

Back to School Schedule:

Onsite Students Preschool to Grade 12: Monday, August 31, 2020

TMHS & TMS Parent Drop Off, Walkers & Driver Arrival: 7:25 am
TMHS & TMS Parent Pick Up, Walkers & Driver Dismissal: 1:50 pm

MRFES Parent Drop Off: 8:25 am
MRFES Parent Pick Up: 2:45 pm

Distance Learning Students Classes Start: Tuesday, September 8, 2020



Bus Transportation:

Bus schedules will be posted on the DATTCO website on Friday, August 21, 2020. Please follow this link www.dattco.com.

You may also find the link to the DATTCO website from the main page of the district's website, <http://district.thompsonk12.org/departments/transportation/>

Students are required to have their face mask secured before boarding the bus. Face masks must remain on during the entire bus ride to and from school. Students will be assigned seats on the bus for us to best contract trace COVID outbreaks. Please review both the mask requirement and seating arrangements with your child.



GPS School Bus Tracking System:

DATTCO provides a school bus tracking system program to allow parents to monitor buses' arrival at stops in real-time. DATTCO formerly provided this program through a program called Safe Stop.

This company has been bought out by a new tracking company called My View. A flyer is included in this mailing with instructions on how to download the My View APP and sign up for this new bus tracking system.

Parent Drop Off and Pick Up:

TMHS & TMS:

Parent drop off is daily at 7:25 am and will follow the regular student drop off procedures. Please do not drop off your child any earlier than this time, as we cannot allow students to congregate outside of the school. Parents should remain in their car, and students will be directed to exit safely.

Walkers must also not arrive before the school doors open at 7:25 am.

Pick up time will be at 1:50 pm. This is a change from last year. We are staggering pick up time and bus dismissal to reduce traffic congestion. Pick up procedures will remain the same. We ask anyone picking up a student at the regular dismissal time to stay in their vehicles.

MRFES:

Parent drop off time will be at 8:25 am daily. Parent may not drop off their child before the start of school as we do not have staff on hand to supervise children to ensure appropriate social distancing. Parents will remain in their cars and follow the traffic flow up to the front doors. Staff will be onsite to assist your child in school.



Unfortunately, we cannot allow MRFES parents to escort their child to class on the first day of school. This has been a past practice at the school, but will not be allowed this school year.

Please take your first-day pictures at home or at the bus stop to capture this special day!

Parent Pick up time will be at 2:45 pm. Parents will remain in their cars and follow the traffic flow. Your child will be escorted out to your vehicle. This is a change in the previous pick up procedure at MRFES.

Late Arrival or Early Dismissal:

The time our students have in school with their teachers this school year may be limited. We ask that students arrive to school on time and remain in school for the entire school day. Please try to schedule a doctor, dentist, and any other appointments after school.

If you must pick up your child early, please send in a note with your child in the morning or call the school well in advance of your arrival. We will have your child waiting for you. You will be asked to enter the foyer and sign your child out. You may not enter the school as visitors will not be allowed into schools.

Reopening School Requirements:

Students and families will notice significant changes due to the requirements put in place to open school safely. Below is a list of changes that are important for parents to discuss with your child before the start of school.

Daily Wellness Checks:

Before leaving the house for school each day, parents must assess their child's health using the health section's wellness checklist. If your child has any of the symptoms listed, your child should remain at home.



Face Masks:

Students are required to wear face masks at all times while riding on the bus and at school. The face mask must cover the mouth and nose. It would be ideal for parents to provide their child with a face mask to wear to school. Masks should be washed or changed frequently.

The district has an inventory of masks in case a student forgets to bring one to school. Students may remove their masks during mask breaks scheduled by their teacher and during breakfast and lunch.

It is recommended that students practice wearing a mask before the start of school. A helpful website to assist younger students wear masks can be found: <https://www.weareteachers.com/mask-videos-for-kids/>

Visitors:

Visitors, including parents, will not be allowed to enter any school. This protocol must be strictly enforced for the school personnel to contact trace in the event of a virus outbreak. Parent meetings will primarily be scheduled via an online platform or by telephone conference.

Water Bottle:

Students are encouraged to bring their own personal water bottle clearly labeled with their name. The district will provide bottled water for refills or for any student who does not have their own container. Water bubblers in the schools must remain closed.

Isolating Students with COVID Symptoms:

Students, faculty, and staff who develop COVID-19 symptoms (please refer to the enclosed letter from the district's lead nurse, Shannon Grauer) will be escorted to a separate health room located in Thompson Middle School. This room is to isolate a sick individual until we can contact a parent or family member to pick up the ill individual. This area will be supervised by a school nurse or a certified health care worker. There is an exterior door adjacent to this health room. This area will be clearly marked for easy access.



Handwashing:

Students will be reminded throughout the day by their teachers and during school announcements to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer. It is essential that all students, faculty, and staff practice good hygiene to minimize germs spread. A good rule of thumb for appropriate handwashing is to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice while washing with soap and water.

Social Distancing:

The district has altered the classroom learning environment to provide the most feasible social distancing between students, teachers, and staff. Non-essential furniture and rugs have been removed from all classrooms to allow for more open space. The classes will look very different as desks must all face forward and are precisely spaced apart. Please talk to your child about the classroom configuration changes as they look very different, especially at the elementary level. All school hallways, bathrooms, and classrooms have signs displayed with reminders to wash hands, social distance, and report health symptoms.

Cleaning Procedures:

The district will be following cleaning procedures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). We have assigned one custodian for each school during the day and are adding substitutes to help maintain the disinfecting of outside play equipment. We have secured PPE equipment, cleaning products, and other supplies to keep our schools free of germs as best we can.

Field Trips and Class Presentations:

All school field trips, onsite presentations, and school assemblies are postponed through January 2021. We will reassess the curriculum enrichment activities mid-year to determine if restrictions can be lifted.



Athletic Programs:

The district continues to monitor the recommendations from the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) regarding high school fall sports. Deb Spinelli, TPS Athletic Director, will update students and families on any changes to the fall high school athletic programs.

The members of the Board of Education voted to cancel the middle school fall sports program. Many districts in the area have canceled fall sports for middle school students, limiting the opportunity for regional competitive games.

The Board plans to revisit our middle school sports programs before each new season to determine if the district may participate.

Changing Learning Models & Quarantine Periods:

The district may be required to switch between learning models, onsite, hybrid, or remote learning due to the virus impact in our schools or community. The district will communicate health-related school closures through the typical means of communication, calls, email, and text. Please be sure that your emergency contacts are all up to date in our student information system.

If you have changed your phone number or email address, please contact your child's school secretary, who can help you update this information in our database. You can also update your information using the TYLER parent portal.

Parents need to understand that as a result of positive cases of coronavirus in school, we may require students, faculty, and staff to quarantine at home. Families must prepare to secure child care if students are asked to remain home for periods of time.

Early Dismissal:

The district will be monitoring the weather during the first month back to school. In extreme heat, we may need to cancel classes and send students home for early dismissal. Our classrooms are not air-conditioned, and everyone is required to wear a mask, which may render the learning environment unsuitable for teaching and learning.

Fans have been purchased for all classrooms; however, they may only be placed at the window to blow air out of the room. The fans will have a minimal cooling effect in the classrooms.

We will do our best to give you advance notice of an early dismissal by keeping up with weather predictions.

Distance Learning Program:

The distance learning program for families who have opted to keep their children home to access the curriculum will begin on **Tuesday, September 8, 2020**. You will receive information on how to access your child's distance learning program by Friday, September 4, 2020, from your child's teacher.

Teachers will be providing instruction live stream scheduled during the school day. Please note that students learning remotely will receive equitable access to the curriculum; however, their instructional day will not be the same as the students will receive onsite.

Elementary and secondary distance learning programs will be different. All teachers are required to use Google Classroom as the central place for students to access instruction. When possible, teachers will record lessons and post by the end of the day for later access.

School attendance is mandatory, and students learning from home will be expected to log in to each class daily. Attendance will be taken.

Please be sure to contact your child's teacher or principal if your child is experiencing a problem with technology or any other issue that prevents him/her from attending their daily remote instruction. The district will follow established attendance protocols to reach out to students and their families if they are chronically absent.

Thompson Public Schools has partnered with TEEG to assist families and school personnel to ensure all students remain connected to their learning program. TEEG personnel will be reaching out to parents of students who failed to stay connected to their virtual classroom at the end of last year. It is our goal to start the school year with good remote learning habits.

Please be sure your child has had breakfast and is dressed and ready to learn. There must be an area set up in the home where students can comfortably participate in their lessons. Students are part of a regular classroom and should not appear in class in pajamas or use their Chromebooks from their beds.

Meal Service:

All meals, (breakfast and lunch) in all schools will be delivered and eaten in classrooms to ensure social distancing. Cafeterias have been converted into classrooms at MRFES and TMS. The high school cafeteria is needed for expanded food packaging and preparation.

Elementary Meals:

All students at Mary R. Fisher Elementary School will receive **FREE** breakfast and lunch. The school has qualified for the Community Eligibility Provision Program, which provides free meals **WITHOUT** completing free and reduced lunch eligibility forms.

Thompson Middle School Meals:

All students at Thompson Middle School will receive **FREE** breakfast **and** lunch. All families who have students attending TMS **MUST** complete and submit a free and reduced lunch application. It is essential to have this form completed because we need to maximize the district's meal reimbursements from the federal meal program to offset the costs of lunches for all students. The form is enclosed for your convenience. We are piloting free lunch this year for middle school students. If we can balance the cost of the free program against the reimbursement funds, we will be able to continue free lunch in the following years and include the high school students.

** TMS Students may only receive free lunch if they have a completed form on file regardless if the family qualifies**

Tourtellotte Memorial High School:

All students attending TMHS will receive **FREE** breakfast. Families must complete a free and reduced lunch application to determine if they are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Students who do not qualify may purchase lunch at the cost of \$3.05.





THOMPSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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August 14, 2020

Greetings Thompson families, staff, and students,

We will be starting the new school year soon, and I wanted to send home some critical information regarding health and wellness in the face of the national pandemic we are currently facing. Our primary goal is to keep everyone as safe as we can while providing an education to our students.

It is essential for everyone to read the following information regarding health and safety to ensure the well-being of all stakeholders.

- **CDC does not currently recommend universal symptom screenings (screening all students grades K-12) be conducted by schools.**
- **Parents or caregivers should be strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of infectious illness every day.**

Students who are sick should not attend school in-person. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to SARS-CoV-2.** Symptoms can include:

- Fever (100.4 or higher) or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

To reduce the risk and prevent a resurgence of COVID-19, everyone is reminded to do the following:

- When in public, wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from other people.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue; throw it in the trash and wash your hands.
- Stay home when you are sick except to get medical care.
- Get your annual flu shot when it becomes available.
- People 65 and over and those of any age with underlying medical conditions should stay safe and stay home.
- Distance yourself from any places or situations where people are not following the rules and you do not feel safe from COVID-19.

Illness in School

In case of illness while in school, a student may report to the nurse's office. The nurse will evaluate the student and, if appropriate, return the student to class. At the discretion of the nurse, if symptoms appear to be COVID-19 related, the student or staff member will be dismissed from school. Students will be escorted to the isolation room (staffed by a staff member) until picked up by a parent/guardian.

Please review these helpful links regarding COVID-19 which are available on our school website under the COVID-19 section:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/schools-childcare/COVID19-symptoms-tablegraphic-v1.pdf>

<https://www.weareteachers.com/mask-videos-for-kids/>

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/COVID19/COVID-19-Resources-for-Families-and-Educators>

Sincerely,

Shannon Grauer

Shannon Grauer
Lead Nurse