

2020-21 Returning to School Guide

Polk County Public Schools is implementing numerous protocols to provide a safe and healthy environment when students and staff return to school. Here's a look at the measures we're putting into place from the bus stop to the classroom and beyond.

Buses

- Drivers will check their temperatures daily. Anyone with a fever or symptoms related to COVID-19 must not report to work.
- Parents and students are being asked to monitor their temperatures and symptoms. They should not come to the bus stop if they are feeling ill.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed on every bus. Students will use hand sanitizer as they enter and exit.
- Drivers and students must wear face coverings while on the bus.
- To minimize exposure, students will be loaded from rear to front, and unloaded from front to rear.
- Students will be assigned seats and socially distanced to the greatest extent possible.
- Weather permitting, buses will travel with several windows and roof hatches open to allow fresh air to circulate.
- School buses will be sanitized multiple times a day.

Schools and Classrooms

- Students and staff should check their temperatures and symptoms daily. Anyone with a fever or symptoms related to COVID-19 should not come to school.
- Students and staff will receive COVID-19 training, including how to identify symptoms and reduce transmission by properly washing their hands and wearing face coverings.
- Students and staff members will be reminded throughout the day to practice proper hygiene.
- Hygiene signage will be installed at all school sites.
- Random temperature checks of students and staff will be conducted throughout the day.
- Students in grades K-12 and staff must wear face coverings at times required by the district.
- Nonessential furniture and equipment will be removed to allow for maximum social distancing.
- Students will avoid sharing devices and supplies.
- One-way traffic patterns will be in place where and when feasible.
- Facilities will be cleaned thoroughly and regularly. High-touch areas will be disinfected throughout the day. Deep cleaning will take place when there is a confirmed case.
- Air conditioning filters will be changed more frequently.
- Hand sanitizer will be available at locations throughout each campus.
- Students will be socially distanced to the greatest extent possible.

Cafeterias

- High-touch points such as the tray slide, milk box and keypad will be frequently sanitized.
- Tables will be sanitized between lunch periods.
- Decals and tape will be used on the floor to keep students socially distanced while in line.
- Students will be socially distanced at tables.
- Hand sanitizer will be available.
- Designated entrances and exits will control traffic flow and minimize exposure.
- Schools will be encouraged to serve breakfast outdoors or in classrooms for social distancing.
- Disposable cutlery and trays will be used.
- All condiments will be pre-portioned. No self-serve dispensers will be used.
- There will be no self-service bars.
- Menu offerings will be streamlined to expedite the serving line.

School Clinics

- Clinic staff will wear personal protective equipment as appropriate for the treatment or screening being administered.
- Isolation areas will be established to separate symptomatic individuals from standard clinic operations.

Common Areas

- Gym equipment will be regularly disinfected.
- Only non-contact sports will be utilized in physical education classes.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in common areas including gyms, libraries and cafeterias.
- Common areas will be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- High-touch points (light switches, door handles) will be disinfected throughout the day.
- When feasible, these areas will be used as classrooms to maximize social distancing.
- Students and staff will be socially distanced in these areas to the greatest extent possible.

Face Coverings

- Students in grades K-12 and staff must wear face coverings at times required by a district.
- Face coverings must cover both the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the face.
- Students and staff may wear face shields in addition to face coverings.
- Face coverings must comply with general dress code and school uniform requirements.
- It is recommended that students in pre-K also wear face coverings.
- Students who have medical or other issues that prevent them from wearing face coverings will be exempt.
- Students and staff will provide their own face coverings. They will be provided one if needed.

Students with Disabilities

- Students with IEPs, 504 plans, EPs, ELL plans, etc., who participate in Campus Learning will have their needs met at school. Protocols will be in place to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- Students with IEPs, 504 plans, EPs, ELL plans, etc., who participate in Campus eSchool will have their needs met via virtual supports.

COVID-19 Response

- The school district will work closely with the Florida Department of Health in Polk County to notify school communities about a confirmed case. Parents and staff members will be notified by automated telephone call and email, social media and post to the school website.
- Individuals who have come into direct contact with the positive case will receive specific instructions on what to do next (quarantine, isolate, monitor symptoms, etc.).
- Students and staff who become ill or must quarantine/isolate who were participating in Campus Learning will transition to Campus eSchool until they are able to return to campus.
- Students and staff members who either test positive or come into direct contact with a positive case will not be allowed to return to school until after a specified period of time and improvement in their symptoms. Specific information will be provided on a case-by-case basis.

Additional Precautions

- The district continues to purchase and stockpile supplies of personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, face coverings, etc.
- Field trips and large-group gatherings will not be allowed until further notice.
- Visitors and volunteers will be limited.

For more information, visit polkschoolsfl.com/reopening.