

Manhattan Public Schools

Back to School Plan
2020-2021 School Year



Manhattan Public Schools plan to return to school promotes a safe and healthy setting for learning, teaching and working. The well-being of our students and staff is our number one priority.

Core Values:

- **Respect – We value respect for others at all times. We believe that respecting others individuality and accepting the unique attributes of everyone is vital to our success.**
- **Integrity- Manhattan Public Schools values integrity. We believe that honesty is the best policy. We believe that having a strong work ethic, showing respect and professionalism towards others even in situations where there are strong differences of opinion, values or views is critical to our success.**

Goals:

- **Community Involvement - Manhattan Public School has worked effectively to gain community trust and unity. The staff, administrative team, board and community work in collaboration for the betterment of all our students. As a result of our collective efforts, resolution to the issues that polarize the school and community have been addressed and resolved.**
- **Enhanced Student Achievement - Manhattan Public School has enhanced the educational opportunities, programs and services to promote enhanced student achievement and developed systems that promote continuous improvement.**

Core Values continued...

- **Community** – We value the sense of family and community. We believe everyone needs to work together for a common goal through compromise, transparency and openness.
- **Work Ethic** - We value self-discipline and we promote the benefits and fulfillment of achieving individual goals. We also believe that in order to be successful, it is vital that we work as a team for the betterment of our students, staff, community and society in general.
- **Citizenship** – We believe in the importance of citizenship. We also believe that the value of serving others builds trust and resourcefulness in the community.

Goals Continued...

- **Technology** - Manhattan Public School has made technology a priority to ensure that we are effectively using technology to enhance learning opportunities for our students and to improve the delivery of our educational programming.
- **Staff** - Manhattan Public School has highly qualified staff that serve as role models for our students, that have effectively incorporated the latest technology into our educational programming and who are effective instructional leaders inspiring our students to do their best.
- **Facilities** - Manhattan Public School takes great pride in the appearance and functionality of our school facilities. Our facilities are inviting, safe, energy efficient and support our programs, services and our continued technological advancements.

Summary: Parent & Staff Survey Responses

- **An overwhelming majority of parents are comfortable with returning to in-person instruction for all students this fall with safety guidelines in place.**
- **An overwhelming majority of staff are comfortable with returning to in-person instruction for all students this fall with safety guidelines in place.**
- **An overwhelming majority of parents would support (possible) screening measures for students such as temperature checks, oxygen saturation, and quick symptom questions upon entrance to school each morning.**
- **An overwhelming majority of parents would support screening at home prior to leaving for school each morning.**
- **An overwhelming majority of staff support (possible) screening measures for staff such as temperature checks, oxygen saturation, and quick symptom questions upon entrance to school each morning.**

Considerations

Things we control:

- Our academic program and school culture
- Creating learning options for students and parents
- How we respond to state and county guidelines
- Our schedule and calendar
- Number of adults in the building
- Facility cleanliness and safety

Things we cannot control:

- The pandemic
- Public health mandates
- Governor's directives
- Building closure orders
- Ever-changing COVID-19 data
- Education funding

Manhattan Public Schools Learning Scenarios

There are two learning scenarios for students:

- Full In-Person Learning platform
- Full Remote Learning Platform

Considerations & Requirements for Remote Learning:

- Parents have flexibility of accessing remote instruction for their student due to medical, health and/or safety concerns
- Parents have flexibility of accessing in-person learning for their student at any time during the grading period
- Students may not participate in extracurricular activities if they are accessing remote learning due to medical, health and/or safety concerns related to COVID

Important to Note:

- Teachers are providing learning opportunities to students while quarantined or isolated due to COVID-19.

Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the administration.

Full In-Person platform or Full eLearning platform

Full In-Person Learning:

- Student schedule will be similar to how in-person learning looked before the pandemic
- Students are in the classroom as usual
- Health and safety measures will be followed ~ face covering, social distancing, hand-hygiene, sanitizing frequently touched surfaces

Full eLearning:

- Students will receive synchronous live instruction by logging onto their device, meaning students will see/hear the same instruction as the in-person students
- Parents and students will read and commit to expectations explicitly written in the electronic handbook
- Students are expected to follow the in-person schedule that their grade level teacher establishes for synchronous classes
- Attendance will be recorded and monitored
- Grading will follow Manhattan Public School's (MPS) traditional grading model to determine proficiency
- Combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction/learning has developed due to wide span of individual circumstances.

Remote Learning Considerations:

- The goal for students in Remote Learning is to provide an educational experience that is as close to as if they were attending in-class learning
- Manhattan Public School's (MPS) plan is to implement a system where students can ask questions and participate in class discussions
- This scenario requires parent/adult supervision and coordination to ensure that all remote students are participating in required classes and learning opportunities (see electronic handbook)
- Additional considerations include providing remote learners sufficient breaks from screen time with blended platform that includes both asynchronous and synchronous learning.

Health, Safety, and Distancing Measures

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Gallatin City County Health Department (GCCHD)

Guidelines: Currently, the most effective way to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is **using multiple mitigation strategies in combination**. This includes students, teachers, and staff **staying home when sick; appropriately covering coughs and sneezes; wearing face coverings; physical distancing; cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces; and washing hands often with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol**. MPS will increase education, training, and protocols to ensure these strategies are implemented.

- MPS will follow CDC guidelines and GCCHD recommendations.
- **Cloth face coverings will be required for grades K-12, all staff, parents, & visitors, in common areas, hallways, restrooms and anywhere social distancing is not possible.**
- Cloth face coverings will be worn on the bus, upon entering the building, and outside (school grounds) in groups larger than 50 where physical distancing cannot be met.
- **Cloth face coverings will not be required in classrooms, but are still recommended, when physical distancing can be met.**
- **Cloth face coverings will not be required while students are seated for lunch in cohort groups.**

Health, Safety, and Distancing Measures

- Student traffic flow during the school day will be addressed at the building level.
- Lunch ~ Students will wear face covering on the way to lunch and while in the serving line. Students will be permitted to remove their masks once they are seated with their cohort group. Masks will not be required where students can physically distance during the lunch period.
- Recess ~ The playground will be divided by grade level to keep grade levels from intermingling.
- Field Trips - on a very limited basis
- Hallways/Lockers/Restrooms ~ may look different at different buildings
 - Cohorts will be distanced from other cohorts when it is necessary to travel/transition
 - Lockers will be separated by cohorts or not used at all
 - Hallways, lockers, and restrooms will be sanitized frequently
 - Water filling stations are to be used ONLY

Health, Safety, and Distancing Measures

- **Visitors and Volunteers**
 - **Visitors and volunteers will be required to wear a mask to enter the building.**
 - **Generally, visitors and volunteers will not be allowed in building (beyond the lobby) to limit exposure**
 - **Prescheduled parent meetings are allowed provided the meeting is limited to the conference room, or other designated space and attendees wear masks.**
 - **Social distancing must be followed for all meetings.**
- **Nursing Support**
 - **MPS's nurse will assist with the implementation of guidelines from the CDC and GCCHD. The nurse will consult frequently with leadership and staff, and communicate with them the guidelines from health authorities.**

Health, Safety, and Distancing Measures

- **Sick Students and Staff**
 - **Parents, students, and staff ~ daily self-monitoring and at-home symptom checks prior to leaving for school.**
 - **Teachers will be asked to report any student with symptoms related to COVID-19 to the designated space in each building.**
 - **Students with reported or observed symptoms will be isolated in a designated space separated from others until parent comes to pick up.**
 - **A document will be provided to parents upon pick-up outlining the next steps required for re-entry, and support during their exclusion.**
 - **Staff with reported or observed symptoms will be sent home or stay home**
- **Contact tracing and case coordination will occur in collaboration with the Gallatin City County Health Department and on a case by case basis.**

When Staff or Students Should Stay Home

- The recommendation for kids with symptoms including fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea, is:
 - Negative test for COVID-19. We will recommend allowing the children back after 24 hours fever free without the use of fever reducing medications.
 - 10 days after the start of symptoms and at least 24 hours since the relief of symptoms without fever reducing medications.
- Staff will follow the same guidelines as for students, for returning to work after showing positive symptoms of COVID-19.
 - We stress the importance of self-monitoring and a culture of openness with regard to communicating symptoms to superiors.

Contact Tracing

- **MPS assists the Gallatin City County Health Department with contact tracing that involves students who test positive and may have been contagious while in school. Quarantine letters and phone calls will come from the school nurse directly to parents/guardians.**
- **The GCCHD will notify the school of a positive case. The school will then begin the process of contact tracing for the dates that the student/staff would have been contagious (48 hrs prior to onset of symptoms). The criteria for a close contact to a person who later tests positive for covid-19 is being within 6ft for 15 minutes or greater.**
 - **An individualized letter will be sent out from the school nurse to a parent/guardian of a student identified as a close contact. The quarantine letter will describe the date of exposure and the expected quarantine dates. The school nurse will also attempt to call each parent in an effort to answer any questions.**
 - **Students who are identified as close contacts and therefore required to quarantine will be expected to begin quarantine as soon as possible following notification.**
 - **Before they leave the school, students should gather all academic materials that they believe may be useful during their quarantine period at home. Notification to gather books may either come from the parent or the front office upon checking out.**
 - **Students/staff who have themselves received a letter from the GCCHD to quarantine (close contact) or isolate (positive test) may not come to the school for any reason.**
 - **Quarantine for close contacts can end after Day 10 without testing and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.**
 - **Quarantine for close contacts can end after Day 7 if the person tests negative (by PCR or antigen test) on Day 5 or later, and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring. Quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7.**
 - **GCCHD does not currently recommend “testing out” of quarantine, but Manhattan School District will accept and honor the negative test result. The school district does not accept any financial responsibility for the cost of a COVID test.**

Physical Distancing in the Classroom

- CDC recommends keeping a distance of at least 6 feet from other people, in addition to practicing other behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19 like wearing cloth face coverings, washing hands often with soap and water, and staying home when sick. Additionally, it is important to ensure ventilation systems operate properly to increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible.
- In situations where maintaining physical distance is difficult, it is especially important (and required) to wear cloth face coverings.

Safety Procedures and Protocols

- School staff will take everyday preventive actions to protect themselves and others from getting sick with COVID-19:
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or inside of elbow, throw the tissue away, and then wash hands.
- Avoid touching one's eyes, nose, mouth, and cloth face covering.
- Maintain distance of at least 6 feet from other adults, and from students when feasible.
- Wear a cloth face covering especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, including tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- Stay home when sick, or after being in close contact with a person with COVID-19.
- Limit use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, games) when possible, and cleaning and disinfecting these objects frequently.

Facility Cleanliness and Safety

- **Normal routine cleaning of surfaces and equipment by teachers and custodians throughout the school day**
- **Disinfection using EPA-approved disinfectants**
 - **Nightly sanitizing of horizontal surfaces, door handles, light switches and other frequently touched surfaces**
 - **Nightly disinfecting of all classrooms**
- **Ventilation ~ air is moved 2-3 times per hour in the classrooms and throughout the building**

How can students ride the school bus safely?

- Drivers should practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated above for other school staff (e.g., hand hygiene, cloth face coverings). Similar to frequently touched surfaces, buses will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily using EPA-approved disinfectants external icon
- Physical distancing is advised, but not prescribed (practice physical distancing to the extent possible).
- Cloth face covering is required.
- Drivers can open bus windows to increase circulation of outdoor air, but should ensure that doing so does not pose a safety or health risk.
- During dismissal, schools may provide physical guides, such as signs and tape on the sidewalk, to ensure that students and school staff remain at least 6 feet apart while waiting for transportation.

In Conclusion

Thanks for your patience as we opened school this year and throughout the first grading period. We respectfully request that you continue to be patient and flexible as plans can change on a moment's notice based on new guidelines from the Governor, CDC, GCCHD, and Office of Public Instruction.