

# PICAYUNE SCHOOL DISTRICT

**DEAN SHAW**  
Superintendent

706 Goodyear Boulevard  
Picayune, Mississippi 39466  
(601) 798-3230 / Fax: (601) 798-1742

**KIMBERLY MASSENGALE**  
Federal Programs/  
MSIS Coordinator

**WALT ESSLINGER**  
Assistant Superintendent

**LISA PERSICK**  
Finance Director

**DEBBIE SMITH**  
Curriculum Director

## **Picayune School District Statement on the Re-opening of School for the 2021 -2022 School Year:**

It is important to note that any re-start plan set forth by the Picayune School District is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, executive orders, local ordinances, etc. as related to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Although Mississippi public school districts have received “guidance” from the Mississippi Department of Education, Mississippi Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control, the Picayune School District’s top priority is the health and safety of our students and staff.

The intent of this document is to give parents and students as much information as possible in a precise and easy to read format. It is not written to answer every “what if” or “suppose this” scenario. It is impossible to produce such a document that answers every question and/or every situation as related to the re-opening of school. However, please do not hesitate to contact your child’s principal or the central office for specific questions. Please know that this plan is subject to change based on future recommendations from our federal, state, and local agencies as the start date of school approaches.

It is the Picayune School District’s goal to see that every child has every opportunity to grow academically, socially, and emotionally in a safe and healthy environment during this vital time in their lives. With the support of our community, great teachers, staff, and supporting parents working together, we know that the students attending the Picayune School District will have a successful school year.

## Picayune School District 2021 -2022 School Year

- The Picayune School District will begin classes on a traditional format daily. Students present will be in an environment as close to normal as possible while following federal, state, and local guidelines related to COVID-19. Students will return to school on August 5<sup>th</sup>. Teachers will return on August 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Every student is required to attend school everyday unless they have an excused absence as defined in the student handbook. Attendance will be reported daily according to procedures set by the MS Department of Education.
- Parents/visitors will not be allowed to proceed any further than the front office area. Classrooms, playgrounds, and cafeterias are strictly off limits to anyone other than school personnel. Parent meetings will be held virtually, by phone, or held in a designated area and will follow appropriate social distancing protocols. Mask will be required when entering the building.
- Buses will operate on a regular schedule with an emphasis on safety and cleanliness.
- Breakfast and lunch will be served daily. Some meals may be served in the classroom or another designated location. Students are encouraged to bring water bottles to school.
- The Picayune School District will follow all MHSAA guidelines and recommendations as it pertains to athletic events and activities. School districts must abide by MHSAA rules and regulations as a member of the organization. Activities will resume as normal as possible and as allowed by federal, state and local guidelines. Students may be allowed to have breaks or recess following a structured schedule set at the discretion of the building level administration. They will also be receiving regular enrichment/activity classes such as PE, music, library, computer, etc.

- Classrooms will be arranged in such a way as to allow students to spread out as much as possible. Each class may be configured based on the size, function, and grade level. Activities that require extended contact with large groups will be limited. Transitions and class changes may be staggered to limit student contact in hallways. Each school will establish procedures to effectively ensure social distancing guidelines are met to the most reasonable extent possible to include recess/breaks and activity classes. The CDC guidelines are guiding principles, not requirements, so our goal is to practice social distancing in each classroom and to be creative about using all opportunities to increase the physical space between students and teachers.
- All schools have been thoroughly cleaned and sanitized. The Picayune School District Maintenance Department will continue to monitor the cleaning of schools, classrooms, and high traffic areas. Schools are continually being cleaned and sanitized throughout the day. Hand washing will be encouraged throughout the day by school staff. Hand sanitizer will be utilized in each classroom as needed.
- School nurses will monitor all students. Students, who have a fever of 100.4 or other symptoms, will be isolated and the parent will be notified. Students should be picked up immediately. Picayune School District request that parents monitor their children closely before sending them to school. Parents should keep their children home if they are sick, display symptoms, or have a fever. Students and staff must be fever free for 72 hours before returning to school. A Doctor's note is required with a return to school date for all positive cases. Documentation of positive results of a household member that requires quarantine for students or staff members is also required.
- If a COVID-19 CASE is identified in a student or staff member, parents of students who have been in close contact will be notified. Parents are also expected to notify the school immediately if their child or someone they have been in close contact with is diagnosed with COVID-19. It is the expectation of the Picayune School District that all positive cases follow the directives of their physician concerning isolation and return to school time frames. Anyone awaiting test results should stay at home until results are available and those results should be provided to the school. The Picayune School District will follow the advice and guidance of the Mississippi Department of Health in determining if an entire classroom and/or school must close due to positive results. We

will monitor health reports daily and respond to any Executive Orders issued by the Governor of Mississippi.

- In the event of a school closure, the Picayune School District will continue instruction through the use of virtual learning and paper packets. School administrators and teachers will work with parents and students on a case-by-case basis to meet individual needs.
- Students are required to have approved masks as part of their school supplies. Students and staff will be required to wear masks while inside the building. Students and bus drivers will also be required to wear masks on buses. Students are not required to wear mask when participating in outdoor activities. Students are expected to provide their own masks. The district will work with families on a case by case basis if hardship exists. Masks cannot display images or wording that is inappropriate, immodest, suggestive, obscene, profane, alluding to illegal activity (i.e. gang affiliation, alcohol, or controlled substance), or offensive because of references to race, gender, ethnicity, or other groups.

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July 28, 2021