

# Edgefield County School District Merriwether Elementary

---

## **2020-2021** **REOPENING** **Planning Guide**

---



# Health and Safety Requirements

The Edgefield County School District (ECSD) is providing the following set of rules and guidance for student and staff health and wellness. ECSD will continue to follow the guidance of local and state health authorities and the South Carolina Department of Education as we continue into the 2020-2021 school year.

The following guidance is information the ECSD Wellness Task Force gathered from CDC, DHEC and AccelerateED. It is intended to assist schools in complying with requirements to help ensure employee and student safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Safety and Health Topics | COVID-19 - Control and Prevention](#)

This guidance is specific for the schools in the Edgefield County School District. This guidance does not address extracurricular activities, such as youth sports, which are addressed [Return of High School Sponsored Team Sports Guidelines](#).

ECSD recognizes the need to plan ahead for the upcoming school year and that the science of COVID-19 will evolve and is still a very fluid situation. Further, the trajectory of disease in our state and nation may require changes to our district's response and what our return to school looks like. ECSD Wellness Task Force will update this guidance periodically and work with schools to keep them informed of any changes.

# General Guidance

Do not allow students, staff, vendors, parents and guardians, guests on-site if they:

- Are showing [Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)
- Have been in **close contact** with someone who has been confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 in the last **14 days**.
- Parents please monitor your child for symptoms daily before arriving to school. If any symptoms of illness are present, please keep your child home and consult your physician.

Ensure staff are trained in health and safety protocols for your school, including how to screen for symptoms, maintaining physical distance, wearing appropriate PPE, frequent cleaning and handwashing, and what to do if someone develops signs of COVID-19.

Communicate regularly with families and staff, and emphasize the importance of staying home when sick, physical distancing of six feet, and hand hygiene.

All students, staff, volunteers, and guests must wear cloth face coverings or shields in appropriate settings, during transitioning and close contact.

Monitor student and employee attendance and absences. Follow the district's leave policies and practices to support employee absences.

# Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- A system for drop-off and pick-up has been developed to keep families at least six feet from each other and reduce their need to enter the school. This may include staggering drop-off and pick-up times for various groups, one-way traffic flows, greeting students at their vehicle, or placing distancing markers on walkways. Students will be dropped off at each cone. **Do not exit the vehicle until you have reached a cone.**
- All students who will be eating breakfast will enter the front of the school.
  - If your student is **NOT** eating breakfast, first and second grades will drop off in the front car line. 4K and 5K will drop off at the kindergarten exit and enter their rooms from exterior doors
  - All 3rd-5th graders will use the 5K car line and enter through the blue double doors.
  - **\*\*\*Please note we will only use the front car lane near the building for drop off and pick up. If you are dropping off or picking up students in the kindergarten lane, please use the right lane only.**
- Dismissal will follow a similar process.
  - 2:00 Kindergarten students and older siblings will dismiss at kindergarten exit. Also, SpEd bus riders to dismiss at 2:00 in the rear. After school students will be dismissed to the cafeteria.
  - 2:05 3rd-5th graders who do not have a younger sibling will dismiss in the back car line.
  - 2:15 buses will be dismissed according to grade levels.
  - 2:20 1st -2nd grade and older siblings will dismiss at the front car line.

# Health Screening at Entry

Check for signs of illness for all staff and students at entry each day.

Staff must enter the front door to check and record their temperature when they arrive to school before entering their classroom at designated area.

Morning announcements will be used as a reminder to have students report to the health room if they are symptomatic. ( ex. *We are practicing staying healthy at MES. Remember to wear your face mask and wash your hands. If you are having any symptoms of illness, please let your teacher know at this time.*)

**Staff and students with any illness must stay home.**

**See the school nurse for any questions.**

---

# Physical Distancing

Our priority during the pandemic will continue to be the social, emotional, and physical wellness of our students.

---

Schools should consider physical distancing strategies such as:

- **Cancel field trips, assemblies, and other large gatherings.** Cancel in-person activities and events such as field trips, student assemblies, school-wide parent meetings and spirit nights.
- **Modify classes where students are likely to be in very close contact.**
- **Make significant modifications to activities that are considered high risk, such as chorus or other classes or activities that may require students to be in close contact.** If these classes continue, hold them outside or in a large well-ventilated space and with fewer people than usual to allow even greater physical distance between students. Ensure that families understand these activities are high risk.
- **Six feet space between desks to the best extent possible.** Rearrange student desks to maximize the space between students. Turn desks to face in the same direction to reduce transmission.
- **Reduce the number of students in the halls at one time.** Stagger release of classes. Limit activities where multiple classrooms interact.
- **Stagger arrival and/or dismissal times.** These approaches can limit the amount of close contact between students in high traffic situations and times.
- **Reduce congestion in the health office.** For example, use the health office for children with flu-like and Covid like symptoms and routine medications. First aid for minor cuts and scrapes will be handled in the classroom. Morning medications should be given at home to reduce risk of exposure.
- **Limit nonessential visitors.** Limit the presence of volunteers for classroom activities , cafeteria support and other activities.
- **Teach staff, students, and their families to maintain distance from each other in the school.**

# MEALS

Limit gatherings and potential mixing of classes in the cafeteria or other communal spaces. Consider having students take their meals outside or in the classroom. You may accomplish this through meal delivery to classes, or through grab-and go services. If using the cafeteria, have students sit with their class and ensure physical distance between student and between groups.

Stagger mealtimes in the cafeteria. Arrange the flow of students to reduce crowding such as at hand washing / sanitizing stations. Space students as far apart as you can at the table.

In the classroom setting, the teacher will sanitize their hands and individually plate food for each student. The staff (not students) should handle utensils and serve food to reduce the spread of germs.

Clean and sanitize tables before and after each group eats.

# Hygiene Practices

**Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.**

Children and adults should sanitize or wash hands when they arrive at school, before meals or snacks, after outside time, after going to the bathroom, after blowing their nose or sneezing, and before leaving to go home. Help young children to make sure they are doing it right.

Teach children (and adults) not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

If soap and water are not readily available, use alcohol based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol. Supervise the use of alcohol based hand sanitizer by all students.

Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Clean hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.

Use hand sanitizer before and after recess. **If hands are visibly dirty at any time, use soap and water.**

# Face Masks/Shields

Wearing face coverings/shields may help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and is required for all staff and students where appropriate. See [COVID-19: Considerations for Wearing Cloth Face Coverings](#) for more information.

Face masks/shields should not be worn by:

- **Those with a disability that prevents them from comfortably wearing or removing a mask/shield.**
- **Those with certain respiratory conditions or trouble breathing.**
- **Those who are deaf or hard of hearing and use facial and mouth movements as part of communication.**
- **Those advised by a medical, legal, or behavioral health professional that wearing a face mask/shield may pose a risk to that person.**

Younger students must be supervised when wearing a face mask/shield and will need help putting them on, taking them off, and getting used to wearing them.

Even when face masks/shields are worn, continue practicing proper physical distancing.

# What to do if Someone Develops Signs of COVID-19

To prepare for the potential of student or staff showing symptoms while at school, schools should have a response and communication plan in place that includes communication with staff, families and the local DHEC.

If a student or staff member develops signs of COVID-19 separate the person away from others, with supervision at a distance of six feet, until the sick person can leave. While waiting to leave school, the individual with symptoms should wear a mask if tolerated. **Students in the classroom will be removed so that the classroom can be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.**

The person with symptoms should follow CDC and DHEC guidance on what to do if you have symptoms for COVID-19. Ask the employee or student's parent or caregiver to inform the school right away if the person is diagnosed with COVID-19. All close contacts will be notified via phone call and/or letter.

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the local health officials will advise, but it is likely that many of the student's classmates will be **considered close contacts** and need to be **quarantined for 14 days**. Refer to [CDC guidance](#)

# **Procedures for a Positive Case of COVID-19**

When a positive case of COVID- 19 is reported to the school, the school nurse will review the case, consult with the county health department, determine home isolation timelines, and notify those who may have experienced exposure. Individuals with pending lab results for COVID-19 will not be allowed in school until the results are received and reviewed by the school nurse. **All information shared for the purpose of COVID-19 contact tracing is strictly confidential.** Parents and staff within the school will be notified and the school nurse will seek guidance from the county health department if a shutdown of a classroom, school, or the District is recommended.

**\*\*Parents/guardians please contact the school nurse or attendance clerk if your child is absent due to Covid-19 or is symptomatic. The nurse will need to speak with you to gather detailed information.**

# PreK- 2nd

## General preparedness:

Plan ahead to ensure adequate supplies to support hand hygiene behaviors and routine cleaning of objects and surfaces.

Encourage staff to take everyday preventive actions [How to Protect Yourself & Others](#) to prevent the spread of respiratory illness.

- Classes should include the same group each day, should remain with same group each day.
- Cancel or postpone special events such as special performances.
- Limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for special activities such as art, music and P. E.
- If possible, at **nap time**, ensure the children's naptime mats are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Consider placing children head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Keep objects and surfaces as clean and sanitized as possible.
- Follow a routine schedule for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting.

# PreK- 2<sup>nd</sup>

## **Clean and Sanitize Toys:**

- **Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.**
- **Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry. You may also clean in a mechanical dishwasher. Be mindful of items more likely to be placed in a child's mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils.**
- **Machine washable cloth toys should be used by one individual at a time. These toys should be laundered before used by another child.**
- **Do not share toys with other groups of children, unless they are washed and sanitized before moved from one group to the other.**
- **Set aside toys that need to be cleaned.**
- **Children books, like other paper based materials are not considered high risk for transmission.**

# What Does the Hybrid Schedule Look Like?



	<b>Cohort A</b>	<b>Cohort B</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Face to Face</b>	<b>Remote Learning</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Remote Learning</b>	<b>Face to Face</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Remote Learning</b>	<b>Remote Learning</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Face to Face</b>	<b>Remote Learning</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Remote Learning</b>	<b>Face to Face</b>

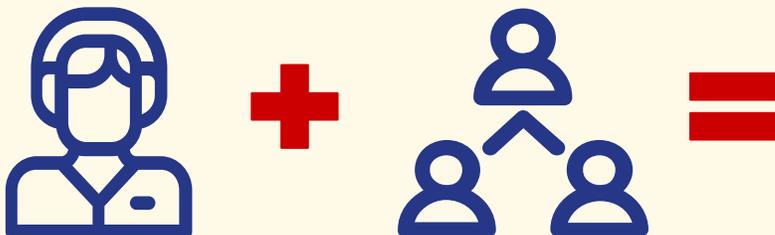
## Remote Learning Days

- Students lead their own learning through Google classroom and remote learning opportunities regardless of connectivity.
- Teachers will be available during set times throughout the day to respond to student needs.

## Face-to-Face Days

- Differentiated grouping based on student needs
- Targeted instruction with reduced class size

## Remote and F-toF Blend



Combine best practices from virtual and in-person instruction to create robust teaching and learning experiences in both environments.

# What Does Remote Learning Look Like?

Students stay home and receive 100% of their instruction through remote learning.



Instruction will be provided through a variety of formats. Accountability measures will be in place to ensure progress monitoring and academic growth.

