

MI SAFE SCHOOLS



MICHIGAN'S 2020-21 RETURN TO SCHOOL ROADMAP

EDUCATORS AND PARENTS HAVE SHOWN INCREDIBLE LEADERSHIP DURING THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES.

While there are still significant unknowns about the future of COVID-19 and its impact on Michigan, the Governor is committed to providing the guidance, support, and clarity that is needed to safely bring students back to the classroom for in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. In doing so, we will continue to put safety first, leveraging science, data, and public health evidence to inform the decisions we make to serve each and every student in Michigan well.

GOVERNOR GRETCHEN WHITMER HAS RELEASED THE MI SAFE SCHOOLS RETURN TO SCHOOL ROADMAP.

The MI Safe Schools Roadmap is a comprehensive document to help districts create local plans for in-person and remote learning in the fall. The Roadmap outlines a number of safety protocols for schools to implement in each phase of the Governor's MI Safe Start Plan. The Governor also signed Executive Order 2020-142, which provides the formal legal frameworks to implement the Roadmap.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2020-142 REQUIRES SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO ADOPT A COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLAN.

The COVID-19 preparedness and response plan will be prepared by districts and will lay out how districts will protect students and educators across various phases of the MI Safe Start Plan. The MI Safe Schools Return to School Roadmap offers guidelines as to the types of safety protocols that will be required or recommended at each phase. Recognizing that these protocols require funding, the governor also announced that she is allocating \$256 million to support the districts in implementing their local plans. The safety protocols detailed in the MI Safe Schools Roadmap include guidance on the use of Personal Protective Equipment, proper hand hygiene techniques, cleaning/disinfecting, spacing in classrooms, screening for symptoms, athletics, and more. The Roadmap also recognizes the impact COVID-19 has had on students' and educators' mental health, and offers guidance on how schools can address this issue.

MI SAFE SCHOOLS FAQ

What is the role of my local school district and school board in school reopening?

The Governor will determine the “when” and “where”—whether schools can reopen (or need to close) for in-person instruction. However, your local school officials, including district superintendents and school boards, will determine the “how”—the mode of instruction (in-person, hybrid, or remote), each grade’s curriculum, and support services for students and staff—based on the parameters established by the Governor and local needs and context.

Will my child be required to wear a facial covering in school?

Both the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and MDHHS have concluded that facial coverings help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to others, especially those at higher risk of illness. As such, your child may be required to wear a facial covering, depending on the child’s grade and which phase their district is in. Schools may choose to implement stronger safety protocols to further minimize spread of COVID-19.

- Students in grades PreK-5 are not required to wear a facial covering in classrooms.
- Any student who cannot medically tolerate a facial covering must not be required to wear one.
- Facial coverings are not required, but strongly recommended in Phase 5 of the MI Safe Start Plan.
- In Phase 4 of the MI Safe Start Plan, facial coverings are required for:
 - PreK-12 students while on school transportation.
 - Students in grades 6-12 at all times except during meals.
 - Students in grades PreK-5, when in hallways and common areas.

Will my child’s teacher be required to wear a facial covering in school?

In certain phases, yes.

- In Phase 5 of the MI Safe Schools Plan facial coverings are not required.
- In Phase 4 of the MI Safe Start Plan, teachers and staff are required to wear facial coverings, except during meals.
- Any teacher or staff who cannot medically tolerate a facial covering must not be required to wear one.
- Schools may choose to implement stronger safety protocols to minimize spread of COVID-19.

Will my student have their temperature checked before getting on the bus or entering the school building?

The MI Safe Schools Roadmap does not require schools to check a student’s temperature. However, schools may choose to implement stronger safety protocols than those required by the Roadmap.

What about sports?

School athletics may continue in Phases 4-6, with some required health and safety protocols. Schools will be directed follow guidance published by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and the National Federation of State High School Associations.

What about other extracurricular activities (e.g. band, choir, after-school programs)?

Extracurricular activities may continue in Phases 4-6, with some required health and safety protocols.

MI SAFE SCHOOLS FAQ

Is my child going to have in-person instruction this year?

In developing this Roadmap, the Governor, the Return to School Advisory Council, and the COVID-19 Task Force's goal was to maximize the amount of in-person instruction students receive while preserving the health and safety of students, teachers, and staff. In doing so, the Roadmap outlines the minimum health and safety requirements necessary for schools to reopen for in-person instruction.

How can I get communication about changes as things develop?

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plans for each phase will need to be approved by your local school board and submitted to the State of Michigan. The plans are required to be posted prominently on the front page of the district's website so you can read and understand your school's plans for the 2020-2021 school year.

Am I allowed to visit my child at school?

The Roadmap does not prohibit parents or other visitors from entering school buildings, though schools may choose to limit parents and visitors entering school buildings to extenuating circumstances.

What happens if a child or staff gets sick at school?

Schools are required to cooperate with the local health department regarding implementing protocols for screening students and staff. If a student becomes ill with symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, schools should quarantine them until they can be picked up by a parent or guardian. Symptomatic students and staff should be kept home until they have tested negative or have been released from isolation according to CDC guidelines.

What happens if a child or staff tests positive for COVID-19? Will we know who tested positive?

- Following regular public health practice, the local health department will initiate contact tracing to identify those who were in close contact to the individual (i.e., less than six feet apart for at least fifteen minutes).
- Those who were in close contact will be asked to self-quarantine for up to 14 days after exposure. Local health officials, depending on situation, may identify other exposure situations that require quarantine. School staff and officials, in accordance with federal and state privacy laws, are barred from disclosing student and staff health information, including whether a specific individual tested positive for COVID-19.

