Polk County Public Schools is implementing numerous protocols to provide a safe and healthy environment for students and staff. Here’s a look at the measures we’re putting into place for the 2021-22 school year. For more information on our safety protocols, visit polkschoolsfl.com/backtoschool.

Plans and procedures are subject to change as state, local and CDC guidelines are updated.

### BUSES

- Buses will transport students at full capacity.
- The CDC and the Florida Department of Health in Polk County strongly recommend wearing face coverings while riding the school bus. Face coverings are optional at this time.
- Drivers will monitor their symptoms daily, and anyone with a fever or COVID-related symptoms must not report to work.
- Parents and students are to monitor their symptoms each day. Students should not come to the bus stop if they are feeling ill.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers are installed on every bus, and students will use hand sanitizer as they enter and exit.
- To minimize exposure, students will be loaded from rear to front, and unloaded from front to rear.
- Students will be assigned seats, which will assist with contact tracing should an individual test positive for COVID-19.
- Weather permitting, buses will travel with several windows open to allow fresh air to circulate.
- School buses will be sanitized multiple times a day and A/C filters will be changed every 27-30 days.

### SCHOOLS & CLASSROOMS

- The CDC and the Florida Department of Health in Polk County strongly recommend wearing face coverings. Face coverings are optional at this time.
- Students, staff, and visitors will not be required to complete temperature screening upon arrival on campuses.
- Students and staff should monitor their symptoms daily. Anyone with a fever or COVID-related symptoms should not come to school.

### CAFETERIAS

- High-touch points such as the tray slide, milk box and keypad will be frequently sanitized.
- Tables will be sanitized between lunch periods.
- Cutlery and trays will be sanitized thoroughly.
- Designated entrances and exits will control traffic flow and minimize exposure.
- All condiments will be pre-portioned. No self-serve dispensers will be used.
- There will be no self-service bars.
SCHOOL CLINICS

- Clinic staff will wear personal protective equipment as appropriate when treating or screening individuals.
- Isolation areas will be established to separate symptomatic individuals from standard clinic operations. While face coverings are optional, individuals with symptoms will be required to wear face coverings in the isolation area.

FACE COVERINGS

- Face coverings are optional at this time. The CDC and the Florida Department of Health in Polk County strongly recommend wearing face coverings.
- If worn, face coverings should cover both the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the face.
- Face coverings must comply with general dress code and school uniform requirements.
- Students and staff may wear face shields in addition to face coverings.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

- PCPS will work closely with the Florida Department of Health in Polk County to notify school communities about a confirmed positive case.
- A schoolwide notification will be sent when a positive case impacts a campus.
- Individuals who have come into close contact exposure with a positive case (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) will also be notified by an automated telephone call.
- Individuals who have come into close contact exposure with a positive case will receive specific instructions on what to do next (quarantine, isolate, monitor their symptoms, etc.).
- Unvaccinated students or staff who are identified as a close contact to a positive case must quarantine from school for a minimum of 10 days from the last date of contact. They cannot test out of quarantine — meaning a negative test will not remove the quarantine period.
- Fully vaccinated students and staff will not be required to quarantine if they are identified as a close contact as long as they do not develop symptoms.
- Students or staff who have COVID-like symptoms should stay home. They may return when one of the following criteria is met:
  1. 10 days have passed, they are fever free for 24 hours without medication and symptoms are improving.
  2. Signed medical clearance is provided for the person.
  3. A person with no known exposure to someone with COVID has proof of a negative COVID test, is 24-hours fever-free without medications, and is symptom-free. (At-home tests are not accepted.)
- Students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 must isolate at home for a minimum of 10 days. They may return to school after 10 days if they are fever free for 24 hours without medication and symptoms are improving. In addition, staff who test positive will require medical clearance to return.
- Students who are quarantined will be able to work while at home. Lessons and assignments will be posted online for students to complete at their own pace. The district continues to explore other learning options for students who are quarantined. However, at this time, PCPS is not offering synchronous classes – virtual classes where instructors and students simultaneously participate in online lessons together.

FIELD TRIPS & LARGE GATHERINGS

- Given the wide range of activities, field trips and large group gatherings will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

VACCINATIONS

- The CDC and the Florida Department of Health in Polk County recommend all eligible persons be vaccinated against COVID-19.
- The Pfizer vaccine is available to those ages 12 and up.
- Staff and students are considered fully vaccinated once two weeks have passed since their final vaccine dose.
- Free vaccinations can be obtained through various entities, such as pharmacies like CVS and Publix and the Florida Department of Health in Polk County. For more information, contact DOH-Polk’s Information Center at (863) 519-7911.
ATHLETICS

- Athletics will continue to be offered during the 2021-2022 school year.
- The CDC and the Florida Department of Health in Polk County strongly recommend wearing face coverings. Face coverings are optional at this time.
- Students and staff should check their symptoms daily. Anyone with a fever, or symptoms related to COVID-19, should not attend school or practice if they are feeling ill.
- Outdoor event capacity will be 100%, indoor capacity will be limited to 75% at this time.
- Middle school intramural/extramural activities will be permitted as long as athletic COVID mitigation guidelines are followed.
- Elementary physical education will follow same protocols as last year. Face coverings are not required during PE and playground equipment can be utilized.
- Pep rallies will not be conducted unless they can be held safely outdoors.

FINE ARTS

- The CDC and the Florida Department of Health in Polk County strongly recommend wearing face coverings. Although face coverings are optional at this time, the use of face coverings while singing is recommended.
- Students and staff should check their symptoms daily. Anyone with a fever or symptoms related to COVID-19 should not attend school or practice if they are feeling ill.
- Students will be socially distanced to the greatest extent possible in rehearsal and performance spaces.
- The sharing of instruments, equipment and supplies will be limited and/or avoided.
- Schools may employ other strategies to reduce the spread of illness, such as holding rehearsals outdoors when space and weather permits as well as the use of bell covers for all wind instruments.
- Outdoor event capacity will be 100%, indoor capacity will be limited to 75% at this time.

VOlUNTEERS/VISITORS

- Volunteers who provide essential services to students and staff will be allowed on campus.
- Volunteers and visitors will be advised that while face coverings are optional, the CDC and the Florida Department of Health in Polk County strongly recommend the wearing of face coverings.
- Volunteers and visitors will continue to follow normal check-in procedures, including being entered into Raptor, the district’s visitor and volunteer check-in system.
- Volunteers and visitors will track and log their movements while on campus.