



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MILTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02186

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August 25, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The countdown is on! Believe it or not, we are only one week away from the start of the 2021-2022 school year, and we hope you are just as excited as we are.

To help prepare your student for the new year, I wanted to provide you with some very important COVID-19 mitigating strategies that we will employ in the Milton Public Schools to provide a safe learning environment for all of our students and staff. For your convenience, please see the information below:

## **MPS COVID-19 Strategies**

**Masks** - All students, staff and visitors to the Milton Public Schools are expected to wear masks over their nose and mouth and securely around the face. This policy includes all indoor meetings and events. When outdoors masks are optional, but if unvaccinated and/or immunocompromised masks are strongly encouraged. You can find the Milton Public Schools Face Covering Policy on the website under School Committee/Policies. There are exceptions to this mandate for students who cannot wear a mask due to medical conditions. If this applies to your child, please complete the [Mask Medical Exemption Form](#)

**Mask Breaks** – As we did last year, building Principals will be working with their faculty and staff to implement mask breaks throughout the day and as needed. Considering masks are optional outside, every effort will be made to hold recess and Physical Education classes outside affording additional opportunities to get fresh air.

**COVID-19 Symptom Screening** – Once again we are asking parents/guardians to assist their students each morning prior to students leaving for school to conduct the [MPS Health Screening Protocol](#) to check for COVID-19 Symptoms. As always, if a student is not feeling well and exhibits any of the symptoms on the checklist, they should stay home.

## **25 Gile Road, Milton, Massachusetts 02186**

The Milton Public School system does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, gender identity, transgender status, gender transitioning, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, pregnancy/parenting status, marital status, sexual orientation, homelessness, or military status, in any of its programs, activities or operations. These include, but are not limited to, admissions, equal access to programs and activities, hiring and firing of staff, provision of and access to programs and services, as well as selection of volunteers, vendors and employers recruiting at the Milton Public Schools. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, students, volunteers, subcontractors, and vendors. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Dr. Karen L. Spaulding, Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum & Human, 617-696-4812

**Breakfast and Lunch** – Although there are no social distance requirements, DESE does recommend social distancing where feasible. MPS will make every attempt possible to socially distance students during breakfast and lunch. Some students will eat in the cafeteria and others outdoors when the weather is favorable. The alternative sites and logistics may differ from school to school. Greater detail will be included in building-based communications. MPS will remain nut-free for all snacks and lunch during this time.

**Water Stations** - In addition to the hands-free water refilling stations, Jackie Morgan and Food Services will have water stations set up in each building to help students stay hydrated on extremely warm days.

**Recess/Physical Education** – Recess and physical education classes will be outside to start the year so masks will not be required. Recess and Physical education classes held indoors will require masking.

**Bus/Transportation** - In alignment with the state mandate, masks must be worn on school buses to and from schools and for all events that require transportation. The windows will be open.

**Visitors** - Visitors will be allowed to enter the building for meetings and events. Visitors must follow the Face Covering Policy when entering any of the Milton Public School buildings.

**Athletics/Athletic Events:**

1. Student athletes do not need to wear masks on school campuses while outside; mask wearing is optional outdoors.
2. Students can use the locker room and weight room facilities but they will need to be masked.
3. We are allowing spectators to attend athletic events in the field house (i.e. Volleyball) but spectators will be required to wear a mask.
4. We will have extra masks available for indoor events if a fan/spectator arrives without a mask or their mask gets damaged.
5. All students, coaches and bus drivers will be required to wear a mask when traveling to and from athletic events.
6. We will encourage social distancing even when outdoors for athletic events.
7. Students will be asked to bring their own personal refillable bottles and encouraged not to share items.

Daily self screening protocols will be applicable after school for all athletic events and/or programs.

**Testing:** Milton Public Schools submitted an application to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to participate in the statewide COVID-19 testing program. The Test and Stay program is a testing initiative intended for asymptomatic close contacts of individuals with confirmed COVID-19. This testing program will allow asymptomatic close contacts to remain in school if they receive an individual rapid antigen test (e.g. BinaxNOW) each school day and test negative, as well as follow other guidelines put forth in the program. Please note that for unvaccinated close contacts participating in the Test and Stay program only, it is recommended to maintain 3 feet of distance when masks cannot be worn (i.e. during meals). This should not be construed as a broad physical distancing requirement or recommendation; it is only in place as part of this single, narrow protocol.

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**Below please find additional guidance:**

1. If districts do not have Test and Stay available or an individual or family chooses not to participate, a close contact will need to quarantine at home for at least 7 days from the point of exposure.
2. The list of close contacts who do not need to participate in testing and quarantine protocols has been updated to include individuals on school buses, when students are masked with windows open, regardless of distance. In addition, the following groups continue to be exempt from testing and quarantine: asymptomatic, vaccinated close contacts; classroom close contacts spaced at least three feet apart while students are masked; and individuals who have had COVID-19 in the past 90 days.
3. The COVID-19 symptoms list has been updated (with more symptoms being identified as COVID-19 symptoms only when "in combination with other symptoms"), along with some points of differentiation in COVID-19 symptoms necessitating a PCR test for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. Individuals with COVID-19 symptoms should continue to stay home until symptoms resolve.
4. Districts and schools may continue to test students with mild symptoms with BinaxNOW tests, if available. So long as these tests are negative, individuals with mild symptoms should remain in school.
5. Weekly COVID pooled testing remains strongly recommended for unvaccinated individuals. Vaccinated individuals may still participate at their discretion; however, this is not recommended.
6. As noted last year, if a student tests positive or presents COVID-19 symptoms during the school day, they should be masked and, when feasible, be in a separate room with the door closed until they can be picked up.
7. DESE and DPH continue to strongly recommend that all faculty, staff, and eligible students receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

**Additional mitigation strategies to help provide a safe and healthy learning environment:**

1. Air purifiers will be placed in every teaching space and office
2. Windows and classroom doors will remain open (student allergies will be considered)
3. If you have a fan in your classroom, it will need to be a window fan and blowing air outside
4. Rooftop vents will remain open at night to circulate the ambient evening air
5. Each school building will be thoroughly cleaned each night
6. We are continuing to ask students and staff to adhere to the daily self screening. If you are sick, we ask you to stay home.

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7. Milton Public Schools was approved for the State's Test and Stay Program
8. The COVID-19 Data Reporting will be updated weekly in the Superintendent's weekly blog. This report will notify the MPS community of the number of positive COVID-19 cases (students and staff) each week
9. PPE will be available including extra masks
10. Hand hygiene will be encouraged and reinforced
11. MPS is committed to setting up Vaccination Clinics and Community Testing
12. On extremely warm days, we are asking students to dress in light-colored clothing to keep them cool

Enjoy the rest of the week and your weekend!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James F. Jette". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James F Jette  
Superintendent  
Milton Public Schools  
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