

# Milan Community School Corporation

## Back to School Plan



## 2020-2021 School Year

School Board Approved 7-20-2020

***Plans are subject to change based on conditions surrounding COVID-19.***

***Revised 7-27-20 to reflect Executive Order Requiring Masks***



## **Milan Community School Corporation Back To School Plan 2020-2021**

In consultation with the Governor's Office, the Indiana Department of Education, the State Department of Health, and the Ripley County Health Department, Milan Community School Corporation has developed this back to school plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

### **IN-CLASS**

The Indiana's Considerations for Learning and Safe Schools (IN-CLASS) document provides all Indiana districts and schools with guidance for preparing school operations under the current pandemic environment. The document may be found here: [IN-CLASS](#)

Governor Holcomb has empowered each school district to consider and evaluate all aspects of returning to school and to develop a re-entry plan that considers the recommendations and addresses local district capabilities while still delivering a quality education. This document explains that not all districts and schools will be able to address or implement all of the considerations listed.

As addressed in the IDOE document, Milan Community Schools will be constantly evaluating two key factors:

- 1) the school's ability to maintain a safe and healthy school environment, and
- 2) the prevalence of COVID-19 in our community.

We will be working closely with Ripley County Health Officer, Dr. David Welsh, who will guide us if any adjustments need to be made during the school year.

The following information will provide guidance to students, parents, guardians, and other community stakeholders regarding the specific re-entry plans of the Milan Community School Corporation. Revisions to this document are expected.

### **LEARNING GOALS**

Milan Community Schools will safely and responsibly educate all students. We believe all students will learn and grow everyday and graduate with a purpose.

## LEARNING PLANS

- The school year will begin, as scheduled, with in-person classroom instruction on the first day of school, August 11, 2020.
- We will follow the 2020-21 approved school calendar. It can be found here: [MCSC Calendar 20-21](#)
- We will utilize eLearning days if school needs to close. Milan Community School Corporation will adhere to any state or county requirements for closing of school and as much notice will be given as possible.
- The Continuation of Learning Plan will be put into place in the event that one or more schools are closed. Parents are encouraged to make alternative child-care plans during this time. Further, parents are asked to ensure that students complete work or contact the school with questions.
- We will review all policies and procedures to provide more flexibility and remove punitive measures for absences when there is determined illness, a localized outbreak, or exposure of a contagious disease.
- The superintendent will be in contact with the Ripley County Health Officer and review health data to make determinations if further actions are necessary.
- All buildings will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to the first day of school, throughout each school day, and at the end of each school day.
- Custodial staff will be trained on effective methods of cleaning and disinfecting work and play areas and given set time schedules for cleaning.
- All staff will be trained on a variety of topics including: the proper screening procedures to help identify symptoms of COVID-19, eLearning methods, remediation, addressing academic losses from the spring, and social and emotional health issues.
- School routines will be adjusted slightly to allow for more time for hand-washing and sanitizing, cleaning areas, and social distancing as much as possible.
- The school clinic will develop procedures to minimize infection.
- Extra-curricular and co-curricular re-entry guidelines have been developed in accordance with the Indiana Department of Education and the IHSAA so that sports and other extra-curricular programs may continue to take place while reducing risk of disease spread.

- The visitor policy may be adjusted to reduce the number of additional individuals in the school buildings, thereby reducing the number of people students and staff are exposed to daily.
- The Milan School website ([www.milan.k12.in.us](http://www.milan.k12.in.us)) will regularly provide updates for students, parents, and stakeholders. In addition, other methods of communication like emails and automated phone calls will be used to ensure that parents and families are aware of any important changes or developments.
- Parents who wish to have their child return to school utilizing our Online Learning Option should contact their building principal to make arrangements. More information for Online Learning can be found [here](#).

## **STRATEGIES TO BE SAFE BEFORE LEAVING HOME**

We ask parents to monitor their child's health each day prior to sending the child to school. This self monitoring will include checking for fever and any symptoms of illness. Refer to the checklist near the end of this document for additional information. If the child has a fever higher than 100.4 or is experiencing any symptoms of illness that are not typical for your child, the parent agrees that the child will not be sent to school.

In general, families can help stop the spread of COVID-19 by stressing good hygiene at home. Handwashing and avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth are also important steps a person can take to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others. Families are encouraged to stress proper hand washing (for at least 20 seconds) and covering coughs or sneezes with the inside of the elbow if facial tissue is not available.

State statute gives public school districts the authority to exclude students who have a contagious disease such as COVID-19 or are liable to transmit it after exposure (IC 20-34-3- 9). In addition, the local health department has the authority to exclude students from school and may order students and others to isolate or quarantine (IC 16-41-9-1.6). As such, districts/schools are encouraged to work closely with their local health departments.

## **SYMPTOMS IMPACTING CONSIDERATION FOR EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL**

Parents, students, and employees should self-screen for multiple symptoms from the following COVID-19-related symptoms:

- A fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Cough/Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills or repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or diarrhea
- Congestion or runny nose

Students and employees should not enter the school buildings if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 that is not otherwise explained.

Students and employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 without being otherwise explained are prohibited from coming to school. If they do come to school, they will be sent home immediately.

If a parent tells the district/school that a student is ill, the district/school may legally ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19.

It is the personal responsibility of every school family to comply with this policy and to report any symptoms to the school so any illness trends in the school populations can be appropriately addressed.

## RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER EXCLUSION

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Currently those guidelines are:

### **Tested, and waiting for a test result**

Persons who have experienced symptoms and have been tested should remain isolated and may not return to school until a negative test result is received. In addition, the person should be symptom free for 72 hours.

### **Untested**

Persons who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but experience symptoms may return if the following three conditions are met:

- They have not had a fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); and
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
- The state website has a list of over 200 testing facilities, their location, and hours of operation. This list is updated frequently.

### **Tested Positive- Symptomatic**

Persons who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return to school if the following conditions are met:

- The individual no longer has a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers); and
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
- At least 10 calendar days; and
- The individual has received two negative tests at least 24 hours apart. (4 days)

### **Tested Positive- Asymptomatic**

Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 may return when:

- The individual has gone ten calendar days without symptoms
- The individual has been released by a healthcare provider.

- The individual has been approved to do so in writing by the student's health care provider.

### **Tested Negative**

Persons who have had symptoms of COVID-19 and received a negative test result may return to school when:

- The individual has not had a fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers),
- The individual has a doctor's note that it is safe to return to school.

### **Someone in Household Tests Positive**

Additionally, students and employees should remain home if someone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms or is being tested for COVID-19. Even without symptoms, Milan Schools may choose to exclude the student or employee from the school building and recommend that they self-quarantine for 14 calendar days if the student or employee has:

- Recently had contact with a person with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19
- Someone in their home being tested for COVID-19
- Recently traveled from somewhere considered to be a "hot spot" by the CDC,

The amount of time out of school could be longer if the student then becomes symptomatic.

## **STRATEGIES TO BE SAFE AT SCHOOL**

### **Medical Inquiries**

Federal law typically limits the type of medical inquiries that can be made, but given the nature of the pandemic, more leeway has been given to districts/schools in this circumstance to make additional medical inquiries of staff and students than would otherwise be allowed.

- If a parent tells the district/school that a student is ill, the district/school may ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19.
- If an employee calls in sick or appears ill, the district/school can inquire as to whether the employee is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.
- If a person is obviously ill, the district/school may make additional inquiries and may exclude the person from school property.
- The school nurse will be the primary point of contact for medical information.

### **Facilities**

Our facilities will be cleaned and disinfected daily, with high traffic areas cleaned more often. Hand sanitizers are readily available.

### **Health and Safety**

We have nurses in both buildings to attend to the health needs of all students. If a student becomes ill at school, that student will be isolated in a safe area until parents can pick them up from school.

### **Clinical Space for COVID-19 Symptomatic Conditions**

The following guidelines will be utilized:

- Each school will have a space separate from the nurse's clinic where students or employees who are feeling ill are evaluated or wait for pick up.
- All waiting staff and students should wear a cloth face covering.
- Only essential staff assigned to the room may enter.
- A record will be kept of all persons who entered the room.
- The room will be disinfected several times throughout the day.
- Strict social distancing is required and staff must wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Students who are ill will be walked out of the building to their parents. If a student or staff member has a fever, for any reason, it will be district/school policy to require staff and students to be fever-free, without the use of fever-reducing medications, for 72 hours before returning to school.
- Additionally, all staff and students with fevers or symptoms associated with COVID-19 should be encouraged to seek medical attention for further evaluation and instructions.
- Students and staff may return before the 72-hour window has elapsed if they are approved to do so in writing by their healthcare provider.

### **Clinic Space for Non-COVID-19 Related Conditions**

Students who do not display symptoms of COVID-19 can be seen and treated in the nurse's clinic. These would include students who are injured during the school day or students with special health care needs such as those with chronic health conditions (i.e. - diabetes or seizures), those requiring medical treatments (i.e. - suctioning, tube feeding, or nebulizers), and those with individual health plans.

### **If Confirmed Case of COVID-19 on School Property**

When there is confirmation that a person infected with COVID-19 was on school property, we will

- Contact the local health department immediately.
- We will work with the local health department to assess factors such as the likelihood of exposure to employees and students in the building, the number of cases in the community, and other factors that will determine building closure.
- It is the responsibility of the local health department to contact the person confirmed with COVID-19, inform direct contacts of their possible exposure, and give instructions to those involved with the confirmed case, including siblings and other household members regarding self-quarantine and exclusions.
- The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the local health department.
- If a closure is determined necessary, we will consult with the Ripley County Health Department to determine the status of school activities including extracurricular activities, co-curricular activities, and before and after-school programs.
- As soon as the school becomes aware of a student or employee who has been exposed to or has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the custodial staff will be informed, so that impacted building or bus areas, furnishings, and equipment are thoroughly disinfected. If possible, based upon student and staff presence, the custodial staff will wait 24 hours or as long as possible prior to disinfecting. However, if that is not possible or school is in session, the cleaning will occur immediately.

### **Mental Health Issues**

Milan School Counselors will provide support for students and staff who may develop mental health difficulties due to the stress and anxiety brought on by COVID-19. These resources may include access to school counselors during the school day, curriculum-related materials to provide students and families with suggestions for coping mechanisms, or other strategies to reduce the stress created by this situation.

## **School and Classroom Environment**

Milan Schools will employ flexible policies and procedures to keep the school environment safe. Because the situation surrounding COVID-19 in communities is often rapidly changing, our policies and procedures must allow for adjustment. Adjustments may include:

- Rearranging of classroom set-up to allow for greater space between students (desks facing in the same direction)
- Changing the methods of instruction (for example, eLearning)
- Reducing the number of people students interact with on a daily basis for overall risk reduction
- Implementing measures to decrease students congregating in one location
- Using assigned seating
- Placing social distancing reminders on the floor to remind students of appropriate space
- Reminding students to attempt to maintain proper social distancing when possible
- Reducing the amount of materials, supplies, and personal belongings going to and from school as much as possible
- Reducing student exposure to high-touch, shared resources at school
- PE lockers will be assigned to individual students so they stay in the same location.

## **Attendance**

While attendance is important, we realize that students may miss more school than usual this year. Attendance awards will not be presented this year.

- Parents are asked to call the school to report the absence, as has been our practice in the past.
- If a student is absent from school and is able to log on and participate in their class virtually, then the student will be marked present.
- If the student cannot log on due to sickness, an appointment, or other reason, the student will be marked absent and will be asked to complete make up work.

## **Visitors**

- Visitors will be limited and may be asked to wait in the secured entrance or vehicle until student can be sent out.
- If a student is tardy, parent may send student into school for morning sign-in, after parent has called from their vehicle.
- If a parent has been asked to attend a conference inside the school building, the parent must sign in at the office. All visitors are required to wear masks.

## **Hygiene at School**

- All employees and students will wash their hands often
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Each school will incorporate restroom breaks throughout the day, including additional time for students to wash their hands.
- Every effort will be made to keep students a safe distance

- Restrooms will be cleaned and sanitized throughout each day.

### **Handwashing - Additional Information**

Reinforcing healthy habits regarding handwashing is expected and guidance can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/>

These key times should occur as much as possible with a staggered class pattern to maintain social distancing between students and include:

- Start of the school day
- Before eating
- After using the restroom
- After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using shared equipment

### **Water Usage**

- Water fountains will not be utilized in schools until further notice.
- Water bottles may be brought from home.
- Water bottles will also be available for purchase for 25 cents for a 16 oz. bottle in the cafeteria at breakfast and lunch times for students to use throughout the day.

### **Personal Protection**

Gov. Holcomb signed an executive order requiring masks for students in grades 3-12, along with teachers and staff at school, effective Monday, July 27. Exceptions to the mandate will be made for people with medical issues, strenuous physical activity, and when eating or drinking. Students and staff will be provided a face shield and masks, and may also bring their own as long as the design of the material is appropriate for school.

### **Cleaning at School**

Custodial staff at all schools will receive training regarding how to clean and disinfect surfaces to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Thorough disinfecting of all schools and busses will occur daily. High-touch objects and surfaces will be cleaned more often and a more vigorous cleaning schedule will be maintained.

## **STRATEGIES FOR SAFE NUTRITION**

Milan Schools will review our food service guidelines and adjust to keep our students as safe as possible during meals provided in our buildings. Efforts include:

- Hand washing hygiene
  - Prior to any meal service, all students and staff will utilize hand washing or sanitizing to ensure safe eating practices.
- Breakfast and Lunch Considerations
  - Options include:

- Keeping groups the same every day to minimize exposure
  - Changing the ways meals are served so that items are contained
  - Changing the way napkins and silverware are dispensed
  - Changing the way trays are returned for cleaning
  - Providing face coverings to all food service staff
  - Adding plexiglass to contain food service areas
- Environmental Risk Reduction
    - Employing social distancing methods to reduce transmission of germs
    - Putting tape marks on the floor to encourage social distancing
    - Seating adjustments to optimize social distancing

## STRATEGIES FOR SAFE TRANSPORTATION

The school bus is the student's first contact with the school in the morning and the last point of contact in the afternoon. It is important to take safety measures to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and protect both students and employees. All buses and transportation vehicles will have been thoroughly disinfected before the first day of school.

- Preparation and Cleaning
  - All buses will have cleaning supplies available.
  - Bus drivers are required to wear masks.
  - All buses and transportation vehicles will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before and after routes.
- Training

Drivers and maintenance/cleaning staff will be properly trained regarding:

  - Correct information about COVID-19, how it spreads, symptoms, and risk of exposure will be provided.
  - Whom to contact if a student or the driver exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.
  - The appropriate methods, tools, and products for cleaning buses, including opening doors and windows for effective circulation and to avoid extensive exposure to cleaning fumes.
  - The hygiene expectations of staff.
  - Using gloves when handling and disposing of trash.
  - Avoiding touching surfaces often touched by passengers.
- Other Transportation Considerations
  - Students may be restricted to only riding to their assigned bus route.
  - Seats will be assigned.
  - Bus stops and routes may be adjusted.
  - Every effort will be made to maintain a safe distance between riders.
  - All students in grades 3-12 are required to wear a mask unless there is an underlying health condition. Students in grades K-2 are encouraged to wear a mask on the bus since 6 feet of social distancing is not possible.
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- Pick-Up/Drop-Off Procedures
  - Parents may also choose to drop off their child at school. *Drop off times have changed this year. Drop off is at 7:45 a.m. in all buildings.*
  - Parents may pick up their child from school. Pick up times at all schools are the same as last year.

## ONLINE LEARNING OPTION

We are providing an online learning option for our families who want to limit their students from contact with others, due to medical concerns of students or family members. Our online learning option will look very different from the spring of 2020. Our requirements will be more rigorous because students will be expected to log on during each class and to complete daily coursework. Our online learning environment will look much more similar to a traditional classroom.

This will be full time robust coursework that will require the same expectation of time as a full day of school. Attendance requirements will be the same as a traditional classroom. A student must be in attendance five periods a day online in order to participate in an after school activity. High school students choosing the full time online option will not be eligible to attend the Southeastern Career Center.

We will work with families who are having connectivity or internet access issues to close this gap and identify solutions. It is important for families to communicate this need with us during the registration process. During registration, or in a meeting with the principal, families will have the ability to select the online learning option.

Parents interested in this model must meet with the principal and will be asked to sign an *Online Learning Agreement Form* which identifies the requirements for successful online learning. Parents may choose the online learning option at any time. Students will be allowed to transition back to traditional schooling at midterm or quarter breaks. Please contact the principal as soon as possible to begin this process.

## **PARENTAL CHECKLIST**

Parents are asked to ensure their children are healthy and well before sending them to school each day. The following information may be used to determine if a child is exhibiting potential symptoms of COVID-19. People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. If your child exhibits these symptoms, do not send your child to school.

- A fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Cough/Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills or repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or diarrhea
- Congestion or runny nose

This list does not include all possible symptoms. The CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

## EDUCATION FOR PREVENTING OR DECREASING THE SPREAD OF PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

Milan Community School Corporation will educate staff, students and families on how to stop the spread of the virus:

- Teach proper hand-washing techniques
  - Wash hands before and after eating, after using the restroom, after
  - sneezing or coughing, after playing or working outside, after touching pets or animals, before touching someone else, or anytime hands appear to be soiled
  - Use soap and water
  - Scrub hands together for a minimum of 10-15 seconds
  - Rinse with warm water
  - Dry with a clean towel

\*\*\* Alcohol-based sanitizers may be used, but must be continually rubbed into skin on hands until dry, in order to be completely effective \*\*\*

- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Ensure that adequate supplies of tissues, hand sanitizing gels, soap and water and cleaning supplies are available for all staff and students
- Post notices throughout buildings describing proper hand hygiene, and covering coughs and sneezes
- Desktops, tables, door knobs, stair rails, water faucet handles, etc., should be cleaned with a disinfectant at least daily, and more often if possible
- Place hand sanitizing gel at every entrance into schools, in the office, outside restrooms, and in every classroom
- Communicate to faculty, staff, students and parents/guardians the importance of maintaining proper preventative health activities such as annual check-ups and immunizations to decrease risk of being infected with pandemic influenza
- Educate the community that school will only be closed as a last resort, and is only effective in containing the virus if students and staff stay home during the closure.
- Finally, stay home when experiencing illness.

