

RETURN TO LEARN

2021-2022

UPDATED August 10, 2021

IN-PERSON LEARNING

Since the beginning of the global pandemic, a primary goal of Rockbridge County Public Schools (RCPS), has been to safely return all of our students and staff back to five days of full-time, in-person instruction. During the 2020-2021 school year, we were able to take some steps toward this goal. We recognize that most students and families want to get back to in-person learning as soon as it is safe to do so. It is for this reason, following the most up to date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **RCPS will be offering in-person learning for five days a week at the start of the 2021-2022 school year.**

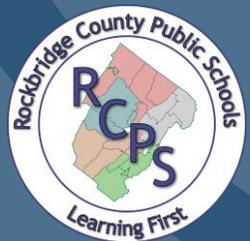


MITIGATION EFFORTS

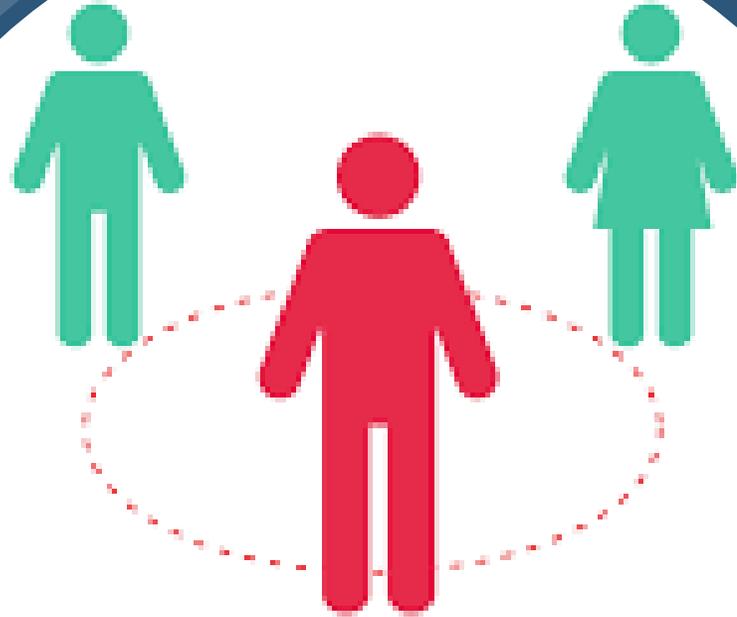
RCPS will continue to follow CDC mitigation guidelines in an effort to keep our students and staff healthy as they return to school, including:

- Masks/face coverings
- Upgraded air filtration systems in all schools (bipolar ionization/MERV-13 filters)
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Handwashing
- Contact tracing
- Quarantine/isolation
- Social distancing

We ask that everyone please self check your temperature at home before coming to school. If it reads above 100.4° or you are feeling ill, please stay home.



SOCIAL DISTANCING



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DISTANCING

Students will be required to maintain **3 feet** of physical distance at all times to the greatest extent possible.

Greater social distance will sometimes be required. For example, 6 feet of distance to the greatest extent possible when participating in music/band activities.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Bus capacity will return to pre-pandemic levels, but parents are still encouraged to drive their students to and from school when possible.

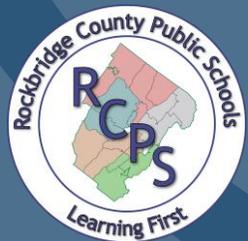
A federal order requiring masks to be worn on public transportation remains in effect, and applies to buses operated by VA public schools.

In compliance with the federal order, all students and drivers are required to wear masks while riding RCPS transportation.



SCHOOL MEALS

Meals (Lunch and Breakfast) will continue to be free to all students, due to an extension of the USDA waiver through June 2022. The logistics of serving and eating are still under development and may vary from school to school.



CLOTH FACE COVERINGS/MASKS

The health and safety of our students and staff remains a consistently high priority in our school division.

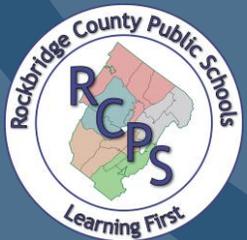
As the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus spread continues, the most recent (July 27, 2021) guidance from the CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors in schools, regardless of vaccination status. The Virginia Department of Health and our regional district make the same recommendation.



CLOTH FACE COVERINGS/MASKS

On August 6, 2021, Governor Northam announced that due to a State law (SB 1303) that passed in March, all public schools must follow CDC guidance regarding mitigation strategies to include the wearing of masks.

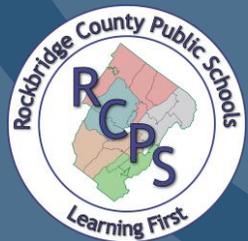
Based upon Senate Bill 1303, information from our local health district, our legal counsel, and our liability insurer, it is necessary that we change our mask policy released in late July and now require masks for all students, teachers, staff, and visitors (aged 2 and above) while indoors in our facilities.



ATHLETICS & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

RCPS will operate all approved athletic practices and events and all extracurricular activities in alignment with the participation guidance provided by the Virginia High School League (VHSL).

Athletics, Clubs, and all other Extracurricular activities at middle and elementary schools will return to pre-pandemic norms as long as proper mitigation strategies can be implemented to ensure safe participation for all involved.



COVID-19 MONITORING

While we are hopeful that COVID-19 transmission rates remain or better yet decrease from the current moderate level in our area, please know that all plans are subject to change based upon local transmission rate data and up to date guidance from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and CDC.

****IMPORTANT****

If needed, individual schools may transition temporarily to fully virtual instruction for a length of time determined in coordination with our local health department. Such a decision would be made in response to case numbers and evidence of transmission at that particular school. While we hope to avoid this, families are asked have a plan in place should this need to occur.

