



Magnolia School District

2020-21 School Year



General FAQs

Academics

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.

Will elementary students have Art, Music, Library, PE, and Recess?

Students will have these activities, but the procedures for these activities may not look the same on all campuses. We will follow 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.

Is there “regular school” and “blended” or do all brick and mortar students do “blended”? What is the purpose of “blended”?

Blended Learning refers to how students will be instructed when they are in “regular school”.

[Blended Learning](#)

[Blended Learning-Virtual Option Quick Comparison](#)

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

[Virtual School FAQs](#)

[Blended Learning-Virtual Option Quick Comparison](#)

If a parent/guardian-student chooses to Home School, are they eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities?

Yes; however, all current Home School laws continue to apply. Home School refers to completely withdrawing a student from Magnolia School District. The parent/guardian-student is then responsible for locating a state approved curriculum and content provider. DESE can provide information and technical assistance on laws and regulations governing Home Schools to all interested persons.

Home School is not the MSD Virtual school option.

When a student withdraws from a AAA member school to be Home Schooled, the student is not eligible to participate in an interscholastic activity for a minimum of 365 after the student withdraws from the member school.

Will you provide packets and books as an at-home option for those who do not want to use the internet option?

No. Magnolia School District's only alternative while schools are open for in-person learning will be the virtual option. DESE can provide information and technical assistance on laws and regulations governing Home Schools to all interested persons.

Where is the school supply list? Do we really need these supplies if students will be working on computers?

The supply list can be found on the district website under "Student Life" tab. It has also been posted on the district Facebook page.

Although much of a student's work will be completed on devices, there will also be work in classes that requires traditional school supplies.

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 during the time students physically attend school, the transition to online learning will be easier if we have to close school to on-site instruction again.

There is a Blended Learning Tab on the MSD Re-Entry Plan that fully explains Blended Learning.

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. The Blended Learning option will be on-site every day unless the Response Level requires a Hybrid Schedule.

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?

This question generated several other questions.

[Face Coverings FAQs](#)

However, as DESE/ADH continue to develop their guidelines, the answers to some questions may change.

Will students/staff 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.

Staff will also be required to self-screen.

We will be providing an easily accessible screening document on our district app and ask that you screen your child and/or yourself daily before school. **Most importantly, please do not send your child or come to school if ill.**

What will the “screening tool” look like?

The tool will ask for the student or staff member’s name and whether or not they are experiencing any of the following:

- unexplained cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, loss of taste or smell
- or fever of 100.4 within the last 48 hours.

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 seating charts be used?

Yes. All teachers and bus drivers will be required to assign seats to students and maintain documentation of those seating charts.

Assigned seating is required to limit the number of contacts during the day and week.

Documentation (a seating chart) is required in the event contact tracing must be done by MSD Health Services at the request of the Arkansas Department of Health.

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.

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 employees and/or students be required to take a Covid test prior to school starting?

No. From CDC.gov:

Testing asymptomatic individuals without known exposure to a person with COVID-19
Universal SARS-CoV-2 testing of all students and staff in school settings has not been systematically studied. It is not known if testing in school settings provides any additional reduction in person-to-person transmission of the virus beyond what would be expected with implementation of other infection preventive measures (e.g., social distancing, cloth face covering, hand washing, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting).

Therefore, CDC does not recommend universal testing of all students and staff. Implementation of a universal approach to testing in schools may pose challenges, such as the lack of infrastructure to support routine testing and follow up in the school setting, unknown acceptability of this testing approach among students, parents, and staff, lack of dedicated resources, practical considerations related to testing minors and potential disruption in the educational environment.

We will be providing an easily accessible screening document on our district app and ask that you screen your child and/or yourself daily before school. **Most importantly, please do not send your child or come to school if ill.**

Will temperatures be taken?

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

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.

Staff will also be required to self-screen.

We will be providing an easily accessible screening document on our district app and ask that you screen your child and/or yourself daily before school. **Most importantly, please do not send your child or come to school if ill.**

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

If a student/staff member tests positive, who will be quarantined and for how long?

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.

If there is a positive test, it will be reported to the MSD Point-of-Contact for COVID-19 (Mr. Houston Taylor - (870) 234-4933, houstontaylor@magnoliaschools.net).

Mr. Taylor reports the positive test to the Arkansas Dept. of Health. ADH begins the process of contact tracing and determining the level of response.

ADH will determine who will be quarantined and for how long.

[ADE Response Levels for Online Learning](#)

What is the threshold for switching to a Hybrid Model or School Closure?

Due to the fluidity of the current circumstances, we cannot provide specific numbers or percentages for which such a change could occur.

We will follow the guidelines below that have been provided by ADH:

The Overall Level of Community Spread (active cases per population) as determined by the ADH will be an important factor in making response determinations. The [ADH COVID-19 Case Update](#) lists the metrics for each county and the number of active cases.

The level of virus transmission within the school will also be an important consideration when determining how to respond to school outbreaks. The level of school spread will be determined by examining:

- **Student and staff absentee levels and trends**
- **Student and staff active cases (per school census)**
- **Evidence and severity of spread within the school community (active transmission within school setting vs. unlinked cases)**

- **Schools will consult with the ADH for guidance when determining the level of response.**

[ADE Response Levels for Online Learning](#)

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?

Students will receive online instruction if required to self-isolate.

ATTENDANCE: If a student has been quarantined by the Arkansas Department of Health, the absence will be considered excused and any/all school-work can be made-up. 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.

There is an MSD Transportation Guidelines link on the MSD Re-Entry Plan that explains the procedures involved.

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 encouraged to schedule appointment when possible.