



# McDOWELL MOUNTAIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

14825 N. Fayette  
Fountain Hills, AZ 85268  
480-664-5200 PHONE  
480-664-5299 FAX  
FountainHillsSchools.org

October 1, 2020

Dear Falcon Families,

Thank you for the patience, kindness, and understanding as we approach the long-awaited opening of school. We appreciate all the families that completed the parent survey to help us prepare for students returning to in person learning on a daily basis.

**Below, you will find the guidelines and information you will need to send your child back to school safely starting Monday, October 19.** In order to keep all students and staff safe from contacting COVID-19 at school, please adhere to the COVID-19 Parent Information. Please DO NOT send your child to school if they have symptoms or have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19. It is imperative for everyone's safety that we all follow the guidelines set forth by the Maricopa County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control. This plan mirrors the guidelines we have been provided by both organizations.

We monitor data from the Maricopa County Health Department on the data dashboard to include our town, district (includes Ft. McDowell), and surrounding communities weekly. Should we have an outbreak of COVID-19, we will follow the guidelines from the county health professionals assigned to assist us.

### **Starting Monday, October 19:**

- If your child is enrolled in **Option A: Traditional Learning**, your student will attend school Monday through Friday in-person.
- If your child is enrolled in **Option B: Remote Learning**, students will attend school remotely five days per week or when quarantined/ill. Remote learning with live instruction will continue to be a daily option until the end of the first semester in December. After the first semester, remote learning will be reserved for students who are ill or quarantined ONLY. As we get closer to the end of the first semester, please contact your school administrator should you have a unique situation.
- If your child is enrolled in **Option D: Virtual Academy**, your child will not be attending school on campus. Attendance will be monitored through the Schools PLP dashboard. Families will have the option to change to the Option A model at the end of the quarter/semester. This is an independent study instructional model. The standards follow the Arizona standards but not necessarily the district's Beyond Textbook curriculum calendar.

Please do not hesitate to contact your school's office should you have questions or needs.

Valerie Dehombreux, MMES Principal  
Kelly Glass, FHUSD Superintendent



## **Return to School**

As we maneuver the changing landscape of our society, FHUSD is committed to the education of our community's children. In making decisions about the reopening of schools, not only are we considering your child's health and wellness, but the health and wellness of our fabulous staff. The guidance provided in this document is a culmination of dedicated community members utilizing Arizona Department of Health (ADHS), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and Executive Orders from Governor Doug Ducey. Guidance and requirements change frequently. Please know we are continuing to be as flexible and understanding to changes while adjusting to the plans set forth.

We are continuing to utilize the guidance from the Task Force established last spring. The following principles guided the development of our plan:

- We will strive to create a return to school environment that will be as normal as possible while implementing safety precautions.
- We are here to support you; however, parents are ultimately responsible for their child's health and well-being.
- Timely, clear, and effective communication is key. FHUSD's Latest News and Facebook page are our official outlets for COVID news and plans.
- FHUSD will plan for what we know today, and we will be flexible as new conditions emerge.
- Cleaning and sanitizing procedures at all sites have been enhanced. FHUSD will continue to invest in new equipment and effective practices to keep our environment safe and healthy.

### **Metrics for In-person Learning and Distance Learning.**

Based on the updated criteria for returning to in-person learning, we will be adhering to the following:

- Below 50 cases per 100,000 persons AND
- Below 5% positivity

The criteria for returning to a distance-learning model for all students will be as follows:

- Above 100 cases per 100,000 persons OR
- Above 10% positivity

Based on the data, we will begin to gradually phase out certain precautions. The order of the phasing and length of time to move from one precaution to another will be based on the data of COVID-like symptoms and the data dashboard. As we work through this list, we will be sending out information prior to the implementation/elimination of the precaution. We will be progressing through the precautions in the following manner:

- Decrease of social distancing
- Eliminate cohorting of students
- Open common spaces – playgrounds
- Plan for field trips and large gatherings



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- Eliminate symptom screening
- Elimination of face coverings – more guidance on this item will be forthcoming when we are preparing to come back to school without a face covering.
- Permit on-site visitors, mentors, outside related services providers

As we return to full time in-person learning, we will continue to monitor the data from the Maricopa County Department of Public Health dashboard, which is updated every Thursday at 9am. The dashboard and current metrics can be found by visiting the FHUSD's website or [Maricopa County Department of Public Health](#).

### **COVID-19 Parent Information**

The monitoring of COVID-19 for our children starts in the home. We want our schools to remain open. Parents, you can assist us in battling the spread of COVID-19 in FHUSD schools in the following ways:

- Please keep your children home should they present with any COVID-like symptoms or they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. Awards for perfect attendance will not be given this school year. We will work with whatever accommodations that are needed due to absences.
- Please check your child for the following symptoms daily:
  - Fever of 100.4 or higher or chills;
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing;
  - Muscle aches;
  - Sore throat;
  - Headache;
  - Fatigue;
  - Congestion or runny nose;
  - Cough;
  - Vomiting;
  - Diarrhea;
  - New loss of taste or smell
- If you have questions about your child's symptoms, please contact your primary care provider.
- Help children learn the value of washing their hands with soap and water and using hand sanitizer especially after covering their cough and sneezes.
- Currently, it is a mandate by the Maricopa County Supervisors that citizens wear masks in public access areas. When we return to school, all students and staff will wear masks when social distancing is not possible. It is imperative to help your student(s) become accustomed to wearing masks.



### **COVID-19 Related Information**

The school district will follow the guidelines in reporting and quarantining of students and staff with COVID-19.

#### **Response to Reported Cases:**

- FHUSD will follow CDC protocols regarding reported cases and take specific guidance from the Maricopa County Department of Public Health.
- School nurses will follow established screening protocols and will consult with public health officials to determine how to best handle students and staff who display or develop COVID-19 symptoms.
- Isolation rooms will be established in each school for students or staff who may be sick. Parents will be required to immediately pick up their child should they present with COVID like symptoms.

#### **Procedures for COVID-19 Symptoms or Positive Test:**

If a person becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms or reports a positive test, the procedures listed below should be followed:

1. Immediately report the situation to the building principal or school nurse. Confidentiality will be maintained to the greatest extent possible.
2. If a student develops COVID-19 symptoms at school, the student will be separated from all other students and staff, with the exception of one staff member to supervise the student. This employee will have PPE and will maintain 6 feet physical distance unless there is an emergency. Parents or guardians will be called immediately for student pick up or 911 if the student appears to be in medical distress.
3. If an employee develops COVID-19 symptoms at work, the employee will be separated from all other students, staff, or visitors, and arrangements made to send the employee home in a safe manner. 911 will be called if the employee seems to be in medical distress.
4. Areas that were exposed to the symptomatic employee or student will be closed for a prolonged time. FHUSD will wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting those areas. During that time, if feasible, we will increase the airflow to the area.
5. Determine whether other employees or students may have been exposed to the symptomatic individual within 6 feet and for a prolonged period of time (longer than 15 minutes). If so, notify those individuals (or, in the case of students, their parents) of the potential exposure. FHUSD will NOT disclose the name of the person who has become sick. Notification will recommend that exposed individuals monitor their health closely, contact their health care provider if possible, and self-quarantine if any symptoms develop.

#### **When should my child stay home from school and for how long:**

##### **● If a person is symptomatic and awaiting\*\* COVID-19 test results:**

○ Stay home away from others or under isolation precautions until results are available. If results are delayed, follow guidance for symptomatic and tested positive for COVID-19. Once results are available, follow the recommendations below based on results.



**• If a person is symptomatic and tested positive for COVID-19 by PCR or antigen testing, stay home, away from others or under isolation precautions until:**

- At least 10 days\* have passed since symptoms first appeared; AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers; AND
- Other symptoms have improved.

**• If a person is symptomatic and tested negative\*\* for COVID-19 by PCR or antigen testing, stay home, away from others or under isolation precautions until:**

- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers; AND
- Other symptoms have improved.

**• If a person is symptomatic and has NOT been tested\*\* for COVID-19 by PCR or antigen testing, stay home away from others or under isolation precautions until:**

- At least 10 days\* have passed since symptoms first appeared; AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers; AND
- Other symptoms have improved.

**• If a person is asymptomatic and awaiting\*\* COVID-19 test results:**

- No isolation is required while waiting for test results. Take everyday precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Once results are available, follow recommendations based on results.

**• If a person is asymptomatic and tested positive for COVID-19 by PCR or antigen testing, stay home away from others or under isolation precautions until:** (Updated: 7/27/2020)

- At least 10 days\* have passed since specimen collection of the first positive COVID-19 PCR/antigen testing while asymptomatic. If symptoms develop, follow guidance for symptomatic and tested positive for COVID-19.

**• If a person is asymptomatic and tested positive\*\* for COVID-19 by serology:**

- No isolation is required since there is a low likelihood of active infection. Take everyday precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**• If a person is asymptomatic and tested negative\*\* for COVID-19 by PCR, antigen testing, or serology:**

- No isolation is required. Take everyday precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**• If a person has other non-compatible symptoms and has not been tested for COVID-19, stay home away from others or under isolation precautions until:**

- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers; AND
- Other symptoms have improved



## **Instructional Opportunities Starting October 19**

### **School times:**

**Starting October 19, 2020, we will begin implementing an 5 day a week in-person schedule.**

**MMES: 8:45 - 3:20 on M, T, TH, & Fri and 8:45 - 2:20 on Wednesday**

**Bring:** Mask, water bottle, Chromebook laptop, charger, lunch if bringing your lunch, and needed school materials/supplies in a backpack.

### **Chromebook/Device**

If your child has been using a home device and you'd like them to be issued a Chromebook, please make an appointment at your student's school to pick one up. Parents will need to complete the technology agreement and can select insurance for the device.

### **Curriculum & Classroom Process**

We will still continue to follow the Beyond Textbooks curriculum calendar, standards based curriculum maps for MMES, and utilize Schools PLP as our learning platform.

If your child has to be remote for a period of time, they will receive the same instruction regardless if they are on campus or working remotely from home.

Elective course will follow the same format, but independent work may differ from that in the classroom.

### **School Operations**

#### **Enhanced Cleaning**

- School campuses will be disinfected twice a day following CDC, state and local guidelines using FDA agents approved for use in public areas.
- The mid-day protocol will be centered around the lunch transition period allowing access to vacant classrooms. This schedule will be established based on final bell schedules.
- At the end of each school day each building will be cleaned and disinfected prior to the start of the next school day.
- District vehicles will be cleaned and disinfected following CDC, state and local guidelines at the conclusion of the morning route schedule and again at the end of the day.
- Additional disinfecting and sanitizing of high touch areas will be completed on each campus midday to include bathrooms.
- All classrooms will have an EPA N-List registered disinfectant available for staff to disinfect high touch points as needed throughout the day.



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- Air quality and circulation will be maintained through HVAC coils and air filter changes as scheduled.
- All soft porous surface furniture, to include couches/overstuffed chairs/non-District purchased rugs will be removed from all areas.
- In the case of a positive COVID-19 case, custodial staff will follow all cleaning protocols.
- All high touch surfaces and classrooms will be sanitized daily.

### Face Coverings:

- Maricopa County Supervisors require all residents wear masks or facial coverings. FHUSD will continue to take guidance from Arizona state health officials and will comply with all mandates that impact preK-12 public schools.
- Acceptable face coverings include masks – cloth or paper, gaiters.
- Cloth masks should not be worn when students are engaging in physical activity, in which case physical distancing will be maintained.
- While the schools will have a supply of disposable masks available, students are expected to bring their own to and from school. It is permissible to wear shields with a mask, but they will not be provided by FHUSD.
- Care of cloth face coverings: masks and face coverings must be cleaned and sanitized daily and should not be worn on subsequent days without cleaning and sanitizing.
- Should students wear cloth face coverings, they should bring an extra to school in case the other becomes soiled.
- **Please see the included PDF document on face coverings for further face covering protocols.**
- Students who refuse to comply with the safety protocols adopted for in-person learning will be assigned to an online learning environment pursuant to A.R.S. 15-841(F).
- While there are exceptions to persons who are provided with accommodations and modifications to the wearing of face masks, we ask that all students who can wear a mask do so. The exceptions are as follows from the Maricopa County Health Department:
  - The individual has a medical or behavioral condition or disability and cannot wear a face covering (including, but not limited to, any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious or incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to put on or remove the face covering without assistance).
  - When actively eating or drinking
  - When strenuously exercising or swimming
  - When seeking to communicate with someone with hearing loss in a way that requires the mouth to be visible
  - When working at home or when in a vehicle alone or with household members
  - An individual may temporarily remove a face covering for identification purposes or medical services
  - Children under two (2) years of age should not wear a face covering



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- Individuals with a medical or behavioral condition or disability may be unable to wear a cloth face covering. Be sure to take other steps to help avoid unnecessary exposure. Other mitigation strategies include physical distancing of greater than 6 feet, a physical barrier or face shield. At least one individual should wear a face covering in such situations.

### **SPECIAL POPULATIONS:**

- Deaf and Hard of Hearing people often use lip reading to help understand what those around them are saying. Other communication strategies that can be used in this situation include:
  - o A cloth face covering that has a clear plastic area that allows the lips to be visible
  - o Writing notes back and forth using different writing utensils
  - o Writing on a white board to communicate
  - o Using a free speech to text app on mobile device
  - o Gesturing
  - o If needed, ensure adequate physical distance (minimum 6 feet), removing cloth face covering long enough to communicate. **RECOMMEND** use of a clear plastic face shield if this method is necessary. This method should not be used for prolonged periods of time.

### **Hand Hygiene**

- All students and staff will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon arrival at each school.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be available at every school site especially in high traffic areas.
- Classrooms will have access to handwashing and students will be instructed to use soap and water, and scrub for 20 seconds, followed by rinsing.
- Classrooms without handwashing will have access to a minimum 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Frequent hand washing will take place throughout the day.

### **Health Checks/Screening**

- Temperature checks will be conducted upon arrival at either the gate, parent drop off, or bus drop off. When dropping students off, parents should wait until the health check is completed to leave the school property.
- Staff members wearing appropriate PPE will visually check each student and take temperatures with a non-contact thermometer prior to students entering the school.
  - If students do not exhibit any symptoms, they will go directly to class.
  - Students with a temperature of 100.4 or higher or exhibiting symptoms will be taken to the health office or isolation room or return home with the parent.
- Parents will be contacted should symptoms be present and be required to immediately pick up their child. Please be prepared to answer phone calls from the school in the event your child is exhibiting symptoms. Please be cooperative with the health office personnel.
- Parents and guardians should assess their child's health daily before sending them to school.



- Students will be reminded of proper hygiene including avoiding touching their eyes, nose, and mouth; covering mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and safely discarding tissues.

### **Lunchrooms/Classroom Food and Holiday/Birthday Treats**

Lunch will be served in all school cafeterias with breakfast at the elementary, middle, and high schools. Parents, please – please – please, put money into your child’s account. This prevents the food service workers from touching bills and coins that could be contaminated. Lunchroom will be sanitized between or during lunches.

- Lunchrooms/Multipurpose rooms will be open during lunch with increased safety measures.
  - Students will be assigned seats at least 3 feet apart.
  - One class at a time will line up for lunch with appropriate physical distancing.
  - Food sharing will not be permitted.
  - Students with food allergies will sit at a designated table.
- Classroom Food and Holiday/Birthday Treats:
  - Until further notice, students will not be permitted to share treats or food in their classroom. This will be re-evaluated regularly as the state of Arizona nears Phase 3.

### **MMES Lunch:**

- There will be four lunch periods, one for each grade level K-3.
- We will set up and use only one side of our cafeteria tables with students facing in the same direction.
- Students’ assigned seating spots will be marked with masking tape.

### **Playgrounds and Common Areas:**

- Where feasible, physical distancing will be maintained in open and common areas such as hallways, stairwells, gyms and playgrounds. When not possible to physically distance, students and staff will wear face coverings.
- MMES recesses will be separated by grade levels and cohort classes. When using the playground equipment, numbers of students using each will be limited. Playground equipment will be sanitized between uses.

### **School Campuses and Classrooms:**

- Where feasible, seating will be arranged to maintain as much physical distance as feasible. Desks will face the same direction or students will sit on only one side of the table, spaced apart.
- Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottle to be filled at school as the water fountains will be off limits. A bottle filler water fountain will be installed at each campus.
- Students will utilize their own school supplies and keep their belongings separate or in their backpack throughout the day. There will be no use of lockers at any site.



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- Signage will be posted in all rooms, common rooms, and entry ways reminding everyone of hygiene practices to prevent the spread of COVID.
- The Falcon Fitness program will take place outside when weather permits. Classes may focus on health related subjects as well as personal fitness strategies instead of high contact exercises.

### **Visitors on Campus:**

- For the safety of our students and staff, no outside visitors will be permitted past the front office. In-person meetings will take place in a designated location, near the main office. This location will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized after each appointment.
- Please make an appointment should you need to speak with an office staff, principal, teacher, or other staff member.
- Front office staff will disinfect shared surfaces routinely throughout the day.
- Hand sanitizer will be available after sharing pens and completing paperwork.
- Parents will not be permitted to walk students on or off campus before and after school, and will not be permitted on campus during lunch hours.
- All volunteer programs, site visits, or other programs are suspended until further notice and will be reevaluated.

### **Protocols for Students on Campus**

#### **Events and Field Trips**

- Field trips, school-wide assemblies, or large events will be canceled and reevaluated.
- Every effort will be made to hold activities such as school assemblies and clubs in a virtual format.

#### **Social-Emotional Well-Being**

All schools will have a student support team that will assist in addressing the social and emotional needs of students. Students may struggle with processing our new procedures in teaching and learning and staff will be ready to address these concerns as necessary.



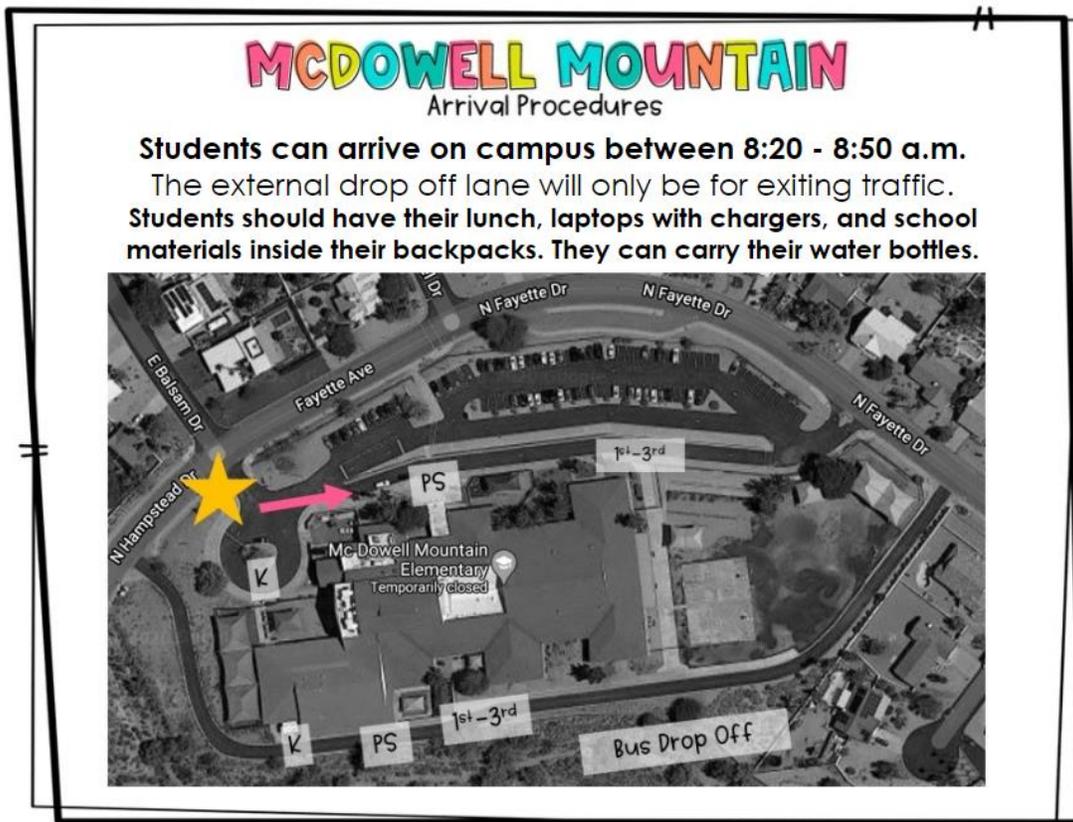
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## Arrival/Drop-Off of Students

### MMES:

Buses will drop off students in the back of the school and cars will drop off students in the front.



**Students can arrive on campus between 8:20-8:50 a.m.** Please check the map above for where your child will be dropped off according to grade level.

For the car drop-off, note that the external lane is only for kindergarten parents after they have dropped off their students at the kindergarten circle unless the parents have 1st-3rd graders to drop off also.

**Please keep a sign in your dashboard window with your students' names and grades** so that staff can easily identify your students for directing them appropriately to their classrooms, especially kindergarten and new students. You can use the same sign for dismissal.

**When your car arrives at the drop off point, parents and students must remain in their cars.** Please roll down the student's window so that staff may take their temperatures with touchless thermometers.



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**Signs listing the symptoms for parents to check each morning will be posted at all drop-off locations. Staff will ask you and your child the following questions as they visually check your child:**

1. Does he/she have any symptoms?
2. Did he/she take any medications this morning?

We are expecting this process to be very quick. What will take longer is the student getting out of the car with their belongings once they're approved. **Therefore, students' backpacks must be packed and ready to go before you arrive. This includes their Chromebook laptops with chargers, school materials/supplies, and lunch boxes/bags already in their backpacks. Students can carry their water bottles and should already be wearing their masks.**

**If your child uses a car seat, please arrange the car seat on the passenger side of the car and parents will need to reach the buckles to unbuckle the car seat without parents getting out of the car.**

### **Protocol for students leaving during class at MMES**

- Students will be able to leave the classroom one at a time for restroom breaks (see procedures below.)
- Traveling to small group intervention for Title I, Fort McDowell services, special education, or the counselor will be structured and facilitated by the appropriate staff.
- No student will be called out of class to come pick up items at the office.

### **Restrooms**

- Classes will take restroom breaks before and/or after specials, recesses, and lunches.
- Students will also be able to use the restroom during class by signing out and going one at a time to the closest restroom designated for their grade levels.
- Students will use hand sanitizer prior to leaving the room and when they return.

### **Hallways**

- Hallways will be marked with signage, stars, and masking tape to indicate one-way traffic for students leaving the classroom individually or for classes traveling to the multipurpose room for lunch, specials, and other appropriate areas of the school.

### **Quarantine Room:**

Each school will have a quarantine room for staff or students who are ill or present with COVID-19 symptoms. At MMES, the quarantine room will be Room 101 which is near the principal's office and front office.



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## Dismissal/Pick up of Students

### **MMES:**

Buses will pick up students in the back of the school and cars will pick up students in the front.



**Preschool and kindergarten will begin dismissal at 3:05. 1st-3rd grades will begin dismissal at 3:10 p.m. and students will be grouped by last name.**

**Please keep a sign in your dashboard window with your students' names and grades so that staff can easily identify your students.**

Please refer to the map above to see in which lane you need to pick up your child.



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### Transportation:

Routes and times will be published in the Fountain Hills Times as well as on the FHUSD Transportation website.

- All students will wear face coverings while on the bus.
- All buses will have clearly visible signage communicating to parents that students should not enter the school bus with any of the symptoms indicated above.
- A bus driver/aide, wearing appropriate personal protective equipment will visually check each student prior to the student boarding the bus.
- If a student has visible signs of illness, the following steps will be taken:
  - If the parent is at the bus stop, the student will return to their parent.
  - If the parent is not at the bus stop, the student will be provided with a mask if they do not have one already, and – if possible – will be situated so as to be physically distanced from other persons.
- To the greatest extent possible given bus capacity, students will be encouraged to sit with their siblings and/or one student per row. Students should sit closest to the window. The bus will maintain maximum bus ventilation at all times with windows open (weather permitting) and ventilation set to non-recirculating mode.
- Buses will be loaded back to front and unloaded front to back.
- Families are encouraged to transport their children to and from school to reduce the number of students on a bus.



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