COVID-19 Mitigation and Safety Protocols

Face Masks	Effective Monday, October 4, 2021, Sumter School District will require students, employees, and visitors to wear face masks in our school buildings. The South Carolina Department of Education is enforcing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) order requiring the use of face masks by students and staff on state owned and operated school buses. In compliance with this directive, Sumter School District will require face masks on all school buses. Face coverings are **required** by students, staff, and visitors in healthcare areas of school facilities. Locations designated for healthcare, testing, or for awaiting pickup due to illness are considered healthcare facilities. Individuals being assessed, tested, or dismissed from attendance due to respiratory symptoms are required to wear a face covering while in these designated healthcare areas and also when transitioning to/from these areas.
Physical Distancing	Schools will allow for physical distancing within the classrooms, hallways, and other areas of the school to the maximum extent possible. In classrooms where students cannot observe physical distancing of three feet or more, plexiglass shields will be utilized as an additional safety precaution.
PPE and Sanitization	In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sumter School District utilized ESSER funds to purchase Personalized Protective Equipment (PPE), including facemasks, shields, gowns, plexiglass dividers for office areas and classroom use, and hand sanitizer and wipes. Bottle refill stations, sanitization stations, and signage regarding safety are strategically placed throughout our buildings. Sanitization procedures will continue to be based upon CDC guidelines with an emphasis on sanitizing frequently touched surfaces. Electrostatic disinfection will also be utilized for sanitization. School bus drivers will disinfect the buses after each route including high touch surface areas. Buses will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily and after transporting an individual who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms.
HVAC/Air Quality	Sumter School District upgraded the filters for the HVAC units from MERV 8 to MERV 10. The filters are changed once a month.
Visitors	As a precautionary measure, visitors will be limited in our schools. Visitors will be allowed inside schools only to handle urgent/critical matters. Conferences with parents that do not need to be held in person will be conducted in a virtual manner.
Meals	Students will receive and consume meals in the cafeteria. At the principal's discretion, a class may receive meals in the cafeteria and consume them in the classroom.
Vaccinations	Sumter School District encourages students and staff who are 12 and older to get vaccinated to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
Quarantines	**Fully Vaccinated** individuals do not need to quarantine if they voluntarily choose to provide documentation of full vaccination status to eliminate the need for quarantine. We **strongly recommend** that the individual wear a mask at school until 14 days after exposure or until the individual receives a negative test result. **Unvaccinated** individuals can return to school after completing up to 10 days of quarantine if the person is not presenting symptoms of COVID-19 after daily at-home monitoring. The 10 days of quarantine begin after the last known close contact with the COVID-19 positive individual. When the person returns to school, we **strongly recommend** the individual wear a mask at school and monitor for symptoms until 14 days after exposure. The close contact definition for quarantine excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student if the exposed students wore masks during the exposure time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting. **Please monitor for symptoms and do not attend school/work if you are sick.**