



Muhlenberg County School District

Re-Opening Plan Fall 2020

INTRODUCTION

Following guidelines established by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and in conjunction with several neighboring school districts, the Muhlenberg County School District created this Roadmap to Reopening as a plan for the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.

It is imperative that this plan be viewed as subject to change based upon information gathered as the year continues. The plan will be updated as new information becomes available.

Muhlenberg County School District utilizes a Flu/Virus Response Matrix to guide school operations when contagious diseases are present in the school community. This matrix includes a level system that describes the contagious disease transmission rate in our community and the needed precautions to further prevent the spread of germs. This same flu/virus matrix also applies to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because there is still much to learn about COVID-19 and its long-term impact on health, it is important that all stakeholders know, understand, and utilize standard precautions prescribed at each level within the matrix.

To help guide our school community, the District will utilize the symbols of green, yellow, and red lights. Green signifies the school community is experiencing low virus transmission rates, yellow signifies an increase of cases and the need for extra precautions, and red signifies high virus transmission rates and the needs for extreme measures to stop the spread of germs in the community. Decisions on which zone (green, yellow, or red) the District is operating under will be determined in collaboration with the local health department and the Kentucky Department of Public Health. This information will be communicated to the public through social media, on school and district websites, and be displayed in various places throughout the school buildings.

	<p style="text-align: center;">Green Zone</p> <p>Extremely low statewide transmission rates and minimal cases within community <i>Use of universal precautions and standard protocols</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Yellow Zone</p> <p>Relatively stable statewide transmission rates and numerous cases within community <i>Use of Healthy At School Guidelines to slow the spread of illness</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Red Zone</p> <p>Increasing statewide transmission rates and substantial cases within community <i>Buildings closed to in-person classes</i></p>

******NOTE: This plan is subject to change as warranted.******

Muhlenberg County School District Learning Zones



Green Zone

- Students attend school five days per week.
- Breakfast and lunch will be served daily.
- Universal health and safety precautions practiced.
- Normal access to campus and buildings.
- Extracurricular activities will follow normal policy/procedure guidelines.

Extremely low statewide transmission rates and minimal cases within community

Use of universal precautions and standard protocols



Yellow Zone

- Contains all *instructional* components as outlined in the red zone.
- Instruction delivered virtually or as a hybrid of virtual/in person.
- Possible A/B.
- Specialized services provided for students.
- Students allowed in building on a limited basis in pre-determined groupings.
- Meals provided for students.
- No visitors allowed in buildings.
- Healthy At School guidelines followed for in person classes (to include daily screenings, hygiene practices, masks, and social distancing).
- Will follow KHSAA guidelines for sports.

Relatively Stable statewide transmission rates and numerous cases within community

Use of Healthy at School Guidelines to slow the spread of illness

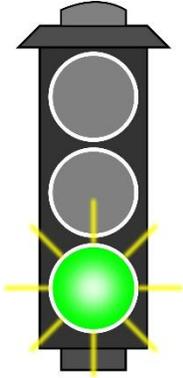


Red Zone

- Buildings closed.
- Instruction delivered virtually.
- Paper packets available for those students who need them.
- Instruction delivered through the internet, software, or both as determined by student need.
- Students connect and interact with other students and their instructors online.
- WiFi Hotspots available in school parking lots for families with little or no internet.
- Meals provided for students.
- Grades determined on achievement, not just participation or attendance.

Increasing statewide transmission rates and substantial cases within community

Buildings closed to in-person classes



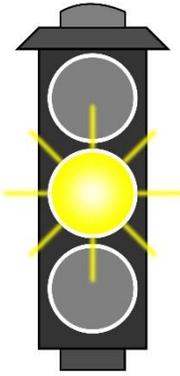
HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOL FOR THE GREEN ZONE

The Green Zone occurs when Kentucky has extremely low statewide virus transmission rates and there are minimal cases within Muhlenberg County, as determined in collaboration with our local health department.

Muhlenberg County Schools will enter the green zone when the pandemic status is lifted. Given the current virus transmission rate and predictions for the fall and winter with no vaccine in place, all stakeholders should plan to not operate in the green zone for quite some time.

Key descriptions for the green zone:

- Standard enrollment options for students (in-person classes with application process available to high school students seeking course completion through the MOVE program)
- Universal health and safety precautions in use
- Use of standard health protocols and school exclusion (i.e., vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rash, fever greater than 100.4)
- Normal access to campus and buildings
- Regular school programs
- Field trips per normal school policy
- Normal transportation procedures
- Regular school cleaning
- Hand sanitizer and tissues



HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOL FOR THE YELLOW ZONE

The Yellow Zone occurs when Kentucky has relatively stable statewide virus transmission rates and there are numerous cases within Muhlenberg County, as determined in collaboration with our local health department.

Virtual Learning

- In-person classes are optimal for student learning; however, students will have the option to enroll in virtual learning until the pandemic status and state-wide emergency orders are lifted. Virtual learning will provide a learning opportunity for students during this time.
- Virtual instruction will include required online meetings and completion of online coursework. Instruction will be delivered from our teaching staff with the intent of providing as much teacher-led instruction as possible.
- Students will attend school virtually on a schedule as determined by the instructor.
- Students utilizing the virtual learning option will participate in regularly scheduled check-ins with the teacher/mentor.
- Grades will be earned based on achievement, not just attendance or participation.
- Google Classroom will be the primary platform used by our teaching staff.
- Students attending virtually must have adequate internet access. The District has installed Wi-Fi access points in all school building parking lots to assist families with internet access. The District is working on additional solutions to assist families with limited internet coverage (i.e., hot spots, flash drives).
- Students issued district-owned technology devices must adhere to the One-to-One Technology Use Agreement. Chromebooks will be provided for students in grades K through 12.
- It is required that students attending virtually who wish to return to in-person classes transition at the start of a nine-week grading period. Students wishing to

transition to in-person classes will be required to contact the school to alert school administrators at least one week prior to attending in-person classes. This will give school administrators and staff necessary time to make adjustments within the classroom to accommodate additional students. Adjustments on the school bus, food service, and technology will also be made.

- If sports are permitted to continue by KHSAA, students enrolled in virtual learning will be able to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Meals will be available for students attending virtually if the family signs up for this option. Logistics will be determined and shared with families.
- Services that support the social/emotional and mental health needs of our students will be offered.
- Interventions and limited Extended School Services for children during the week (specific numbers, hours and other logistics to be determined) will be provided.
- The district will provide specialized services (e.g., speech therapy, special education services, gifted and talented opportunities) for identified groups.

Healthy at School Guidelines for In-Person Classes

For a complete listing of all Healthy at School Guidelines, visit KDE's COVID-19 website:
<https://education.ky.gov/comm/Pages/COVID-19-Updates.aspx>

Social Distancing Guidelines

- No visitors (including mentors and volunteers) will be allowed in the buildings, unless prior approval is obtained by a school or district administrator.
- Students will sit as family units on the school bus whenever possible.
- Alternate feeding sites within the school building may be offered to allow for increased social distancing (i.e., having lunch in the classroom or outdoors when weather permits).
- School signage will be provided for specific areas in all schools and public spaces to remind students and staff of appropriate six feet distance requirement
- Bathroom breaks will be taken on an individual basis when possible. Full classroom bathroom breaks are discouraged.
- When needed, the school may stagger arrival and dismissal times to reduce the number of students moving around the building during transitions.
- All extracurricular activities will be governed by KHSAA/KMEA guidelines.
- All K-12 non-critical activities will be cancelled.
- No school-wide assemblies.

Personal Protective Equipment

- All students (1st grade - 12th grade), staff and visitors will wear protective masks (in accordance with CDC guidelines) during all district related activities when a minimum of six feet distance from another person is not available.
- If seating in the classroom is at least 6 feet apart, students do not have to wear masks while in class.
- Students are encouraged to bring their own masks; however, masks must conform to dress code guidelines.
- Students with certain health conditions or disabilities may be exempt from wearing a mask. This exemption process will include a physician's recommendation and/or the student's IEP Team.
- Specific equipment will be provided based upon the individual student needs and requirements (e.g., medically fragile, at-risk populations).
- All students will be required to wear a mask while on the bus unless a medical exemption is in place.

Screening, School Exclusion, and Contact Tracing

- All staff and students will complete a COVID screener, including daily temperature checks, before entering the building.
- For the purpose of contact tracing, all classrooms, buses, cafeterias, and other common areas (e.g., library, computer lab, etc.) will require seating charts. School personnel are expected to maintain copies of all seating charts for the entire year.
- Per Board Policy 09.213, *Contagious Diseases and Parasites*, any known or

suspected cases of communicable diseases (COVID-19) must be reported immediately to the health department. Likewise, 09.213 requires the parent or legal guardian for a student to notify the student's principal of any communicable disease, such as COVID-19, that can threaten the safety of the student or others in the building.

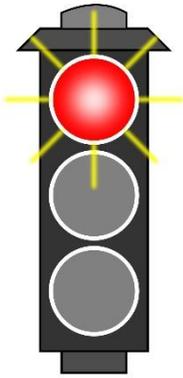
- School signage will be provided for specific areas in all schools and public spaces (e.g., safety protocols/practices).
- If the school has a positive COVID-19 case, the school and district will collaborate with the health department to make contact with anyone who may have been in contact with that person. Sharing of information will adhere to FERPA guidelines while also meeting the health and safety needs of the community. Virtual teaching and learning will be initiated for all individuals quarantined due to the positive case.

Cleaning, Sanitization and Environmental Guidelines

- Healthy hygiene practices will be taught to all students and staff and implemented during all district related activities. Signs will be posted throughout all buildings
- Hand sanitizing stations have been placed in all classrooms and common areas.
- Building staff will clean surfaces in between classes.
- Students will be allowed to bring water from home. Water bottle filling stations will be designated in each building.
- School buses will be sanitized after each bus route.
- Playground equipment will not be used. Organized time of outdoor/indoor game and exercise opportunities will be provided.
- Plexiglas shields will be placed in all front office/receptionist areas to reduce exposure risk.
- A checklist of daily and weekly cleaning/sanitizing duties will be implemented.
- Staff members will be assigned specific duties by administration to assist with cleaning and sanitizing equipment, desks, etc.
- Whenever possible, individual desks will be used instead of tables.

Maintaining Quality Teaching and Learning for Virtual and In-Person Instruction

- Online learning platforms will not only be used for virtual learning but also for in-person classes. The increased use of technology during in-person classes will assist students if the district must move into the Red Zone, cancel all in-person classes, and rely heavily on technology to continue teaching and learning for an extended time.
- Online learning platforms will be assigned based upon student needs. Teachers can also assign based upon priority standards. Training will be provided to all staff on the use of these platforms.
- Students enrolled in virtual learning will participate in the universal screening process to determine individual learning needs.
- Staff will create an individual plan to work on key standards plus close gaps or accelerate foundational skills.
- Students will work with teachers on goal setting and progress tracking as well as learning how to manage their learning process.
- Teachers are encouraged to implement project-based learning and competency based models.
- No out-of-building/school-related trips will be allowed unless approved by the Superintendent.
- When possible, teachers and staff will rotate to classrooms while students remain with the same group for the entire school day.



HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOL FOR THE RED ZONE

The Red Zone occurs when Kentucky has increasing statewide transmission rates and substantial cases within Muhlenberg County, as determined in collaboration with our local health department.

Health and Safety for All

- All in-person classes will be dismissed.
- Virtual learning will be implemented for all students. Paper packets will be available for students who do not have internet access.
- All in-person school-related activities will be cancelled.
- Meals will be available for students if the family signs up for this option. Logistics will be determined and shared with families.

Maintaining Quality Teaching and Learning When In-Person Classes are not an Option

- Online learning platforms will be used for virtual learning.
- Virtual instruction will include required online meetings and completion of online coursework. Instruction will be delivered from our teaching staff with the intent of providing as much teacher-led instruction as possible.
- The District has installed Wi-Fi access points in all school building parking lots to assist families with internet access. The District is working on additional solutions to assist families with limited internet coverage (i.e., hot spots, flash drives).
- Students will participate in regularly scheduled check-ins with the teacher/mentor.
- Online learning platforms will be assigned based upon student needs. Teachers can also assign based upon priority standards. Training will be provided to all staff on the use of these platforms.
- Students enrolled in virtual learning will participate in the universal screening process to determine individual learning needs.
- Staff will create an individual plan to work on key standards plus close gaps or accelerate foundational skills.
- Students will work with teachers on goal setting and progress tracking as well as learning how to manage their learning process.
- Teachers are encouraged to implement project-based learning and competency based models.
- Google Classroom will be the primary platform used by our teaching staff.
- Students issued district-owned technology devices must adhere to the One-to-One Technology Use Agreement. Chromebooks will be provided for students in

grades K through 12.

- Services that support the social/emotional and mental health needs of our students will be offered remotely.
- Interventions and limited Extended School Services for children during the week (specific numbers, hours and other logistics to be determined) will be provided remotely.
- The district will provide specialized services (e.g., speech therapy, special education services, gifted and talented opportunities) for identified groups remotely.

Supporting Exceptional Learners for Virtual and In-Person Instruction

Special Education

- **Child Find and Evaluations**

Muhlenberg County School District (MCSD) will continue to identify, locate and evaluate students suspected of having a disability and needing special education and related services. At the same time, MCSD will be mindful that students have been displaced from their typical learning environment when initiating the referral process. Some evaluation procedures can be completed in remote learning situations. Some evaluations require in-person contact with students or observations of students in school settings. MCSD will conduct evaluations remotely and in-person while adhering to public health guidelines for the safety of students and staff.

- **Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meetings**

MCSD is committed to providing families an opportunity to have meaningful participation in the special education process. Whether in-person or an alternative format, such as video conferencing or by phone, Special Education teams will partner with families to determine the most practical format to conduct IEP meetings.

- **Delivery of Special Education and Related Services**

MCSD will continue to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). We will be working to incorporate new health and safety precautions that must also be enacted while providing FAPE to students with disabilities. Because FAPE must now be provided consistent with the need to protect health and safety, there may be disruptions, delays, and/or changes in how services are provided.

Even so, it is a District priority to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers. IEPs will continue to be developed and implemented based upon each student's unique needs and the learning environment chosen by the family. While families generally may choose between in-person or remote learning, there are some students for whom remote learning will not provide FAPE.

If a family chooses remote learning, an IEP team meeting may be held if necessary. At the meeting, the team will discuss whether remote learning is appropriate to meet the needs of the student based on their unique circumstances and response to remote learning during the spring of 2020.

If a family chooses in-person learning, an IEP meeting may be convened to review and update the student's IEP for the 2020-21 school year. The committee may need to consider developing a contingency plan to have in place in the event the student must transition to remote learning at some point during the school year.

- **Progress Monitoring and Reporting**

Special Education teams will have in place consistent data collection and service log procedures for use across learning environments. Collecting data and tracking the provision of services will assist educators and families in determining the effectiveness of instruction provided, student performance on IEP goals/objectives, and assist IEP teams in making any necessary adjustments to instruction. Periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals will continue to be provided.

- **Accommodations and Modifications**

Accommodations and modifications will be provided regardless of a student's learning environment. General and special education teachers will continue to collaborate in determining the appropriateness and success of a student's accommodations and/or modifications. The IEP team (general education teachers, special education, related services providers, and families) will work collaboratively to identify alternate solutions if it believes an accommodation and/or modification is not appropriate or successful in a particular setting.

In addition, MCSD understands that some students with disabilities may not be able to wear a mask or face covering for medical, physical, or disability-related reasons. Those with trouble breathing, or those unable to remove a mask or face covering without assistance, should not wear a mask or face covering. In such cases, IEP teams will work together to determine an alternate accommodation. Similarly, we know that some students with disabilities are at high risk of medical complication or have medical conditions that may preclude in-person learning. For such students, IEP teams will meet to consider individual needs and, as appropriate, alternate placement options.

- **Confidentiality and Student Privacy**

Special Education and Related Service Providers may use digital platforms approved by the district for secure access. Families may provide consent to participate in teletherapy sessions with providers when remote services are required. Families or other household members may observe or otherwise participate in distance learning opportunities. As with an in-person observation in a classroom educators may set ground rules regarding non-students' presence during virtual instruction.

504 Support and Compliance

- We understand that any change to the learning environment has the potential to be a barrier for our learners. Consequently, MCSD will continue to identify and accommodate those students that would benefit from a 504 plan in a remote environment.
- All 504 support and meeting protocols have been developed for both in-person and remote options. Decisions around meeting participation and communication will be made on an individual basis. 504 teams are encouraged to discuss accommodation needs for students in both learning environments- in person and remote.
- We understand that some students with disabilities may not be able to wear a face covering for disability-related reasons. For these students, 504 teams will work together to determine reasonable accommodations. Additionally, we know that some students with disabilities are at higher risk of medical complications. On a case-by-case basis, 504 teams will convene to consider individual needs. As always, a parent may request a review meeting at any time.

Mental Health

Crisis Response and Suicide Prevention

- For students who express concerning language or behaviors while in school, a mental health professional will administer an in-person suicide risk assessment and follow protocols established for in-person interactions.
- For students who express concerning language or behaviors while remote, staff will follow remote suicide risk assessment protocols (provided to all school administrators and mental health professionals). If contact with the student cannot be made within a reasonable amount of time, school staff will contact emergency responders to request an immediate welfare check.
- All crisis event responses will be made in collaboration with the district leadership and building level administrators.
- An emphasis will be placed on training all staff on recognizing signs of depression and anxiety across all learning environments.
- Staff have always received training in mandatory reporting and recognizing signs of distress in students. We will add training specific to remote learning in order to make sure staff are trained to respond appropriately across all learning environments.



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July 31, 2020

Robby Davis
Superintendent
Muhlenberg county Public Schools
510W Main St.
Powderly, KY 42367

Mr. Davis,

RE: Endorsement of Muhlenberg County Public School's 2020-2021 Reopening Plans

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Muhlenberg County Health Department to thank and commend you along with all the employees of the Muhlenberg County Public Schools. Your hard work over the past months is demonstrated in the development of your plan to reopen schools safely this upcoming school year. In addition to working with you during the development, we have reviewed your plans and find consistency with the latest best practices, safety standards and recommendations from the Kentucky Department for Public Health, Kentucky Department of Education, and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The health department fully supports your plans and is committed to continue to support and assist your students, their families, and your employees as you all respond to COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Cathy Bethel
Public Health Director
Muhlenberg County Health Department