2021 - 2022

STARKVILLE OKTIBBEHA SCHOOL DISTRICT

STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

RETURN TO SCHOOL GUIDE

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StarkvilleSD.com/COVID19

STARKVILLE OKTIBBEHA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

For on-going updates from SOSD on our Covid-19 response and plans for returning to school, visit **StarkvilleSD.com/COVID19**

STAY CONNECTED!

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STARKVILLE OKTIBBEHA SCHOOL DISTRICT

GENERAL GUIDELINES

*The health and safety of our students, staff and families is of utmost importance as we prepare to return to full, in-person school for the 2021-2022 school year. The **Starkville Oktibbeha School District** has developed plans to fully reopen schools based on guidance from public health officials and state and federal agencies. District plans will continue to be updated as response to Covid-19 evolves.*

The District is focused on our identified mission, vision, beliefs and goals.

MISSION

The **mission** of the Starkville Oktibbeha School District is to achieve excellence by facilitating the discovery and development of each student's **passion, purpose, and potential.**

VISION

EXPECT
EXCELLENCE
EVERY DAY.

BELIEFS

We believe excellent public schools are the **HEART of a thriving community**.

We believe **excellent TEACHERS** are essential for student success.

We believe **DIVERSITY is a strength** and shall be embraced, recognized, and celebrated.

We believe problem solving, critical thinking and creativity cultivate **LIFE-LONG LEARNERS**.

We believe quality education fosters **LEADERSHIP and develops good citizens**.

We believe our schools must be **safe, welcoming, and RESPECTFUL to all**.

We believe **ENGAGING our families and community** is vital to ensuring each student's growth.

We believe that **health and WELLNESS** are foundational to success.

GOALS

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
We will maximize growth of all students through rigorous and meaningful instruction.

HEALTH, WELLNESS & SCHOOL CULTURE
We will foster and maintain inviting, equitable, healthy learning environments that promote safety, wellness, engagement, and excellence.

HUMAN RESOURCES
We will recruit and retain a highly qualified, diverse workforce through an equitable process to ensure student achievement.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION
We will engage and partner with community stakeholders to foster greater student opportunities and build a more vibrant quality of life.

OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
We will maximize resources to ensure operational effectiveness.

Equity & Access

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District is committed to equity and access to quality instruction for all students supported with safe and best practices during a pandemic.

Our schools have a responsibility to be culturally and linguistically responsive and meet the needs of ALL students, including language support for English learners and support for students with disabilities. All students must have opportunities to achieve academic success that are accessible, personalized, culturally relevant, and responsive.

What Families Can Expect When Schools Reopen

Schools will reopen with a full, in-person traditional schedule.

For the 2021-2022 school year, the Starkville Oktibbeha School District will reopen schools as traditionally as possible with a full, in-person traditional school schedule while adhering to recommended health and safety guidelines as identified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH), and the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE).

Social Emotional Learning

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District recognizes the social emotional impact of the pandemic including fear, loss and isolation.

The District has committed to increasing mental health supports for students in the upcoming school year, including a renewed focus on social-emotional learning.

Attending to the social emotional well-being of our students will be a top priority as they return to school.

District and school staffs are committed to supporting students' social emotional wellness and offering resources to ensure students transition back to school smoothly. Support may include social emotional learning, building relationships, and increased access to mental health/wellness services. Families and schools will work together to check how students are feeling and assess their individual needs to provide the support our students need during these challenging times.

STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

How can families prepare at home?

The guidelines SOSD will implement to address the challenges of COVID-19 in the upcoming school year may seem uncomfortable to students at first. **Try these tips from our school counselors** to help your child prepare at home...

TALK TO YOUR CHILD about returning to school in August

MODEL AT HOME wearing a face covering, washing your hands & demonstrating six feet of distance

Allow your child to **PICK OUT A FACE COVERING** that is comfortable to him or her

PRACTICE putting on & taking off a face covering – You can PRACTICE with a favorite doll or stuffed animal!

Encourage your child to **ASK QUESTIONS** and communicate his or her feelings

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VIRTUAL HUG

DANCE PARTY

STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

When we say HELLO...

Celebrate each new day of school safely by practicing our official classroom greetings!

ELBOW BUMP

RAISE THE ROOF

Academics

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District believes excellent teachers are essential to student success. Quality instruction is a standard of excellence in the Starkville Oktibbeha School District that includes:

- Mississippi College & Career Readiness Standards
  - Essential standards
  - Prioritized content
- Rigorous and meaningful instruction
- Response to intervention through the tier process
  - Accelerated learning
  - Tutoring and intensive intervention
  - Academic support during summer sessions and after-school programs
- High quality early childhood education
- Services provided under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act)

Our teachers will support our students through engaging, learning experiences that promote and encourage reading, writing, critical thinking and communicating.

Athletics

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District has resumed extra-curricular activities and practices. Each sport and/or activity affiliated with the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) will adhere to the established guidelines as defined by MHSAA, CDC, and MSDH for health and safety.

Arts

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District recognizes the importance of arts in education. The District is committed to arts integration in the regular classroom and during specials classes including art and music in elementary school. At the middle and high school level, band, theatre and choir leaders have developed safe practices for delivery of instruction in the arts.

Attendance

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District will follow the Mississippi Department of Education attendance reporting requirements.

Academic Calendar

The first day of school is Thursday, August 5. The full academic calendar for the 2021-2022 school year is available online at www.starkvillesd.com.

Child Nutrition

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District Office of Child Nutrition will continue to serve our students breakfast and lunch.

Students may also choose to bring their lunch from home in a lunchbox of their choice.

Transportation

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District Department of Transportation will continue to provide bus transportation for students during the 2021-2022 school year.

Buses will be disinfected following each route.

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District is committed to ensuring the health and wellness of all students. As public health guidelines change, the District will adjust plans accordingly.

We will work together with our students and families to keep our children safe as we transition to a new school year.

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District will promote behaviors that reduce the spread of infectious diseases by educating our students, faculty and staff about routine, regular hand washing, and sanitizing spaces and high touch surface areas.

General Safety Precautions Throughout the Day

Schools will follow **disinfection and sanitization guidelines** for school campuses including classrooms, workspaces, outdoor spaces and playgrounds.

All students and staff will be encouraged to wash/clean their hands regularly. **Handwashing station** with soap and/or hand sanitizer will be available in hallways and classrooms.

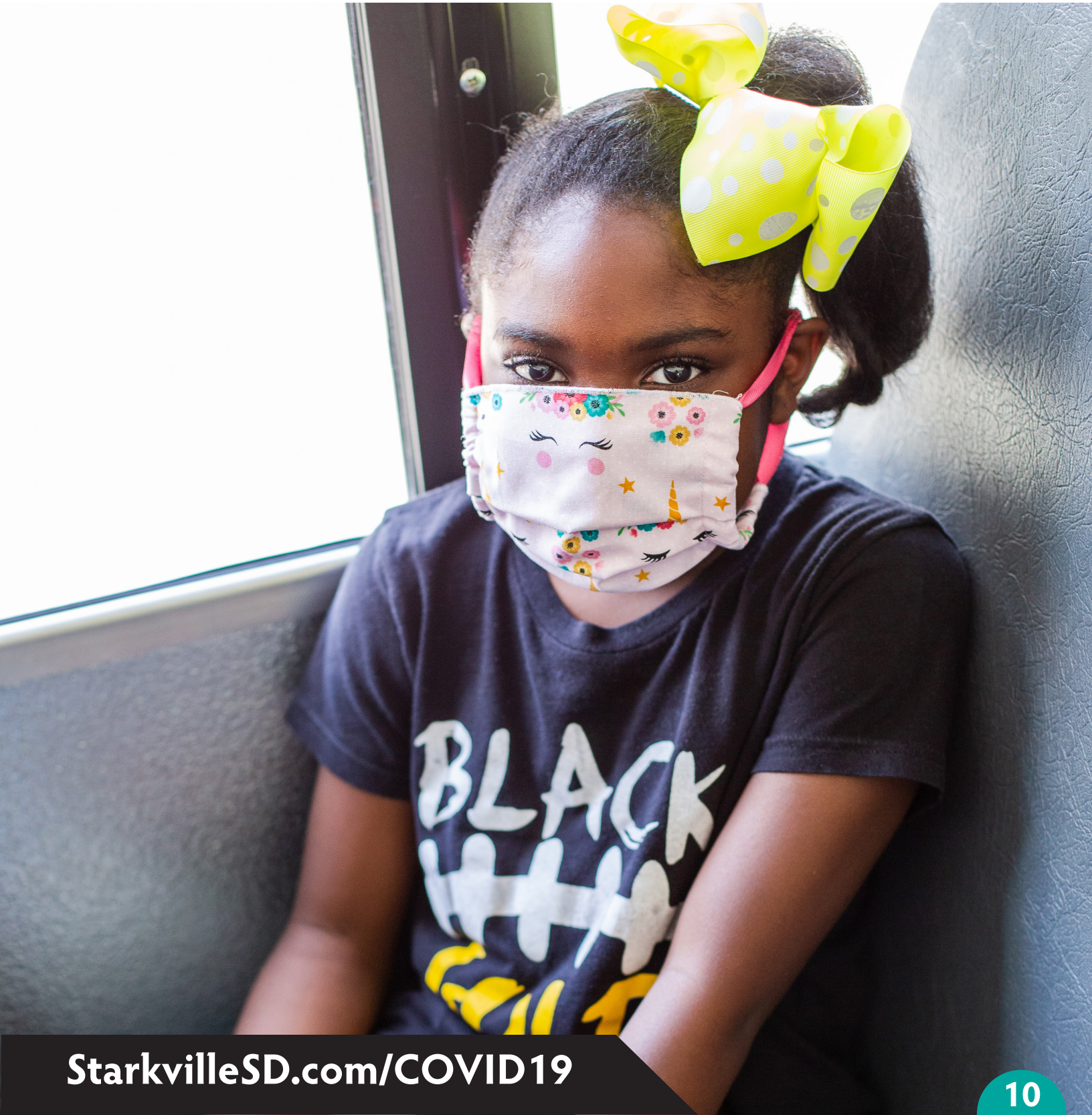
Schools will **limit sharing of supplies** between students and disinfect between uses if sharing is unavoidable.

Face coverings should be worn by staff and students indoors and on school buses.

Gloves are not recommended for use by students or staff, with the exception of those conducting duties such as cleaning, first aid or food service.

STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

STUDENTS



The Starkville Oktibbeha School District's goal for the fall is to safely bring back students to in-person school settings in order to maximize learning and address our student's needs in a holistic manner. Through continued discussion with infectious disease specialists, physicians in our own community, and the Mississippi Department of Health, we are heartened to learn that based on current data, the medical community supports the return to in-person learning with appropriate health and safety protocols in place.

SOSD is Committed To:

- Be consistent and coordinate with actions of other public entities in the area and seek compliance to the best of our ability with CDC recommendations.
- Complete initial and ongoing deep environmental cleaning of all district facilities.
- Signage strategically located in common areas.
- Physical distancing measures of 3 feet in place by location when and where it is reasonably possible.
- Conduct training for employee and supervisor training.
- Communicate expectations and procedures to students and parents.
- Protect the health and well-being of our students, staff and community.
- Established guidelines in place for employee, student, and visitor screening.
- Act responsibly and in alignment with our core mission, vision and beliefs.
- Listen closely to the concerns of our school community and ensure we keep our decisions under constant review.

Handwashing & Hand Sanitizing

Handwashing removes pathogens from the surface of the hands. While handwashing with soap and water is the best option, alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60 percent ethanol or at least 70 percent isopropanol) may be utilized when handwashing is not available. As has always been the case, handwashing should be used whenever hands are visibly soiled and after using the bathroom.

Our hand hygiene requirements & related guidance are as follows:

- Students and staff are required to exercise hand hygiene (handwashing or sanitizing) upon arrival to school, before eating, and before dismissal.
- **Handwashing:** When handwashing, individuals should use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with an individual disposable towel.
- **Hand sanitizing:** If handwashing is not feasible, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent ethanol or at least 70 percent isopropanol content can be used. Hand sanitizer should be applied to all surfaces of the hands and in sufficient quantity that it takes 20 seconds of rubbing hands together for the sanitizer to dry. Hand sanitizer should be placed at key locations (e.g., building entrances, cafeteria, classrooms).

What is EFFECTIVE HANDWASHING?

USE SOAP & WATER!

Wait for a visible lather & wash for **20 SECONDS**

Dry with an individual **DISPOSABLE TOWEL**

What is EFFECTIVE HAND SANITIZING?

1. Choose a sanitizer with at least **60% ethanol** or **70% isopropanol**
2. Apply enough that it takes **20 seconds** of rubbing hands together to dry

Restrooms

School or facility restroom cleaning will include day-time intervals to promote a clean environment and make sure social distancing is maintained. Restroom check-in sheets for cleaners will be posted on the back of the door of each restroom and require the cleaning team to check off the frequency and time cleaned.

Schools will supply a schedule/access for students to regularly wash their hands.

Guidance for Vaccinations

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District urges all employees and all students above the age of 12 with parent permission to be fully vaccinated.

Vaccinations are our best defense against the spread of COVID-19.

You can schedule your vaccine at covidvaccine.umc.edu. Vaccines appointments are also available throughout our community at OCH Regional Medical Center, Walmart, WalGreens and Kroger stores. You may also check with your local health care provider or pharmacy to schedule your vaccine.

According to the Mississippi State Department of Health, vaccination remains the primary public health prevention strategy to end transmission and allow for safe participation of in-person classes and school sponsored extra curricular activities.

Guidance for Masks/Face Coverings

For the start of the 2021-2022 school year, masks will be required for all students.

The District will monitor rates of transmission and adjust our mask procedures accordingly.

Guidance for Masks/Face Coverings (cont.)

When school begins in August, access to a face covering should be available at all times for students within the Starkville Oktibbeha School District.

Students in grades PreK-12 are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers their nose and mouth indoors in school settings and on school buses.

Masks are not required outdoors.

Face coverings must be worn by students in grades PreK-12 in the following situations:

- When in common areas
- When in classrooms
- While on the school bus
- When working closely around another student's premises or in situations requiring close proximity to the teacher such as in a small group
- Masks are not required outside

What makes a good FACE COVERING?

AN EFFECTIVE FACE COVERING SHOULD:

- Fit snugly against the **side of the face**
- Be secured with **ties or ear loops** (preferred)*
- Include multiple **layers of fabric**
- Allow for **breathing without restriction**
- **Cover nose & mouth**
- Be **laundered & machine dried** if reusable

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MASK BREAKS

will occur throughout the school day, when...

- Students can be **6 feet apart**
- Students can be **outside** or near open windows

*Students will be allowed to wear a neck gaiter/buff as a facial covering. All facial coverings must be appropriate for the school environment.

Guidance for Masks/Face Coverings (cont.)

Masks/face coverings should be provided by the student/family, but extra disposable face masks may be made available by the school for students who need them. Reusable masks/face coverings provided by families should be washed by families daily. The SOSD will endeavor to provide masks for students of families experiencing financial hardship and unable to afford masks/face coverings through grant funds and private donations. Transparent face coverings provide the opportunity for more visual cues and should be especially considered as an alternative for younger students, students who are deaf and hard of hearing, and their teachers.

Students will be shown how to properly put on and wear a mask. Some learning experiences that have the potential for gas ignition or electric arc flash (such as in a welding class) may require the use of a fire-retardant face covering.

Face coverings should:

- Fit snugly but comfortable against the side of the face.
- Be secured with ties or ear loops, if provided.
- Include multiple layers, or equivalent, of fabric.
- Allow for breathing without restriction.
- Be removed from behind head or ears to minimize hand contact with face.
- Be laundered and machine dried if reusable.
- Cover nose and mouth.

Face coverings will not be mandatory in cases where the use of the face covering will pose a medical or health issue or for religious reasons. Students with concerns about wearing face coverings should talk with their principal or the school nurse for a discussion on possible accommodations. Documentation from a health care provider may be required.

Where Students Should Wear Face Coverings...

When entering or exiting spaces

On the school bus

During individual or small group instruction

During school day transitions

In hallways or common spaces

Guidance for Quarantine/Close Contact

Close Contact

The Mississippi Department of Health defines close contact as 15 minutes of cumulative contact over a 24-hour period with less than 6 feet of physical distance with the following exceptions:

- Fully vaccinated persons in close contact with an infected person do NOT have to quarantine or get tested unless they develop symptoms.
- Individuals who have tested positive for Covid-19 within the past 3 months and recovered do NOT have to quarantine or get tested again as long as they do not develop new symptoms.
- In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, unvaccinated individuals within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student do NOT have to quarantine if both students were wearing masks.

Quarantine

Students who are NOT fully vaccinated and are identified as close contacts to Covid-19 will be allowed to return to school from quarantine according to the following options as defined by MSDH:

The following options are allowed to end quarantine:

- **10-day option:** Quarantine can end after 10 days if the individual has no symptoms during the entire 10-day period, or
- **7-day plus test option:** If the individual has no symptioms for 7 days and has a negative test result from any test done by a health care provider for the detection of Covid-19 RNA collected on day 5, 6, or 7 of the quarantine period, the quarantine period can be discontinued after 7 days.

Quarantine (cont.)

Students can discontinue quarantine only if the following criteria are also met:

- No symptoms of COVID-19 at any point during the quarantine period; and,
- Continue to monitor for symptoms for a full 14 days; and,
- Continue to wear masks and practice social distancing at all times for a full 14 days.
- If symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and seek testing for COVID-19.
- Remember, a negative test collected prior to day 5 cannot be used to shorten the quarantine period.

Individuals who are fully vaccinated are not required to quarantine if exposed to a positive Covid-19 case unless they become symptomatic. Fully vaccinated persons do not have to quarantine after exposure, but it is recommended that they get tested. Proof of vaccination may be required.

In general, people are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

If you do not meet these requirements, regardless of your age, you are NOT fully vaccinated. Keep taking all precautions until you are fully vaccinated.

Physical Distancing

Physical Distancing Guidance as Defined by Mississippi Department of Health

Schools should maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing, to reduce transmission risk.

This guidance is made with an understanding of the potential physical constraints and other barriers in classroom setting when providing in-person classes for all students.

Suspected or Confirmed COVID Illness

If a student is sick, please stay at home. If a student becomes ill while at school, the student will be isolated, and parents will be required to pick up the student in an immediate manner.

Parents are asked to notify the school if a student has symptoms associated with COVID-19 or has been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with, or is showing symptoms of, COVID-19. According to the Mississippi State Department of Health, close contact is defined as any individual within 6 feet of the infected person for at least 15 minutes or greater within a 24-hour period.

COVID-19 Symptoms include:	
Fever or chills	New loss of taste or smell
Cough	Sore throat
Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing	Congestion/Runny Nose
Fatigue/Muscle or body aches	Nausea or vomiting
Headache	Diarrhea
Skin rash	Appetite changes

By acting quickly, we can also determine if other close contacts need to be quarantined and if deep cleaning may be required for any schools or buses. If quarantined, it is imperative that students DO NOT enter ANY SOSD property/facility until they are cleared. Students returning to school must be fever free and symptom free for at least 24 hours.

The Mississippi Department of Health may be notified if the district becomes aware that a student has tested positive, and may include those individuals in close contact to assist the MDHS in their contact tracing efforts.

COVID-19 Related Isolation Space

In order to minimize transmission of COVID-19, schools must ensure they have an isolated space available for students displaying COVID-19 symptoms. Schools will designate a COVID-19 related isolation space that is separate from the nurse's office or other space where routine medical care is provided. A student who shows COVID-19 symptoms during the school day will be moved to the specific room pre-designated for medical-related isolation until they can be picked up by a family member.

Health Screening

Staff, students, and visitors who are entering a SOSD building may have their temperature checked and recorded.

Parents or caregivers should check for COVID-19 symptoms each morning as the District's primary screening procedure for students.

The district may implement strategies to reduce risks to the safety and health of students and staff from COVID-19 that include conducting daily in-person or virtual health checks when there is an elevated risk (e.g., symptom and/or temperature screening, questionnaires, self-checks and self-questionnaires). Any such screening will consider ways to maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Because people infected with COVID-19 can spread the virus even if they do not have signs or symptoms of infection, temperature screening may play a part in a comprehensive program to monitor student health during the pandemic.

If a student registers as having a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, the student will be moved to an isolated area with as much respect to the individual's privacy as possible while working to maintain the safety of others. Again, students who are sick or displaying symptoms are asked to stay home.

Positive COVID-19 Case Response

Students who are identified as a close contact to a Covid-positive case may return to school after **7 days** of quarantine, if they do not exhibit symptoms during the 7-day period, and the student receives a negative on any test done by a health care provider collected on day 5 or later after exposure. Students who do NOT test must quarantine for 10 days and be symptom free during the entire 10-day period before returning to school.

Elevated cases within a group or classroom may require extensive quarantine, including the dismissal of classes or buildings, or the entire school.

In the event of an outbreak, which will be considered **3 cases within any group or more,** all group members will be quarantined for 14 days.

In the event of multiple outbreaks or affected groups, or **20% or more of the population of students or staff**, an entire school building may be closed.

Re-opening of classes or buildings will not take place until after a 14-day quarantine to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Parents will be notified if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 while protecting the privacy of the infected individual.

During the event of a class or building closure, students will have access to remote or virtual learning.

Screening Testing

The Mississippi Department of Health has developed a School Based Testing Inititiative to facilitate onsite screening testing for unvaccinated asymptomatic students and teacher/staff.

Routine screening testing of *asymptomatic unvaccinated* students, teachers, and staff is recommended by the Mississippi State Department of Health as an additional measure to prevent further transmission.

Screening testing can identify potential cases and prompt rapid isolation and quarantine of individuals exposed to COVID-19 who are not fully vaccinated.

School-based screening testing may be used to prevent unnecessary exclusion from school for quarantine through testing unvaccinated students and staff who are exposed to Covid-19.

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District is currently discussing options for school-based screening testing with our school nurses and MSDH. The District will update our guidance to include procedures for school-based screening testing when finalized.

Exclusion When Sick

All students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of any infectious illness, regardless of vaccination status, should stay home from school and be evaluated by their healthcare provider.

Students, teachers, and staff must be symptom and fever free for at least 24 hours, or if COVID-19 is diagnosed, until the isolation criteria for return to school are met.

Reporting

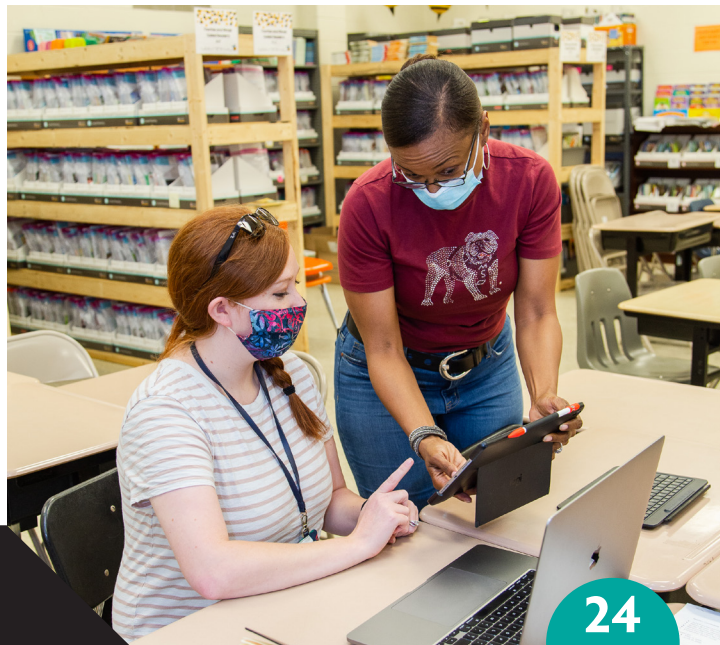
The Starkville Oktibbeh School District will provide weekly reports of cases among students, teachers and staff, number of outbreaks, and teachers and students under quarantine as a result of COVID-19 exposure to the Mississippi State Department of Health. The reports are also available on our dashboard at www.starkvillesd.com/Covid19.

STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

STAFF

SOSD is Committed To:

- Be consistent and coordinate with actions of other public entities in the area and seek compliance to the best of our ability with CDC recommendations.
- Complete initial and ongoing deep environmental cleaning of all district facilities.
- Signage strategically located in common areas.
- Physical distancing measures of 3 feet in place by location when and where it is reasonably possible.
- Conduct training for employee and supervisor training.
- Communicate expectations and procedures to students and parents.
- Protect the health and well-being of our students, staff and community.
- Established guidelines in place for employee, student, and visitor screening.
- Act responsibly and in alignment with our core mission, vision and beliefs.
- Listen closely to the concerns of our school community and ensure we keep our decisions under constant review.



Common Work Spaces

- Please see maintenance cleaning protocols for details on site cleaning.
- Sanitizing wipes or sanitizing spray with paper towels will be available for employees to disinfect their own workspaces. After use in common areas, please return these items back for others to use. If more are needed, please contact your supervisor.

Break Rooms & Food Preparations

Due to the overwhelming concern for safety for employees and all those in our facilities during this pandemic, the break rooms will not provide or permit the sharing of resources for food preparation and storage. Employees are discouraged from the use of common refrigerators, coffee machines or products (coffee, tea, sugars, stirrers, etc.), toasters, toaster ovens, etc. Where microwaves are available for use, disinfectant spray and paper towels will be provided for employees to wipe high touch points including microwaves. It is the responsibility of the user to wipe down the machines before and after each use.

Restrooms

School or facility restroom cleaning will include day-time intervals to promote a clean environment and make sure social distancing is maintained. Restroom check-in sheets for cleaners will be posted on the back of the door of each restroom and require the cleaning team to check off the frequency and time cleaned.

Guidance for Masks/Face Coverings

When school begins in August, access to a face covering should be available at all times for all staff within the Starkville Oktibbeh School District.

All staff are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers their nose and mouth indoors in school settings and on school buses.

Guidance for Masks/Face Coverings (cont.)

Face coverings must be worn by all employees in the following situations:

- In classrooms.
- When working in public places.
- When working closely in a student's premises, such as in a small group.
- When social distancing is not able to be maintained with a co-worker, student or member of the public while at a school facility or while riding a bus or with another person in other school district vehicle.
- **Employees may use either a district-issued or a personal face covering, depending on preference and availability.**
- Non-Fire-Retardant/Arc Rated Face Covering– use when there is no potential for a gas ignition or electric arc flash.
- Fire Retardant Face Covering – must be used when there is potential for a gas ignition or electric arc flash.

Face coverings should:

- Fit snugly but comfortable against the side of the face.
- Be secured with ties or ear loops, if provided.
- Include multiple layers, or equivalent, of fabric.
- Allow for breathing without restriction.
- Be removed from behind head or ears to minimize hand contact with face.
- Be laundered and machine dried if reusable.
- Cover nose and mouth.

Face coverings will not be mandatory in cases where the use of the face covering will pose a medical or health issue or for religious reasons. Employees with concerns about wearing face coverings should talk with their direct supervisor or the school nurse for a discussion on possible accommodations.

Guidance for Vaccinations

The Starkville Oktibbeha School District urges all employees and all students above the age of 12 with parent permission to be fully vaccinated.

Vaccinations are our best defense against the spread of COVID-19.

You can schedule your vaccine at covidvaccine.umc.edu . Vaccines appointments are also available throughout our community at OCH Regional Medical Center, Walmart, WalGreens and Kroger stores. You may also check with your local health care provider or pharmacy to schedule your vaccine.

According to the Missisippi State Department of Health, vaccination remains the primary public health prevention strategy to end transmission and allow for safe participation of in-person classes and school sponsored extra curricular activities.

Guidance for Quarantine/Close Contact

Close Contact

The Mississippi Department of Health defines close contact as 15 minutes of cumulative contact over a 24-hour period with less than 6 feet of physical distance with the following exceptions:

- Fully vaccinated persons in close contact with an infected person do NOT have to quarantine or get tested unless they develop symptoms.
- Individuals who have tested positive for Covid-19 within the past 3 months and recovered do NOT have to quarantine or get tested again as long as they do not develop new symptoms.
- In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, unvaccinated individuals within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student do NOT have to quarantine if both students were wearing masks.

Quarantine

Staff who are NOT fully vaccinated and are identified as close contacts to Covid-19 will be allowed to return to school from quarantine according to options defined by MSDH.

The following options are allowed to end quarantine:

- **10-day option:** Quarantine can end after 10 days if the individual has no symptoms during the entire 10-day period, or

Guidance for Quarantine (cont.)

- **7-day plus test option:** If the individual has no symptioms for 7 days and has a negative test result from any test done by a health care provider for the detection of Covid-19 RNA collected on day 5, 6, or 7 of the quarantine period, the quarantine period can be discontinued after 7 days.

Employees can discontinue quarantine only if the following criteria are also met:

- No symptoms of COVID-19 at any point during the quarantine period; and,
- Continue to monitor for symptoms for a full 14 days; and,
- Continue to wear masks and practice social distancing at all times for a full 14 days.
- If symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and seek testing for COVID-19.
- Remember, a negative test collected prior to day 5 cannot be used to shorten the quarantine period.

Individuals who are fully vaccinated are not required to quarantine if exposed to a positive Covid-19 case unless they become symptomatic. Fully vaccinated persons do not have to quarantine after exposure, but it is recommended that they get tested. Proof of vaccination may be required.

In general, people are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

If you do not meet these requirements, regardless of your age, you are NOT fully vaccinated. Keep taking all precautions until you are fully vaccinated.

Suspected or Confirmed COVID Illness

If you are sick, please contact your supervisor. If you become ill while at work, immediately isolate yourself, tell your supervisor, and go home.

Call your supervisor or human resources, if you have symptoms associated with COVID-19 or have been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with, or is showing symptoms of, COVID-19. According to the Mississippi State Department of Health, close contact is defined as any individual within 6 feet of the infected person for at least 15 minutes or greater.

By acting quickly, we can also determine if other close contacts need to be quarantined and if deep cleaning may be required for any district facilities and vehicles. If quarantined, it is imperative that employees DO NOT enter ANY SOSD property/facility/worksite until they are cleared. Employees returning to work must be fever free and symptom free for at least 24 hours.

The Mississippi Department of Health may be notified if the district becomes aware of a staff member or student has tested positive, and may include those individuals in close contact to assist the MDHS in their contact tracing efforts.

Temperature Screening

Staff, students, and visitors entering a SOSD building may have their temperature checked and recorded. Neither the OSH Act nor OSHA standards prohibits employer screening for COVID-19, if applied in a transparent manner applicable to all employees (i.e., non-retaliatory).

Employers may implement strategies to reduce risks to the safety and health of workers and workplaces from COVID-19 that include conducting daily in-person or virtual health checks (e.g., symptom and/or temperature screening, questionnaires, self-checks and self-questionnaires). Any such screening should consider ways to maintain confidentiality, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Because people infected with COVID-19 can spread the virus even if they do not have signs or symptoms of infection, temperature screening may play a part in a comprehensive program to monitor worker health during the pandemic, but may have limited utility on its own.

If a person registers as having a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, the person will be moved to an isolated area with as much respect to the individual's privacy as possible while working to maintain the safety of others. Again, individuals who are sick or displaying symptoms are encouraged to stay home.

Positive COVID-19 Case Response

Staff who are identified as a close contact to a Covid-positive case may return to school after **7 days** of quarantine, if they do not exhibit symptoms during the 7-day period, and the student receives a negative on any test done by a health care provider collected on day 5 or later after exposure. Staff who do NOT test must quarantine for 10 days and be symptom free during the entire 10-day period before returning to school.

Elevated cases within a group or classroom may require extensive quarantine, including the dismissal of classes or buildings, or the entire school.

In the event of an outbreak, which will be considered **3 cases within any group or more,** all group members will be quarantined for 14 days.

In the event of multiple outbreaks or affected groups, or **20% or more of the population of students or staff**, an entire school building may be closed.

Re-opening of classes or buildings will not take place until after a 14-day quarantine to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Staff and parents will be notified if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 while protecting the privacy of the infected individual.

During the event of a class or building closure, employees will be asked to tele-work, where appropriate, to continue to provide a rigorous, high quality education to students.

Return to School Guidance

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL

MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION