



Midland Public Schools
Inspiring Excellence

Superintendent Communiqué

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Midland Public Schools
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Vision

Lead with respect, trust and courage.

Ensure an equitable, collaborative
and inclusive culture.

Enable all to achieve success

Midland Public Schools' Elementary and Middle School Face-2-Face (F2F) students return to their classrooms Wednesday, December 9, 2020

Two things have remained constant during the 2020-21 school year ...

- ⇒ Midland PS highest priority is the health, safety and wellbeing of our students and staff!
- ⇒ Midland PS firmly believes that the full face-2-face learning experience is best for students.

The first page of the MPS August 2020 *Our Schools* newsletter contained the following:

*"This school year, like none other, MPS is asking for the patience and support of our families and community. The 2020-21 school year may look and feel different, however, we know that learning only happens when students and staff feel safe and emotionally strong. **Please know we will follow the conditions in our schools and community very closely and may need to adapt quickly as public health conditions warrant.** Together, we can accomplish great things for our students. With positivity, determination and flexibility, we are confident that if we all work together to provide the best education possible for MPS students and embrace this somewhat daunting 2020-21 school year, our students, District and community will come out the victors—stronger and more resilient!"*

Face-2-Face MPS families had to "**adapt quickly as public health conditions warrant**" when our District made the difficult decision to pause F2F learning and move to full virtual learning beginning November 23 when our students/staff quarantine numbers reached 400, and MPS didn't have enough guest staff to staff classrooms, drive our buses and disinfect our classrooms due to MPS team members in quarantine. Adequate staffing is essential to operate our school district safely. However, we know this move to full virtual was not easy for families and left some of our youngest learners vulnerable.

In this SE Communiqué, the District is announcing that **beginning WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, Midland PS will RESUME F2F LEARNING for ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS.**

For the following reasons, we believe moving back to F2F at this time is best for students:

- ⇒ Midland County COVID positivity rates have dropped significantly in the past two weeks.
- ⇒ Returning to F2F 13 days after Thanksgiving allows positive/symptomatic student/staff members to quarantine before returning to school.
- ⇒ We know F2F instruction is the most effective learning experience for elementary/middle school students and also supports the social/emotional wellbeing of students.
- ⇒ The CDC lists elementary students in a lower-risk category and middle school students in the moderate-risk category.
- ⇒ The CDC is now recommending a shorter quarantine period for close contacts—7-10 days (instead of previous 14-day period).

A couple of additional points of clarification:

- ⇒ Please know that MPS will continue to closely monitor future MDHHS/Governor orders as well as positivity rates and operational staffing to determine the need to adapt quickly should MPS COVID numbers/staffing issues indicate the need for F2F instruction to return to a pause.
- ⇒ **MPS HIGH SCHOOL FAMILIES** → We will review MPS high school students' return to F2F instruction once the MDHHS/Governor announces that high schools are allowed to return.
- ⇒ This announcement does not affect students enrolled in MPS Virtual Academy first semester.

Thank you, MPS students, staff and families, for your flexibility and support this school year! Stay strong & well!

MPSCoConnect Link: <https://www.midlandps.org/content2/706>

Michael E. Sharrow, Superintendent of Schools

