

Miller R-II School District



COVID-19 Return to School Plan
Fall 2020

Leveled Response System

The Miller R-II School District will use Level Indicators to define health and safety restrictions to provide guidelines for students, staff, parents, and community stakeholders. The Miller R-II School District will respond to new information, new data, and confirmed cases of COVID-19 based upon a leveled response system. The district will seek counsel from the Lawrence County Health Department and other professionals in determining the appropriate level of response and the requirements which accompany that level of response. Below are the levels of response the district will be prepared to utilize for the 2020-2021 school year.

**Level 1: Traditional School
(Pre-Pandemic School)**

**Level 2: In-Person School With
Additional Health Precautions and
Virtual Instruction Available**

Level 3: Distance Learning

Leveled Response Definitions

Level 1: Traditional School (Pre-Pandemic School): All instruction will take place in school buildings during the normal school day. There are no restrictions on visitors or volunteers in the building.

Level 2: In-Person School with Additional Health Precautions and Virtual Instruction Available: Families will have the choice for their student to receive instruction in-person or through virtual means provided by the district. Extra cleaning and safety protocols for students and staff will be followed. Restrictions on visitors, including parents, will be in effect.

Level 3: Distance Learning: Distance Learning would occur due to another school closure. The Miller R-II School District will primarily utilize Acellus Online Learning Platform and a variety of other resources to best meet the needs of our students.

Health Precautions

The following health and safety precautions can be utilized to minimize risk of exposure to infectious illnesses when the District is in Level 2 Protocol:

- All staff and students will have their temperature taken before school begins. (See flowchart for responding to fever.)
- Water fountains will be restricted. Water bottle fillers will be available. Students and staff are encouraged to bring their own water bottle.
- In kindergarten through sixth grade, students will be required to wear facial coverings upon entering the building. Once students pass an initial health screening, students will be allowed to remove facial covering. Students in Pre-School will not be required to wear a facial covering. Elementary students will cohort (a consistent grouping of students throughout the day) with their homeroom class as much as possible during the day. Classes will intermingle minimally throughout the day. It is still highly recommended that the Pre-K-6th grade students wear a facial covering when social distancing is not possible. Students in Pre-K-6th grade may choose to wear a facial covering or other personal protective equipment (PPE) during the school day, but are not required to do so.
- Due to inability to effectively cohort (a consistent grouping of students throughout the day) students at the secondary level, 7th through 12th grades will be required to wear a facial covering upon entering and leaving the buildings, during transition periods and in classrooms when social distancing cannot be obtained.
- Outside visitors will be restricted. This includes parents visiting for breakfast and lunch.

- Staff will monitor for known symptoms of COVID-19 and will refer students to the health office if observed. Symptoms are listed in the following section.
- The District requests that parents or guardians screen children for known COVID-19 symptoms (as well as other infectious illness symptoms) and keep students home if observed.

Health Office Protocols

It is essential for the Miller R-II School District and the community to work together to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment and in the community while still providing a quality education program. State statute gives public districts the authority to exclude students who have a contagious disease such as COVID-19 or who are liable to transmit the disease after having been exposed to it. See 167.191, RSMo.

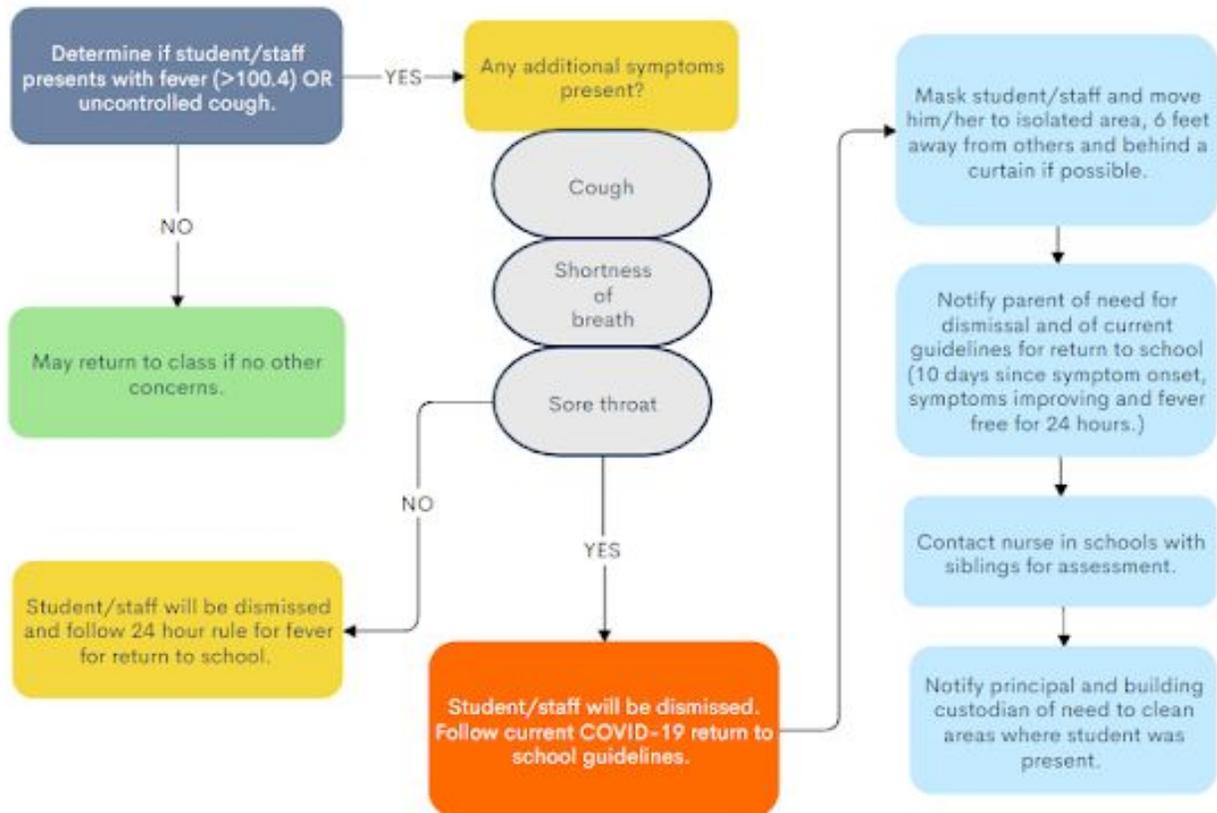
In addition, the local health department has the authority to exclude students from school and may order students and others to isolate or quarantine. See 19 CSR 20-20.05. The Miller R-II School District will work closely with the Lawrence County Health Department to ensure the safest environment for our students and staff.

Exclusion from School:

Students and staff will be excluded from school if they test positive (+) for COVID-19 **OR** exhibit two or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 based on CDC guidance **that is not otherwise explained:**

- a) Fever of 100.4°F or greater
- b) Chills
- c) Cough
- d) Headache
- e) Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- f) Fatigue
- g) Muscle or body aches
- h) Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- i) Sore throat
- j) New loss of taste or smell
- k) Congestion or runny nose
- l) Close contact with a person with COVID-19 in the last 14 days

Screening:



The current CDC guidelines do not require screening of all students or staff for COVID-19 prior to entering the school building. However, at this time the Miller R-II School District has elected to obtain temperatures of students and staff before the start of school each day. In addition, school staff will monitor students for signs of illness. If staff or students are present with fever or symptoms of COVID-19 without other obvious explanations, they will be sent home immediately as they are prohibited from coming to school. The Miller R-II School District will communicate the symptoms of COVID-19 and encourage staff and students to self-screen prior to coming to school.

Isolation:

If a student or staff is suspected of having COVID-19 as evidenced by fever and/or symptoms related to COVID-19 as previously listed; then, the student or staff will be isolated from the rest of the building population until released home. Currently, this will occur in each building's health office with at least one staff present to monitor staff or students for health deterioration. Other healthcare needs will be delegated out to appropriate staff outside of the isolated area. Once the isolated person has been released home, the office will be properly sanitized before further staff or students enter.

Return to School After Exclusion:

Once a student or staff is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC and/or local health department. Currently those guidelines are:

1. **Untested.** Persons who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but experience symptoms may return if the following three (3) conditions are met:
 - a. At least ten (10) calendar days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
 - b. At least 1 full day (24 hours) has passed fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications.
 - c. Improvement in symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath or other COVID related symptoms have improved)

2. **Tested.** Persons who experience symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return to school if the following three (3) conditions are met:
 - a. A Negative COVID-19 test. Documentation from a healthcare provider or the health department stating the results of the test and ability to return to work or school will be required.
 - b. At least 1 day (24 hours) have passed fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications.
 - c. Improvement in symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath or other COVID related symptoms have improved)

3. **Tested + with NO symptoms.** Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 may return when they have gone ten (10) calendar days from the test date without symptoms and have been released by a healthcare provider. Written documentation will be required for return in such instances.

Siblings or Other Students in the Household:

If a student is excluded from school due to COVID-19 symptoms, his or her siblings or other students living in the same household will be questioned. If they exhibit symptoms, they will also be excluded from school. If they do not exhibit symptoms, they may be excluded from school and asked to self-quarantine per the discretion of health staff and/or administration.

If a student is excluded from school due to a positive COVID-19 test, his or her siblings or other students living in the same household will be excluded from school and may return when they have gone fourteen (14) calendar days without symptoms and have been released by a healthcare provider. Written documentation will be required for return in such instances.

Testing:

Instructions for COVID-19 testing may be obtained from the local health department, a healthcare provider or a medical virtual visit.

Self-Quarantine:

If a student or staff has recently had close contact, currently defined as 15 minutes or more within a distance of 6 feet, with a person who received a positive COVID-19 test; the Miller R-II School District may exclude the student or staff from school and request self-quarantine for 7-14 calendar days. If said person remains symptom free for seven (7) calendar days, then they would be eligible to return to work or school.

Medical Inquiries:

The Miller R-II School District may request additional medical inquiries of staff and students. Please note that federal law typically limits the type of medical inquiries that can be made; however, if local public health authorities determine that a public health emergency, such as COVID-19, is a significant threat to students or other individuals in the community, an educational agency or institution in that community may determine that an emergency exists as well.

If staff or students are reporting an illness related absence, the Miller R-II School District may inquire if COVID-19 symptoms exist and if a medical visit or testing has been completed. The Miller R-II School District may also inquire of testing results.

Prevention and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Staff will be required to wear a facial covering if social distancing of 6 feet cannot be maintained. In addition, persons who are coughing or sneezing due to reasons other than potential COVID-19 infections (i.e. allergies, respiratory infections, etc.) may be asked to wear a mask or other PPE while on school property to minimize dissemination of bodily fluids or potentially asked to leave until improvement of symptoms.

When the district is in Response Level 2, the following guidelines will be in place for PPE for students:

- All students (K-12) will be required to wear a face covering while on the bus.
- Secondary students (7-12) will be required to wear a face covering while entering the building, during class when social distancing is not obtainable, transitions between class periods, and at the end of the day.
- Elementary (K-6) students will be required to wear a face covering while entering the building and will be allowed to take off their facial covering once the health screening has been completed before the start of school. Facial covering will be required at dismissal.

Any person is welcome to wear a facial covering or other PPE in the school building unless it inhibits the person's ability to perform his or her job, inhibits a student's ability to participate in the education process or is disruptive to the educational environment. Furthermore, facial coverings may be requested to be briefly removed in a safe environment for staff or student identification. Regular care such as cleaning of the facial covering is strongly recommended. Students or staff with underlying health concerns that would prevent them from wearing a facial covering will be exempt from any requirement but proper documentation from a health professional will be required.

Currently, it is the recommendation of district health staff to practice frequent and effective hand washing with soap and water for a minimum of twenty (20) seconds. Avoid touching faucets, light switches or door handles with bare hands after washing by using a paper towel as a barrier.

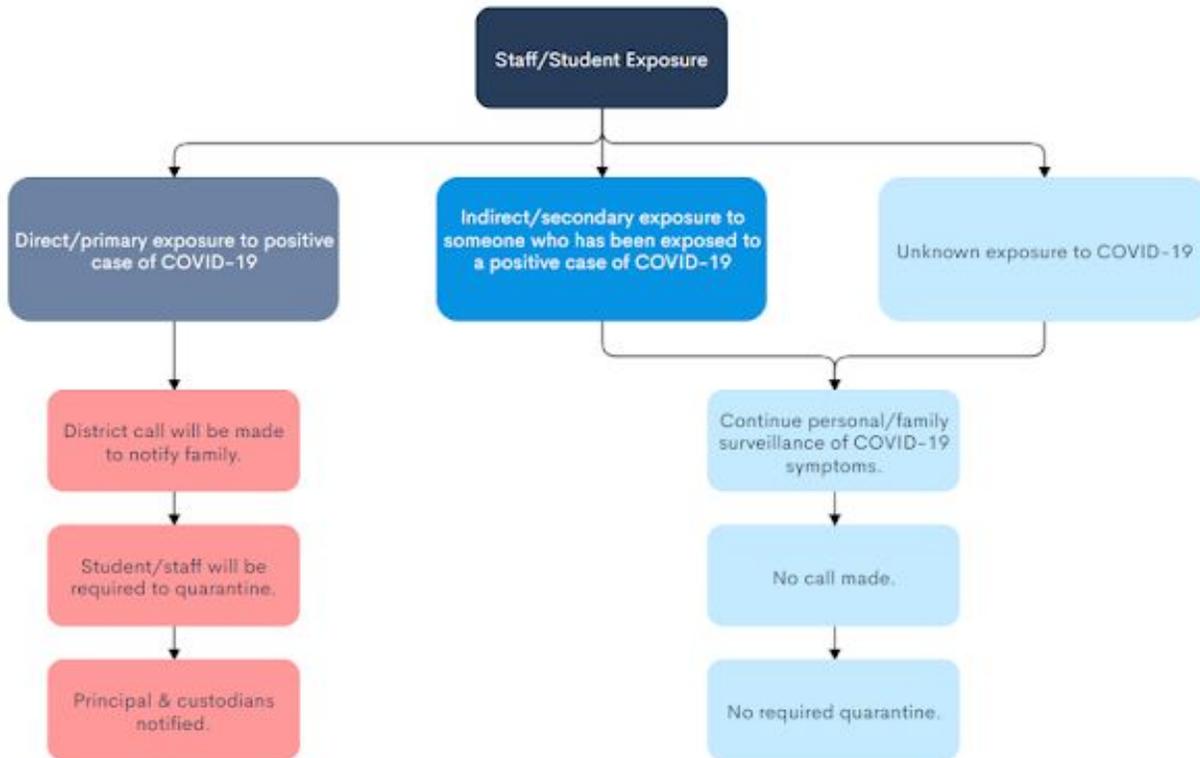
When hand washing is not an option, hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol are an acceptable substitute.

Other Illness:

Please keep in mind that other illnesses may occur that are unrelated to COVID-19. If a student or staff presents with symptoms related to another illness, please refer to the student handbook. For instance, fevers that are unrelated to COVID-19, as typical with strep throat, may return after treatment and once the person is fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.

District Communication Guidelines in Quarantining Situations

Due to the current inherent risk involved with any public contact, including that in the public-school setting, the district will only notify individual families of direct contact with known positive cases of COVID-19.



Student Social/Emotional Needs

During trying times like these, students may experience emotional trauma above and beyond their normal experiences. The Miller R-II School District plans to partner with parents to meet the needs of students through open communication and connection to community resources. Please inform your child's teacher or administrator if social/emotional resources are needed in your home. The following links may be helpful resources as well.

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network - COVID-19 Resources

<https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/trauma-types/disasters/pandemic-resources>

National Association of School Psychologists - Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting with Changes Resulting from COVID-19

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/helping-children-cope-with-changes-resulting-from-covid-19>

Student Transportation

PLEASE NOTE: WE ARE TAKING EVERY PRECAUTION POSSIBLE TO MINIMIZE EXPOSURE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS. HOWEVER, STUDENTS WILL MOST LIKELY BE WITHIN 6' OF EACH OTHER FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME WHEN USING DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION. THEREFORE, BUS RIDERS WILL BE AT A HIGHER RISK OF CONTRACTING COVID-19. IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, PLEASE SECURE OTHER TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL FOR YOUR STUDENT(S).

Before Boarding:

- If a student has a fever or has other symptoms, he or she should not attend school and should not ride the bus. (Any student with a temperature of 100.4 or greater will not be allowed to attend school.)
- At bus stops, students are encouraged to practice social distancing while waiting for the bus.
- Parents should make sure their student(s) are wearing their facial covering before loading onto the bus in the morning.

While Aboard:

The following steps will be taken to better ensure student safety while on the bus:

- Drivers will wear a facial covering when students are loading and unloading.
- Students K-12th grade will be required to wear a facial covering while on school transportation. *Only documented medical exemptions will be made.*
- Students will have an assigned seat, and the list will be maintained by district personnel to aid the Lawrence County Health Department if contact tracing is needed. Siblings will be required to sit together.
- Bus windows will be left open when safe to do so and weather permits.

Unloading:

- As students unload, students will be encouraged to maintain appropriate social distancing while reporting to the appropriate location.
- Drivers will consistently disinfect the bus and high-touch areas with an approved cleaner.

Instructional Plan

The Miller R-II School District will provide students and families two instructional options for the 2020-2021 school year. Families are required to select and commit to one of the options described below no later than the second full week of the semester (Tuesday, September 8, 2020). Students in grades K-12 will remain with the option selected for the remainder of the

semester. This practice is based upon the recommendation of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Families would have the option to transition to a different instructional option at the beginning of the following semester.

Onsite Instruction Option: Traditional school with in-person classes implementing additional health precautions.

Virtual Instruction: The Miller R-II School District will primarily utilize Acellus Online Learning Platform and a variety of other resources to best meet the needs of our students. Students will be monitored by a Miller R-II Teacher. **Students must have internet access to choose this option.** Students who do not have a device will be allowed to check out a device from school. Students will be expected to complete all coursework through the designated virtual learning platform.

Extenuating Circumstances

In the event that a group of students, such as a classroom roster or bus roster, is quarantined due to COVID-19 health concerns, these students will receive distanced instruction.

In the rare situation where an entire building or the district is closed for a period of time due to COVID-19 (Response Level 3), students will receive distanced instruction for the duration of the closure.

If an individual student is quarantined due to COVID-19 health concerns, he/she will receive distanced instruction.

Special Circumstances for Students:

Students who lack devices for online instruction – Currently, we have devices available for all of our students in grades 3-12. For students in Pre-K-2nd grade, a learning device could be checked out to the student.

Students who lack internet access and have no cellular data coverage - Under these circumstances, the District will make Wi-Fi available in the parking lots at the high school and elementary. In addition, the Miller R-II School District is working to provide various hotspot locations throughout the District.

Attendance

Regular school attendance is critical to a student's educational success. However, continued challenges of COVID-19 for the 2020-2021 school year have led to a temporary change in routine attendance guidelines. Less emphasis will be placed on attendance incentives such as

perfect attendance. **Parents/guardians are asked to be vigilant in contacting the school regarding the reason for any student absence as soon as possible.** Automated attendance notifications to a parent/guardian will continue to occur for informational purposes only. If the school has not heard from parents/guardians in a timely manner, they may expect a personal call from the school checking on the wellness of their student. The District will rely on the most recent guidelines from the Lawrence County Health Department to determine return-to-school protocols for students.

Extracurricular Activities

The risk of coronavirus transmission will still be present to some degree as school activities begin and possibly through the 2020-2021 school year. Students and their families, along with school personnel must recognize these risks and implement best practices to reasonably mitigate these risks. Participation in school activities is voluntary and every individual will need to evaluate the risk versus the benefits of activity participation. Students who enroll in virtual classes **only** will not meet the eligibility of the Miller R-II School District to participate in Extracurricular Activities. To be eligible, a student must be enrolled in at least 2 seated courses per semester. In addition, a student choosing only 2 seated courses must be enrolled in 5 courses of virtual instruction, for a total of 7 courses. The eligibility requirements in the Miller R-II Athletic Handbook still must be met.

Screening:

Before every activity (practice, rehearsal, competition, bus transportation) temperature screenings will be done upon arrival to the school for coaches, directors, staff, and players. If a temperature is 100.4 or greater the individual should be moved to an indoor environment for five minutes prior to having their temperature retaken. If temperature remains at 100.4 or greater the individual will not be allowed to participate and will be sent home. The school nurse and parents will be notified.

Facial Coverings:

Facial coverings or masks are REQUIRED for participants, coaches/directors and officials/adjudicators any time they are not doing strenuous physical activity. Wearing facial coverings before activities and immediately following activities is REQUIRED, especially prior to screening.

Positive Testing:

What happens if a student, coach, or director test positive for COVID-19?

- Notify the local public health authority and school personnel.
- All participants who had close contact, direct contact with this individual, or a direct exposure to secretions (i.e. being coughed on) (up to 48 hours before they started showing symptoms) may be excluded from practice and play for 14 days. The Health

Department should be contacted to assist in proper contact tracing and quarantining of individuals. If there was doubt of who the individual came into contact with, then the entire team/group that practiced/rehearsed or competed with the individual may be quarantined for 14 days.

- A close contact is defined by the CDC as a person who has had close contact (less than 6 feet) for greater than 15 minutes with an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection during the 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic or was diagnosed.
- Exceptions may be considered if all activities were done practicing appropriate social distancing while wearing a facial covering and after consultation with your local health department.
- If a coach/director or participant is positive and was wearing a mask or face covering, it is possible that none of their contacts will have to be excluded from participation. In some cases, a mask or facial covering may not be considered protective depending on the type of exposure. A participant in quarantine should stay home, stay separated from others, follow state or local health department guidance, should NOT participate in practices/rehearsals/contests, and, if appropriate, may participate in individual conditioning activities with remote virtual instruction with guidance from a healthcare professional.
- Coaches/Directors and staff who were in contact with the infected individual while properly wearing a facial covering may not need to be excluded from participation.

What happens when a participant/coach/director has been exposed to a confirmed positive case of COVID-19?

- Individuals who have had a significant exposure (i.e. close contact as defined above) to a confirmed positive COVID-19 individual must quarantine for 14 days from the last date of exposure to the positive COVID-19 individual. If the exposed individual has a negative COVID-19 test, they still must quarantine for 14 days.
- If the exposed individual develops symptoms during the 14-day quarantine period, testing for COVID-19 should occur. If positive, then the participant/coach/director must follow the guidance for a confirmed positive individual. The participant/coach/director can return if the test is negative and symptoms have improved following the 14-day quarantine.

Return to Play:

Any student who has tested positive must complete a “COVID-19 Return to Play Form” before they resume any activities.

Spectators:

Gathering sizes and/or group restrictions are determined by local and state health departments. Upon initial return to participation, gatherings will be limited to no more than the

current local recommended gathering size, indoors or outdoors. Increasing or decreasing tolerances for group sizes shall be determined by the local and state health department. When attending these events please respect those around you who may be more susceptible to this situation by honoring the guidelines set forth by the local Department of Health.

2020-2021 Return to School Plan

The *2020-2021 Return to School Plan* is based upon the information available to the district prior to August 7, 2020. The nature of the COVID Pandemic is such that adjustments could be necessary for the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff. The Miller R-II School District reserves the right to adjust the plan based upon new information and guidance from local health professionals. We will communicate any changes to this plan as soon as possible.

Conclusion

The Miller R-II School District is committed to providing a safe environment for students and staff alike. Further, we are committed to providing a high-quality learning experience for students and families in both the in-person and virtual settings. Finally, we are committed to the physical, mental, and emotional needs of our students and families and will serve our community to the best of our ability to meet these needs. A strong partnership between the schools, families and the community will be essential as we adjust to the changes this pandemic has brought. This partnership, support, and sense of cooperation is what makes the Miller R-II School District community a great place for everyone. We look forward to walking through this journey alongside you as we move forward with the 2020-2021 school year!