

Dear MCS Families,

This email provides an update regarding recent MCS COVID data and subsequent changes to COVID-related protocols (effective Monday, December 6, 2021). As an overview, this email includes the following:

1. MCS COVID “Test-and-Stay” and Surveillance Data
2. “Modified Quarantine” Protocols for Asymptomatic, School-based Close Contacts
3. MCS COVID Testing Options
4. School Visitor/Volunteer Protocol
5. Virtual School (2022-2023)

MCS COVID “Test-and-Stay” and Surveillance Data

In recent months, the data collected through the MCS COVID testing programs show the potential risk for school-based, asymptomatic close contacts is extremely low. Specifically, since the implementation of our “Test-and-Stay” program on September 13, 2021 through yesterday, 1.7% of the group (students and staff combined) who participated in daily rapid antigen testing during their quarantine period tested positive for COVID. Further, as part of our surveillance testing partnership with the Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH), in which students and staff can opt-in for weekly COVID testing, only 1.8% tested positive for COVID. Put simply, the risk for school-based transmission remains low. Lastly, it is also worth noting: as posted on our [MCS website](#), numerous schools in MCS have had zero COVID cases among students and staff for multiple weeks.

“Modified Quarantine” Protocols for Asymptomatic, School-based Close Contacts

Given the aforementioned MCS COVID data, effective Monday, December 6, 2021, MCS will transition to a “modified quarantine” for asymptomatic, school-based close contacts. Any student or staff member who is identified as a close contact at school and who remains symptom-free will be allowed to return to school the following day; this person will be required to wear a mask for seven calendar days (from the date of close contact with a COVID-positive person) regardless of vaccination status.

MCS will continue to contact trace (as required by the Governor’s Office and GDPH) and notify families immediately if their child is a school-based close contact. Also, to clarify, per the [Georgia Administrative Order](#) (updated August 2, 2021), non-school based close contacts are not eligible for a “modified quarantine”; rather, these students and staff will be required to follow the [current quarantine protocol](#) (7-day quarantine, with a negative COVID test; 10-day quarantine, with no negative test or symptoms).

MCS COVID Testing Options

Our district will continue to offer weekly surveillance testing (in partnership with GDPH) for students and staff who choose to participate in this program. If you have not done so already and would like to register to participate, please fill out [this form](#) by November 28, 2021. Also, MCS continues to partner with local providers to offer free COVID testing for all members of our community at our Lemon Street Campus; click [here](#) for more details. Going forward, MCS will no longer offer the daily rapid antigen tests through the “test-and-stay” program.

School Visitor/Volunteer Protocol

We recognize the importance of welcoming our families back into our school buildings so they can appropriately engage with their child(ren). Effective December 6, 2021, MCS will resume normal school visitor/volunteer protocols. Given each school has different expectations and opportunities to visit your child at school, please refer to specific guidelines provided through the front office or from the principal at your child's school.

Virtual School (2022-2023)

Given the COVID transmission rates and the availability of the COVID vaccine, MCS will not be offering a full-time virtual learning option for students next school year (August 2022-May 2023). I share this information now because I want all families to be aware of our intentions so they can plan accordingly. For secondary (grades 6-12) students, virtual learning is available through [Georgia Virtual](#), an online education program provided by the Georgia Department of Education.

As we move into December, we will continue to monitor both community and MCS COVID data and update our protocols as necessary.

In closing, I thank each of you for your continued engagement and partnership. As I've said before, I remain incredibly hopeful.

Wishing each of you a safe and restful Thanksgiving Break.

Sincerely,

Grant

Grant Rivera, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Marietta City Schools
250 Howard Street NE
Marietta, GA 30060