



As we approach the start of the new school year, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) is closely monitoring the latest developments concerning the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as well as local conditions. Due to significantly declining conditions in our community; the disproportionate impact that the Delta variant is having on individuals, including those who are vaccinated or have antibodies; the fact that vaccinations are not available for all ages; atypical cases involving healthy and younger individuals who have been hospitalized, as a result of COVID-19; the most recent guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics and now the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), M-DCPS will once again meet and consult with local health officials in the coming days regarding the school experience in the fall, particularly as it relates to the mask policy in schools and District facilities.

The District expects in-person schooling, as recommended by the CDC, with guidelines including but not limited to:

- Facial coverings will be required on buses. The wearing of facial coverings and social distancing outdoors while students wait for the bus will be a parental responsibility; however, both will be encouraged.
- Social distancing will be in place in cafeterias and alternate dining venues will be used when possible.
- A health screening room in all schools.
- Heightened cleaning and sanitization protocols in place on buses, school campuses, and District offices. Personal hygiene behavior, including frequent handwashing and the use of hand sanitizing stations will continue to be encouraged.
- Improved air technology, such as purifiers, ionization systems, and upgraded A/C units.
- Increased amount of outdoor fresh air coming into our school buildings.
- HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) systems will run at maximum outside airflow for two hours before and after school buildings are occupied.
- Instead of quarantining entire classes or departments, the quarantine process will focus on individuals directly impacted by a potential exposure due to the availability of better science and data.

For those parents who wish to continue virtual schooling, Miami-Dade Online and MiamiDade Virtual are two options offered at M-DPCS. For more information, visit <https://mdo.dadeschools.net/> or <https://mdvs.dadeschools.net/>.

M-DCPS strongly encourages all eligible students and employees to get vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus prior to the start of the new school year. For vaccination opportunities, visit dadeschools.net.

As this is an evolving situation, M-DCPS will keep you informed and provide updates as they become available. Our District has a later start date than most other Florida school districts, and we will use this later start date to our advantage as we continue to make decisions that prioritize the health of our students and employees.