

MVSD

Reopening Guidance



INTRODUCTION

Thanks to Vermont's high vaccination rate and the rescission of all executive orders relating to COVID 19, Vermont Schools will be operating in a much more traditional fashion for Fall.

On 8/5/2021 we received a memorandum from Dan French, Secretary of Education and Mark Levine, Commissioner of Health, with the written expectations for the COVID -19 prevention measures for Fall 2021. To keep our students and staff healthy, the Missisquoi Valley School District will be requiring the implementation of these measures.

The measures include:

Stay Home When Sick practices, Surveillance Testing, continued Contact Tracing and Wearing Masks inside our schools. Specifically, masks will be required of all staff and students when indoors until further notice.

As required by the Agency of Education, we are publishing the guidelines for reopening on our school district website. Should you have any feedback regarding this plan, please feel free to fill out this [input survey](#).

Thank you for your continued support of our schools.

Julie Regimbal, Superintendent
Missisquoi Valley School District



Protocols for In-Person Learning

All of our schools will be operating 5 days a week for in person learning next school year. In order to do so safely, the following procedures will be in place:

Transportation and Entering School Buildings (NEW)

- In accordance with the CDC, wearing a mask on a school bus is required.
- Before sending your child to school we ask that you check your child to determine if they have a fever or any symptoms consistent with COVID-19. We also ask that you not send your child to school if they have been exposed to COVID -19. For everyone's well being, it is important that children and staff who have been exposed or are showing signs of illness, stay home.
- Transportation on school buses should look the same as in previous years. Some families who can transport their children to school may still want to do so, particularly if their child is not vaccinated.
- Students riding the bus will still have assigned seating for the purpose of contact tracing. As always, it will be important that any changes to your child's pickup or drop off be communicated well in advance.
- To protect students' safety and reduce the ability of students to congregate students will enter and exit each building through assigned entry points.
- Arrival and dismissal times and routines for students may still be adjusted to reduce students congregating together and support contact tracing.

Crossroads and the Afterschool Program (NEW)

All Crossroads and Afterschool programming will be in person beginning this school year. Hopefully students will be outside as much as possible. When outside students do not need to wear a mask or keep physically distant. When inside all students and staff will need to follow the same rules in place during the school day. While students and staff are required to wear a mask during the day at school, the same will apply to the Crossroads program, for example. Please reach out to your child's school based coordinator for more information about general requirements.

Facial Coverings and Distancing (NEW)

- All students, staff and visitors will be required to wear facial coverings (masks) when indoors until further notice.
- The Agency of Education and the Department of health have advised that mask wearing in schools be tied to the rate of student vaccination in a school building. At this time there is no clear process for this standard. Therefore we will be requiring masks until there is clarity of this process and notification that individual schools have met the standard for the safe removal of masks.
- The CDC does require all individuals to wear a mask riding the school bus regardless of their vaccination status. [CDC Requirement](#)
- Physical distancing of students is no longer required. Should there be an increase in cases during the fall or winter months, schools are prepared to implement greater physical distancing protocols.

Hygiene and Cleaning (NEW)

- Students and staff will be frequently reminded about the importance of proper handwashing. We will place hand sanitizer throughout the building and ensure all our bathrooms are properly stocked with soap and towels. Signs will be placed throughout the building to reinforce good hygiene practices.
- Our schools will continue to be cleaned daily. Students and staff may be required to clean their
- Should an outbreak occur in the future, our MVSD Facility team will review and implement appropriate strategies from our facility re-occupancy plan.

Outdoor Recess and Athletics (NEW)

- Face masks will not be required outside for any activities including recess and athletics.
- All playground equipment and regular outdoor activities will be accessible to students without physical distancing requirements.
- Students will be prompted to wash their hands before and after recess.
- The Vermont Principals Association and Vermont Agency of Education will provide recommendations for any indoor athletic activities.



Visitors and Public Use of Facilities (NEW)

- Visitors and volunteers will be allowed in school in accordance with the school administration's procedures. We will require volunteers and visitors to wear a face mask and follow all requests to sign in for the purpose of contact tracing.
- Visitors and volunteers should not come to school if they are unwell.
- The public use of facilities is now allowed in accordance with each schools' facility use request process as long those using the facility comply with all school COVID protocols.
- The schools may need to react to COVID 19 conditions and minimize the access to our buildings by outside groups and organizations.

Student Services

- Students who have chronic medical conditions will have their individual situation assessed by the school nurse. Individual Health Care Plans (IHPs), Individual Education Plans (IEPs), 504 Plans, and any other relevant documentation will be reviewed. Schools will contact the student's parents/guardians as well as the student's physician if needed.
- For students with IEPs of 504 plans, the child's team will meet to determine the nature, extent, and service delivery model. Any unique needs for children with disabilities relating to the recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic will be addressed in that students plan.
- More detailed information about the provision of special education or other needed student supports will be provided families at your request.



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Food Services (New)

- Schools will still be offering Universal Meals to all students. Breakfast and lunch are both available at no charge.
- At this time, students will be eating lunch in the cafeteria. There will be protocols in place for assigned seating or sign in to help with any necessary contact tracing.

When Someone is Sick (NEW)

- Any individual who shows any signs or symptoms of illness should stay home. Parents are encouraged to contact their school nurse if their child is home ill with any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19. Individuals should not return to school unless they are cleared through the school nurse.
- Students and employees with any of the following symptoms of COVID-19 should consider remaining home.
 - Cough, Fatigue, Fever or chills, Headache,
 - Known close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19,
 - Measured temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater,
 - Nausea or vomiting,
 - New loss of taste or smell,
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, or sore throat.
- Any unvaccinated student or employee who begins to exhibit COVID-19 like symptoms must report to the school nurse immediately.
- The school nurse will assess the student and call a family member when it is appropriate to request that the child be picked up immediately.
- If an unvaccinated student or employee has symptoms of COVID-19 and has had a test, they should rest at home and not come to school until they receive their results.

If Someone Tests positive for COVID-19

- We will follow all Vermont Department of Health guidelines for notification of students and staff when there is a positive case of COVID 19 in school. [This will include contact tracing, notification of close contacts and quarantining of unvaccinated individuals.](#)
- We will continue to update our COVID 19 Dashboard on our website with confirmed positive cases. That site can be accessed here [MVSD COVID DASHBOARD](#)

Quarantine Situations

- Under the state of emergency we were able to call a student, “present” even when they were learning remotely. That is no longer the case. If a student is required to quarantine, they will be considered absent and follow the usual protocols for a student home with an illness.
- If a classroom is required to quarantine due to a COVID 19, those students will also be considered absent, but that would **not** indicate a truancy issue. We may not be able to provide remote instruction on those days and we are awaiting more guidance. Students should have access to activities to keep them learning.

Surveillance Testing (NEW)

- This fall, the Vermont Department of Health is offering no-cost COVID-19 surveillance testing to students and staff in Vermont schools. It is the strong recommendation of the Health Department that districts/schools participate in this testing to support in-person learning, including extracurricular activities, and monitor for the presence of COVID-19 among the largest unvaccinated population in our state.
- The program will be run through the state's testing vendor, CIC Health, which will be working directly with each school district. The tests themselves – self-administered nasal swabs – will be familiar to those who participated in teacher testing during 2020-21.
- All students and staff ages 5 and up, regardless of vaccination status, will be eligible for testing. Please note: students 5-7 are only eligible for testing if they are swabbed by a clinical staff member (ie. a school nurse).
- Testing will be opt-in at the student level. Schools will collect and record parental consent for testing using a consent form from CIC Health.
- Unlike the school staff testing last year, there will be no registration necessary for this testing program.
- Results will be available to students and parents via a private login to a personal testing portal. In the event of a positive test, the family will receive a call from the Vermont Department of Health.
- If a case is determined to have been infectious while at school, the district administration will be notified, and the school will be offered additional follow up testing in the following days.

Vaccination Clinics (New)

“The best way to keep students safe and healthy – and to ensure a smooth return to full, in person learning is to make sure they are vaccinated if they are age 12 or older. The vaccines are safe and highly effective at preventing the most serious effects of COVID-19, including against the Delta variant. The sooner your students get a first dose, the sooner they will be closer to full vaccine protection.”

-Agency of Education COVID-19 Response team

MVU will be hosting walk-in vaccine clinics in the gymnasium on August 30, September 20 and October 11th. The clinics will be run by AMCare.

A full list of clinics, clinic hours and registration information can be found at healthvermont.gov/MyVaccine

Resources:

[Memo from Dr. Levine and Dan French](#)

[Memo: COVID-19 Prevention Measures for Fall 2021](#)

[*A Strong and Healthy Year*](#)

[*CDC Requirements for Public Transportation*](#)

[*Getting the COVID 19 Vaccine*](#)

[*Instructional Reopening for Fall 2021*](#)

[*Vermont Department of Health guidance for PK-12 Schools*](#)

[*Child Care and Out of School Programs*](#)

[CDC recommendations for reopening schools](#)

[American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

[How to Reopen Schools: A 10-Point Plan Putting Equity at the Center](#)

[REUNITE RENEW THRIVE](#)

[VSBIT Considerations for Facility Directors](#)

[Proper Handwashing Video](#) & [Proper way to wear Cloth Facial Covering Video](#)

[MVSD Reopening Framework](#)

[MVSD Facility Re Occupancy plan](#)