

Milton-Union Exempted Village Schools



2020-21 Building Reopening Plan

(rev. 8.17.2020)

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Introduction – Opening Statement

The following is intended to outline current reopening plans as we begin the 2020-21 school year. Please understand these plans are fluid and subject to change. To some degree, research sources, guidelines, reasonable safety measures, parameters, and opinions regarding the spread and control of COVID-19 are often contradictory and change frequently. Ohio school personnel specifically have been asked to consume and interpret an incredible amount of *medical* information regarding infectious disease transmission in the operation of school. As you review our plans, please keep in mind the following factors.

- **Health and medical decisions will be made by health and medical professionals.** Although educators have knowledge on these matters, we cannot be as informed, trained, and credentialed as the biologists and infectious disease experts creating and communicating requirements and recommendations for various health/medical organizations.
- Within these requirements and recommendations, **school personnel are trained and credentialed to make decisions regarding educational factors.**
- Constitutional, political, and media arguments will not be considered in connection to the health, safety, and welfare of students, staff members, and community stakeholders. We all have tremendous responsibilities, but we will not accept that Ohio schools must now serve as the next setting to engage in disagreements over the origin, spread, transmission, and economics of COVID-19. Safety is not a political issue, and we believe our students should be at school. **Our focus will be maximizing the safety of students and staff members for moral and operationally practical reasons, not to mention our responsibility to help reduce and minimize any community spread.**
- When the Milton-Union Schools experience a positive case, Miami County Public Health will facilitate contact tracing and quarantine requirements. Layers of protection will inform the decision. Meaning, the strict use or absence of face coverings, social distancing, frequent disinfection, etc. will determine the scope of quarantine and the number of students and staff members affected. **If quarantine is required, students and staff members could be excluded from school for as many as 14 days,** but the exact length would be determined by Miami County Public Health personnel, not the Milton-Union Schools.
- **Our goal is to keep students engaged through daily, in-person school attendance for as long as possible.** Vast quarantine will disrupt these plans, and in doing so, student equity and access to education, basic services, mental and physical health supports, etc. will result from student absence. We *want* our children in school because it is best for them. We intend to follow recommendations and requirements, even when inconvenient, to keep our kids safe, engaged, and attending.
- Although safety is a priority, **there is also inherent risk in entering any public building.** Movie theatres, restaurants, shopping centers and malls, churches, etc. cannot guarantee a risk-free environment when open to the public. School buildings are like any other public building. Our job will be to layer enough protections to *minimize* risk.

We love our staff members and students. Their safety is our priority, and we have always taken this task very seriously. Our focus will continue to be education – education regarding common courtesy, safety,

listening to and considering available resources, and the general value of informing oneself in the COVID-19 era. This type of collaboration, cooperation, and critical thinking are hallmarks of an educated society with children prepared and ready for life after their public school experience and high school graduation. We have the greatest confidence that our staff members and students will work respectfully and responsibly as we navigate this new, but temporary, normal together.

Miami County Schools Common Reopening Plans

The following general procedures were identified through collaborative work with the Miami County Educational Service Center and its member schools. Miami County Public Health and the Piqua City Health Department were consulted and provided input in establishing these principles and plans. (Please note that local health departments do not provide approval of county or specific school district plans but work only in advisory and consulting capacities.)

These general principles will guide each school district as they move forward with re-opening schools throughout Miami County.

1. Each school district will implement recommended safety protocols to the best of the district's abilities.
2. Each school district will work closely with the local health department to promote safety in each school building.
3. Each school district will be transparent with all stakeholders that some level of risk will always be present when children and school district employees occupy school district facilities.
4. School districts recognize the need for consistency in areas of operations while recognizing that individual differences in classroom sizes, school facilities, and building operations may lead to some inconsistencies.

Thoroughly Clean and Sanitize School Environment to Limit Spread on Shared Surfaces

- Schools will clean surfaces multiple times throughout the day including, but not limited to, playgrounds and buses paying close attention to high touch areas and shared materials, and make sanitation wipes or disinfectants labeled for use against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) available in each room and common space. The sharing of supplies and materials will be minimized and, if items must be shared, sanitized between each user.

Wash and Sanitize Hands to Prevent Spread

- Hand washing and sanitizing are important tools in preventing the spread of COVID-19 by killing the virus. Students, staff members, and volunteers should practice frequent handwashing for at least 20 seconds when hands are dirty, before and after eating, and after using the restroom. Schools will provide opportunities for handwashing. To supplement handwashing, schools will provide hand sanitizer (60% to 95% alcohol based) in high traffic areas including entrances to buildings and classrooms and instruct students and staff to use the sanitizer. Additionally, staff,

students, and volunteers should avoid touching their mouths, noses, and eyes since the virus easily enters the body through these membranes.

Daily Self-monitoring for Students and Staff Members

- Students and staff members should check their temperatures and health should be monitored daily before coming to school.
- Temperatures should be taken prior to leaving home for school. A student or staff member with a temperature over 100°F should stay home. A COVID-19 symptom health assessment should be completed for students and staff members prior to leaving home for school.
- Daily absences will be monitored.

Student and Staff Member Illnesses

- Any student or staff member with a fever over 100°F should stay home.
- Any student or staff member that has the following symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home from school and should see their primary care provider to be assessed for COVID-19.
 - Any of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
OR
 - Two of the following symptoms: fever (measured or subjective), chills, rigors, myalgia, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, GI issues (nausea or vomiting or diarrhea),
OR
 - Any of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing, fever (measured or subjective), chills, rigors, myalgia, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, GI Issues (nausea and vomiting or diarrhea) **AND** an epidemiological link to a case of COVID-19.

Communications when a Student/Staff Member Test Positive for COVID-19

- Communication will be developed in conjunction with the Miami County Public Health and school district. A common template will be developed to include the following.
 - Specify to parents/guardians which classroom/bus/school/other activity with a confirmed case. Necessary and appropriate information will be shared with staff members.
 - The school district will cooperate with the Health Department's work in contact tracing.
 - Isolation will be required of any student or staff member testing positive for COVID-19. Anyone determined to be in close contact of a positive case and, therefore, possibly exposed will be asked to self-quarantine. The Health Department will determine close contacts and duration of the quarantine period through the contact tracing process.
 - The Health Department will provide a letter for the school district to use, and the letter will explain/define what is considered "exposure" to COVID-19 resulting in quarantine.

Returning to School after Illness

- If a student or staff member is tested and diagnosed with COVID-19, he/she must meet the following criteria to return to school:
 - three days with no fever (without using fever reducing medication), **AND**
 - Other symptoms improved, **AND**
 - ten days since symptoms first appeared.
- Students and staff members that only have a fever and no other symptoms and have not had any contact with an individual that has COVID-19 may return to school after they are fever free for 24 hours without using any fever reducing medications.
- Also, a negative COVID-19 test result will allow the individual to return to the building after he/she is fever free for 24 hours without using any fever reducing medications.
- Any other illnesses should be handled in the routine manner according to district policies.
- To return to school, the student must be transported to school by the parent/guardian and must be checked by the school nurse.
- Staff may be required to provide documentation from a physician to return to work or abide in accordance with updated guidance from the CDC or local Health Department.
- Miami County Public Health will be consulted throughout this process and will determine who needs to be quarantined and the appropriate duration.

Food Service

- All districts will follow the state “dine safe” orders from the Ohio Department of Health. (See attached plan.)
- All districts will offer food service. Logistics will be determined by each district in compliance with the Health Department based on:
 - Limited capacity/occupancy of the school cafeteria. For Milton-Union, student seating will be limited according to size and shape of each cafeteria table. Student seats and areas to stand while entering serving lines will be marked to encourage social distancing.
 - Alternative locations for student dining including, but not necessarily limited to, tables set-up in the Athletic Lobby and adjacent hallway.
 - No self-service.
 - Individual condiments.

Classroom Occupancy

- Districts will inform parents/guardians that safety protocols are in place but any student who attends school will incur some level of risk. Districts will decrease the likelihood of infection with hygiene, cleaning, and safety procedures, but being in a public place has a certain level of risk that cannot be eliminated.
- Classroom occupancy will be determined based on each individual circumstance with the maximum amount of safety considerations possible.

- The district will communicate its face covering policy in all school buildings, property, and transportation.
- School employees will be required to wear a face covering unless they have a reason that would be approved by the Health Department. The district will retain written justification for employees who are exempt from wearing face coverings.

Remote Learning

- School districts will offer remote learning options for families who do not wish to send their child to school.
- Families may choose two options:
 1. Send their child to school (assume some level of risk), or
 2. Agree to remote learning from home on a semester basis.
- * More information regarding both the in-person and fully remote option is provided later in this document.

Visitors/Volunteers/Parties

- To limit building capacity and reduce exposure, visitors are generally discouraged from being in school buildings.
- Safety protocols such as taking temperatures and health screening questions will be implemented for all visitors.
- Visitors are required to wear masks.

Transportation

- Miami County districts will allow two students per seat and in some instances three students if the children are younger and therefore smaller.
- Districts will attempt to seat children from the same household together.
- Seating charts are required and will be available to assist with contact tracing if needed.
- Students should load the bus back to front.
- Face coverings are required for drivers and students. The district may deny transportation to a student refusing to wear a face covering.
- In the event state policies require school districts to use alternative schedules, districts may adopt minimum requirements for transportation to reduce the number of students who are eligible for school district transportation.

Recess

- School districts will make every effort to maintain consistency with other safety procedures.
- Districts may limit student access to certain pieces of playground equipment and restrict activities that are “high touch” and difficult to clean or maintain social distancing. **Maintenance and custodial staff members will disinfect playground equipment twice per day.**

- Students will be required to wear face coverings to and from recess (i.e., exiting and re-entering the building). Face coverings are not required while students are actively engaged in exercise and movement on the playground.
- All districts will work toward “structured” recess activities such as nature walks that limit students’ physical contact with others.
- Students must sanitize their hands before and after recess.
- Families may choose to “opt out” of recess for their child(ren).

Milton-Union Face Covering Expectations

<p>Consistent with Recommendations from Ohio’s <i>Reset and Restart Plan</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-2 Students: Face coverings are required in hallways and classrooms when adequate social distancing cannot be maintained. Teachers and staff members will direct opportunities for students to remove face coverings during breaks. • 3-6 Students: Face coverings are required in hallways and classrooms. Teachers and staff members will direct opportunities for students to remove face coverings during breaks and when social distancing can be maintained. Where social distancing <i>can</i> be maintained outdoors, face coverings may be removed. • 7-12 Students: Face coverings are required in hallways, classrooms, and at all times while inside school buildings. In circumstances where social distancing <i>can</i> be maintained, face coverings may be removed under the direction of teachers and staff members. Where social distancing <i>can</i> be maintained outdoors, face coverings may be removed. • School employees will be required to wear face coverings while in the presence of students especially when adequate social distancing cannot be maintained.
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* The district is required to maintain records of documented instances when staff members and students are medically exempt and excused from wearing face coverings.

Milton-Union Specific Educational Options and Additional Requirements

Once again, the Milton-Union Schools will offer two learning environments for students, parents, and caregivers as we begin the 2020-21 school year – (1) an in-person and (2) fully remote educational option. Each option is briefly described below along with additional requirements to promote student and staff member health and safety.

Option One – In-person Education (Traditional Schedule with Precautions)

* **Every attempt will be made to maintain and encourage six feet social distancing. However, in some areas social distancing will be closer to three or four feet.** For example, with all students present on a typical school day, certain classrooms and hallways will be filled, and although promoted and encouraged, six feet social distancing will not always be possible.

- * Because social distancing may not always be possible in every hallway or classroom, students will be required to have face coverings on their person and use them in accordance with guidelines.
- * As much as possible, students must use their *individual* materials for use in the classroom and not share supplies. If for any reason sharing becomes necessary, materials shall be sanitized between users, and/or students will be encouraged to wash and sanitize hands after use.
- * **To encourage social distancing, the district will implement strategies to stagger hallway traffic and congestion including, but not limited to, high school and middle school students visiting lockers only between certain periods scheduled alphabetically by students' last names and permitting clear backpacks as a matter of personal choice for students to avoid the use of school lockers altogether.**
- * In addition to the countywide guidelines, **visitors should plan before arriving to one of the district buildings.** Once again, a specific protocol will be established for visitors, and parents and caregivers. There will be no access to building offices to drop-off student belongings. Student belongings will need to be brought to secure vestibules located at each building and staff members will handle delivery.
- * **Parent conferences and required meetings will be handled remotely as much as possible.** Plans and precautions will be made and taken if an in-person meeting becomes a necessity given specific student circumstances.
- * **Students who are eligible for free meals and those who would like to purchase breakfast will be given an opportunity to order weekly.** Every Monday prior to departure for the day, students will be given enough breakfast items for the following five school days. Students should eat breakfast prior to their arrival at school daily.
- * **Large group student events will be avoided as much as possible.**
- * For the short-term future, **field trips are prohibited.**
- * All changes in bus route assignments will require administrative approval. **No bus passes will be accepted.**

Option Two – Fully Remote or On-line Learning (Five Days per Week)

For students, parents, and caregivers uncomfortable with an in-person educational option, they may select a fully remote option available through our partnership with the Miami County Educational Service Center. This option continues to evolve, but parents/caregivers would be required to select this option on a semester basis. Families would also maintain their connection with the Milton-Union Exempted Village Schools. Meaning, students, parents, and caregivers who select this option would still be enrolled in the Milton-Union Schools and eligible to participate in school activities and athletics.

Option Two is not the same as what students, parents, and caregivers experienced at the conclusion of the 2019-20 school year. This option will be more rigorous and consistent with learning events and activities provided in a fully virtual environment. Instruction will not be facilitated by a Milton-Union staff member. For more information, please visit the following links. Parents and caregivers will be asked to identify their interest in this option no later than August 3, 2020.

Please Note: The above virtual learning service provider is subject to change.

Additional Information and Considerations

To train staff members accordingly and provide additional time to implement reasonable safety precautions, the district will not begin the 2020-21 school year until after Labor Day. With these additional non-student days, certificated and classified staff members will participate in professional development and engage in department, classroom, and instructional planning necessary for the upcoming school year. The first student day will be on Tuesday, September 8, 2020. The remainder of the 2020-21 district calendar will remain unchanged.

Depending on the level of risk and community spread, the district may be directed to close by the Governor’s Office, Ohio Department of Health, or Miami County Public Health. The county risk level may dictate instructional delivery method depending on government orders.

	Level 1 – Public Emergency Active exposure and spread.	Traditional Schedule	The district will provide five-day, in-person instruction per typical school week.
	Level 2 – Public Emergency Increased exposure and spread. Exercise high degree of caution.	Traditional Schedule	The district will continue to provide five-day, in-person instruction per typical school week.
	Level 3 – Public Emergency Very high exposure and spread. Limit activities as much as possible.	Traditional Schedule	The district will continue to provide five-day, in-person instruction per typical school week.
	Level 4 – Public Emergency Severe exposure and spread. Only leave home for supplies and services.	Remote Learning	The district will take steps to transition to fully remote learning facilitated by Milton-Union staff members.*

* The district will only move to fully remote learning should the situation require.

Hybrid Scheduling Options

The district will pivot as quickly as possible to an A/B student schedule **only** if necessary and should circumstances require. In this model, as many as 50 percent of the student population would be served in-person at least two days per week. Students would alternate participating in classroom instruction and completing assignments digitally. With fewer students at school daily, the likelihood of social distancing greatly increases.

The district is planning two, possible hybrid delivery models to serve 50 percent of students at any given time. A specific decision regarding which hybrid model best serves most students will be made when necessary and required by the health circumstances in Miami County. **Every step will be taken to keep families with multiple children enrolled in the Milton-Union Schools on the same hybrid, in-person attendance schedule.**

- Hybrid Model A – 50% of students would be served across the district. Specific considerations would be made equally for students in grades K-5 and 6-12 as we transition back and forth between in-person and remote learning.
- Hybrid Model B – 50% of students would be served across the district, but special consideration would be made for the youngest students still working to establish literacy skills, struggling learners, students with special identifications, and seniors at-risk of graduation. Meaning, specific students in this model will be served in the building daily while others transition back and forth between in-person and remote strategies.

Timing and communication will impact the ability of parents and caregivers to plan for hybrid learning. The district will continue to explore the time necessary in transitioning from one instructional model to another for parents and caregivers to plan accordingly if hybrid scheduling becomes necessary.

Milton-Union Facilitated Remote Learning – Expectations and Considerations

If the situation requires, the district will transition as quickly as possible to a fully digital instructional delivery model. In this model, daily lessons would be prepared and delivered by Milton-Union staff members using district-provided devices, Microsoft Teams, Seesaw, and other technology tools. Throughout the 2020-21 school year, district staff members will continue to participate in professional development opportunities focusing on the use of various instructional technologies that improve instructional delivery and the quality of our work with students.

Should we need to transition instruction quickly based on the risk level and community spread in Miami County, the district understands its responsibility of maintaining and improving the delivery and quality of instruction provided through hybrid and remote learning models. Although these are unprecedented times, students must continue to learn, make gains toward the next grade level and graduation, and further readiness for college and career. The following is not meant as a *plan*, but rather, expectations and guidelines for students, staff members, parents, and caregivers should the district need to provide instruction remotely in any capacity during the 2020-21 school year.

Expectation Drivers...

- Technology enhances quality instruction.
- Teacher facilitated, classroom instruction is always preferable for maintaining connections with students and in guiding their learning.
- Regarding instructional delivery, assessment, feedback, and measuring learning, flexibility and patience are important for all stakeholders – teachers, community members, students, families, etc. – *accountability with flexibility*.

Students...

- As much as possible, teachers will schedule “classes” or virtual opportunities to engage with students in real time.
- Although real time is always better than video, recordings will still be available for students who need other options.
- For K-3 teaching and learning, students will likely engage in smaller, differentiated groups as well.

- Enrichment and intervention times will likely need scheduled as well and as needed at the discretion of teachers and other school staff members.
- We will work towards flexible, differentiated, and independent learning opportunities within a fully remote environment to provide students with multiple pathways. The student is responsible for engaging in and working towards completing these learning pathways in meaningful ways.
- Follow set-up policies, procedures, and expectations established and set by your teachers for blended or fully remote learning opportunities.

Considerations for...

Families	Measuring Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in parent/caregiver education opportunities provided by individual buildings and grade levels. • Communicate with teachers and other building staff members when something is needed. • Understand that students struggle with content and do not typically have difficulty navigating technology applications and web interfaces. • Participate in initial communications to begin any form of remote learning as provided by school staff members through Zoom or Microsoft Teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff members are researching secure testing capabilities for remote environments. All work should measure <i>student</i> growth and understanding. • Consider questioning strategies and assignment expectations to push student thinking through depth of knowledge and meaningful work. Assignments and student work products should move beyond simple Internet searches. • Assessments can measure multiple skills and layered content. We must always make considerations for what and why we are assessing students.
Promoting Engagement	School Staff Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide various resources including training videos to demonstrate how end users may access learning applications. • Communicate that student engagement is required, and the school will take measured and progressive steps to engage with students and families. • Connect with parents and caregivers when students are activity <i>disengaged</i>. • Provide multiple means to communicate and engage in meaningful ways – videos, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, directions with screen shots, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will compromise on learning management and educational platforms to ensure consistency and increase comfort levels of parents and caregivers. • We will make every effort to connect with parents, caregivers, and students. • We have learned new lessons to apply technology and enhance our practices. We will continue to use this learning to engage students for in-person, blended, and remote contexts. • We will readily communicate and demonstrate our commitment to student success.

Concluding Statement

Please understand that all plans are subject to change with future developments and new information. The parameters of the situation are constantly changing, and medical, health, legal, safety, and educational guidance from state-level departments, local organizations, and school partners will guide school responses. We appreciate the patience of our students, parents, caregivers, staff members, and community stakeholders in these unprecedented times. Any changes will be communicated as quickly as possible to members of our public. Thank you for your continued support of Milton-Union Schools.

Resource Links

[COVID-19 Resource Center: Education \(Pre-K to 12\)](#)

Bricker & Eckler Attorneys at Law

[Screening, Isolating, and Excluding Students and Staff Members during a Pandemic](#)

Bricker & Eckler Attorneys at Law

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Information](#)

Miami County Public Health

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Reset and Restart Education Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts](#)

Ohio Department of Education

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Ohio Department of Health

[COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools](#)

Ohio Department of Health and Department of Education

[Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#)

World Health Organization