

Mountainville Academy

School plan to safely open in the fall during COVID-19 pandemic



This document communicates with students, parents and employees of Mountainville Academy the plan for safely reopening our school on August 18, 2020. This plan was approved by our Board of Trustees and follows recommendations and requirements issued by the Utah County Health Department and the Utah State Board of Education. Updates will be emailed and posted on our website mountainvilleacademy.org

July 2020

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Hello Mountainville Academy families,

We hope that you are enjoying a nice break and time spent together as families. As we prepare to begin what we hope to be the very best school year we have ever had, we want to communicate significant information relative to how school will look this year.

We LOVE students and our school! Children NEED school! Students thrive in safe, structured and nurturing environments. Currently we are planning a normal school opening on August 18. Our hope is to keep school "in the building" through a shared commitment from students, teachers, families, and staff by preventing the spread of COVID-19.

We have developed guidance for the opening of school with all students having the opportunity to attend on a regular schedule. However, we realize as the state relaxes restrictions, the risk of infection and the corresponding need to follow health guidelines increases. The following guidelines are intended to provide protection for our employees, students, and community.

What we will do as a school:

- Mitigate risk/spread by encouraging physical distancing, proper hand hygiene, sanitization, wearing masks, staggering class release times, hallway flow adjustments, adjusting lunch time seating, recess modifications and spacing of students in common areas.
- Be aware of illness/symptoms in the student body and contact a student's family immediately if a student exhibits symptoms.
- Monitor positive COVID-19 cases and its spread in our area of Utah County and follow (as we would with any community health concern) the recommendation of health department officials regarding school closures, modified school schedules or in-school adjustments.
- Continue to refine our digital curriculum to meet the needs of distance learning as it arises.
- Modify our method of delivery, however necessary, to ensure the health and well-being of students and staff.

What you can do:

- Understand that these guidelines are determined by health, educational and civic professionals commissioned to care for your child, considering the physical environment, time spent in school, and the potential risk to the health of our students, staff and families.
- Keep your child home if they have a fever, cough, cold or flu symptoms, and have them return only when these symptoms have subsided.
- Talk to your child about changes they may notice at school, reinforcing that these measures are in place to preserve their health, and the health of those around them.
- Send your child to school with a mask and encourage them to wear it.
- As always, please reinforce the importance of respecting the authority of teachers and staff to maintain order in the classroom, the hallway, and other campus areas.
- Prepare as much as possible to adapt to change. As evidenced this past spring, things evolve quickly, and schedule modifications and/or closures may be unavoidable.
- Know that you as a guardian and parent have the right to keep your child home at any time as you assess risk as it relates to your family.

Please be aware there is no such thing as a "COVID-free zone" in our classrooms or school. The more people congregate in society - no matter where that takes place - the more opportunity there is for the virus to spread. COVID-19 exists everywhere and, at this point in time, no vaccine has been developed.

The information that follows, if adhered to by all involved, will provide the best measures to not only

prevent the spread of the virus, but also give us an opportunity to provide the best education we can for all students. Our plan focuses on 5 areas: **Minimize Outbreak, Stay Home When Sick, Physical Distancing, Hygiene, and Cleaning & Sanitizing**. We feel that these areas will provide protection from COVID-19 while enabling our school to resume a more traditional operation.

The information that follows will provide you more details about the "how" of implementing our plan. Please read it thoroughly, and please know we are making every effort to provide the best educational experience possible.

Any family with extenuating circumstances or unique challenges can call the office or email Annette at ajohnston@malions.org. We ask for your support through this process and look forward to teaching your children this fall!

Janese Vance

Janese Vance
Principal

Minimize Outbreaks

Backpacks

No lockers will be issued to Middle School students this school year. Backpacks will now be allowed in classrooms to keep student belongings separated and to avoid students congregating in hallways.

Visitors, non-regular staff and volunteers

Visitors and volunteers will be required to have a temperature check, complete a symptom checklist and wear a mask upon entry into a school building.

Employees

All staff at the school will wear face coverings when distancing is not possible.

Drinking Fountains

All drinking fountains will be equipped with a water bottle filling station. Students need to bring a refillable water bottle.

Stay Home When Sick

Don't hesitate to stay home

Monitor your child each morning for symptoms and do not send them to school if they exhibit any of the following:



Shortness of breath, sore throat or persistent cough



Temperature higher than 100.4



Congestion or a runny nose



Vomiting or diarrhea



New loss of taste or smell

If your child feels sick, stay home, except to get medical care. Students should also stay home from school **if they are experiencing other illness symptoms** such as severe or long-lasting abdominal pain, rash with fever, strep throat, head lice before first treatment or any other illness that prevents a student from participating comfortably in school activities.

Staff and parents of students are encouraged to notify school officials of any COVID-19 symptoms, positive tests for COVID-19, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case. Staff and students who are sick or who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 should stay home.

Accommodating high-risk students and staff

Staff and parents who consider themselves as high-risk, may be asked complete a form with health information that will be shared with the health department to help facilitate contact tracing. Employees will work with their immediate supervisor if there is a concern about risk.

Health room

We will use the room by the office to accommodate symptomatic individuals until they are able to go home. Students or staff who are symptomatic should not come to school. If a student begins exhibiting symptoms after arriving at school, they will wait in the health room with a facial mask and maintain physical distancing while arrangements are made for them to be picked up by a parent or emergency contact as soon as possible. Parents and guardians need to make sure their emergency contact list is up to date.

Monitor symptoms

Staff will be encouraged to safely and respectfully monitor any observable symptoms in students, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath. Staff will observe all applicable privacy laws and regulations in doing so.

Physical Distancing

Distancing

One of the best ways to curb the spread of COVID-19 is by doing your best to physically distance from one another. The rule of thumb is to maintain 6 feet of distance between yourself and anyone else. If that distance is maintained, the virus is less likely to be passed from one person to another. Of course, physical distancing is challenging in a school where classroom walls cannot be moved. In those settings, if students cannot be placed 6 feet apart, they will be required to wear cloth face coverings as mandated by Utah Gov. Gary Herbert. When a teacher is in front of the room during class — and can maintain 6 feet of distance between himself or herself and students — the teacher will not have to wear a mask. If the teacher moves closer than 6 feet, such as for one-to-one instruction, they will be required to wear a mask.

Lunch

Lunchroom tables will be spread throughout the gym. Students will be distanced as much as possible. Elementary students will seat with their class with tables sanitized between each seating. For Middle School, students will be limited to 8 students at a table.

Layout modifications

Teachers will put forth efforts to distance students from one another by spreading out desks and removing any non-essential furniture. Teachers may choose to have students face the same direction rather than facing one another and remove reading corners, etc. to optimize space. Elementary Specialty classes will be shortened to 30 minutes to allow for cleaning and sanitizing between classes. The Library and Elementary Computer Lab will be temporarily closed. Computer specialty classes will have the computer teacher come to the classroom and work with students on their Chromebooks.

High Traffic Areas

Signage will be applied to floors to direct traffic in high traffic areas and stairways. Directional signs will indicate expected traffic flow (travel on the right).

School Dismissal

Dismissal from school each day will be staggered to minimize congestion in hallways and entrances/exits to the school. Starting at 2:50, Kindergarten, 5th grade and students in the Middle School building will be dismissed using designated exits. At 2:55, 1st grade, 2nd grade and 3rd grade will use designated exits to leave the building. At 3:00, 4th grade and Middle School students in the main building will be dismissed using designated exits.

Hygiene

Handwashing

We are planning on increasing instruction and monitoring of student handwashing. Proper handwashing techniques include lathering hands with soap, scrubbing between fingers, washing the backside of each hand, scrubbing each wrist, washing underneath fingernails and rinsing with water. The process should take 20 seconds. In our Elementary school, we will provide frequent opportunities for students to wash hands, including before and after recess, lunch and other activities.

Hand sanitizing

If soap and water are not readily available in some classrooms, hand sanitizer will be provided. Elementary students will sanitize their hands every time they enter and exit the classroom. Staff in Middle School will encourage students to sanitize their hands each time they enter and exit a classroom and frequently throughout the day. Students will be instructed to cover all surfaces of their hands with sanitizer and rub them together until their hands feel dry. We have sanitizing stations throughout the school and at each entrance and exit.

Respiratory Hygiene

Staff and students will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Face coverings

Cloth masks will be provided for all students and employees. As mandated by Utah Governor Gary Herbert, students will be required to wear masks during the school day. Employees will be required to wear face coverings when physical distancing of 6 feet is not possible. Accommodations will be made for staff and students who have respiratory issues. Face shields will be used as needed for special education and as an approved requested accommodation.

No physical contact

Students and staff will be reminded to practice physical distancing when it comes to greetings (no handshakes, high fives or hugs.) Air high fives, air elbow bumps or a simple wave can be used in place of physical contact. Students and staff are encouraged to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.

Large gatherings

Because of the need to stop the spread of COVID-19, large gatherings, such as the typical back-to-school nights, theater and music performances, may be held differently. No assemblies that include the whole school will be held. If schools can maintain physical distancing of 6 feet, smaller assemblies or performances can be held.

At elementary schools, students will be released at the end of the day on a staggered schedule. More information will follow as the school year approaches.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

Cleaning schedule

The school will implement a multi-step cleaning protocol to include daily disinfection of touchpoints — drinking fountains, handrails, door handles, sinks, light switches, and toilets. Other daily disinfection will include bathroom floors, student desks and chairs. An airless hand sprayer will be used on playgrounds and other high touch areas. Lunch room tables will be disinfected by lunch room monitors between each lunch group. Playground equipment will be disinfected twice a day; once after morning recess and again after lunchtime recess.

Shared objects

Students will have assigned classroom seating and will sanitize their own space upon arrival with alcohol-based cleaner and a paper towel. Students will clean all shared hard surfaces such as desks, computers or other equipment when entering and exiting the classroom. Elementary students will be given a disinfecting wipe to clean all shared supplies in music and art activity spaces.

Lockers

Lockers will not be used in secondary schools to prevent congregating of students. Students will be allowed to bring backpacks to class in order to keep their belongings separated from others.

Air handling & filters

We will increase outside airflow throughout buildings. Filters will be changed monthly and fans will run continuously during building occupancy.