



Fort Payne City Schools

2021-2022 Path to Reopening

Message from Superintendent

Fort Payne City Schools is committed to providing high-quality instruction, a safe/clean learning environment, and mental health support for all students and staff. We are looking forward to the start of the 2021-2022 school year and are working diligently to create a plan that supports our reopening. We know that we cannot anticipate every challenge or obstacle that might present itself but be assured that we are making every effort to address a safe start and daily routine for the school setting. We are working in conjunction with health experts, state officials, school leaders, industry specialists, families, and others to be as prepared as possible. We thank you for your continued support as we work together to make this a safe and successful school year!

Brian L. Jett

Plan Highlights

School start date

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graph TD; A[School start date] --> B[Traditional Learning or Virtual Learning options for Parents/Guardians]; B --> C[Traditional School Day]; C --> D[Transportation Guidelines]; D --> E[*School officials in partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health will monitor health conditions and determine if one or all of our campuses transition to a blended learning model if necessary];
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Traditional Learning or Virtual Learning options for Parents/Guardians

Traditional School Day

Transportation Guidelines

*School officials in partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health will monitor health conditions and determine if one or all of our campuses transition to a blended learning model if necessary

Parent Communications Regarding COVID-19

All communications related to FPCS will be communications to parents/guardians through the following methods:

FPCS Website: www.fpcsk12.com

Email

Social Media-Facebook:
[www.facebook.com\fortpayneschools](https://www.facebook.com/fortpayneschools)

Voice messaging system

Traditional media outlets

Traditional Face-to-Face Instruction/ Start Date

- School will proceed with normal hours of operation unless otherwise notified by FPCS.
- All new and returning students in grades K-12 will not register onsite. In-District registration forms can be accessed at www.fpcsk12.com Students will return to school on **August 10th**.
- Parents are encouraged to bring students to school and not ride the bus, if possible.
- Additional information regarding individual school returns will be available on school websites.

Virtual School Option and Registration Information

- In response to COVID-19, Fort Payne City Schools will continue to implement a virtual school option for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. Virtual learning has been an option for FPHS students for several years.
- Virtual options will be available for any student in grades 9-12. All other virtual options will be a school level committee decision based on medical recommendations/needs and determined to be in the student's best interest.

How will the Virtual School Work?


The FPCS Virtual School will work much like our traditional school with the exception that students will work from home. Classes will start in August and follow our traditional school calendar. FPCS Teachers will be working daily with students through assignments that provide a mixture of both interactive and independent assignment. The curriculum utilized will be Edegnuity in grades 9-12 and will focus on Alabama Standards. The FPCS traditional grading system will be utilized, regardless of where the student is taking the class. Virtual learning will include rigorous instruction, high expectations of student performance, and meeting all grade-level standards. Students must participate in all required state testing events.

Information regarding virtual options may be found at:


[Virtual Learning / FPCS Virtual Plan and Application \(fpcsk12.com\)](https://www.fpcsk12.com/virtual-learning/fpcs-virtual-plan-and-application)

Additional Considerations

Extracurricular Activities – Students must meet the same extracurricular activity eligibility requirements as students enrolled in the traditional day program, including, but not limited to, any applicable Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) requirements.



All elective courses may not be offered to full-time virtual program students.



Students can be required to be on campus for certain events such as class meetings, state testing, or other activities designated by the school principal.

How to Sign Up?

Information regarding virtual options may be found at:

[Virtual Learning / FPCS Virtual Plan and Application \(www.fpcsk12.com\)](http://www.fpcsk12.com)

Parents in grades 9-12 who have declared each student's preference for virtual instruction, or those who are interested in doing so may go to the website to complete the Virtual School Full-Time Registration form for 2021-2022.

Assessments

Formative and State Required Assessments

- All students will participate in all formative assessments. This includes both traditional in-person and FPHS virtual students. Virtual students will be required to come on campus for state assessments.
- Grades K-3 will participate this fall in literacy assessments per state law.

Expectations for FPCS Campuses

Social Distancing guidelines will be implemented at all facilities as feasible. Teachers, staff, students and visitors should keep a social distance of 3 feet in all areas of the school when it is practicable.

Students could reduce social distancing to three feet in the classroom setting if all individuals are masked.

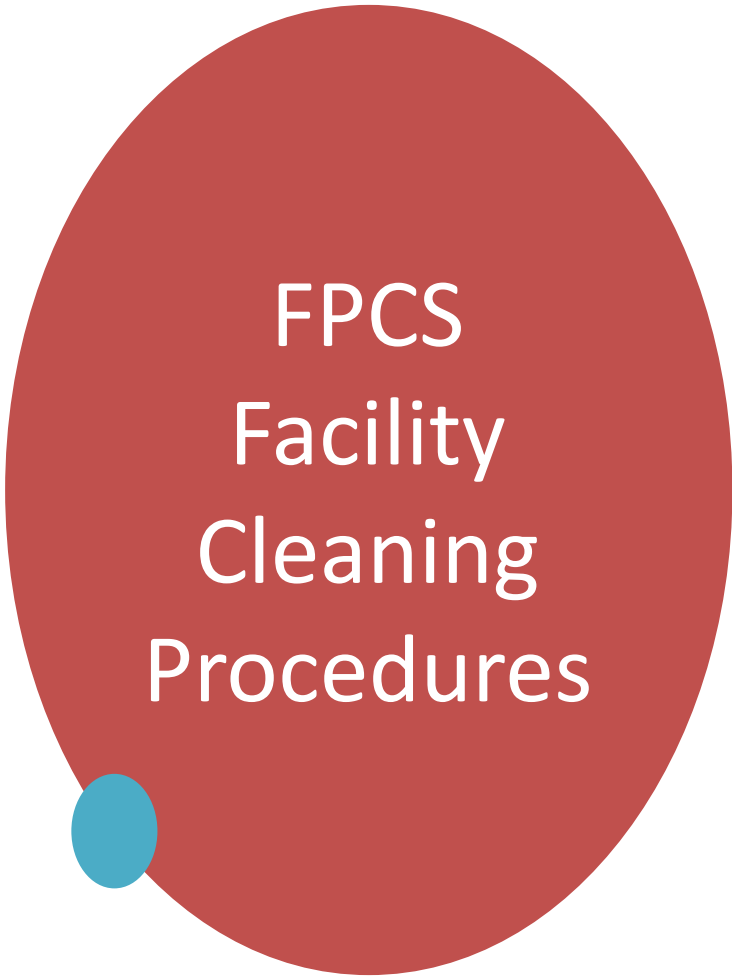
Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be issued to all employees and will be required to be worn on school campus at all times when six feet distance cannot be maintained.

Employees are required to self-check for illness and should stay home if they are sick. Parents of students should check for illness each day prior to school. Students should not report to school sick.

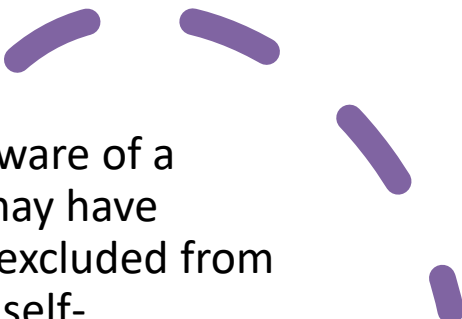
Seating Charts

Seating charts will
be required for all
classrooms at
FPCS

Seating charts will
be required on all
FPCS buses



FPCS Facility Cleaning Procedures



As soon as FPCS becomes aware of a student or employee that may have COVID-19 or that has been excluded from school or recommended to self-quarantine, **the custodial staff will be informed so that all desks, lockers and workspaces of the person are thoroughly disinfected.** If the school is not open when notification occurs, the custodial staff will wait 24 hours or as long as possible prior to disinfecting and instead will block off the area so that others do not have contact. However, if that is not possible or school is in session, the cleaning will occur immediately.

FPCS Ventilation Systems

Improving ventilation is an important COVID-19 prevention strategy that can reduce the number of virus particles in the air. Along with other preventive strategies, including wearing a well-fitting, multi-layered mask, bringing fresh outdoor air into a building helps keep virus particles from concentrating inside.

All HVAC systems at FPCS have been updated to include air filtration systems that continuously brings fresh air into our classrooms. All FPCS buses are also equipped with air filtration systems.

Stay at Home When Sick and Get Tested

Students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care. Staying home when sick with COVID-19 is essential to keep COVID-19 infections out of schools and prevent spread to others. It also is essential for people who are not fully vaccinated to quarantine after a recent exposure to someone with COVID-19.



FPCS Classroom Reorganization

Classroom Organization and Setup

- Rearrange desks, chairs, music stands, and art tables to increase space in between students (Goal: 3 feet).
- Face desks, chairs, and art tables in the same direction.
- Require students to remain seated in the classroom as much as possible and assign seats.
- Minimize class sizes when possible.
- Revise activities that combine classes or grade levels to work together.
- Revise or minimize students traveling to different buildings to receive services.
- Implement a homeroom stay where the teachers rotate, as opposed to the students, if possible, in lower grades.
- Only allow supervisors and staff who are required for instruction to be in the classrooms.
- Prohibit students from sharing items like pencils and pens.
- Ensure adequate art supplies or educational tools to minimize sharing. When sharing is necessary, minimize the numbers of students having contact and teach disinfecting techniques.

FPCS Signage

Providing Guidance on COVID-19

- Post signs at all entrances informing all who enter that they must: a) Not enter if they have a cough or fever; b) maintain a minimum of six-foot distance from one another; c) not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact.
- Post signs in bathrooms with directions on how to effectively wash hands.
- Materials provided to employees and students should include information on how to recognize the signs of infection and directives not to come to school if sick.

Cafeteria/ Child Nutrition Program

Encourage grab and go meals

Eat meals in classrooms/ Delivery boxes will be purchased for CNP

Social distancing and limited capacity in lunchroom

Eat meals in alternate areas such as outside as weather permits

Students who bring their lunch from home will need to pack items that do not require heating.

Snacks and food items are limited to your child. No items may be brought from home for a class or group of students.

Visitors/Check-in & Out/Absences

Visitors to School Campus:

- During the pandemic visitors will be limited in their access to the building
- Parents/Guardians should remain outside for check ins. Parents should not leave the premises until the student had entered the building. If you must accompany your child in the building, then only one parent may enter the building and must go directly to the office. Only one parent is allowed in the building to check their child out and they must go directly to the office. Visitors will be required to wear a mask indoors at FPCS facilities.

Excuses for Absences

- Parents are encouraged to upload documentation for excused absences and email to appropriate staff at each school
- Hand delivered excuses will be given to classroom teacher

FPCS Persons with COVID-19

All Staff and Parents should be familiar with the symptoms of COVID-19 based on CDC Guidance:

- A fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Asymptomatic return to School per CDC Guidance:

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after:
10 days have passed since test



K-12 Classroom Close Contact Definition

In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were 3 feet or more (but within 6 feet) of an infected student if:

- Both students were engaged in the consistent and correct use of well-fitted masks; and
- Other K–12 school prevention strategies (such as universal and correct mask use, physical distancing, increased ventilation) were in place in the K–12 school setting



ADPH CLOSE CONTACT GUIDANCE



Asymptomatic vaccinated close contacts do not need to be sent home but should monitor for symptoms, and isolate if symptoms develop.



Asymptomatic close contacts who have tested positive for and recovered from COVID-19 in the prior 3 months do not need to be sent home unless they develop symptoms.



Asymptomatic close contacts who meet the K-12 indoor classroom student exclusion noted in the previous slide do not need to be sent home unless they develop symptoms.



Unvaccinated individuals who are identified as a close contact and do not meet the K-12 indoor classroom student criteria above must be sent home.

Exposure Notification

Individuals who test positive for or are diagnosed with COVID-19 must stay home for 10 days following the onset of symptoms or a positive test result and must be 24 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medications and symptoms improved before returning from isolation.

Face Covering Inside FPCS Facilities



After consulting with local pediatricians and health care providers, reviewing guidance from the CDC and direct recommendations from Dr. Harris and the Alabama Department of Public Health the Fort Payne Board of Education is requiring all students, teachers, and staff to wear masks when in school buildings and classrooms for the first twenty days beginning August 9, 2021. Outside activities will not require a mask.

This decision was made after careful consideration. It is based on the increase of COVID cases in our area, particularly in children and is to protect our students and ensure their health and safety.

The Fort Payne Board of Education will direct the superintendent to evaluate this practice to determine if the mask requirement would continue after **September 3, 2021** or if we would return to personal preference.

Face covering requirements will be sensitive to students and staff who have documented medical issues that make wearing a face covering inadvisable by their physician.

TRANSPORTATION

Pursuant to a federal mandate all students, passengers and drivers will be required to wear masks while on any of the Fort Payne City school buses.

Traveling on School Bus: Face coverings that cover the nose and mouth are to be worn by everyone while traveling on any FPCS school bus or vehicle regardless of vaccination status. This provision is intended to comply with CDC Order, authorized by 42 U.S.C. 264(a) and 42 C.F.R. 70.2, 71.31(b), and 71.32(b).

- All parents who can are encouraged to transport their students to and from school and activities.

Preparation and Cleaning:

FPCS will inspect all buses and transport vehicles for cleanliness and safety daily.

- Buses will be disinfected more frequently and thoroughly than previous years. Products used will be based on CDC, local health department and/or risk management professionals. Buses will be sanitized each morning and afternoon.



FPCS Transportation Modification Considerations

- Assign students to a single bus.
- Assign students to seats; seat students with members of same household
- Follow social distance in bus loading and unloading
- Limit students to one route and prohibit practices such as being picked up and dropped off in different locations, using different routes.
- Encourage parent/guardian to monitor social distance at bus stops.
- **Mask or cloth face covers will be worn by students and staff on all FPCS buses**
- Prohibit eating or drinking (unless medically required) or chewing gum on the bus.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be installed inside buses



FPCS additional hygiene, cleaning & disinfecting measure for the building

- All persons are encouraged to wash hands frequently.
- Place hand sanitizer hygiene stations at the entrances of the building. **All persons entering the building should sanitize their hands.**
- Encourage students and employees to sanitize their backpacks and personal items at the beginning and end of the day and separate personal items into cubbies or baskets that are not shared with other students. Do not allow students to share lockers.
- Require all persons to wash hands after blowing noses, coughing or sneezing or when in contact with bodily fluids.
- Discourage shaking hands, hugging or giving high-fives, etc.,
- Disinfect door handles, light switches, stair railings and other frequently touched surfaces every hour.
- Disinfect bathrooms and other common areas frequently with posted schedules where workers sign off the time when the work has been completed.
- Make sure that disinfectant and related supplies are available to all employees close to their workstations.
- Ensure that there are adequate sinks, soap and paper products for all classes or other sanitizing stations.
- Effective hand sanitizer is made available to all persons working or learning in the building. **Parents should notify the school if their child is allergic to any form or common ingredients of hand sanitizer.**
- Remove items from the classroom or hallways that are frequently touched but are not easily cleaned such as fabric.
- Install physical barriers in reception areas and workspaces where the environment does not accommodate social distancing.

Areas of Special Consideration

Water Fountains

- Water fountains will be cleaned throughout each day. FPCS will purchase disposable cups for students and staff to use at water fountain.

Restroom Use

- Students will be assigned a restroom and use the restroom closest to their classroom.
- Grades 6-12 restrooms will not be allowed to be utilized during class changes. Individual classes will be given time frames for usage and will allow students in need to use the restroom during that time.

Lockers

- Academic lockers will not be issued this year.

Commons Areas

Assign students to use different entrances upon arrival when possible.

Student breaks will be in classrooms

Large group assemblies are suspended- virtual methods will be used when whole student body needs to be informed of information

Stagger drop-off and pick-up processes if possible

Stagger times that classes are released

Require students to stay in an assigned section of the school yard or playground as opposed to mingling with other classes

Make hallways or entrances one-way when feasible

Rearrange furniture to avoid clustering in common areas such as library

In locations where students line up, tape marks are put on the floor to indicate the appropriate social distancing

Guidance for PE & Locker Room

Guidance for Physical Education Classes

- Reorganize to allow for smaller classes and social distancing (Goal: 3 feet) if possible
- Alternate schedule - minimize numbers of students in gymnasium, require social distancing (Goal: 3 feet).
- Teachers use controlled entrance and exits -meet students at classroom – utilizing outside entry door as much as possible to pick up and take to gym, fields, multipurpose rooms, etc.
- Schedule outdoor activities as much as possible with weather conditions being considered.
- Use separate partitions in open spaces; utilize markings on gymnasium floor/wall/field
- (student section/workstations).
- Manage social distancing when moving students to gymnasium/field.
- Disinfect equipment between classes.
- Students disinfect hands in and out of PE class (hand-sanitizing stations, portable handwashing stations).
- Teachers have access to technology to broadcast instruction due to increased social distancing (ex. microphone).
- Games and sport activities that require close guarding and potential contact with another player should not be included. Provide lessons that include no contact activities and no or limited equipment (e.g. shadow tag, jumping rope, running, etc.). Workstation equipment set-up should consider strategies for social distancing throughout activity.

Locker Room

- Locker rooms would not be open to students until social distancing requirements are eased.
- Students should not be required to dress out. Students should wear clothing that is appropriate for weather conditions, allows for full movement and safe for participation when scheduled for PE.

Guidance for Music/Band Classes

Guidance for Music/Band Classes

- Follow social distancing (Goal: 6 feet) guidelines as much as possible.
- Alternate schedule - minimize numbers of students in the classrooms, require social distancing (Goal: 6 feet).
- Utilize other available classrooms for sectionals or group rehearsals where social distancing is achievable.
- Limited and monitored restroom usage.
- Teachers use controlled entrance and exits so students are not entering and exiting through the same door if possible.
- Use separate partitions in the open spaces (large classrooms); utilize markings on classroom floor/wall/practice field (marching band) - (student section/workstations).
- Manage social distancing when moving students to/from multiple rehearsal spaces.
- Students should be provided their own equipment for class/prohibit equipment sharing.
- Disinfect equipment between classes.
- Students disinfect hands in and out of the music classrooms (hand-sanitizing stations).
- Avoid touching, choreography, singing/playing in circles.
- Blended Learning/Flipped classroom for concepts and skills relating to each standard. (utilizing technology platforms).
- Teachers have access to technology to broadcast instruction due to increased social distancing (ex. microphone).
- Conductors face chorus from 10 to 20 ft. away from the first row of singers. Possibly wear a face shield if possible.
- Activities that require close contact or potential contact with another person should not be included. Provide lessons that include no contact activities and no or limited equipment (e.g. solo, small ensemble, sectional rehearsals, etc.). Equipment and practice rooms should consider strategies for social distancing throughout the activity.
- All efforts should be made at every level to assist students in creating personal activities and rehearsal plans that include logging and reporting of learning processes, achievement of standards and all available assessment benchmarks.

FPCS Code of Conduct



The FPCS Code of Conduct is in effect.



Physical altercations are not an allowable behavior. Given the current situation, such poses an even greater danger to others health and the discipline thereof will be reflected of the severity.

Open House



All Open House activities will be face to face this year. Schools will contact you regarding information and times for accessing Open House.



Additional Information such as obtaining student schedules, homeroom assignments, etc., will be posted on individual school websites.

Future Information

This document is considered a working document and may be updated based on additional information regarding COVID-19 when it is released. This document was developed around current policies, practices, and strategies that the FPCS district and schools must implement in order to ensure the healthiest and safest environment while mitigating risk throughout the 2021-2022 school year.