



*Canton Public School District's Plan  
for Safe Return to In-Person  
Instruction and the Continuity of  
Services*

2021-2022 School Year

Gary Hannah, Superintendent

## *Message from the Superintendent*



May 28, 2021

Dear Parents, Staff, Community, and Other Stakeholders,

Canton Public School District's Board of Trustees and the administration of the district are committed to beginning our 2021-2022 school year in a manner that balances our need to return to traditional learning with the need to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

In the coming weeks, we will be providing additional information related to our reopening on August 9, 2021. Please rest assured that we are whole heartedly committed to continuing to provide our learners with the knowledge, skills, and character building that have always been our focus. We will work diligently to ensure that these focal points continue in a safe environment that will minimize the risk of Covid-19 exposure.

This document outlines the major considerations related to our safe reopening of school for the 2021-2022 school year. This plan will be updated every six months as required by the Mississippi Department of Education. We ask for your continued support, grace, and flexibility as we adjust our plans as necessary in the best interest of our students, staff, parents, and community.

Sincerely,

*Gary Hannah*

Gary Hannah, Superintendent

The following pages address the fundamental components of this plan as suggested by the Mississippi Department of Education:

- *Academic Programming and Teacher Evaluation*
- *Operations*
- *Family and Community Support*
- *Communications*
- *Health and Safety*
- *Technology*

## **Academic Programming and Teacher Evaluation**

### **Traditional Learning in August: Meeting Our Students Where They Are**

Canton Public School District's teachers and administrators are eagerly preparing for traditional teaching and learning to resume in August. We are aware that many of our students may have mastery gaps due to the limited availability of small group and individualized learning this past school year. Because of this, we are prepared to accelerate our students' learning before the school year begins and continuously throughout the year. Each school has identified targeted students for Extended School Year that will occur during the month of June. The focus of our Extended School Year will be to provide targeted remediation and enrichment to identified students based on a review of these students' data, academic progress, and grade-level needs. Once the school year begins, we plan to provide safety-nets to our students in the form of small group instruction, individualized tutoring, extended learning time, and an instructional pace that will simultaneously "catch students up" where needed *and* accelerate them to grade-level or beyond grade-level mastery.

We will continue to conduct frequent progress-monitoring of our students using online assessment tools. These online assessments will allow us to correct misconceptions immediately and re-teach deficient standards and skills. Students who are participating in traditional learning as well as students who are receiving virtual instruction due to an underlying medical condition will participate in progress monitoring and interventions as needed.

Throughout the year, we will electronically survey students, parents, and teachers to collect their feedback about instructional support that our students may need. Surveys will be translated into students' home language as needed.

### **Academic Support to Families**

Each school will conduct virtual parent sessions that will be designed to assist parents with supporting their children's learning growth at home. Sessions will focus on homework, academic standards, and data interpretation. Language translation services will also be available to families as needed.

### **Staff Observation and Feedback**

District and building-level administrators conduct classroom observations, both formal and informal, to provide feedback to teachers on the delivery of instruction. This process occurs not only in traditional learning but in virtual learning as well. If multiple students are exposed to Covid-19 or if a school closure occurs, administrators

will continue to observe classrooms and provide feedback to teachers to enhance their professional development.

### **Continuity of Services and Contingency Planning**

Continuity of learning is a critical component of Canton Public School District's instructional planning to ensure that teaching and learning occurs despite circumstances that may cause an interruption of learning for students. If face-to-face instruction is interrupted, teaching and learning will proceed.

The Canton Public School District will provide the following learning accommodations if multiple students are exposed to Covid-19 or if a school closure occurs:

- Skills packets for Pre-K-8 students (determined by each school site)
- Posted assignments using Google Classroom (elementary) or Canvas (secondary)
- Pre-recorded mini-lessons posted in Google Classroom (elementary) or Canvas (secondary)
- Virtual tutoring during after-school hours to support students in the completion of assignments and standards' mastery

### **Technology**

Virtual learning during the 2020-2021 school year has enhanced our knowledge of technology and expanded how we use technology to enhance instruction. Though we will return to traditional in-person learning, our schools will continue to use technology and online learning management systems to enhance our students' learning. Students will use electronic devices to support their classroom learning experiences. Additionally, students who will continue with virtual learning due to pre-existing health issues will have access to an electronic device that they will be allowed to check out for the duration of their home-based learning experience.

Our Technology Department recently hired an Instructional Technology Facilitator who will provide professional development to our teachers to further enhance the use of technology in the classroom.

### **Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs**

We are keenly aware of the fact that our students' (and staff's) needs include more than academics. Many students and some staff will have an adjustment period of

which we must be aware and empathetic. The list below includes a small sampling of ways that we hope to support our CPSD family as we return to traditional learning.

- Schools will share age-appropriate information with students and correct misinformation related to Covid-19.
- Adults will reassure our students that they are safe and that we are working to keep them safe.
- We will try to keep our routines as normal as possible while also maximizing safety.
- Guidance counselors will be available at each site to support students and staff as needed.

### **Adoption of Policies**

The following policies have been adopted in response to Covid-19 and are still in effect:

- **JBDE:** Reporting Attendance for Virtual Instruction (applicable if multiple students are exposed to Covid-19, if a school must close, or for students who continue with virtual learning due to pre-existing medical conditions)
- **JGAA:** Return to School During Covid-19 (includes provisions for a safe-return to traditional learning)

## **Operations**

### **Health and Safety: Air Quality**

We have taken several steps to address air quality within each of our schools. Each older school site will receive new air conditioning units. We have also purchased more portable units for emergency use. Additionally, we have purchased air purifiers for every classroom.

### **Health and Safety: Screening and Precautionary Measures**

The Canton Public School District recently created two new positions that will support our students and staff in the prevention of exposure to Covid-19. These two individuals will oversee our health and safety within the district. The district's Covid Coordinator is responsible for planning, coordinating, and executing safety measures at each site. Our district has also employed a Lead Nurse who will be available daily to assist in health screening, evaluating symptoms, and helping schools implement safety measures. Staff and students will undergo temperature checks daily at each site. All students and staff of the Canton Public School District are required to always wear masks, and masks will be provided for all students.

## **Communication**

The Canton Public School District will ensure that our parents, community, and all stakeholders remain informed about all issues related to our schools and students, and this is especially important in the wake of Covid-19. We will use the following district-based and school-based communication tools to not only report any changes in scheduling but also to provide information to promote healthy home and community behaviors to reduce Covid-19 exposure:

- CPSD website ([www.cantonschools.net](http://www.cantonschools.net))
- Social media (Facebook & Twitter)
- News outlets (radio, newspapers, television)
- Communication tools: Robocalls, Remind, Class Dojo, Canvas, CPSD phone app)

## **Transportation**

The Canton Public School District provides transportation to all students who are zoned within the district. Students who reside more than one mile from the school to which they are assigned are provided the opportunity to ride an assigned, district-operated school bus. To ensure maximum safety for our students, the Transportation Department will implement the following safety mechanisms:

- Windows may be opened to improve ventilation if it does not create a safety hazard.
- Students and drivers will be required to wear masks while on the bus, including field trips, off-campus events, and daily transportation.
- Students will be seated according to their loading or un-loading order, and social distancing will be maintained (at least 6 feet whenever possible). Social distancing will include entry door areas, limiting the number of students boarding the bus at one time, and general seating.
- Bus drivers will be frequently reminded that the Covid-19 virus is still a hazard, and the expectation will be that all bus drivers follow safety protocols to ensure that our students and staff are safe.
- Each bus will be cleaned and disinfected after the following routes: morning, midday (when applicable), and in the afternoon/evening. Additionally, buses must be sanitized and disinfected after field trips or off-campus events for which transportation is provided.

### **Students' Arrival and Dismissal**

Students are transported to school via bus, parent drop-off, parent pick-up, and private transportation. Students who ride the bus must always wear their masks. Upon students' arrival and dismissal, school personnel will be on duty to monitor students to ensure that they are practicing social distancing and wearing their masks.

### **Food Services**

Students will receive breakfast and lunch at each school site. Cafeteria staff will prepare grab-and-go meals for students, and students will eat in their classrooms to minimize large-group contact.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting Our Buildings**

#### **Buildings, Classrooms, Common Areas, Food and Nutritional Service Areas, Co-curricular or Extracurricular Events**

##### **Clean surfaces with disinfectant/multipurpose-cleaning agents**

- We will practice routine cleaning of frequently high-touch surfaces.
- Cleaning products containing soap or detergent will be used to reduce germs on surfaces and objects by removing contaminants and may also weaken or damage some of the virus particles. High touch surfaces and shared objects will also be cleaned several times a day.

##### **High touch Surfaces and Objects**

- Staff will clean high-touch surfaces and objects (such as, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the school and on school transport vehicles (such as buses) at least once a day or as often as needed (for example, when visibly dirty).
- Schools will be encouraged to limit the sharing of high-touch objects that are difficult to regularly clean (such as electronic devices, pens, pencils, books, games, art supplies, lab equipment).
  - If certain conditions apply (such as low mask usage or high community transmission), do not use difficult-to-clean shared objects for 72 hours.
  - If items need to be reused within 24 hours they should be disinfected.
- Staff should wash their hands after removing gloves or after handling used items or other objects near students who are unmasked.

- Staff will regularly (at least once a day or as often as needed) clean surfaces using soap or detergent.
- If choosing to disinfect, ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning products, including storing products securely away from children.
- Staff will use gloves when removing garbage bags or handling and disposing trash.
- Staff will wash their hands after removing gloves.

### **Soiled Surfaces**

- Staff will immediately clean surfaces and objects that are visibly soiled.
  - Use soap or detergent to clean these surfaces or objects.
  - If choosing to disinfect, dirty surfaces should be cleaned before disinfection.
- If surfaces or objects are soiled with body fluids or blood, use gloves and other standard precautions to avoid contact with the fluid.
  - Contain and remove the spill, and then clean and disinfect the surface.

### **Cleaning and disinfecting buildings and facilities if someone is sick**

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. Wait 24 hours before you clean or disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, etc.

### **When cleaning**

- Wear disposable gloves and gowns for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.
  - Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) may be required based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash.
  - Gloves and gowns should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
  - Always wash immediately after removing gloves and after contact with a person who is sick.

- Hand sanitizer: If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol may be used.
- However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.
- Additional key times to wash hands include:
  - After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - After using the restroom.
  - Before eating or preparing food.
  - After contact with animals or pets.
  - Before and after providing routine care for another person who needs assistance

### **Safety During Extracurricular Activities**

- The Canton Public School District's Athletic Department will provide temperature scanning stations and sanitizing products for usage to ensure that all participating athletes wear masks during the designated times. During indoor activities, masks will be mandatory. After all indoor athletic contest/practice sessions, sanitizing will occur by using a Backpack Electrostatic Sprayer once the areas have been vacated.

### **A Final Word**

The health and well-being of our students and staff are of the utmost importance to us. Though virtual learning was our best option during the 2020-2021 school year, we are eagerly awaiting the arrival of our students. We assure you that we will take a multitude of necessary precautions to ensure the safety of our students, staff, parents, and community. Together, we can do this.

# Perseverance Conquers All!

