



## **Marietta City Schools**

### **Flexible Approach to Teaching and Learning**

#### **Phase I**

The MCS “Flexible Approach to Teaching and Learning” will be guided by public health data and our ability to implement critical risk mitigation strategies. Our projected date to transition to Phase I, which focuses on our youngest learners, is Tuesday, September 8, 2020. During this and future phases, students who are eligible for in-person learning (according to the plan outlined on the following pages) may choose to remain in full virtual learning. The timeline between each phase is flexible, likely between two and four weeks, thereby allowing MCS leadership and public health officials to collaborate and make the necessary adjustments based on the criteria outlined below.

In an effort to be transparent, we are providing public health benchmarks that will guide our school discussions regarding PK-12, full-time in-person instruction; such figures should serve as an incentive for family and community behavior while our community remains in high-spread transmission, as defined by the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH). Put simply, if we want our children back in school, our entire community must be willing to follow the necessary behavioral and health guidelines that will limit spread. As we transition through each phase, we will be guided by specific factors that consider both community transmission and school-based staffing and mitigation strategies.

#### MCS Factors for Each Phase:

- Risk Mitigation Strategies: Ability to successfully execute each of the daily risk mitigation strategies outlined in this document, which align to CDC guidelines for safely reopening schools
- Staffing: Ability to staff required positions for teaching and school operations

#### Public Health Considerations for Each Phase:

- Transmission Data: Consistent decline in 14-day case rate (date of onset) per 100,000 people in Cobb County (as determined by Georgia Department of Public Health and Cobb & Douglas Public Health)
- COVID-19 Testing: Timely access to testing and results
- Contact Tracing/Case Investigation: Ability to quickly notify individuals who may have come in contact with person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is showing symptoms of COVID-19

In developing this plan, we intentionally prioritized our youngest learners and students with disabilities, recognizing that these students may have the greatest difficulty actively engaging in virtual learning. Additionally, as our MCS students continue virtual learning, please know we are creatively developing opportunities for in-person tutoring in groups of one to five students. Look for details in the coming weeks from your specific school.

Lastly, we will offer virtual townhalls in the coming weeks to share information and solicit feedback on our journey through fall semester. As we transition to future phases, we will provide similar family guides that detail each additional phase of implementation. My hope is that each of you can see and feel our unwavering commitment both to your child’s learning and the safety of all students and staff.

In this together,  
Grant

Grant Rivera  
Superintendent

# Flexible Approach to Teaching & Learning

**MCS Considerations for Each Phase:**

- Risk Mitigation Strategies: Ability to successfully execute each of the daily risk mitigation strategies outlined in this document, which align to CDC guidelines for safely reopening schools.
- Staffing: Ability to staff required positions for teaching and school operations.

**Public Health Considerations for Each Phase:**

- Transmission Data: Consistent decline in 14-day case rate (date of onset) per 100,000 people in Cobb County (as determined by Georgia Department of Public Health and Cobb & Douglas Public Health)
- COVID-19 Testing: Timely access to testing and results
- Contract Tracing/Case Investigation: Ability to quickly notify individuals who may have come in contact with person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III	PHASE IV
<p><b>Grades PreK-2</b> 2 days per week in-person</p> <p><b>Grades 3-12</b> virtual learning</p> <p><b>Special Education Grades K-5</b> (low-incidence classes) 2 days per week in-person</p>	<p><b>Grades PreK-5</b> 2 days per week in-person</p> <p><b>Grades 6-12</b> virtual learning</p> <p><b>Special Education Grades K-12</b> (low-incidence classes) 2 days per week in-person</p>	<p><b>Grades PreK-5</b> 5 days per week in-person</p> <p><b>Grades 6-7 and 9</b> 1-2 days per week in-person</p> <p><b>Grades 8 and 10-12</b> virtual learning</p> <p><b>Special Education Grades K-12</b> (low-incidence classes) 5 days per week in-person</p>	<p><b>Grades PreK-5</b> 5 days per week in-person</p> <p><b>Grades 6-12</b> 1-2 days per week in-person</p> <p><b>Special Education Grades K-12</b> (low-incidence classes) 5 days per week in-person</p>

## PHASE V

**Grades PK-12**  
5 days per week in-person

Transition to Phase V will be dependent on the level of community transmission within the "minimal to moderate" range (6-100 people per 100,000 people). Transmission data is defined as 14-day case rate (date of onset) per 100,000 people in Cobb County (as determined by Georgia Department of Public Health and Cobb & Douglas Public Health).

Special education low-incidence classes: Autism, Mild Intellectual Disabilities, Moderate Disabilities, and Severe and Profound Disabilities.  
 Projected time between each phase: two to four weeks, depending on public health and MCS considerations.  
 In each phase, students eligible for in-person learning may choose to remain in full virtual learning.  
 Students who select in-person learning (two days per week) will be expected to engage in virtual learning the remaining days per week.

**Phase I**  
**Projected Date – Tuesday, September 8, 2020**

**In-person Learning: Students Grades PreK-2, Select Students with Disabilities Grades 3-5**

Phase I in-person learning is offered to all students in grades PreK-2 and students with disabilities served through low-incidence special education classes in grades 3-5 (autism, mild intellectual disabilities, moderate disabilities, and severe/profound disabilities).  
Students have the option to attend in-person two full days per week (Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday); students in the same family will be assigned the same in-person days.  
Each in-person class size will be limited to 5-9 students in order to maintain appropriate social distancing.  
On days the student does not have in-person learning, they will follow the assigned virtual learning schedule.  
Each family will be contacted by their child’s teacher to discuss Phase I options.  
All students and staff must follow the safety protocols (see below for details) during in-person learning.

**Virtual Learning: Students in PreK Who Do Not Prefer In-Person Learning**

Each family will be contacted by their child’s teacher to discuss Phase I options.  
PreK students who prefer to continue full virtual learning will follow the ELC’s Blended Learning Plan.  
Please visit [this page](#) to review the Blended Learning Plan.

**Virtual Learning: Students in Grades K-2 Who Do Not Prefer In-Person Learning**

Each family will be contacted by their child’s teacher to discuss Phase I options.  
Students who prefer to continue virtual learning will follow the established daily schedule with the same expectations regarding engagement, attendance, and completion of assignments.  
Please visit [this page](#) to review the Virtual Learning Family Guides.

**Virtual Learning: Students in Grades 3-12**

Students continue virtual learning, following the established daily schedule with the same expectations regarding engagement, attendance, and completion of assignments.  
Please visit [this page](#) to review the Virtual Learning Family Guides.

**Phase I – In-person Safety Protocols**

**Collective Responsibility**

Any return to in-person learning requires collective responsibility for every MCS family. Failure to do such significantly compromises the health and safety of all students and staff. It is imperative, now more than ever, that families do not send their sick child to school out of convenience or medicate the child before school in order to reduce a fever. We all share a collective responsibility to monitor our child and do the right thing.

**Daily Self-Check**

Each student and staff member will be required to conduct a daily self-check before coming to school. This self-check includes taking a temperature and reviewing the following questions:  
If the answer to any of these questions is yes, stay home and contact your school’s nurse.

- Take your temperature. Do you have a **fever** (temperature at or above 100.4°F or 38°C) without having taken any fever-reducing medications?

- Do you have a **loss of smell or taste**?
- Do you have a **cough**?
- Do you have **muscle aches**?
- Do you have a **sore throat**?
- Do you have **congestion or a runny nose**?
- Do you have **shortness of breath**?
- Do you have **chills**?
- Do you have a **headache**?
- Have you experienced the new onset of any **gastrointestinal symptoms** such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of appetite in the last few days?
- Have you, or anyone you have been in close contact with, been **diagnosed with COVID-19 or placed in quarantine** for possible exposure to COVID-19 within the last two weeks?
- Have you been **asked to self-isolate or quarantine** by a medical professional or a local public health official in the last two weeks?

### Self-Quarantine Due to Close Contact of a Person Who Has Tested Positive for COVID-19 (With or Without Symptoms)

Any student or staff member (with or without symptoms) who is identified as a close contact of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to self-quarantine at home for a period of 14 days from the date of last exposure. Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes.

Students and staff who have symptoms must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) before returning to school or work.

Please contact Cindy Davis, Executive Secretary for the Department of Special Services, by email (cindydavis@marietta-city.org) or phone (678-695-7238) for DPH guidelines regarding the appropriate timeline to take a COVID-19 test.

Any student who is required to self-quarantine (and subsequently be absent from school) can continue school through virtual learning, if the child and family so desire.

NOTE: This information is continually being updated by DPH and CDPH. We will provide revised guidelines as needed.

### Self-Isolation Due to Positive COVID-19 Test

Any student or staff member who has tested positive for COVID-19 (with or without symptoms) will be required to self-isolate and be absent from school or work for 10 days.

**If students or staff are symptomatic:** the period of self-isolation is 10 days from the date of symptom onset; students and staff who have symptoms must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) and symptoms must have improved before returning to school or work.

**If students or staff are asymptomatic:** the period of self-isolation is 10 days from the positive test.

Any student who is required to self-isolate (and subsequently be absent from school) can continue school through virtual learning, if the child and family so desire.

If you have tested positive, please contact Cindy Davis, Executive Secretary for the Department of Special Services, by email (cindydavis@marietta-city.org) or phone (678-695-7238) for additional guidance.

NOTE: This information is continually being updated by DPH and CDPH. We will provide revised guidelines as needed.

### Contact Tracing

MCS will be using local school staff to support public health officials in contact tracing. This process will include identification of and notification to any person (student or staff) who was in close contact within the last 48 hours of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. Close contact is considered less than six feet apart for at least 15 minutes.

### Face Coverings (Masks/Shields)

MCS will require all staff, students, and visitors to wear a face covering while in MCS school and district buildings and on MCS school buses. Exceptions will be made for medical reasons and to accommodate eating and drinking, outdoor activities, and independent work in personal office spaces where physical distancing can be maintained. We acknowledge the importance of providing opportunities (socially distanced and not indoors) for students and staff to periodically remove their face covering. Teachers will create as many opportunities for these breaks as possible. For more information about face coverings, please review [our MCS Mask Guide](#).

### Temperature Checks – All Students

All families are requested to check the temperature of their child each day prior to leaving their home for school. If necessary, thermometers will be provided. Please contact Cindy Davis via email ([cindydavis@marietta-city.org](mailto:cindydavis@marietta-city.org)) or phone (678-695-7238) to request a thermometer. MCS intends to check the temperature of each student each day prior to entering the school building.

#### Temperature Checks – Bus Riders (K-2, Select Students with Disabilities Grades 3-5)

All elementary students riding the school bus are to be escorted to the bus stop each morning by a parent/guardian or supervising adult. A bus monitor will check the student's temperature prior to boarding the school bus. Students with a temperature below 100.4° Fahrenheit will be permitted to board the school bus; any student with a temperature at or above 100.4° Fahrenheit will be directed to return home with their parent/guardian or supervising adult. If a child does not have a parent/guardian or supervising adult present at the bus stop, the child will be socially distanced on the school bus and brought to an isolation room at their elementary school. If a child has two such instances of a fever and no parent/guardian or supervising adult at the morning bus stop, bus privileges may be revoked for the remainder of the semester.

Each MCS parent/guardian of an MCS bus rider will be required to sign a bus rider protocol acknowledging the above information. Please see below for additional school bus safety protocols.

#### Temperature Checks – Car Riders (PreK-2, Select Students with Disabilities Grades 3-5)

Any student who is a car rider will have their temperature checked before exiting the vehicle (in the carpool line). Students with a temperature below 100.4° Fahrenheit will be permitted to exit the car and enter the school; any student with a temperature at or above 100.4° Fahrenheit will be directed to return home with their parent/guardian or supervising adult.

#### Temperature Checks – Walker (PreK-2, Select Students with Disabilities Grades 3-5)

Any student who walks to school must be escorted by a parent/guardian or supervising adult. The student will have their temperature checked before entering the school building. Students with a temperature below 100.4° Fahrenheit will be permitted to enter the school; any student with a temperature at or above 100.4° Fahrenheit will be directed to return home with their parent/guardian.

## Return to School Verification

Please see the previous sections regarding self-quarantine and self-isolation for specific criteria. Students and staff must be symptom-free before returning to school or work. Any student who is required to self-quarantine or self-isolate (and subsequently be absent from school) can continue school through virtual learning, if the child and family so desire.

## Classroom Protocols

Class size for in-person learning will be limited to five to nine students for grades PreK-2 and select students with disabilities (grades 3-5).

To provide the greatest degree of social distancing and safety protocols, elementary teachers will adhere to the following classroom guidelines:

Separate student desks.

Limit sharing of supplies, books, manipulatives, etc.; any sharing requires disinfecting prior to passing from one student to another.

Hand sanitizer and disinfecting spray available in each classroom.

Increased opportunities (weather and space permitting) for students to go outside.

Significant efforts to keep students grouped by class (and not mix or commingle students from different classes).

Use of disposable bathroom/hall passes.

## Student Desk Partitions

Each student and teacher desk will be provided a clear desk partition.



## School Meals (Breakfast/Lunch)

To the greatest degree possible, school lunches will be served in the classroom or the hallway nearest the classroom, and students will eat lunch in their classroom. School breakfast will be available in the hallways as students enter the school building, and students will eat breakfast in their classroom.

## Outdoor Activities/Recess

Teachers will seek frequent and creative opportunities to allow children to go outside during the school day. During recess and any other times that students may be outside, the playground equipment will not be used (unless disinfected between each classroom use). Each class will be able to use their own collection of balls and other outside equipment that will be isolated to that specific class and disinfected each night.

## School Signage

Age- and developmentally appropriate signage will be placed throughout each elementary school to remind students of personal hygiene (hand washing, coughing into arm, etc.) and social distancing from others. Additionally, signage will be used to create one-way directional walk patterns in some areas of buildings.

### **School Cleaning and Disinfecting**

Throughout the school day, extra custodial staff will be provided to each school to further disinfect high-touch areas. Additionally, classrooms, hallways, and common areas will be fogged and disinfected each night.

## **Phase I – School Bus Transportation Safety Protocols**

### **Grace and Understanding**

Given the increased responsibility to check students' temperatures and, when possible, socially distance students on school buses, we kindly ask that families extend to us a degree of grace and understanding during the return to in-person learning. In the morning routes, it is possible that buses may be delayed in arriving to bus stops or schools as we navigate through the new protocols and increased car rider traffic. Families are encouraged to download the [Marietta City Schools Traversa Ride 360 App](#) to monitor the current location and arrival time of their assigned school bus (based on GPS tracking).

### **Parent/Guardian or Supervising Adult at the Morning Bus Stop**

As noted above, all elementary students riding the school bus are to be escorted to the bus stop each morning by a parent/guardian or supervising adult. The temperature of each bus rider will be checked prior to boarding the bus; any child with a temperature at or above 100.4° Fahrenheit will be expected to return home with the parent/guardian or supervising adult. If a child has two such instances of a fever and no parent/guardian at the morning bus stop, bus privileges may be revoked for the remainder of the semester. Each MCS parent/guardian of an MCS elementary school bus rider will be required to sign a bus rider protocol acknowledging the expectations to have an escort at the morning bus stop.

### **Bus Windows**

In an effort to increase ventilation on the bus, bus windows may be opened (weather permitting) while students are on the school bus.

### **Social Distancing**

To the greatest degree possible, students will be socially distanced and placed in assigned seats on the school bus.

### **Bus Assignment**

To maintain social distancing and capacity numbers, all elementary students who ride the bus home in the afternoon must ride their assigned bus. Students may not switch buses or routes to ride home with a friend.

### **School Bus Cleaning and Disinfecting**

Between each bus route (elementary, middle, and high school), MCS staff will disinfect high-touch areas. Each night, the school bus will be fogged and disinfected.

## **Phase I – General School Considerations and Safety Protocols**

### **Fall Break**

Marietta City Schools will observe Fall Break from September 28-October 2.

<b>Before School Program (BSP)/After School Program (ASP)</b>
No BSP and ASP will be offered during Phase I.
<b>After-school Extracurricular Clubs and Activities</b>
Elementary students will have the opportunity to participate in after-school extracurricular clubs and activities, based on ability to implement appropriate safety protocols and social distancing guidelines. Please contact the appropriate sponsor/coach or school principal for detailed information.
<b>Limit Non-essential School Visitors and Volunteers</b>
To protect our students and staff, MCS will limit non-essential school visitors and volunteers to school campuses.
<b>Media Center/Learning Commons</b>
MCS will limit student use of shared spaces and materials in each elementary school media center/learning commons. Efforts will be made to give students access to learning resources in such a manner that provides the appropriate degree of safety and sanitation.
<b>Student Assemblies and Large Group Events/Meetings</b>
During Fall 2020, significant limitations will occur relative to student assemblies and large group events/meetings. Each principal will provide additional details about how such events may occur virtually, when appropriate.
<b>Student Field Trips</b>
During Fall 2020, student field trips will be limited; consideration will be given on a case-by-case basis for field trips that achieve appropriate degree of social distance and avoid co-mingling of students.