



HILLTOP RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN 3.0

AUGUST 16, 2021

PRESENTED TO THE MPCUSD 23 BOARD OF EDUCATION THROUGH WORK BY:

MPCUSD 23 TRANSITION PLANNING TEAM

MPCUSD 23 ADMINISTRATION

MPCUSD 23 COMMITMENT

- 1. Least Restrictive Educational Environment** - *Mt. Pulaski Schools are dedicated to keep our students, staff and community safe while participating in all activities associated with school. In our work, the school district will provide the least restrictive educational environment necessary to protect the health and well being of all stakeholders while complying with all State and Federal mandates. Mitigations used throughout the pandemic will be deployed only as necessary in relationship to health concerns in our schools and communities.*
- 2. Health Monitoring** – *Families are expected to check their students for symptomatic signs of illness. These symptoms include, but are not limited to, fever (over 100.4 F), cough, sneezing, congestion, headache, body aches, vomiting and upset stomach. Students displaying these symptoms should be kept home from school. The schools will monitor students for the same symptoms and inform families when there is a concern.*
- 3. Clean Environment** – *All staff will participate in identifying high touch areas, conduct best practices in cleaning and sanitization in our schools, busses, vans and supplemental areas.*
- 4. Social Distancing** - *Every effort will be made to maintain a minimum 3 feet of social distance between individuals and 6 feet when possible.*
- 5. Planned Maintenance** – *Develop systems to monitor the health of stakeholders within the district, offer transparent communication, adjust practices as necessary while upholding respect for individual privacy and safety.*
- 6. Instruction** – *Conduct and maintain best practices that allow for productive instruction while maintaining high quality standards and implementing student and staff accountability.*
- 7. Contact Tracing** - *Mt. Pulaski schools will collaborate with the Logan County Health Department in determining individuals who may need to be isolated or quarantined.*
- 8. Vaccinations** - *While not being required, vaccinations are encouraged through a collaborative effort with the Logan County Health Department.*

9. **Mitigation** – *In the past year, we have become very familiar with many mitigation measures including, masks, social distancing, hand washing, social distancing, disinfecting, continual cleaning of high touch surfaces and much more. The school district is committed to providing students with the least restrictive environment possible. Disinfecting and continual cleaning of high touch surfaces will continue daily, while other mitigation measures will be implemented as necessary or as required.*

Mitigation measures will be determined by a tiered system which monitors local health and safety conditions in collaboration with the Logan County Health Department.

INFORMING DECISIONS

- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that students and staff that are unvaccinated wear masks. Mt. Pulaski Schools also recommend that unvaccinated individuals wear masks. Provided COVID-19 positivity and transmission rates remain low over reasonable periods of time in the school and community, mitigations may be reduced (including masks) by the superintendent if positivity and transmission rates remain low over reasonable periods of time. All decisions will be in accordance with State and Federal guidelines.
- The Mt. Pulaski Superintendent is authorized to reinstate any COVID-19 mitigation measures, including masks, in the event it is determined necessary to protect the health and well-being of students, staff and community due to rising COVID-19 positivity and transmission rates in the school(s) or greater community. This decision must be followed by communication with all Board members within 24 hours.
- It is *required* that all students wear masks while being transported to and from school and school events.
- When all students and staff appropriately wear masks at school, quarantine will not be necessary.
- The district will strive to provide secure and reliable internet to families that do not have such capabilities. This will ensure equal opportunity for all students to successfully participate in remote instruction.
- In-person and remote instruction will have equal accountability. Student work will be assessed equally whether conducted in-person or in quarantine. These assessments will apply to promotion requirements and student eligibility for extracurricular activities.

- The district will provide COVID-19 tests for all adults and also for children with parental/guardian approval.
- Students will comply with MPCUSD23 staff when requested to wear a mask.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

Families may register and enroll their student(s) through an online process by logging into Teacherease. New families and those families experiencing difficulties may contact the student's school office for help.

ATTENDANCE

Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, all schools must resume fully in-person learning for all student attendance days, provided that, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-30 and 105 ILCS 5/34-18.66, remote instruction may be available for students who have not received COVID-19 vaccine or who are not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine, only while they are under quarantine consistent with guidance or requirements from a local public health department or Illinois Department of Public Health. *In short, remote instruction will only be available for those quarantined by the health department.*

Only IDPH, County Health Departments or Mt. Pulaski Schools can determine if an individual is to be quarantined. Families or individuals who self-quarantine will be considered absent according to attendance measures of the student handbook or employment contracts.

Students that are medically unable to attend for an extended period of time will need to follow procedures for home/hospital services pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/14-13.0. Mt. Pulaski schools will work with parents/guardians on a case by case basis.

SCHEDULES

Schedules will return to normal full day schedules. Grade school hours will run from 8:00 a.m. until 3:08 p.m. with doors opening at 7:45 a.m. High school hours will run from 8:00 a.m. until 3:12 p.m. with doors opening at 7:45 a.m.

STAYING HEALTHY

Mt. Pulaski CUSD 23 will conduct health screenings of our students and staff as needed. Our school district can also test students for COVID-19 with the permission of

parents/guardians or adults over the age of 18. Mt. Pulaski schools encourage families to be diligent conducting at-home health screenings so ill students are not sent to school.

Students are also encouraged to routinely wash their hands and use hand sanitizer when necessary. Individuals coughing or sneezing should turn away from others and use their arms as a barrier.

Individuals awaiting outcome from COVID-19 tests due to close contact with a positive tested individual must refrain from attending school or school events until test results are available.

CLEANING

Mt. Pulaski CUSD 23 is dedicated to maintaining practices that ensure a safe and clean environment. Daily and routine cleaning and disinfecting of transportation vehicles, classrooms and school facilities will continue to provide mitigation measures that will keep our community safe.

TRANSPORTATION

Masks will be required for all individuals on school provided transportation. Transportation routes will be conducted through normal bus routes, as in previous years. Please complete a transportation registration form prior to registering your student(s), so bus routes may be designed and we can inform families of their pickup times. All buses will be disinfected and cleaned daily. Drivers are not required to wear masks when they are not transporting students.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Wearing masks is recommended when students are not eating. All student's breakfast and lunch will be free for the 2021-22 school year. All schools will operate under traditional lunch times and settings. Social distancing will be practiced when feasible. Each student's lunch time will be coordinated through their schedule. The cafeteria will be thoroughly cleaned between lunches and disinfected daily.

ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

Mt. Pulaski CUSD 23 athletics will follow the guidance and recommendations from the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) and Illinois High School Association (IHSA) for qualifying events. The school district will keep families informed of changes in protocol as they occur. The school district plans to offer all traditional activities throughout the school year. Normal athletic and gate fees will apply to all activities.

All home and some away junior high and high school activities will be available for home viewing through the NFHS Network. For more information, visit <https://www.nfhsnetwork.com/>.

Field trips, assemblies, and other large gatherings will be allowed under the guidelines and expectations of current mitigation protocol. Meetings with staff and other back-to-school events will be held in their traditional formats.

CHANGES IN THE HILLTOP RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN 3.0

Mt. Pulaski CUSD 23 is a Recognized School District by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) which allows our district to conduct instruction, declare legal graduates and receive state and federal funding above local funding provided by taxpayers. In order to maintain our Recognition status, our school district must adhere to state statutes, executive orders, school policy and ISBE expectations. Without our Recognition status, we can not legally operate as a school district.

As local circumstances require or state mandates dictate, the school district may need to consider further mitigation factors in order to keep our students, staff and community safe. Mt. Pulaski CUSD 23 will give our families as much advance notice as possible and adhere to maintaining the least restrictive environment allowable, maintaining public safety.

INSPIRE – ENGAGE – EMPOWER

Our vision *is to be an innovative, high-performing community that produces globally-minded, influential citizens.*

Our mission *is to engage and inspire students to become mindful and productive citizens promoting growth and success for all.*

Mount Pulaski believes.....

- *Student-centered decision making is our top priority.*
- *All people will feel safe, welcomed and valued in our schools.*
- *Integrity, diversity and respect for all is imperative.*
- *Students will be challenged by rigorous curriculum and instruction.*
- *A strong partnership among parents, community and school is essential.*
- *Parent involvement is critical to student success.*
- *Opportunities and encouragement for continuous improvement are integral for success.*

These statements were designed by a team representing parents, school board members, students, administrators and teachers to define what beliefs will guide our work, what defines our existence and who we aspire to be.

The Hilltop Return to School Plan is designed to embody this design even in a time when our community must adjust our systems and adapt practices in a manner that puts others first to ensure safety and success for all.