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2021-22

Mansfield Township School District Safe Return to School Plan

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Mask Wearing Protocols

- In accordance with Executive Order No. 251, all students, staff, and visitors will be required to wear a mask while inside district school buildings. *The masking protocol is mandated in accordance with an Executive Order and is enforceable by law. Penalties for violations of this Order may be imposed under, among other statutes, N.J.S.A. App. A:9-49 and -50. Student refusal to wear a mask will be treated as code of conduct violation. As per EO 215, the following limited exceptions apply to the masking protocol:*
 - When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors;
 - When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face masks without assistance;
 - When a student's documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, precludes use of a face mask;
 - When the individual is under two (2) years of age;
 - When the individual is engaged in activity that cannot physically be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating or drinking, or playing a musical instrument that would be obstructed by a face mask;
 - When the individual is engaged in high-intensity aerobic or anaerobic activity;
 - When a student is participating in high-intensity physical activities during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals; or
 - When wearing a face mask creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

Note: Parents requesting an exception for their child must submit medical documentation to their building principal. All exception requests will be reviewed by the Superintendent, Board Physician, Board Attorney, and if necessary the Child Study Team.

Physical Distancing and Cohorting Protocols

- **MTSD** will promote physical distancing to the greatest extent allowed.
 - Mansfield Elementary will strive for 3 feet of social distancing. Understanding that 3 feet of distance at all times is a challenge to achieve, the other health and safety measures detailed in this document will provide additional measures for the health and safety of our students.
 - When feasible, students will remain in consistent groups throughout the day, which is helpful when contact tracing needs to be performed.
 - Physical barriers (dividers) may be used in the classroom, at the discretion of the teacher.
 - All teachers will maintain seating charts.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette Protocols

- Students and staff will be encouraged to regularly wash and sanitize hands throughout the school day.
- Students and staff will be encouraged and reminded to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue during the limited instances when individuals might not be wearing a mask.
- The district will continue to maintain adequate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette supplies.

Provision of Meals

- **MTSD** will continue to implement layered prevention strategies to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in cafeterias or other group dining areas. This will include to every extent practicable:
 - Distancing as much as possible in the school cafeteria.
 - Meals will continue to be given to all students/families, at no charge, for the 2021-2022 school year through the district food service provider.

Transportation Protocols

- Masks will be required on school buses at all times unless and until NJDOE and NJDOH guidelines recommend otherwise, at which time optional masks will be considered.
- Seating charts will be maintained for buses to every extent practicable.
- When conditions permit, windows will be opened on buses to allow for optimal air circulation.

Cleaning, Disinfection, and Airflow

- Mansfield Elementary School will follow standard procedures for cleaning and disinfecting with registered products for use against SARS-CoV-2.
- On a daily basis, at minimum, the district will continue to clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are touched often; such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones, and toys at least daily.
- Measures will be taken to improve airflow to the extent possible to increase circulation of outdoor air, increase the delivery of clean air, and dilute potential contaminants.
 - MTSD has MERV-8 Filtration.
 - UV sanitation will be utilized in bathrooms and nurse's offices.

Screening, Exclusion, and Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff Members

- **Screening for Symptoms-** Daily screening of students and staff will no longer be implemented. It is the responsibility of all parents and guardians to monitor their children for signs of illness every day. Students who are sick shall not attend school. Parents and guardians are encouraged to reach out to their respective school nurses to inform them of their child's symptoms and reasons for absence.
 - Staff will be responsible for monitoring their own health and shall not attend school when they are sick. All staff are encouraged to reach out to the school nurse or building administrator if they are absent due to experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

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- **Symptomatic Students and Staff-** Procedures will be in place to identify and immediately respond to a student or staff member who becomes ill in school with symptoms consistent with COVID-19. As was the case last year, there will be a designated and supervised area for students and staff who are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to be held until they can be safely sent home.
 - **Parents should not send students to school when they are sick. Staff should not attend school when they are sick.**

COVID-19 exclusion (isolation) criteria for persons who have COVID-19 compatible symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19:

Individuals regardless of vaccination status, who test positive or individuals with COVID19 symptoms who have not been tested and do not have an alternative diagnosis from their healthcare provider should;

- Stay home for at least 5 full days after the onset of symptoms or if asymptomatic after the positive test (day of symptoms is day 0; if asymptomatic, day the test was performed is day 0).
- If they have no symptoms or symptoms are resolving after 5 days, they can leave their home and should;
 - ❖ Wear a mask when around others at home and in public (indoors and outdoors) for an additional 5 days. For these additional 5 days, schools should have a plan to ensure adequate distance during those activities (i.e., eating) when mask wearing is not possible. Time without a mask being worn should be kept to the minimum possible.
 - ❖ On days 6-10, limit participation in extracurricular activities to only those activities where masks can be worn consistently and correctly.

COVID-19 exclusion criteria for close contacts (quarantine) guidance:

- Exposed close contacts who have no COVID-19 compatible symptoms in the following groups should be excluded from school:
 - ❖ Age 18 or older who completed the primary series of a recommended COVID-19 vaccine, but have not received a recommended booster shot when eligible.
 - ❖ Persons <18 years old who are not fully vaccinated
 - For determining the timing of close contact to a COVID-19 case:
 - ❖ Individuals would only be considered exposed if they had close contact during the case's isolation period (day 1-5).
 - ❖ Individuals would NOT be considered exposed during the case's additional precaution period at day 6-10).
 - Exposed close contacts who have no COVID-19 symptoms in the following groups do not need to quarantine or be excluded from school: •
 - ❖ Age 18 or older and have received all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised people.
 - ❖ Age 5-17 years and completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines.
 - ❖ Had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a viral test)
 - An alternate diagnosis (including a positive strep test or influenza swab) without a negative COVID-19 test is not acceptable for individuals who meet COVID-19 exclusion criteria to return to school earlier than the timeframes above. During periods of low community transmission, ill individuals excluded for COVID-19 compatible symptoms who are not tested **and do not have a known COVID-19 exposure** may follow [NJDOH School Exclusion List](#) to determine when they may return to school.
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Contact Tracing

- Contact tracing is a strategy used to determine the source of an infection and how it is spreading. Finding people who are close contacts of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, and therefore at higher risk of becoming infected themselves, can help prevent further spread of the virus. Per the CDC, a close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone with suspected or known COVID-19 for 15 or more minutes during a 24-hour period.
 - **As per 8/21/21 updates to NJDOE Road Forward, in the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) where both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.**
 - ***Ms. Joan Issemann* is the point-person for all MTSD contact tracing.**
 - School staff will identify school-based close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases in the school. Schools will assist in identifying the close contacts within the school and communicating this information back to the WCHD.
 - With guidance from WCHD, our school will be responsible for notifying parents and staff of the close contact exposure and exclusion requirements while maintaining confidentiality.
 - WCHD contact tracing team will notify and interview the close contacts identified by the school and reinforce the exclusion requirements.

Testing

- MTSD will continue to collaborate with community agencies, WCHD, and County Superintendent's Office in providing information on COVID tests to all members of the community.

Remote Instruction for Quarantined Students

- In accordance with mandates from Governor Murphy, and the NJDOE, remote instruction shall not be a district-wide option for the 2021-2022 school year. The NJDOE acknowledges that there will be specific circumstances where students will be required to quarantine in accordance with NJDOH guidelines “where an individual student, group of students, or entire class(es) are excluded from school due to meeting the NJDOH’s COVID-19 exclusion criteria, LEAs are strongly encouraged to immediately provide virtual or remote instruction to those students in a manner commensurate with in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible.” It is under **these conditions only** that MTSD will provide temporary remote instruction to students while they are required to quarantine.
 - Individual students who are excluded due to quarantine resulting from contact tracing will be contacted within 24 hours to ensure:
 - Asynchronous access to lessons and activities via Google Classroom
 - Scheduling of synchronous, remote, virtual home instruction with an appropriately certified teacher.
- If it becomes necessary to move to emergency virtual or remote instruction to provide the continuity of instruction, in the event of a public health-related district closure to satisfy the 180-day requirement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9, MTSD will utilize Synchronous Remote Learning from 9am to 1pm, until such time that the health related closure comes to an end.
- MTSD is a 1:1 school district. All students and staff have mobile laptops. If students and staff have issues with connectivity, the district will provide free internet access via Kajeet.

Vaccination

- The vaccination status of students and staff will need to be known in order to properly contact trace for quarantine purposes. MTSD will ask for this information ahead of time or as the contact tracing takes place.
- MTSD recognizes that it is an individual decision for staff and students to receive the COVID-19 vaccination or not receive the COVID-19 vaccination.
- MTSD will comply with any Executive Orders related to the mandating of vaccines for staff or students.

Before and Aftercare

The Mansfield Township School District will provide Before/Aftercare services for the 2021-2022 school year. Please refer to the district website for more information, mansfieldtsd.org

Student and Staff Member Travel

- MTSD advises students and staff to follow the recommended NJDOH guidelines for student and staff member travel out-of-state.