



# Magnolia School District

2020-21 School Year



## **BLENDING LEARNING (ON-SITE LEARNING)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Blended Learning means students will be on-site for a normal school day; however, while in their traditional classroom setting, a large portion of their instruction and work will be completed on their MSD issued laptops.

The purpose of Blended Learning is to prepare students in the event of a mandated Closure or Hybrid Schedule. This will ensure that students are ready for an online learning experience at home.

Blended learning (on-site) is a combination of face-to-face instruction along with online instruction in the classroom. The main mode of delivery will still be face-to-face instruction. However, while in the classroom, students will complete most of their assignments in the Magnolia School District's Learning Management System (LMS).

The MSD Learning Management System includes:

Microsoft's Office 365 Suite of Educational Applications (Teams, Class Notebook, Forms, OneDrive, Outlook)

Teacher Pages through Campus Websites

EduLastic

Moby Max

A teacher, or support staff, will be in the classroom at all times to provide instruction and individual or group support.

A selection of documents has been provided to help parents/caregivers understand and navigate the Magnolia School District's Learning Management System.

### **General**

#### **What will be the first day of school for students?**

August 24. This date will only change if the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) sends updated guidance.

## **Academics**

### **Will elementary students have Art, Music, Library, and PE?**

Students will have pullout classes (Art, Music, Library, and PE). Except for PE, teachers will go to the classrooms to deliver instruction. Library classes will depend on the ADH guidelines in effect at that time.

### **How will unfinished learning from last spring be addressed?**

Students in grades K-10 will be administered diagnostic assessments to determine individual learning gaps. Students will be provided with supports based on their needs. All courses will address unfinished learning by including priority standards that were not taught from the previous course.

### **Will MSD offer a Virtual School option?**

For information about possible Virtual options, please contact Kristal McDonald at the District Annex. (870) 234-7651 [mcdonaldk@magnoliaschools.net](mailto:mcdonaldk@magnoliaschools.net)

### **What is the school's back-up plan for education if the school has to be closed, whether for a few days or weeks?**

Unless we are directed otherwise by state authorities, online learning will be provided during times of school closure. Since we will have blended learning for students who physically attend school, the transition to online learning will be easier if we have to close school to on-site instruction again.

## **Athletics/Activities**

### **When school starts will we be able to have large venue events such as football games, choir concerts, band concerts, etc...?**

At this time, we are not sure what those events will look like. When it is closer to time, we will review the guidance from ADH and AAA to make those determinations.

## **Scheduling**

### **Will my child be able to attend concurrent courses at Southern Arkansas University, and will you provide transportation?**

If students are able to attend, transportation will be provided.

### **Will blended learning (on-site) be on the same schedule as previous years? Will the children who choose the blended option go to school every day?**

Based on current guidance, we will have a regular school day. It will be a full day, five days a week. Students who choose the blended option will be on-site for learning every day.

### **Will you allow students to attend half days or split days?**

No, students will attend the full day.

## Is there a plan for a Hybrid Schedule should DESE/ADH guidance require it?

Yes.

MSD has developed and documented a plan with staggered schedules and onsite instructional days for separate student groups. Group 1: Monday and Thursday On-Site

Group 2: Tuesday and Friday On-Site

Wednesday is a virtual day for everyone

Student Groups will be determined alphabetically at each campus in the event of a Hybrid Schedule.

Households and siblings will be considered among campuses, and a Change of Group form for adjusting according to those considerations will be provided.

- **It is understood that a Hybrid Schedule may never happen, but being prepared will cut down on confusion should it become necessary.**

## When can secondary students pick up their schedules?

Students will be able to pick up schedules in early August. More information will be communicated at a later date.

## Safety

The Magnolia School District is dedicated to the health and safety of all students, staff, and their families.

MSD policies regarding current concerns such as masks, distancing, screening and other health and safety matters must balance the practicality of performing these screening procedures for large numbers of students and staff with the information known about how children manifest COVID-19 infection, the risk of transmission in schools, and the possible lost instructional time to conduct the screenings.

MSD policy makers must also “consider the mounting evidence regarding COVID-19 in children and adolescents, including the role they may play in transmission of the infection. SARS-CoV-2 appears to behave differently in children and adolescents than other common respiratory viruses, such as influenza, on which much of the current guidance regarding school closures is based. Although children and adolescents play a major role in amplifying influenza outbreaks, to date, this does not appear to be the case with SARS-CoV-2. Although many questions remain, the preponderance of evidence indicates that children and adolescents are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting from SARS-CoV-2 infection. In addition, children may be less likely to become infected and to spread infection. Policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within schools must be balanced with the known harms to children, adolescents, families, and the community by keeping children at home.”  
([COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#), American Academy of Pediatrics)

## Will face coverings or masks be mandatory?

Current Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) guidance states face coverings/masks should be worn by children ages 10 and up and by adults. Also . . .

“When developing policy regarding the use of cloth face coverings by students or school staff, school districts and health advisors should consider whether the use of cloth face coverings is developmentally appropriate and feasible and whether the policy can be instituted safely. If not developmentally feasible, which may be the case for younger students, and cannot be done

safely (eg, the face covering makes wearers touch their face more than they otherwise would), schools may choose to not require their use when physical distancing measures can be effectively implemented. School staff and older students (middle or high school) may be able to wear cloth face coverings safely and consistently and should be encouraged to do so.” ([COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#), American Academy of Pediatrics)

With that information, adults and students fourth grade and older will be strongly encouraged to wear face masks when they cannot be socially distanced. Some students, or staff, may be unable to safely wear a cloth face covering because of certain medical conditions (eg, developmental, respiratory, tactile aversion, or other conditions). Face coverings/masks should not be used by anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, or is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

If social distancing in the classroom is possible, students will be able to remove masks when seated. Anytime students are out of their desks or in transition to the bathroom or other areas, they will be strongly encouraged to wear masks. (This might change with ADH guidelines.)

Face coverings/masks that may cause disruption in the school environment will be removed and students will be provided a substitute mask. When students are actively involved in a physical activity (PE), masks are not required.

Students in grades K-3 can wear face coverings if the parent chooses. Parents will have to provide the face coverings/masks, and the face coverings/masks should meet dress code guidelines.

### **Will face coverings or masks be provided by Magnolia School District?**

Students will be asked to bring their own face coverings/masks as part of their school supplies. If they do not have face coverings/masks, MSD will provide each student with one washable facemask. Bandanas are not allowed. Face coverings should meet dress code guidelines.

### **Will disciplinary action be taken if a student refuses to wear a face covering?**

We will follow ADH guidance on mask requirements. If a student refuses to wear a mask in situations where it may be required, the refusal could be considered insubordination and addressed according to the student handbook. The first step in the disciplinary process would most likely be a parent conference.

### **How will elementary students be able to hear their teachers and watch letter-sound formation when their teachers wear masks?**

Teachers will be allowed to use clear face shields for phonics instruction.

### **Can a student wear a face shield or a dust scarf (pulls up from neck) instead of a mask?**

Students can wear dust scarves, but the district will have to receive additional guidance about the face shields for students. We will update this page when additional guidance is received.

### **If my child has sensory issues or other health issues, are they required to wear a mask or face covering?**

The MSD will follow the guidance from the ADH regarding mask requirements. If a student has sensory issues, or any other health-related issues that would prohibit a mask, the student will not be required to wear one. It is recommended that, as appropriate, the expectations regarding an eligible student's

wearing of a mask be addressed in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individual Healthcare Plan, or 504 plan.

### **Will students be screened?**

In order to effectively limit the spread of any communicable disease, we need your help in screening your child before sending him/her to school. We realize this is an inconvenience for many parents, but it is impractical and ineffective to screen students after they are at school or already on the bus. We will be providing an easily accessible screening document on our district app and ask that you screen your child daily before sending him/her to school. Most importantly, please do not send your child to school if they are sick.

### **How will social distancing be practiced?**

Social distancing will be practiced as much as possible.

“In many school settings, 6 feet between students is not feasible without limiting the number of students. Evidence suggests that spacing as close as 3 feet may approach the benefits of 6 feet of space, particularly if students are wearing face coverings and are asymptomatic. Schools should weigh the benefits of strict adherence to a 6-foot spacing rule between students with the potential downside if remote learning is the only alternative.” ([COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#), American Academy of Pediatrics)

In accordance with ADH directives, efforts will be made to limit close contact between students. We will limit contact by arranging classrooms and other areas to maximize spacing between students and teachers to the extent possible. We also plan to amend schedules to conform with social distancing guidelines (e.g. stagger lunches, minimize transitions, teachers may go to students, etc.).

Teachers will be asked to remove all non-essential items from their classrooms to allow for the maximum social distancing space possible. Class sizes cannot be reduced at this time.

### **Is there a diagram showing what the classroom will look like?**

Because classrooms are different at every campus, we cannot provide a diagram; however, students will be socially distanced as much as possible.

### **Will the water fountains be available?**

Students will be asked to bring filled water bottles as the usual water fountains will not be available.

MSD is installing touchless, bottle-filling stations/fountains on each campus. Other fountains will be temporarily shut off.

### **Will elementary students have recess?**

Students will have recess, but recess may not look the same. We will follow ADH guidelines in effect at that time.

### **If the school day has started, how will students enter the building?**

Based on current guidance, students will enter through the main doors and check in with the office.

### **What does switching classes look like?**

Transitions will be unique to each campus due to the layout of the buildings. Each school will have procedures in place to minimize the interaction between students.

### **Will my student be able to eat in the cafeteria?**

Based on the ADH guidance at this time, students will be able to eat in the cafeteria while adhering to the social distancing guidelines. Outdoor seating options may be provided if weather permits.

### **Can students bring their lunch?**

Based on current guidance, students can bring their own lunch.

### **What steps are being taken to reduce the health/safety risk of students and staff?**

MSD is committed to the health and safety of our students, teachers, and their family members; we expect all of our staff and students to follow appropriate ADH and established MSD guidelines to minimize exposure and risks.

Everyone — students and staff — will be expected to stay home when sick.

### **Will temperatures be taken?**

At this time the guidance from DESE and ADH does not include taking the temperature of staff and students.

### **What happens if my child has allergies in the fall? Will she continue to be sent home?**

Students with symptoms will be assessed by the school nurses to determine the appropriate course of action.

### **How do you intend to provide a safe, sanitized environment?**

Actions will include but are not limited to the following:

- Assigning staff person at each campus to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns (e.g., school nurse). All school staff and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- Development of internal communication flow concerning health issues related to COVID-19 using the ADH School Communication Flow Chart.
- All teachers, staff, and students will be trained in proper sanitation and student movement
- Distributing disinfectants, wastebaskets and tissues to all faculty and staff.
- Placing Centers for Disease Control (CDC)-approved hand sanitizer in offices and classrooms

- Using CDC-approved hand sanitizer upon entry and exit to different locations
- Posting signs to illustrate ways to prevent the spread of germs
- Following ADH guidelines about the use of face masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) by janitorial staff
- Posting of Directional Markers for student travel
- Staggered transitions to prohibit congregation in hallways and cafeterias
- Placement of Sanitation Stations throughout MSD Campuses
- Detailing procedures for limiting contact with high-touch surfaces

**How will the district handle someone testing positive? If 14 days of self-isolation is required, will online instruction be provided to prevent absence? If a student displays fever and is in self-quarantine for 10-14 days, how will this affect him/her?**

The ADH controls the procedures to be followed once a teacher or student tests positive. MSD will follow the guidance and direction provided to us by the ADH. Students will receive online instruction if required to self-isolate. If a student has been quarantined by the Arkansas Department of Health, the absence will be considered excused. During the time of quarantine, students will be allowed to participate in online learning.

**Will bus transportation be provided?**

If guidance from ADH allows us to provide bus transportation at the time school starts, the district will provide it.

However, due to the confined nature of public school busses, social distancing measures will be difficult to maintain.

Magnolia School District strongly encourages parents to bring their students to school when possible.

**Will students on school buses be required to wear a mask and socially distance?**

According to DESE guidance, students are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering at all times while on the bus due to the bus being a confined area where physical distancing is not feasible. There may be exceptions for students with health, sensory, or other conditions. This will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Students should maintain a distance of six feet apart while waiting on the bus to arrive.

Parents should use the current ADH Guidance to screen each student prior to sending the student to board the bus.

**Will buses make more trips to reduce the number of students on the bus?**

No, the district does not have enough buses or drivers to add routes. If we added routes with current buses and drivers, students would be getting on the bus as early as 5 am.

**Can I walk my child into the school?**

No, parents and guardians may not walk their student into the school, but they may walk their student to the school entrance.

**Can I visit the school, classroom, or eat lunch with my student? Will parents, visitors, or PTO members be allowed in the buildings?**

Under current ADH guidance, visitors will only be allowed in the school reception area when necessary. Parents will not be allowed to eat with their children. Schools will discontinue large group gatherings (assemblies, pep rallies, etc.). MSD has always welcomed parent support in our buildings; however, with the current ADH guidance, visitors are not allowed in buildings.