



UPDATED 11-9-2020

## Poplarville School District Restart Plan 2020-2021

The Poplarville School District will begin the 2020-2021 school year for students on Thursday, August 6, 2020. Faculty, staff, and administration are **HERE** to support our students and families. We believe that our commitment to education, social support, and health does matter. Below you will find our plan for restarting schools. Please understand in these uncertain times; this plan may need to be updated for the best interest of the health and safety of students and staff. There may still be specific guidance issued by the Mississippi Department of Education and the Department of Health that could impact our plan. A school restart tab will be added to the district's webpage, where you can find additional updates as they become available.

We would like to thank the restart committee members as they have devoted hours to considering all aspects of returning to school with a safe and educationally balanced plan. We would also like to thank our parents and community members for their input through surveys, messages, and conversations. This plan is based upon our understanding of this input. This plan may not be ideal for everyone. Every family situation is unique, but we are committed to providing the best educational experience possible under these circumstances. Thank you for your commitment to our school district. We hope our school community will work together to make our students feel safe so that we can confidently return to school under our schedule options. Please be assured that we will continue to update you with any new guidelines and their impact on district decisions.

*The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) issued Considerations for Reopening Mississippi Schools. Three options were outlined in the MDE document: the traditional school model, a hybrid school model, and a virtual model. **Poplarville School District intends to begin the school year with the traditional school model with an option for those students who require a virtual learning schedule.** Parents must be prepared for all three models to be utilized during the school year. Changes could be made throughout the school year based on COVID-19 spread in our schools and community and based on directions from the Governor's Office, the Mississippi State Department of Health, and the Mississippi Department of Education. In the event a school, grade-level, or district must transition to distance learning under the hybrid model, accommodations will be made for those without internet access.*

### School Calendar and School Day Start and Ending Times

**Calendar:** An updated school calendar can be found on the district website at [www.poplarvilleschools.org](http://www.poplarvilleschools.org) and the end of this document.

There are two changes to the calendar.

1. The student start date has been changed to Thursday, August 6, 2020.
2. The Fair Day initially scheduled for Friday, September 25th, is now a regular school day as there will be no county fair this year.

**School Start and Ending Times:** The Mississippi Department of Education has given school districts the flexibility to adjust the amount of time students spend in the classroom each day. The Poplarville School District will reduce the amount of instructional time to allow more time for bus arrivals and cleaning, extended class changes, if needed, and extended lunch periods to promote social distancing. Teachers will utilize the last hour of the day to meet with virtual learners.

The school day for each campus will begin thirty(30) minutes later than in previous years and end thirty(30) minutes earlier. **Students may not be on any campus before 7:45 a.m.**

	PLE	PUE	MSP	PHS
Morning Drop Off	7:45-8:15	7:45-8:15	7:45-8:15	7:45-8:15
Tardy Bell	8:20	8:20	8:20	8:20
Bus Rider Release	2:15	2:15	2:45	2:40
Car Rider Release	2:20	2:15	2:30	2:40

An updated bell schedule will be published on the district website at [www.poplarvilleschools.org](http://www.poplarvilleschools.org). Buses will adjust their route schedules by approximately 30 minutes to correspond to school starting and ending times. Teachers will use the additional time to support virtual learning.

**Homeroom Teacher and Schedule Pick-up:** Parents and guardians may pick up their child's schedule on July 22nd and 23rd from 8:30-3:00 at your child's school. For grades K-5, this means you will be provided with information regarding who your child's teacher will be for the upcoming school year. For grades 6-12, a daily class schedule will be provided. A student will not be placed in a class, whether virtual or traditional and cannot be given a schedule until online registration is complete. Visitors on campus should follow social distancing.

**Get Acquainted Events:** Information regarding Get Acquainted Events for students in grades K-8 will be included and distributed during schedule pick-up. Get Acquainted Events are being planned based on the student's grade-level and the transition to a new school.

**Kindergarten students:** Half of the kindergarten students will be attending on Thursday, August 6th, and half of the kindergarten students will attend their first day on Friday, August 7th. We want to make their first experience with coming to school an easy transition. Information regarding our kindergartener's first day of school will be included and distributed with schedule pick-up.

**Supply List:** K-8 Supply Lists are available on the school district's website. Students on the virtual schedule will need the supplies listed to complete assignments. Not all assignments will be appropriate for computer use only. High school students will be given a supply list on the first day of class. There will be no sharing of supplies.

**Uniforms:** The dress code located in the student handbook and posted to the district's web page outlines the acceptable attire approved to be worn by students in this district. The dress code remains the same for the upcoming school year, except that students are now able to wear a black polo in addition to the other colors. Students on the virtual schedule will be required to appear in uniform when attending online class meetings.

**Google Workshops for Parents:** Google workshops will be held both in-person and virtually to introduce parents to Google Classroom. Whether your student is part of the traditional schedule or on a virtual schedule, these workshops will help parents support their students. Information for signing up for one of these workshops will be posted on the school's website.

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### Schedule Options

Parents/students will be offered **two** options for the restart of the school year.

1. **Traditional Schedule** for face to face instruction
  - a. We believe that optimal learning takes place during face-to-face instruction.
  - b. Attendance will be taken based upon MDE guidelines.
2. Because district officials respect each family's needs and circumstances, full-time **virtual learning** will be an option for students during the 2020-2021 school year **under the following conditions.**
  - a. Virtual learning will not look like learning during the spring 2020 closure.

- b. Only students who chose virtual learning at the beginning of the school year will have the option to continue in the virtual setting for the next nine week grading period. Students/parents will be required to commit to the virtual schedule for the entire nine-week grading period two weeks prior to the beginning of the school term. Students who are failing a course at the end of a nine-week grading period will be required to return to the traditional classroom unless the student is under a physician's order to remain in the virtual setting.
- c. Once a student attends class in the traditional setting, the virtual option is waived unless the student is required to quarantine.
- d. Students who enroll during the school year from another school district will only be allowed to register for virtual learning if they were enrolled virtually at their former school and are passing at the end of the nine-week grading period.
- e. Students enrolling from the homeschool setting will be required to register for the traditional setting.
- f. Students and families enrolled virtually must have internet access or the ability to travel to a wifi location.
- g. Daily attendance will be taken based upon MDE guidelines. Assignments must be submitted daily to be considered present.
- h. Google Classroom will be utilized as the student learning platform.
- i. Grab and Go Meals will be served. All meals will be provided to students at no cost until the end of the school year.
- j. Assignments will be required, turned in by due dates, and graded. Nine-weeks grades will be based upon these assignments. District grading policies are listed in the student handbook.
- k. Virtual learners will be expected to adhere to all discipline procedures outlined in the student handbook. Students are responsible for following technology guidelines, codes of conduct, integrity and authenticity of work guidelines, and the dress code while participating in virtual learning.
- l. Parents of students needing to sign up for the virtual schedule will be required to meet with a school representative to complete the proper forms, learn how to log into the student's learning management system, and sign an acknowledgment of necessary responsibilities with virtual learning. Meetings will be scheduled by appointment only. Please go to [www.poplarvilleschools.org](http://www.poplarvilleschools.org) and complete the virtual learning survey by 3 p.m. on Friday, July 24, 2020, to request an appointment.

**For Both Schedules, Please Note:**

- Attendance will not be part of school incentive programs this year. Exemptions for grades 6-12 are solely based upon grades for the 2020-2021 school year, not attendance.
- All parents/guardians must complete the online registration process for his/her student. Registration is required for all students, whether they are on a traditional or virtual schedule.
- All students are required to participate in state-administered exams as required by the Mississippi Department of Education. Guidelines for the 3rd-grade Literacy-Based Promotion Act and High School End of Course Test still apply. Students must take state assessments on campus at a time scheduled by the school testing coordinator in order to meet course requirements.
- Promotion and retention policies remain in effect.
- Policies for students enrolling from non-accredited schools remain in effect. This includes grade-level placement tests being administered for enrollment.

**Health and Safety**

**Health and Hygiene Education**

- Schools will provide instruction for students and staff on minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
- CDC health and hygiene posters will be displayed to remind students and staff of precautions that they should take to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

**Masks**

- Students must wear a mask or facial covering in the classroom when social distancing cannot occur or when moving around the campus and social distancing cannot happen.
- Staff must wear a mask, facial covering, or a face shield (A face shield should only be used by staff for instruction when more than 6ft from others) when social distancing cannot occur.

**Temperature Screening and Nurse Calls**

- We each have an obligation to other students, teachers, and staff not to attend school when sick. The health of our community is a top priority. Attendance incentives and exemption policies tied to attendance have been suspended this school year.
- Temperature checks will be conducted each morning as students enter the classroom.
- Temperature checks will be conducted before staff members sign in to work.
- Each classroom will have a touchless infrared thermometer to conduct temperature checks.
- Parents are asked to screen their child before they leave for school each morning. Students should not attend school and follow up with their medical provider when they show the following symptoms:
  - Fever of 100 degrees or greater or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea
- Please do not treat your child with a fever reducer and then send them to school.
- Parents are asked to provide updated contact information anytime there is a change in phone numbers. It will be imperative to reach the parent or guardian immediately of any student with a fever or with COVID-related symptoms.

#### **Water Bottles**

- Water fountains are being retrofitted for water bottles. Each student should bring their own water bottle since students will not be allowed to drink from the fountain directly.

#### **Social Distancing**

- Social distancing will be utilized to the extent possible.
- Classrooms will be monitored, and schedules may be changed to reduce class size or make transitions less congested.

#### **Nurse on Each Campus**

- Poplarville School District now employs a full-time registered nurse on all four of its campuses.
- A "Nurse Referral List" will be provided to all teachers to determine if a student is symptomatic and needs to be referred to the nurse. A mask will be provided by the school nurse to students with symptoms until the student is picked up by a parent/guardian.
- A designated room or space, "A Quarantine Room," near or within the nurse's office, will be used to separate a student with symptoms.
- Nurses are leading our coordination with local health agencies.

#### **Quarantine and Notification**

- If a student or family member tests positive for COVID-19, the parent should contact the school and ask to speak to the school nurse as she is the school's COVID contact. The school nurse will notify only those who need to know your child's status. The nurse will share the district's protocol with you for your child returning to school. **If a household member is positive for COVID-19, all those living in the home should quarantine for 14 days.**
- Students who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate/quarantine and remain off school property for a period of 14 days or until cleared by a medical provider.
- Staff who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to quarantine and remain off school property for the period or until cleared by a medical provider. **These students should stay home and isolate themselves from others.**
- **After contact tracing for close contacts,** the Mississippi State Department of Health **guidelines will be used** to determine if any other students and staff will be subject to a 14- day quarantine period. [https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/\\_static/resources/9917.pdf](https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/resources/9917.pdf) - MSDH Guidance
- **Students and staff will be notified through SchoolStatus text and a letter when someone in their class tests positive for COVID-19. Only students who are considered to be a close contact will need to quarantine.**
- In the days following the notification, temperatures will continue to be taken of the students' classes as a proactive measure. In addition, school officials will follow all directions given by the Mississippi State Department of Health regarding contact tracing and quarantining of students deemed "close contacts" by the Mississippi State Department of Health.
- Students and staff will be notified by a phone call from a school representative when they have come in close contact with anyone testing positive for COVID-19 for **more than 15 minutes at a distance of less than 6 feet.** The

name of those with COVID-19 will not be disclosed due to confidentiality rules. **Only close contacts will be required to quarantine for 14 days.**

- Virtual learning will be provided to students who are required to quarantine. Accommodations will be made for those without internet access.
- Deep cleaning procedures will be implemented.

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## **Back to School Transition**

### **Social and Emotional Health**

- A “Social and Emotional Health” tab will be added to the school district website. The tab will take the visitor to:
  - a list of available community resources for students and adults,
  - family resources that accompany the social-emotional learning curriculum utilized in the schools,
  - Pine Belt Mental Health affiliation and available services, and
  - (for older students) a link for self-referral and for individuals to report a threat or concerns.
- Poplarville School District has made a commitment to students’ social and emotional health through training and use of a social-emotional learning curriculum that focuses on how we learn to understand and manage emotions, set goals, show empathy for others, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. We know these skills play a critical role in determining how well-equipped children will be to meet the demands of the classroom.
- The district continues to partner with Pine Belt Mental Health to provide services during the school day.

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## **Transportation**

**Parents who can transport their child to and from school are encouraged to do so.**

### **Masks**

- Students will be required to wear a mask or facial covering when moving on and off the bus and when social distancing cannot occur.
- Drivers and monitors will be required to wear a mask or face shield.

### **Hand Sanitizer**

- Hand sanitizer will be provided on all buses.
- Students are encouraged to sanitize their hands upon boarding and exiting the school bus.

### **Bus Route Times**

- Student morning pick-up times will be approximately thirty minutes later than last year.
- Student afternoon drop-off times will be approximately thirty minutes earlier than last year.

### **Seating and Social Distancing**

- Students who live in the same household will be asked to sit together on the bus.
- Students will sit 1 to a seat to the extent possible.
- A seating chart will be developed to maintain as much distance as possible.
- Routes may be adjusted based on the number of students on each bus.
- If a student displays symptoms while riding the bus, the student will report directly to the nurse upon arriving at school.

### **Bus Sanitation**

- All buses will be disinfected at the end of each route.
- Drivers will document sanitation dates and times and will keep cameras running during the sanitation process.

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## **Child Nutrition**

- Both breakfast and lunch will be served daily with appropriate precautions in place.
- Cafeteria workers will wear gloves and masks when serving students.
- Efforts will be made in each school cafeteria to space students as much as possible.
- Some students will be eating in the cafeteria while others will be eating in their classroom or other location.
- Extra time between lunchtimes will be scheduled for cleaning.
- Entrance and exit pathways will be marked to designate student flow.
- Cafeteria staff will wash hands immediately after unpacking and storing deliveries.

- Students will not be allowed to help in cleaning the cafeteria.

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### **Technology**

- Students will be provided with Chromebooks/Tablets for classroom use.
- Students on a virtual schedule may check-out a Chromebook or tablet. There is a thirty dollar insurance fee associated with issuing a device for home use. Please see the district's technology plan for further information.
- Certified staff members involved in student instruction will be provided with a Chromebook/Computer for instructional planning and instruction.
- Additional Internet Access Points will be provided at each campus to boost access when necessary.
- Internet Bandwidth will be increased if necessary.
- Helpdesk assistance will be provided for students, staff, and parents/guardians.
- Training resources will be made available to staff, students, and parents using different methods of delivery. (CIPPA, FERPA, Google, Virtual Teaching Tools, etc.)
- Lesson recording technology will be provided at each campus for lesson videoing.
- Community Internet access points will be provided as needed to transition to a virtual schedule during school closure.
- Shared computers will be cleaned between each use.

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### **Campus Visitors, Activities/Athletics, and Events**

#### **Campus Visitors**

- For staff and students' safety, only visitors with an appointment will be allowed past the lobby.
- All visitors entering beyond the front lobby are required to wear a mask.
- Extra masks will be available to distribute if needed.
- We ask that anyone who believes they are ill/sick does not visit our schools.
- Social distancing tiles will be on the floor of each lobby. If there is no empty tile available, visitors are asked to remain outside until the lobby is clear.
- Hand sanitizer will be available at each lobby.
- Parents are encouraged to handle school business over the phone or schedule an appointment.

#### **Activities/Athletics**

- Mississippi High School Activities Association guidelines will be followed for activities and athletics.
- PE and music classes will take place on each campus, but classes will focus on individual activities.
- Students who participate in the virtual schedule should communicate with their coach about the logistics of participating in sports.
- Library books will be treated with a UV light treatment before being reshelved for checkout.
- After school clubs will not meet until COVID-19 protocols are no longer necessary.

#### **Events and Field Trips**

- No large group events such as indoor assemblies and field trips will be held while protocols are in place for COVID-19.

#### **Recess and Breaks**

- Students will have breaks or recess each day. We know that students need time out of the classroom in the fresh air.
- Recess and breaks will be scheduled so that students are in smaller class groups or a larger area so that social distancing can take place.
- The use of shared objects at recess will be limited.

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### **Student Support Services**

#### **IEP Students**

- We will follow the Individualized Education Plan for each enrolled student in the traditional or virtual schedule.

- Ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act will not prevent any school from offering educational programs through distance instruction

### **Intervention (Tier), ELL, Dyslexia, and Behavior**

- The Mississippi State Board of Education’s Policy 41.1 requires that districts and schools follow a three-tiered instructional model consisting of:
  - Tier 1: high-quality classroom instruction
  - Tier 2: focused supplemental instruction
  - Tier 3: specifically designed intensive interventions as prescribed.
- This systematic approach supports struggling learners, as well as advanced learners, through the selection of evidence-based instruction and intervention in response to both academic and behavioral needs. The system includes on-going progress monitoring of the effectiveness of instruction to ensure that all Mississippi students graduate from high school ready for college and career. Such a model enables early identification of students in need of support and allows for appropriate support to be put in place as soon as a student starts to fall behind.

### **Gifted**

- Gifted education programs are mandated in grades 2-6 for intellectually gifted students in Mississippi schools.
- Gifted education activities will enhance the integration of advanced content and individual students’ interests utilizing higher-level thinking skills, creative problem solving, critical thinking skills, research skills, personal growth, human relations exercises, leadership skills, and creative expression. Activities will also create an appreciation for the multicultural composition of the school and community.

## **School Facilities**

### **Sanitation and Disinfection**

- Schools and buses will be thoroughly disinfected before students and staff enter the building for the start of school in August.
- School schedules have been developed so that cleaning and sanitizing restrooms and touchpoint services will be cleaned multiple times a day.
- Student desks will be cleaned and sanitized between each class change on the high school campus.
- Students will be asked to help keep their areas in the classroom clean and sanitized in grades K-8.
- Sanitizer stations will be available to students and staff around the campus.
- Signage will be located throughout the building, reminding students about social distancing and what to do if they show symptoms or feel ill.
- Age-appropriate signage will be posted throughout the building with tips for proper hygiene and preventive measures.
- Students and staff are expected to wash and sanitize their hands often.
- Doors to classrooms and windows will be left open as much as possible to allow for airflow.
- When students or staff notice an area in need of cleaning, it should be reported to the office for attention.

## **Staff Support**

### **Health and Safety**

- Staff are asked to screen themselves before they leave for school each morning. Staff should call into work and follow up with their medical provider when they show the following symptoms:
 

○ Fever of 100 degrees or greater or chills	○ Headache
○ Cough	○ New loss of taste or smell
○ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing	○ Sore throat
○ Fatigue	○ Congestion or runny nose
○ Muscle or body aches	○ Nausea or vomiting
	○ Diarrhea
- Staff will be reminded of health and safety protocols on a daily basis.
- The district will provide necessary PPE to all staff.
- Staff schedules will be reviewed to ensure our staff has adequate time to attend to personal health and safety measures.
- Staff will be given guidance on contacting the COVID-19 designee at Central Office if they come in contact with COVID-19 or suspect they have or do have COVID-19.

- All employees will be required to wear a mask when working directly with students when social distancing is not allowable. **A face shield should only be worn by staff when giving instruction, and social distancing can occur.**
- Return to work protocols will be shared with staff, which include training on safety measures.
- Each school will create and test an emergency communication protocol with staff.
- Temperature checks will be self-administered by staff before signing in each day.
- Staff will remove excess furniture and items from the classroom to create more space for social distancing.
- School staff hours have been changed to 7:45 to 3:45 to provide virtual learning.

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## Support and Partnerships

### How Can Parents Help?

- Keep us informed by contacting the school nurse with any changes in your child's health.
- Please check for symptoms at home each morning before school. These symptoms include a fever of 100 degrees or greater, new cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, body aches, muscle pains, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, unusual fatigue or irritability, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, unusual rash, or unusual pink/red eyes not explained by allergies or injury.
- Please keep children at home when symptoms are noticed during the morning health check. Please do not treat the symptoms and then send your child to school.
- Please provide transportation to and from school when feasible.
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in your household, please report that information to the school nurse immediately before sending your child to school.
- Please follow all guidance from school officials and the Mississippi State Department of Health.
- Help us slow rumors by not responding to unsubstantiated information on social media. The district's website will have up to date information available.
- Please work with your child's teacher or school principal to take care of concerns. They can best help you and answer questions you may have.
- Please note: The district does not reply to questions or comments on social media as we don't have anyone whose sole purpose is to monitor these sites actively.
- Make sure you have completed the online registration for your child.
- Plan to pick up your child's schedule on July 22nd or 23rd at your child's school. You will also be provided with additional information regarding the opening of the school.

### What is Next?

- Each school will submit protocols to the PSD superintendent for approval by July 22, 2020, outlining how this plan will be carried out on each campus.
- Each school will submit protocols to the PSD superintendent for approval before July 22, 2020, outlining the plan for virtual learning of students not on the traditional schedule and for all students in the event grade-levels or schools must transition to virtual distance learning during the school year.
- Everyone must be prepared for intermittent closures. Parents must have plans that can be activated immediately if there is a school closure or if their children cannot attend school because of a quarantine situation. Parents are urged to be prepared to change plans within 24 hours if needed, and it is critical that parents have updated email addresses and phone numbers on file with their child's school. In the event a school, grade, or district must transition to distance learning, accommodations will be made for those without internet access.

**Again, thank you for your support! While these times may be unprecedented, our commitment to your child's education and the well being of students and staff are our top priority.**