

Madison Parish School Board



Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Madison Parish School District will continue to adhere to the 2019-2020 Student Guidelines and Policies Handbook until further notice. The handbook has been updated with an addendum for Covid-19 Guidelines. Attached you will find a copy of the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency Information. Please contact your scholar(s) school's administrator, if you have any questions or concerns. The Madison Parish School District would like to thank you for trusting us to provide your scholar(s) with a quality education.

“Madison Matters: A New Beginning Together!”

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting public health emergency for the 2020-2021 school year, the Superintendent is authorized to develop, implement, and maintain administrative regulations and procedures necessary to protect employees, scholars, and others from the conditions giving rise to the declared emergency.

In the development and implementation of necessary administrative regulations and procedures for safely reopening schools and for maintaining the safety of employees, scholars, and others when schools are open during a health emergency, the Superintendent and staff shall rely upon the practices, guidelines, and suggestions of the Louisiana Department of Education in coordination with the Louisiana Department of Health. The Superintendent is authorized to develop and revise plans for reopening schools or maintaining the safety of employees, scholars, and others and to make required submissions to governmental authorities with regard thereto.

In the event that the Superintendent develops or implements administrative rules, regulations, or procedures, or alters the school reopening plan in any substantive fashion, he/she shall advise the Board of such developments no later than the next regular meeting of the Board.

The Madison Parish School Board adopts and incorporates as if set forth fully herein the required provisions of Chapter 4 of Bulletin 741, *Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators*, for the 2020-2021 school year and shall abide by the required health and safety standards included therein or in any amendments thereto.¹

In no event shall the Board's reopening plan for the 2020-2021 school year be interpreted to include any standard less than that required by Chapter 4 of Bulletin 741, including the following standards:

A. Group Sizes

1. The maximum group sizes that may convene indoors in a single room, irrespective of room size, or outdoors at any given time are as follows:

- a. Phase One – 10 individuals;
- b. Phase Two – 25 individuals; and
- c. Phase Three – 50 individuals.

These maximum numbers shall include scholars, teachers, and others who are present.

2. Group Composition

a. Younger scholars, who are not required to wear face coverings or not capable of maintaining a physical distance from other scholars or adults, will be assigned to static groups. This includes, at a minimum, scholars in grades 2 or lower. The static group composition will be maintained for as long as possible over the course of the 2020-2021 school year.

i. *Physical Distance* means the act of an individual maintaining a space of 6 feet or more from another individual.

ii. *Static Group* means a group whose composition of scholars and adults does not change.

b. The composition of a group may change if scholars are able to maintain a physical distance of at least six (6) feet from other scholars and adults in a classroom or indoor setting, to the greatest extent possible.

c. scholars with disabilities will continue to receive special education and related services in the least restrictive environment. The reopening plan will factor in any additional service providers who may need to enter the classroom, scholars who may need to receive services outside the classroom (e.g., resource, APE), and/or scholars who may need to receive services through alternate instructional methods.

B. Physical Standards for the Use of School Facilities

1. If a group convenes indoors, it must convene in a room enclosed by a wall or partition. This includes large rooms, such as gymnasiums or auditoriums, which may include more than one group at a time if each group is separated by a wall or partition.

2. If a group convenes outdoors, a wall or partition is not required but each group must remain separated from any other group(s). School principals are given the authority to create and implement recess schedules so that groups remain separated and do not exceed maximum group sizes.

3. To the greatest extent possible, each school shall avoid crowding at entry and exit points of each building, classroom, and restroom and shall, to the extent possible, maintain group sizes and physical distance requirements.

4. If a room is used by more than one group in a single day, high-touch surfaces contained in that room must be cleaned before and after use by each group.

a. *High-Touch Surfaces* means surfaces that are touched frequently, such as door handles, bathroom fixtures, drinking fountains, railings, desks, and other surfaces in school facilities or on school buses.

C. Monitoring scholars and Adults for Symptoms of COVID-19

1. Upon arriving at the school or workplace facility, each employee, scholar, and other person must be assessed for symptoms of COVID-19. As defined by the CDC, such symptoms would include cough, trouble breathing, and/or temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher. Procedures for assessment would include physical observation and taking of temperature of each employee, scholar, or other upon his/her arrival on campus. Each principal/workplace supervisor shall determine the most efficient way to accomplish such assessments at his/her school or work site.

2. Each principal/workplace supervisor shall establish an area used to isolate anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Any employee or visitor exhibiting such symptoms will not be allowed to remain on the campus/worksites and shall be asked to immediately depart. Any scholar exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 shall be directed to the Isolation Area for observation until picked up by a parent/custodian or until the scholar is authorized to drive or walk home. The Isolation Area must be cleaned after it is occupied by any individual exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

D. Environmental Cleaning and Personal Hygiene

1. High-touch surfaces and bathrooms must be cleaned multiple times per day. School bus seats, seat backs, handrails, and other high contact surfaces on school buses shall be cleaned after each use of those buses, i.e., after morning routes, afternoon routes, and special routes.

2. Employees, scholars, and school or workplace visitors should wash or sanitize their hands upon arrival at the school or workplace, at least every two (2) hours thereafter, before and after eating, and before exiting the school facility. In addition, scholars should wash or sanitize their hands before and after usage of indoor or outdoor playground equipment.

E. Face Coverings

1. While inside any school facility or on school buses, all scholars in grades 3 through 12 and all employees and visitors are required to wear face coverings to the greatest extent possible and practicable.

a. *Face Covering* means a piece of material used to cover both the nose and mouth for the purpose of forming a barrier to droplets or airborne particles that are coughed, sneezed, or exhaled when talking. Face coverings are meant to protect both the wearer of the face covering and surrounding individuals.

b. The face covering is considered part of the school uniform/dress code for both scholars and employees (see Board policy/scholar handbook/employee handbook). The failure/refusal of employees and scholars to wear such face coverings shall result in their

immediate separation from others and, for scholars, notification to the parent/custodian. Thereafter, the incident shall be treated like all other violations of Board policy and/or the scholar/employee dress/grooming code.

c. Face coverings shall be solid in color and shall contain no pictures, writings, or messages of any kind. Notwithstanding this requirement, face coverings that contain references to the school system (i.e., name or insignia) or individual schools within the system (i.e., name or mascot), which are provided to scholars by the school system or by individual schools within the system, may be worn.

2. While inside school facilities or on school buses, scholars in grades pre-Kindergarten through 2 may wear face coverings but are not required to do so.

3. While inside school facilities or on school buses, children under two (2) years old may wear face coverings but are not required to do so.

4. Face coverings need not be worn by employees or scholars who are outdoors and who are able to maintain social distancing of at least six (6) feet.

5. Notwithstanding the above, any individual who contends that he/she has a disability or condition which prohibits him/her from wearing a face covering inside school facilities or on school buses shall have the right to seek an exception to such requirement through the procedures outlined in Section J(1), (2), and (3) below.

F. Hygienic Supplies

1. scholars, employees, and school visitors shall be provided adequate access to hygienic supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content, disinfectant wipes or spray, paper towels, and tissues. The quantity of hygienic supplies in each school or work location must be appropriate to the needs of that facility, and the quantity of hygienic supplies in individual classrooms must be appropriate to the role and the number and age of scholars or adults in such classroom.

2. scholars and employees are expected to bring their own face coverings with them to school and/or work each day. However, disposable face coverings shall be available at each school for scholars, employees, and guests who do not have their own coverings on a particular date.

G. Transportation

1. School buses used to transport scholars must not exceed the following maximum capacity requirements:

a. Phase One – 25%, including adults, of the maximum capacity of the bus as determined by the bus manufacturer;

b. Phase Two – 50%, including adults, of the maximum capacity of the bus as determined by the bus manufacturer; and

c. Phase Three – 75%, including adults, of the maximum capacity of the bus as determined by the bus manufacturer.

2. Passengers on a school bus must be spaced to the greatest extent possible as follows:

a. Phase One – Passengers must ride one (1) per seat except that members of the same household may sit in the same seat or adjacent seats. Every second seat on the bus must remain empty; and

b. Phases Two and Three – Passengers must be dispersed throughout the bus to maximize social distancing to the greatest extent possible.

H. scholar Programming Determinations

1. Each scholar placement determination as to whether distance or in-person education program should be made after consultation with the parent or custodian.

2. Each scholar placement determination should take into consideration a scholar's unique academic, social, emotional, familial, and medical needs, as identified by the scholar's parent or custodian.

3. Documentation of efforts made to communicate with parents or custodians about scholar programming, together with the results of such communications, shall be maintained.

I. Essential Visitors to School Facilities

1. Essential visitors are individuals who must enter schools or early learning centers in order to conduct visits in accordance with Louisiana law or policy. Essential visitors include, but are not limited to, individuals who:

a. Conduct *CLASS*® observations;

b. Observe teacher candidates as part of the teacher preparation quality rating system; or

c. Provide essential support or services including, but not limited to, early intervention services, special education services, or mental health consultations.

2. Essential visitors must comply with the minimum health and safety standards contained in this policy including, without limitation, hand washing, temperature checks, and the wearing of face coverings.

J. Medical or Disability Impact Exceptions

As provided in Section 401(E) and Section 403(I) of Bulletin 741, the Board recognizes that there may be medical or disability impact exceptions to one or more of these standards specific to a given scholar, employee, or other person, and such exceptions will be considered on an individual basis as set forth below.

1. In order for a scholar to be granted an exception based upon a medical or disability issue:

a. The parent or legal guardian of the scholar shall submit a written application, by letter, memorandum, or email, to the principal of the school in which the scholar is or will be enrolled.

b. The application shall identify the specific provision(s) of Chapter 4 to which the exception is applicable.

c. The application shall include documentation from a qualified medical professional or healthcare provider identifying the medical or disability issue that the applicant contends affords the need for the exception.

d. The application shall also include a reference to whether the exception is related to a service or accommodation afforded in an existing Section 504 plan, individualized education plan (IEP), or individualized health plan (IHP).

e. If the application is related to an existing Section 504 plan, IEP, or IHP, the principal shall convene a meeting of the School Building Level Committee (SBLC) to review the application and the existing Section 504 plan, IEP, or IHP to determine if an exception is needed or whether the plan can be modified to alleviate the need for the exception. The SBLC shall provide its recommendation to the principal, who shall forward that recommendation with the application to the Superintendent.

f. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall make a decision on the application within three (3) working days of his/her receipt of it.

g. The written decision of the Superintendent or designee shall be provided by letter, memorandum, or email to the applicant, and the decision of the Superintendent or designee shall be final.

h. All documentation related to the application shall be incorporated into the scholar's school record and, if applicable, made a part of the scholar's Section 504 plan, IEP, or IHP.

2. In order for an employee to be granted an exception based on a medical or disability issue:

a. The employee shall submit a written application, by letter, memorandum, or email, to his/her immediate supervisor.

b. The application shall identify the specific provision(s) of Chapter 4 to which the exception is applicable.

c. The application shall include documentation from a qualified medical professional or healthcare provider identifying the medical or disability issue that the applicant contends affords the need for the exception.

d. If the immediate supervisor of the employee is not the Superintendent, the immediate supervisor shall promptly forward to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee the application for review and consideration, and the Superintendent or his/her designee shall make a decision within three (3) working days of his/her receipt of the application.

e. If the Superintendent is the immediate supervisor of the employee seeking an exception, then the Superintendent or his/her designee shall make a decision on the application within three (3) working days of his/her receipt of it.

f. The written decision of the Superintendent or designee shall be provided by letter, memorandum, or email to the applicant, and the decision of the Superintendent or designee shall be final.

3. In order for anyone other than a scholar or employee to be granted an exception based on a medical or disability issue:

a. The individual seeking the exception must meet with the school principal or worksite supervisor to discuss the reason for and basis of such exception and to determine whether there are any possible accommodations that can be made. In the event that a reasonable accommodation cannot be identified by the principal or worksite supervisor, then the individual seeking the exception can submit a written application to the Superintendent or his/her designee for additional consideration.

b. In the application to the Superintendent or designee, the applicant shall identify the specific provision(s) of Chapter 4 to which the exception is applicable and shall include documentation from a qualified medical professional or healthcare provider identifying the medical or disability issue that the applicant contends affords the need for the exception.

c. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall make a decision on the application within three (3) working days of his/her receipt of it.

d. The written decision of the Superintendent or designee shall be provided by letter, memorandum, or email to the applicant, and the decision of the Superintendent or designee shall be final.

K. Meals

Standards regarding group sizes (Section A) and physical standards for the use of facilities (Section B) must be followed for meals in the cafeteria and elsewhere.

Breakfast and lunch for each scholar shall be prepared by the cafeteria staff under the direction of the cafeteria manager. The cafeteria manager shall be responsible to see that meals are distributed to scholars in such a manner as to limit contact between the cafeteria staff and scholars.

New Policy: July 2020

Ref: Louisiana Revised Statute Annotated Section 17:81, 17:439.1, 17:3391; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Department of Education.