scientists are conducting studies now to provide more information. You should get tested again only if your medical provider and/or workplace tells you to. <u>Take steps to protect yourself and others.</u>
	Viral Negative, Antibody Negative	You <i>likely*</i> have NEVER HAD a COVID-19 infection.	You could still get COVID-19. You should get tested again only if your medical provider and/or workplace tells you to. <u>Take steps to protect yourself and others.</u>

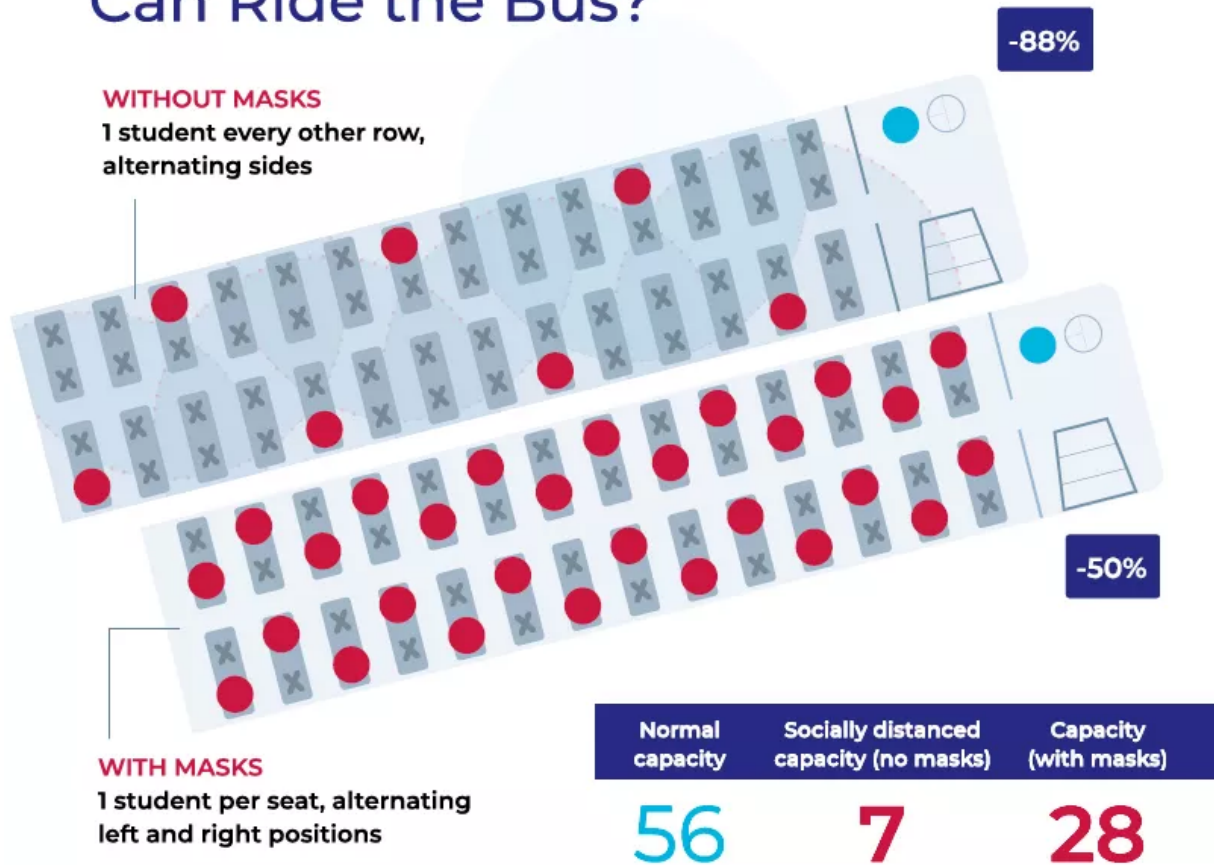
*No test is ever perfect. All tests occasionally result in false positive results (the test result should be negative because you DO NOT have COVID-19 but comes back positive) or false negative results (the test result should be positive because you DO have COVID-19, but comes back negative). Sometimes the results are not definitive (the result is unclear, and you don't know if it is positive or negative). For this and other reasons, results should always be reviewed by a healthcare professional.

†Viral tests are typically performed on respiratory specimens such as nasal swabs or throat swabs. They test for the presence of the virus, usually by testing for the virus's RNA or sometimes by testing for the virus's proteins ("antigen testing"). Antigen testing may be less sensitive than tests for the virus's RNA. If your antigen test is negative, please ask your healthcare provider if additional testing with an RNA test is needed and how long you should stay home.

‡Antibody testing, also called "serologic testing" or "serology", is typically performed on a blood sample. Ideally, the results show whether you have ever been infected with the virus in the past or may be currently infected. Antibody tests check for antibodies that appear in the blood between about one and three weeks after symptom onset and may remain as long as a lifetime. Antibody tests may be positive while a person is infected. It is not yet known whether these antibodies protect against reinfection with the COVID-19 virus. For many other similar viruses, antibodies are protective for years or longer, but we do not yet have adequate data to know for COVID-19.

TRANSPORTATION

How Many Students Can Ride the Bus?



SOURCE: National Council on School Facilities and Cooperative Strategies

CDC INFORMATIONAL DOCUMENTS

Please wear a cloth face covering.



**Maintain a distance of 6 feet
whenever possible.**



cdc.gov/coronavirus

51

Por favor use una cubierta de tela para la cara.



Mantenga una distancia de 6 pies cuando sea posible.

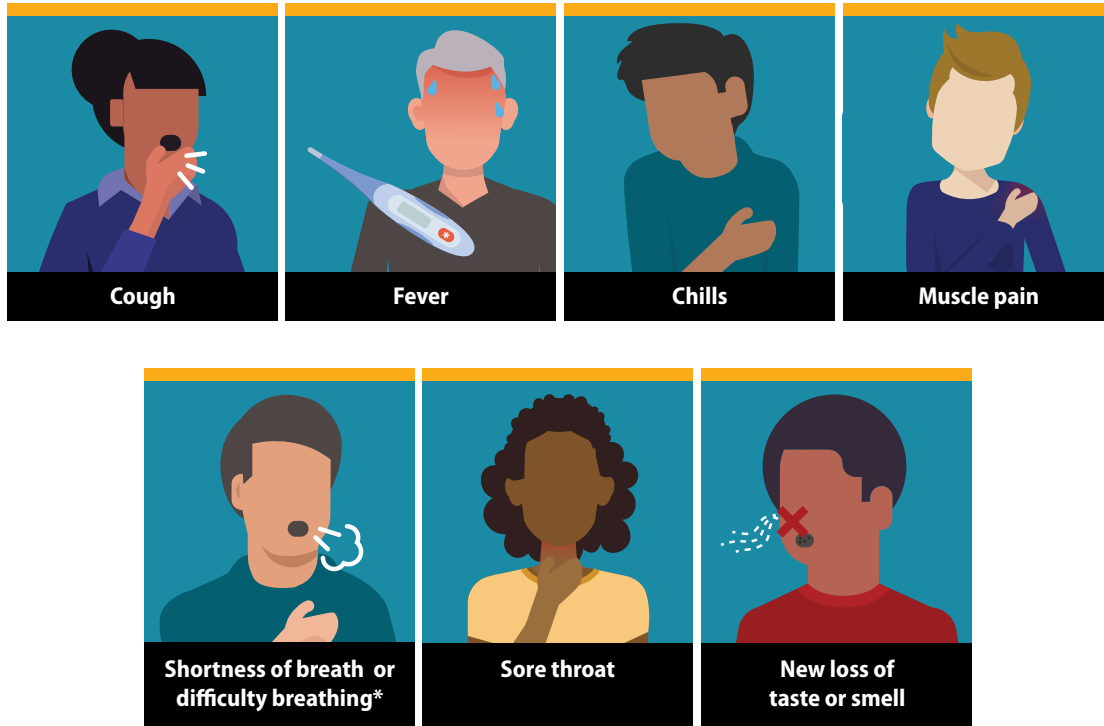


cdc.gov/coronavirus-es

52

Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

***Seek medical care immediately if someone has emergency warning signs of COVID-19.**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.



cdc.gov/coronavirus

317142-8 May 20, 2020 12:50 PM

Síntomas del coronavirus (COVID-19)

Conozca los síntomas del COVID-19, que pueden incluir:



Los síntomas pueden ser de leves a graves, y aparecer de 2 a 14 días después de la exposición al virus que causa COVID-19.

***Busque atención médica de inmediato si alguien tiene signos de advertencia de emergencia del COVID-19.**

- Dificultad para respirar
- Dolor o presión persistente en el pecho
- Confusión de aparición reciente
- Dificultad para despertarse o mantenerse despierto
- Color azulado en los labios o el rostro

*Esta lista no incluye todos los síntomas posibles. Llame a su proveedor de servicios médicos por cualquier otro síntoma grave o que le preocupe.



cdc.gov/coronavirus-es



Feeling Sick?

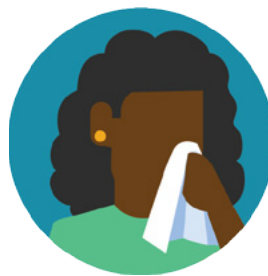
Stay home when you are sick!

If you feel unwell or have the following symptoms
please leave the building and contact your health care provider.
Then follow-up with your supervisor.

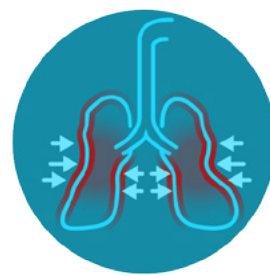
DO NOT ENTER if you have:



FEVER



COUGH



**SHORTNESS OF
BREATH**



cdc.gov/CORONAVIRUS



¿Se siente enfermo?

¡Quédese en casa si está enfermo!

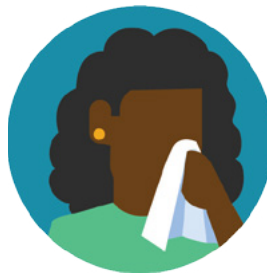
Si no se siente bien o tiene alguno de estos síntomas,
**por favor, salga del edificio y comuníquese con su
proveedor de atención médica.**

Luego, póngase en contacto con su supervisor.

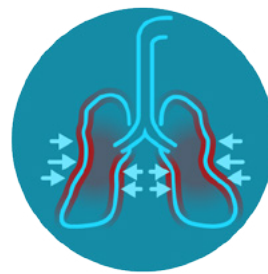
NO ENTRE si tiene:



FIEBRE



TOS



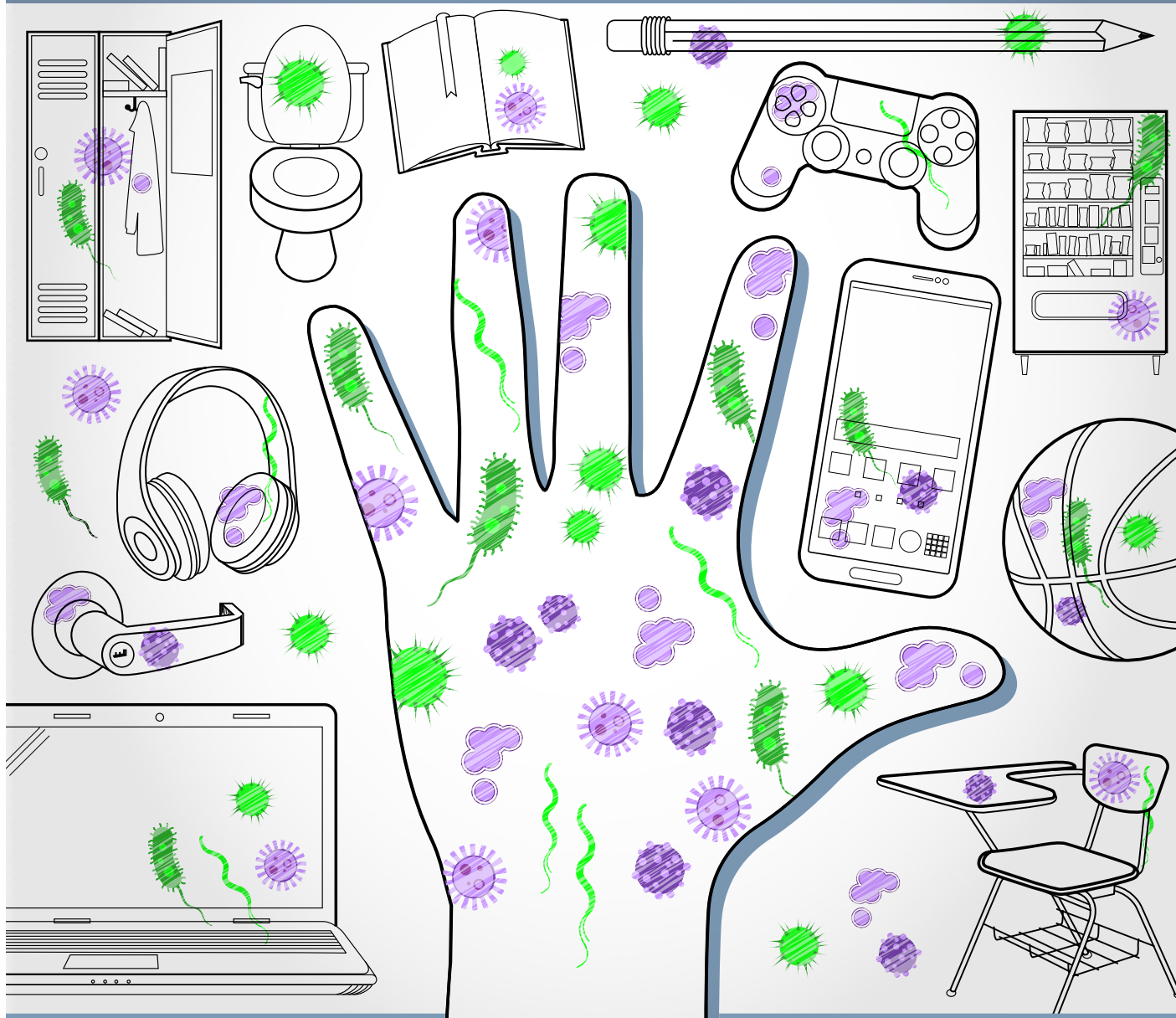
**DIFICULTAD
PARA RESPIRAR**



cdc.gov/CORONAVIRUS-ES

GERMS

are all around you.



Stay healthy.
Wash your hands.

CS294906-F

www.cdc.gov/handwashing



Los **MICROBIOS** están por todos lados.



Mantente sano.
Lávate las manos.

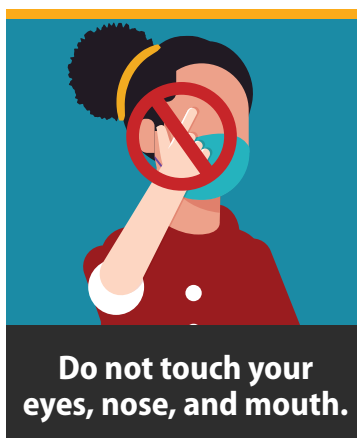
CS294906-F

www.cdc.gov/handwashing/esp



Stop the Spread of Germs

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.



cdc.gov/coronavirus

316917C May 13, 2020 5:03 AM

Detenga la propagación de gérmenes

Ayude a prevenir la transmisión de enfermedades respiratorias como el COVID-19.



Mantenga al menos 6 pies (aproximadamente la longitud de 2 brazos) de distancia de otras personas.



Cúbrase con un pañuelo desechable la nariz y la boca al toser o estornudar, luego bótelo en la basura y lávese las manos.



Quando esté en un lugar público, use una cubierta de tela para la cara sobre su nariz y boca.



Evite tocarse los ojos, la nariz y la boca.



Limpie y desinfecte los objetos y superficies que se tocan con frecuencia.



Quédese en casa cuando esté enfermo, excepto para recibir atención médica.



Lávese las manos frecuentemente con agua y jabón por al menos 20 segundos.



cdc.gov/coronavirus-es

316917AF May 27, 2020 6:06 PM

Facemask Do's and Don'ts

For Healthcare Personnel

When putting on a facemask

Clean your hands and put on your facemask so it fully covers your mouth and nose.



DO secure the elastic bands around your ears.



DO secure the ties at the middle of your head and the base of your head.

When wearing a facemask, don't do the following:



DON'T wear your facemask under your nose or mouth.



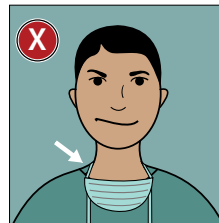
DON'T allow a strap to hang down. DON'T cross the straps.



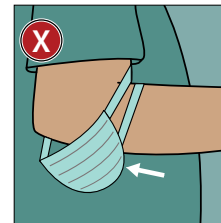
DON'T touch or adjust your facemask without cleaning your hands before and after.



DON'T wear your facemask on your head.



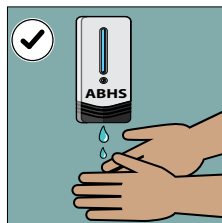
DON'T wear your facemask around your neck.



DON'T wear your facemask around your arm.

When removing a facemask

Clean your hands and remove your facemask touching only the straps or ties.



DO leave the patient care area, then clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water.



DO remove your facemask touching ONLY the straps or ties, throw it away*, and clean your hands again.

*If implementing limited-reuse: Facemasks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage. Folded facemasks can be stored between uses in a clean, sealable paper bag or breathable container.



Additional information is available about how to safely put on and remove personal protective equipment, including facemasks:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/using-ppe.html>.

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

61

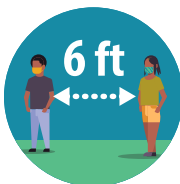
Important Information About Your Cloth Face Coverings

Print Resources Web Page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html>

As COVID-19 continues to spread within the United States, CDC has recommended additional measures to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. In the context of community transmission, CDC recommends that you:



**Stay at home
as much as
possible**



**Practice social
distancing
(remaining at
least 6 feet away
from others)**



**Clean your
hands often**



In addition, CDC also recommends that everyone wear cloth face coverings when leaving their homes, regardless of whether they have fever or symptoms of COVID-19. This is because of evidence that people with COVID-19 can spread the disease, even when they don't have any symptoms. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

How cloth face coverings work

Cloth face coverings may prevent the person wearing the mask from spreading respiratory droplets when talking, sneezing, or coughing. If everyone wears a cloth face covering when out in public, such as going to the grocery store, the risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 can be reduced for the community. Since people may spread the virus before symptoms start, or even if people never have symptoms, wearing a cloth face covering may protect others around you. Face coverings worn by others may protect you from getting the virus from people carrying the virus.



General considerations for the use of cloth face coverings

When using a cloth face covering, make sure:

- The mouth and nose are fully covered
- The covering fits snugly against the sides of the face so there are no gaps
- You do not have any difficulty breathing while wearing the cloth face covering
- The cloth face covering can be tied or otherwise secured to prevent slipping



Wash your cloth face covering after each use in the washing machine or by hand using a bleach solution. Allow it to completely dry.

For more information, go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html>



CS 316651-A 05/26/2020

cdc.gov/coronavirus

62



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Robert R. Neall, Secretary

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Karen Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools

Response to a Laboratory Confirmed Case of COVID-19 and Persons with COVID-19-like Illness in Schools, Child Care Programs, and Youth Camps

Updated July 21, 2020

This guidance accompanies the *“Decision Aid: Exclusion and Return for Laboratory Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Persons with COVID-19-like Illness in Schools, Child Care Programs, and Youth Camps.”*

This guidance applies to persons with a laboratory **confirmed case of COVID-19, regardless of whether they have symptoms**, and persons with COVID-19-like illness. Exclusion, quarantine and return to school for a person with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 or persons with symptoms of COVID-19-like illness is based on CDC and Maryland Department of Health/Maryland State Department of Education guidance and is to be implemented by local school systems in collaboration with the local health department.

For the purposes of this guidance, symptoms of COVID-19-like illness include those that meet:

1. New onset cough or shortness of breath; **OR**
2. **At least 2 of the following:** fever of 100.4° or higher, chills, shivering, muscle pain, sore throat, headache, loss of sense of taste or smell, or gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting or diarrhea).

NOTE: This definition was adapted from the clinical criteria in the [CDC case definition of a probable case of COVID-19](#).

The guidance below is meant to supplement, where necessary, current communicable disease outbreak investigation processes, current school health services illness management processes, and current local health department COVID-19 response processes. The guidance below is designed to expedite notification, isolation, and quarantine of school staff and/or students, as indicated, when a person notifies the school they/their child has a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19, regardless of whether the person has symptoms, or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19-like illness. The specific processes to implement this guidance within each school system are to be developed and carried out as a collaboration between the local school system and the local health department.

1. Communication

- a. School systems should develop processes to inform staff and parents that they are expected to notify the school as soon as they are made aware that they/their child has tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 or that they/their child has been exposed to a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19;
- b. School systems should communicate to parents the expectation that ill students **MUST** be picked up within a specified period of time;
- c. The school should have a plan for how parents are to notify the school of a positive test result or exposure to ensure confidentiality;
- d. Schools should have a plan to collaborate and coordinate with the local health department regarding school contact tracing procedures including determining the role of the school nurse, the school administrator, and the local health department; and
- e. The school system should develop communication templates for notification of contacts of persons who are confirmed to have COVID-19.

2. Notification of contacts who must quarantine

- a. The local health department should lead the process of contact tracing;
- b. The school should work with the local health department to identify persons who may have had close contact with the person testing positive for COVID-19;
- c. Schools should provide written notification to all identified contacts. The notification should include the following:
 - i. When to seek medical care
 - ii. How to monitor for symptoms
 - iii. Who to contact and how to contact them if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 while under quarantine
 - iv. The projected length of quarantine if remain asymptomatic
 - v. Plan for maintaining remote learning for those who remain well enough to engage in learning while under quarantine
 - vi. Information about local COVID-19 testing sites

3. Isolation, Exclusion, Quarantine, and Return to School

- a. If a student or school staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19-like illness **during the school day**, the school should:
 - i. Safely isolate the person in the designated isolation area and place a surgical mask on the person if they are not wearing a cloth face covering as appropriate;
 - ii. The SHS staff member should don the appropriate PPE and conduct the appropriate determination of the student's condition based on presenting symptoms;
 - iii. Begin the process for the person to vacate the school as soon as possible;

- b. When a school is informed of a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 in a student or school staff member, regardless of whether the person had symptoms, the school should begin the process for identifying close contacts and begin the notification process in collaboration with the local health department;
- c. The school should follow the “Decision Aid: Exclusion and Return for Laboratory Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Persons with COVID-19-like Illness in Schools, Child Care Programs, and Youth Camps” (see attachment) for persons with a positive test for COVID-19 or have COVID-19 like illness, regardless if they have been tested, and those who had close contact with the person with COVID-19-like illness;
- d. The school should follow the instructions from the local health department for all matters regarding quarantine, exclusion and return to school for persons with a positive test for COVID-19 and those who had close contact with the with COVID-like illness; and
- e. If the number of laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 or persons with Covid-19-like illness meets the definition of an outbreak, the response decisions, including possible school closure, will be made by the local health department.

Decision Aid: Exclusion and Return for Laboratory Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Persons with COVID-19-like Illness in Schools, Child Care Programs, and Youth Camps

For the purposes of this decision aid, COVID-19-like illness is defined as: New onset cough or shortness of breath **OR** At least **2** of the following: fever of 100.4° or higher, chills, shivering, muscle pain, sore throat, headache, loss of sense of taste or smell, and gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting or diarrhea). **NOTE:** This definition was adapted from the clinical criteria in the [CDC case definition of a probable case of COVID-19](#).

Person (child, care provider, educator, other staff) with **ONE NEW** symptom not meeting the definition of COVID-19-like illness.

Exclude person and allow return when symptoms have improved and criteria in the [Communicable Diseases Summary](#) have been met as applicable. If person develops symptoms of COVID-19-like illness, follow processes below for person with COVID-like illness.

An **asymptomatic person** (child, care provider, educator, other staff) tests positive for COVID-19.

Person (child, care provider, educator, other staff) with COVID-19-like illness.

- Exclude person and recommend that they talk to their health care provider about testing for COVID-19 or whether there is another specific diagnosis.
- The person must isolate pending test results or evaluation by their health care provider.**
- Close contacts of the ill person should quarantine per [CDC guidelines](#).**

Person has positive test for COVID-19.

Person does not receive a laboratory test or another specific alternative diagnosis by their health care provider.

Person has negative test for COVID-19.

Health care provider documents that the person has a specific alternative diagnosis (e.g. influenza, strep throat, otitis) or health care provider documents that symptoms are related to a pre-existing condition.

The ill person should stay home at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared **AND** until no fever for at least **24 hours** without medication **AND** improvement of other symptoms.

The asymptomatic person must stay home for 10 days from positive test.

The person should stay home until symptoms have improved and criteria in the [Communicable Diseases Summary](#) have been met as applicable.

Person should consider being tested/retested for COVID-19 if symptoms do not improve.

Close contacts should stay home for 14 days from the date of last exposure **even if they have no symptoms or they have a negative COVID-19 test done during quarantine.**

Close contacts DO NOT need to remain at home as long as they remain asymptomatic.

July 20, 2020

Attachment for document entitled "Response to a Laboratory Confirmed Case of COVID-19 and Persons with COVID-19-like Illness in Schools, Child Care Programs, and Youth Camps"



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Robert R. Neall, Secretary

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Dr. Karen Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools

Guidance for Use of Cloth Face Coverings in Schools

July 21, 2020

This guidance is being provided by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to assist schools to develop and implement policy regarding the use of cloth face coverings in the school setting. The use of cloth face coverings is not a substitute for other SARS-CoV-2 mitigation strategies such as physical distancing, frequent hand washing, and cleaning of frequently touched surfaces within the school setting.

Cloth face coverings protect others if the wearer is infected with SARS CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and is not aware. Cloth face coverings may offer some level of protection for the wearer. Evidence continues to mount on the importance of universal face coverings in interrupting the spread of SARS-CoV-2. To prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the CDC recommends the use of cloth face coverings in schools when feasible.

Use of Cloth Face Coverings in Staff and Students

MDH/MSDE requires the following:

- School staff must wear cloth face coverings while in the school building, on school grounds when not contraindicated due to a medical condition, intellectual or developmental disabilities, or other conditions or safety concerns;
- All students, school staff, and bus drivers must wear a cloth face covering while on school bus when not contraindicated due to a medical condition or developmental or safety considerations;
- Other adults must wear cloth face coverings when they must enter the school building or grounds for essential functions;
- Students, especially students in middle and high school, must wear cloth face coverings in the school building and on school grounds as much as possible when not contraindicated due to a medical condition or developmental or safety considerations;
- The use of cloth face coverings is most important at times when physical distancing measures cannot be effectively implemented especially when indoors;
- Local education agencies should examine the structure and schedule of the education program to identify when physical distancing may be a challenge;

- **Cloth face coverings should not be worn by children under 2 years and anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.**

Communication

- School systems should provide resources to families regarding the importance and expectation for the use of cloth face covering in school;
- Information should be provided to staff, students and students' families regarding the school system expectation of parents to provide cloth face covering or whether the school will provide them;
- School staff and families should teach and reinforce proper use and removal of cloth face coverings, including the use of behavioral strategies as necessary to assist students with becoming comfortable wearing cloth face coverings; and
- Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Recently, a student at your school has become sick with the COVID-19 like illness or tested positive for COVID-19. Symptoms could include fever, cough, sore throat, chills, shivering, muscle pain, headache, loss of sense of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or shortness of breath. Students who have become ill at school have been evaluated and sent home as appropriate. School management has been notified so proper disinfecting/cleaning can be performed.

Any child/person that is sent home for any of the above symptoms will be asked to isolate at home and allowed to return when symptoms have improved. Recommendations will be made that they talk to their health care provider about testing for COVID-19 or whether there is another specific diagnosis. The person must isolate pending test results or evaluation by their health care provider. Any person meeting the criteria for COVID-19 like illness or a person testing positive for COVID-19 can return to school after the following criteria has been met: 1) 10 days since symptoms first started, AND 2) No fever for at least 24 hours without medication, AND 3) Improvement of symptoms.

Contact tracing will begin immediately if a person meets the criteria for a COVID-19 like illness or a positive test result. The school and the health department will work closely together to identify any close contacts. You will be contacted directly by the health department with instructions for your child/family. Close contacts will be instructed to stay home for 14 days from the date of the last exposure even if they have no symptoms or have a negative test done during quarantine. During this quarantine period, you should monitor your temperature twice a day and watch for any of the above symptoms to appear. If you develop symptoms, call your medical provider and notify the health department immediately.

Currently there are several options for COVID-19 testing to determine if you are currently infected with the virus.

- Talbot County Health Dept – 410-819-5632 (appointment required)
- Chesapeake College – testing provided by University of Md – (registration required)
<https://myportfolio.umm.edu/mychart/SignupAndSchedule/EmbeddedSchedule?id=RES%5e84002535&vt=22697>
- Your Doc's In
- Choice One

For more information, please contact the Talbot County Health Dept at 410-819-5600.

Fredia Wadley, MD
Health Officer, Talbot County

Kelly L. Griffith, Ed.D.
Superintendent Talbot County Schools