

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Frequently Asked Questions

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Frequently Asked Questions
March 16, 2020

Why did Muncie Community Schools (MCS) decide to close?

In light of Governor Holcomb's request to slow the spread of COVID-19, MCS decided to implement e-Learning for students beginning today, Monday, March 16 through Friday, April 3. Spring Break falls between the two e-Learning weeks and begins on Monday, March 23- 27. There will not be any class assignments during spring break. We will continue to monitor COVID-19 and will provide updates regarding e-Learning or school closure by April 1.

How will I receive communication and updates from MCS Schools?

Any school closures or other emergency information will be communicated using the district's standard channels of communication, including phone calls, emails, text messages through School Messenger and the MCS Schools website and social media. Parents, guardians and staff should verify that their phone numbers and email addresses are correct in School Messenger and PowerSchool by calling your school's main office to ensure notifications are received.

Will Central Office and Schools be open for regular business during e-Learning?

Yes, the front office will be open. However, in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, we ask that you only come into the school for essential reasons. For example, picking up medicine, checking out a device and picking up learning packets are reasons to stop by the front office. If you need help with enrollment, student transfers, work permits, etc., we will be able to assist you via a phone call.

Will there be meal assistance for students while schools are closed?

MCS will offer breakfast and lunch meals for all families daily during the week of March 16-20 and March 30- April 3. There will not be meals available during spring break. Families will not need to get out of the car, a drive-thru will be set up for easy access at the following locations:

- Central High School, 801 N Walnut Street, Door 17
- Northside Middle School, 2400 W Bethel, Front Entrance
- Southside Middle School, 1601 E 26th Street, Front Entrance
- Longfellow Elementary School, 1900 E Centennial Avenue, Front Entrance

Breakfast will be distributed between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. Lunches will be distributed between 11:00 a.m., and 1:00 p.m. If you need further assistance, email Stephanie Bond at Stephanie.Bond@muncieschools.org. We are working with the Indiana Department of Education to find multiple ways to offer food to our families and will keep you informed of any changes with this plan.

How long will eLearning be in place for students?

At this time, MCS will hold eLearning from Monday, March 16 through March 20 and March 30 through April 3. Attendance will be taken for secondary students by logging into Schoology each eLearning day. Elementary attendance will be verified via teacher contact with students and/or parents. We will evaluate

delivery and engagement of eLearning at the conclusion of each week of blended at home instruction.

How will my student receive his/her class assignments?

Students will receive online instructional and at home content provided by their teachers either through Schoology or hard copy (learning packets) of content. Lesson packets were sent home on Friday. If you need a lesson packet, please stop by the front office at your school. These lessons will be interactive and relate to the curriculum for the specific class. Students will have access to their teachers via email or another method communicated by the teacher. Teachers will be contacting students or parents/guardians at least twice on a weekly basis. Elementary students will receive phone calls from teachers and middle/high students will receive communication via Schoology, email and/or personal phone calls. Teachers have scheduled office hours and will be available to assist on a daily basis.

On Monday, March 30, Auxilio will follow bus routes to deliver new learning packets and to pick up the completed learning packets. Currently, the bus will be at your assigned stop and the normal drop-off time.

A link to Schoology is available on the district website at muncieschools.org. If you need help with Schoology, email MCS.InstructionalCoach@muncieschools.org and you will receive guidance.

What is the availability of internet access in Muncie?

The Muncie Public Libraries have free internet and professionals who can help students. Additional internet sites include YMCA locations, Burger King, McDonald's, Panera Bread, Qdoba Mexican Grill, Ross Center, Starbucks and Taco Bell. You may access the MCS network via school parking lots.

If Comcast is your local service provider, effective Monday, March 16, Comcast has announced it is offering two months free to new Internet Essentials customers in response to recent and anticipated emergency measures associated with COVID-19. [Click here](#) for more details.

What if my student's Chromebook is not working properly while schools are closed?

Families should contact the MCS Helpdesk at 765-747-5485 or email mcs.itdept@muncieschools.org for assistance.

Will the schools be open if my student left something in their classroom and/or locker?

Yes, schools will be open. However, we request that people enter schools for essential reasons only.

My student takes medication during the school day. How can I pick up that medication?

Parents and guardians can retrieve their student's medication from their school nurse, if you have not already done so, on Monday, March 16 through Friday, March 23.

My student was scheduled to take ILEARN, IREAD, SAT, IAM. Will those tests be rescheduled upon student's return? We are anticipating additional guidance from the Indiana Department of Education and will communicate the plans for these assessments at a later date.

Will mental health support be available to students while schools are closed?

If your student is currently a client of Meridian Health please communicate with the therapist on times to meet during this closure.

If your student is not assigned a therapist through Meridian Health, but needs support while schools are closed, there are a number of free resources available 24/7.

- www.havehope.com or call 888.628.8255.
- <https://lookupindiana.org/> or call 800.284.8439.
- <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> or call 800.273.8255.
- If you have immediate concerns or are in danger, call 911.

Open Door will be maintaining regular hours and services.

What is the COVID-19 (Coronavirus)?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) virus, and we are learning more about it every day. There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. Symptoms include cough, fever and shortness of breath. In rare cases, COVID-19 can lead to severe respiratory problems, kidney failure or death.

What can I do to help prevent illness?

The most important thing you can do is remain calm, prepared, and informed. It also is important to take standard illness prevention tips. The same steps you take to reduce the spread of flu or other respiratory illnesses are key tools for reducing the spread of coronavirus.

How the public can help:

- Stay home when you are sick. The CDC recommends that you remain home until you are “fever free” for at least 24 hours.
- Seek medical attention if you are experiencing symptoms that cause concern.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, or by coughing into the inside of your elbow. Throw any used tissues away in trash.
- Avoid touching eyes, mouth and nose with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in and around your home.

Information is [available here](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

How do I explain COVID-19 to my family?

Don't be afraid to discuss COVID-19 with your children, but let them guide the conversation. It is important to provide facts without promoting a high level of stress. Remind your children that the adults are working to address this concern and give them actions they can take to protect themselves.

- **Early elementary school children** need brief, simple information that should balance COVID-19 facts with appropriate reassurances that their schools and homes are safe and the adults are there to help keep them healthy. Give simple examples of the steps people take every day to stop germs and stay healthy, such as washing hands. Use language such as “adults are working hard to keep you safe.”
- **Upper elementary and intermediate school children** will be more vocal in asking questions about whether they truly are safe and what will happen if COVID-19 comes to their school or

community. They may need assistance separating reality from rumor and fantasy. Discuss efforts of school and community leaders to prevent germs from spreading.

- **Middle school and high school children** are able to discuss the issue in a more in-depth (adult-like) fashion and can be referred directly to appropriate sources of COVID-19 facts. Provide honest, accurate, and factual information about the current status of COVID-19. Having such knowledge can help them feel a sense of control.

What is MCS doing to prevent the spread of germs?

MCS is using hospital grade disinfectants, and are using our electrostatic sprayers. We are thoroughly cleaning all surfaces, and paying extra-attention to high-tough points. Every desk, every classroom will be cleaned and disinfected.

What happens if a student or staff member is exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19?

While there have not been any confirmed cases in Delaware County or MCS, the district will follow local and state health department guidelines. If there is a confirmed case, we will report it to the Delaware County Health Department and the Indiana State Department of Health and follow their recommendations.

Will school and district-sponsored trips be canceled due to concerns of COVID-19?

Yes, school and district-sponsored travel has been canceled.

What about travel over Spring Break?

Any person returning from Spring Break travel with COVID-19 symptoms may be required to self-quarantine. The CDC has issued no official recommendations regarding domestic travel at this time, but all travelers should practice general preventative measures. Regarding international travel, the CDC recommends avoiding nonessential travel to countries with a level 3 travel health notice. Additionally, anyone returning from countries with a CDC level 2 or 3 travel health notice may be instructed to self-quarantine for 14 days. For more information on this, [click here](#).

Will MCS continue to host/attend events?

At this time, all scheduled events have been canceled until further notice.

Will athletics/extra-curricular practices continue while schools are closed?

All activities held at MCS facilities are canceled until further notice.

Suggested Resources:

[Indiana Department of Health](#)
[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
[Delaware County Health Department](#)