

Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan



MOUNTAIN BROOK
SCHOOLS

**2021-2022
REOPENING PLAN**

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

I hope you and your family had a wonderful summer. It has been a delight to see our children having fun at camps and activities around our schools this summer. I know we all experienced a sigh of relief as we slowly experienced a return to normalcy this summer. Unfortunately, over the last few weeks, we have seen a sharp increase in COVID-19 cases in the state of Alabama.

The Alabama Department of Public Health released its [“Back to School Guidance”](#) on Monday, August 1, 2021. This document contains guidance for schools and details regarding positive cases, quarantine guidelines, masking and distancing when indoors. Additionally, we met with health officials from the Jefferson County Health Department who [provided updates on the impact of COVID in our area](#). We believe that public health officials should direct school and community initiatives impacted by public health concerns. In fact, [we communicated this message to Governor Ivey in collaboration with other school superintendents from around the state](#). It is clear that our health officials strongly recommend “that schools require masks and social distancing to open schools safely”. **Therefore, Mountain Brook Schools will begin the 2021-22 school year requiring facial coverings for all while inside our schools. Masks will only be required while indoors.** At this time, all school activities and events will be occurring across our campuses.

School leaders are charged with developing plans that support a safe environment so all can stay in school. We will establish plans that focus on keeping students and staff safe in school, and in turn, minimizing positive and quarantine cases while being responsive to the ever-changing situation in Mountain Brook and the surrounding area. We understand that Mountain Brook community members are connected to other communities through their businesses, professional roles and personal responsibilities. We will continue to consult with public health officials as we make informed and responsive decisions.

While we understand that members of our community may disagree on the best course of action, we are committed to doing everything we can to give the Mountain Brook community the best chance of a consistent school year, where students can engage with teachers in their classrooms. However, we respect that every family must make decisions that are best suited for their individual needs. To that end, we will be offering instructional options to help families choose the route that best meets their needs.

To be very clear, these decisions are not determined by petitions, popularity, or political leanings. These decisions are made solely on the recommendations and consultations with our public health officials who are trained and have the expertise to make such recommendations.

No one wants a normal school year more than the people at Mountain Brook Schools. We have worked tirelessly for a year and a half to provide options for our community during the most challenging situations in recent history. We are committed to the learning and activities

**Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan**

that have always made our schools positive places for students and parents. While no situation is perfect, we believe in our community, its resilience, and its steadfast belief that children benefit from being in school. That is our goal. Please join me in making this school year the best it can possibly be. Together we can make this be a fantastic year!

Sincerely,

Dicky Barlow

INSTRUCTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

TRADITIONAL OPTION

The traditional option for Pre-K through 12th grade provides students who reside within the residential zones served by Mountain Brook Schools the opportunity to complete a program of courses in an in-person setting when feasible.

The school system will do its best to space students as far apart as possible in all situations. By choosing the traditional option, families accept a level of risk regarding COVID-19 transmission and quarantine requirements.

Mountain Brook Schools will continue to provide support for individuals who may test positive or who are quarantined. Close contacts will not be required to quarantine if they are 3 feet or more away from a positive individual, observing correct masking procedures, vaccinated, and asymptomatic. Any student who becomes positive or quarantined will access their academic work through the Schoology while at home.

VIRTUAL OPTION

Elementary (K-6)

The full-time virtual option for K-6th grade provides students who reside within the residential zones served by Mountain Brook Schools the opportunity to complete a program of courses virtually. Mountain Brook Schools is partnering with Edmentum EdOptions Academy for students who opt for virtual instruction at the elementary level. The program provides high-quality, Alabama-certified teachers experienced in online instruction, flexible program implementation and management designed for virtual learning, and is accredited by Cognia (formerly AdvancEd.) For a consistent program of instruction, students must participate for a minimum of one semester.

To apply for the elementary virtual option, complete an application at <https://forms.gle/pyyyGXss9oR2bbE7A>.

Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan

Secondary (7-12)

The full-time virtual option for 7th through 12th grade provides students who reside within the residential zones served by Mountain Brook Schools the opportunity to complete a program of courses in an online setting.

Instruction will be provided through the [ACCESS ALSDE Distance Learning Program](#). More information can be [found on our website](#).

By selecting the virtual option, students and parents assume increased personal responsibility in time management, organization, self-direction, communication, and discipline to complete the course and school requirements.

Courses

In some instances, specialized courses will not be available in the virtual option. Students in grades 7-12 selecting the virtual option who wish to enroll in a course not offered virtually can come to the school building to take an individual course at the designated time during the school day.

Requirements

Students:

- Must be enrolled in Mountain Brook Schools.
- Must maintain consistent, reliable daily Internet access at their home or another location available to them.
- Must agree to and sign an Academic Integrity Contract.
- Are required to take any state-mandated tests and must do so at the Mountain Brook school for which they are zoned. The MBS virtual program coordinator will ensure testing dates and requirements are known to virtual students.
- **Students who don't make adequate progress in ACCESS coursework may be required to complete assignments on campus.**

Students whose education program is determined by an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) may apply for enrollment if the IEP team decides the virtual option is the Least Restrictive Environment for that student. Please contact your child's case manager for specific information.

Attendance

- Complete all assigned work.


**Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan**

Extracurriculars and Technology

Students are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities and must meet all organization requirements. The school system will provide students in the virtual option any devices, including Chromebooks, that are provided to Mountain Brook students in the same grade.

**Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan**


Instructional Option Comparison Chart (Elementary)

		
	Traditional	VIRTUAL OPTION
Curriculum	Mountain Brook w/ resources	Edmentum's EdOption Academy
Teacher	Mountain Brook (school-based)	Alabama Certified Teacher
Instructional Delivery	In school	Virtual through Edmentum
Schedule	Regular	As assigned by the instructor
Extracurriculars	Yes	Consistent with traditional plan
Lunch	Designated locations including cafeteria, outdoor or other common spaces	N/A

*Decisions about traditional options will be made based on information and data from the Jefferson County Department of Health.

**Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan**

Instructional Option Comparison Chart (Secondary)

	VIRTUAL OPTION	
	Traditional	VIRTUAL OPTION
Curriculum	Mountain Brook w/ resources	ACCESS Distance Learning
Teacher	Mountain Brook (school-based)	ACCESS Distance Learning
Instructional Delivery	In school	Virtual through ACCESS
Schedule	Regular	As assigned by the instructor
Extracurriculars	Yes	Consistent with traditional plan
Lunch	Distanced in designated locations including cafeteria, outdoor and other common spaces	N/A

*Decisions about traditional options will be made based on information and data from the Jefferson County Department of Health.

SAFETY EXPECTATIONS OVERVIEW

WELLNESS

Physical Distancing

Mountain Brook Schools will make every effort to distance students physically to the maximum extent possible in their classrooms. At times, it is important to note that distancing between individuals may not meet the ADPH's recommendation of 3 feet due to space constraints within our buildings. Seating arrangements will be recorded.

Schools will encourage distancing for large common spaces, such as libraries, gyms, cafeterias, and playgrounds.

Schools have developed plans to ensure safe traffic flow into, out of, and within their buildings. Students will enter and exit through designated locations.

Facial Coverings

Due to the ongoing transmission of COVID-19, staff, students and visitors will be masked while indoors on Mountain Brook Schools property. Individuals will not be required to mask while outdoors.

Mountain Brook Schools will continue to monitor weekly updates to the Jefferson County data and will communicate any adjustments to the masking requirement. We do realize that masking is only as good as the effort of the community, and hope that our community will be committed to reducing transmission so that we can attend school without concern for masking.

Jefferson County data can be found at

<https://alpublichealth.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/6d2771faa9da4a2786a509d82c8cf0f7>.

Our schools are intentionally planning specific times when students can extend their distance and take "mask breaks." These breaks may occur more frequently at the lower grade levels due to the difficulty of prolonged masking for younger students.

Individuals can determine what type of cloth facial covering is most comfortable for them, but it needs to cover the nose and mouth. Any graphics or wording should comply with the Mountain Brook Schools Code of Conduct.

Each school will have a supply of extra masks in case a student or employee forgets their mask at home or it breaks during the day.

**Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan**

Screening

All students and employees will be asked to conduct a daily symptom check before attending school. Mountain Brook Schools will provide a symptom-checking tool that will help parents, students, and employees make daily decisions regarding attendance.

Students and employees with shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, new cough, or new loss of taste or smell should not attend school. Additionally, any student or employee with a fever should not attend school until they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

Other symptoms to check for include fatigue, chills, difficulty breathing, cough, muscle pain, sore throat, stomach issues such as nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, headache, and congestion.

It is also important for students and employees to be mindful of those with whom they have come in contact, particularly if any of them have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days. If a student or employee is exhibiting symptoms, they should contact their healthcare provider for assistance and not report to the school building.

School nurses will screen any student or employee who begins to exhibit signs or symptoms of COVID-19 while at school. The nurses will contact parents if their child is unwell, and parents are asked to pick up their child from school within 30 minutes of the notification.

Testing, Positive Cases, and Notification

If a student or employee presents with identifiable COVID-19 symptoms, they should report to the school nurse's office for evaluation and possible quarantine. The nurse will contact the student's parents upon evaluation and recommend testing if appropriate. Parents and employees will be asked to share test results with the school nurse to assist with notification and cleaning procedures. All personal information will be kept strictly confidential.

If a student or teacher tests positive, Mountain Brook Schools will work with the Jefferson County Department of Health who will be conducting contact tracing. In the indoor classroom setting, close contact is defined as someone who was less than 3 feet from a positive individual and unmasked. If needed, the individual will be required to remain at home until they meet all return-to-school criteria listed below:

- Fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication, and
- Symptoms have improved, and
- 10 day period has passed since the onset of symptoms (symptomatic) or positive test date (asymptomatic)

**Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan**

Quarantine Criteria:

- Asymptomatic vaccinated close contacts do not need to be sent home but should monitor for symptoms, and isolate if symptoms develop.
- Asymptomatic close contact who have tested positive for and recovered from COVID-19 in the prior 3-months do not need to quarantine unless they develop symptoms
- Asymptomatic close contacts who are masked and remain distanced by 3 ft for no more than 15 minutes per day do not need to quarantine unless they develop symptoms
- Unvaccinated individuals who do not meet the above criteria must be sent home.

Personal Hygiene

All students and employees will practice enhanced personal hygiene during the 2021-2022 school year. They should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or use hand sanitizer after every class/activity change. Hand sanitizer of at least 60% alcohol will be available in every instructional and common area throughout school buildings.

Students and employees also will practice cough and sneeze etiquette to mitigate the transmission of airborne pathogens. They are also encouraged to use personal water bottles or plastic cups at water fountains.

OPERATIONS

Cleaning

Mountain Brook Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our students and staff. Our custodial teams have received professional training and will continue to clean our schools daily.

Desks and instructional workspaces will be disinfected daily, and high-touch areas and bathrooms will be cleaned multiple times during the school day. Playground and athletic/PE equipment will be cleaned daily as well.

Teams in our schools are also devising plans to minimize sharing of supplies and equipment. If a class is temporarily displaced for cleaning, it will relocate to another area in the school building.

Child Nutrition and Transportation

Mountain Brook Schools has implemented measures to reduce high-touch areas in lunchrooms. Cashless transactions will be required, and sanitizing will occur between lunch groups. All students will eat lunch in the cafeteria or other designated common space in the school to accommodate distancing.

When being transported on school buses, students will be required to wear cloth facial coverings. Bus windows will be lowered to allow for additional airflow when weather permits. Buses will be sanitized before and after each route, and students and drivers will sanitize their hands before getting on the bus. When possible, alternating seats and rows will be used as much as possible.

Visitors

Mountain Brook Schools believes in community schools and the partnership that exists between the community and school system. However, due to the possibility of virus spread, visitation may be limited at times.

Schools are required to keep an accurate, detailed record of all visitors, and visitors will be screened before entering the building. Schools are modifying check-in and check-out procedures, and all parent meetings will have the option to be hosted virtually or in person.

Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan

Attendance and Absences

If a student is quarantined or tests positive and is unable to attend class on campus, their absences will be considered excused. Students will be able to access their academic work through a learning management system to continue their work in alignment with their classmates.

If an employee is unable to attend work due to a COVID-19 related issue, they should contact their administration and the Director of Personnel to make the necessary arrangements.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities will be allowed in Mountain Brook Schools. If held indoors, masking will be required. Activities will accommodate distancing as much as possible.

School-based athletics will follow all health and safety protocols outlined by the AHSAA and Mountain Brook Schools.

Ventilation

Mountain Brook Schools is following CDC recommendations for the maintenance of all HVAC systems to ensure the air quality in the buildings. We installed Tri-Dim MERV-11 filters in all schools and added ionizers to existing units.

WELLNESS/OPERATIONS PROCEDURES

WELLNESS/OPERATION CATEGORY	PROCEDURE
SAFETY AND HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students, faculty, and staff will wash and/or sanitize their hands regularly throughout the day.• Hand sanitizer (>60% alcohol) will be provided for every instructional and common area throughout school buildings.• All students and employees will strive to follow ADPH guidelines regarding handwashing and/or hand sanitizing, in addition to cough and sneeze etiquette, throughout the school day.• Students will be encouraged to use individualized instructional materials.• Students are encouraged to use personal water bottles or plastic cups at water fountains.
SOCIAL DISTANCING/MOVEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classrooms will distance seating as far apart as possible.

**Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will enter and exit through designated locations.• Seating arrangements and assignments will be recorded.
FACIAL COVERINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Masking will be required while indoors on Mountain Brook Schools property.• This requirement is subject to change.
SCREENING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents are asked to conduct a daily symptom check with their child and should not send students who are exhibiting symptoms to school.• School nurses will quarantine and screen any student or faculty member who begins to exhibit signs or symptoms of COVID-19 while at school.• School nurses will contact parents if their child is unwell. Parents are asked to pick up children from school within 30 minutes of the call.• School nurses will follow procedures outlined by the SDE for school nurses.• Parents are encouraged to give medication at home if possible.

Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan

TESTING AND POSITIVE CASES

- If a student or employee presents with identifiable COVID-19 symptoms, they should report to the nurse's office where they will be quarantined and evaluated.
- Upon evaluation, a student's parents will be contacted by the nurse who will recommend testing if appropriate. If the individual is in distress, the nurse will call 911 and follow emergency protocols.
- Parents and employees will be asked to share the test results with the school nurse to assist with notification and cleaning procedures. All personal information will be kept strictly confidential in compliance with FERPA.
- If the student or employee tests positive, the school nurse will notify the school administration, district COVID Coordinator, Director of Student Services, and the Jefferson County Department of Health.

Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school district will follow the guidance of the Jefferson County Department of Health and work to support the health department’s contact tracing. The individual will be required to remain at home until:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ They are fever-free for 24 hours without medication.○ Symptoms have improved.○ It has been 10 days since symptoms appeared (symptomatic) or a positive test was received (asymptomatic).• Requirements about returning to school or work are subject to change per state orders.
ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All COVID-19 related absences will be coded as excused.• Academic work will be provided to the student in the same manner as a traditional absence.• Teachers will utilize a learning management system to share academic work with all students.• All normal absence protocols apply.

Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan

MEDICALLY FRAGILE STUDENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All IEPs, 504, and health plans will be reviewed to ensure individual supports are provided as documented in the student's individual plan.• Parents are asked to communicate with their child's case manager, counselor, or school nurse regarding concerns.• Alternate plans/virtual school will be developed for any medically fragile student who is unable to attend school.
CHILD NUTRITION AND TRANSPORTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement measures to reduce high-touch areas in lunchrooms.• Cashless transactions will be utilized.• Frequent sanitizing between lunch groups.• Cafeteria and alternative dining locations may be utilized.• Frequent sanitation between bus routes.• Windows will be open on buses, weather permitting.• Students will sanitize their hands before loading busses.• Alternate seats and rows will be used as much as possible.• Facial coverings are required while being transported on buses.

**Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan**

CLEANING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day.• Student workspaces will be cleaned daily.• Bathrooms will be cleaned throughout the day.• Playground and athletic/PE equipment will be cleaned daily.• Any space utilized by a positive individual cleaned and disinfected prior to continued use.
VISITORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitation to schools may be limited at times.• Schools will maintain an accurate, detailed list of visitors.• Visitors will be asked to verify that they are symptom free.
ACTIVITIES/ATHLETICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Off-campus field trips and overnight events will be allowed on a case-by-case basis.• Extracurricular activities must meet all guidelines regarding social distancing, safety, and health.• Spaces utilized by extracurricular activities must be cleaned and sanitized before the next school day.

**Mountain Brook Schools
2021-2022 Reopening Plan**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All school athletics will follow safety and health protocols of the AHSAA and health department.• If needed, video streaming may be used to connect school activities with the community.
SAFETY DRILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety drills may be modified to honor distancing efforts.