



The  
**McGuffey  
Montessori**  
School

## Safe Return to School

"Solidarity among human beings is very beautiful, arising from antiquity and projecting itself as it does into the future, binding the past to the present and the present to the future, for all eternity."

Dr. Montessori spoke in 1949, in San Remo, in a lecture entitled  
*Human Solidarity in Time and Space*

Hello McGuffey Families,

Welcome to this new day in Montessori education where, activated by a world pandemic, we are called to adapt and to return fully to our Montessori method. This document is a consolidation of the many developing resources for schools to assist your family in returning to school under new conditions while continuing to offer adults and children a safe and vibrant Montessori learning experience.

Our goal is to be open every day for every student. To accomplish this we need to have procedures in place that will mitigate risk of infection, knowing that we can't eliminate risk entirely. We will establish and reinforce a culture of health, safety, and shared responsibility. This guide presumes that there will be times where we will be called to work both remotely and within the prepared environment of the school.

While I know we won't all agree with every aspect of our reopening plans, you can rest assured that the plans are a result of our staff conducting broad research, task forces regularly putting together ideas and plans, and taking serious consideration of our responsibility to our students, our families, and our community.

We will all be called upon to compromise, remain flexible, trust one another, and be hopeful.

I have great optimism for the coming year and can hardly wait to see our new and returning students in carline starting August 25th.

Sincerely,

Nancy Hawthorne  
Head of School

## Possible Learning Scenarios

Rev. 8/23/2020

Our goal is to be open every day for every child and to provide a safe environment for your child to continue their development. To make reopening as smooth as possible, we have:

- Reduced student–teacher ratio by increasing staff across classrooms
- Increased student–space ratio
- Increased hands-on material redundancy
- Built in time for temperature screens, handwashing, and sanitizing of materials
- Staff are prepared for all hands on deck for transitions and cleaning
- Made a plan to keep cohorts together

We know there is a likelihood for some amount of remote learning. To smoothly transition to an away plan, we have put the following in place:

- The county health department will tell us when a classroom or the school needs to close, or when particular people need to quarantine. Using contact tracing, health department officials will narrow down who should quarantine.
- Nancy and the Board have set up parameters for when the entire school needs to switch to remote learning. We will shift to remote learning if Butler County goes to level 4 (purple).
- If a classroom should close, we will provide remote instruction as we did this spring.
- If a family is forced to quarantine, our staff will be prepared to provide self-guided learning materials. Please note that these materials may not match what the classroom is doing.

## Illness Protocol

In the past, it was not uncommon for adults to come to work sick or for children to arrive at school sick. Staff and students can no longer come to school sick.

We know it is difficult to manage, but we all must be ready to keep our children at home more often this year to keep others safe, just in case. Will we make mistakes? Yes. Will we err on the side of caution? Yes. Will your child miss school more often than you would like? Yes.

We ask that families answer these questions every morning before arrival:

- Do you or anyone in your household have a fever?
- Do you or anyone in your household have a cough?
- Do you or anyone in your household have a sore throat?
- Do you or anyone in your household have shortness of breath?
- Do you or anyone in your household have loss of taste or smell?
- Do you or anyone in your household have nasal congestion or a runny nose?
- Do you or anyone in your household have diarrhea or nausea?

If there is a 'yes' answer to any of these, then the student or staff member must stay home from school—no exceptions. If a student or staff's temperature is at or above 100°F, the student or staff member must stay home from school—no exceptions. When utilized in [Mass General Hospital](#), this approach was able to drastically reduce the spread of disease. [Staying home when sick](#) is a new responsibility to our community.

While we understand that these symptoms can be related to non-COVID-19 illnesses, we must proceed with an abundance of caution to remain open as many days as possible. Since these symptoms can appear after infection of COVID-19, we must take them seriously.

Staff and students should stay home if they are sick with any of the following symptoms, even if the symptoms are mild.

- 100° fever or higher
- Cough or shortness of breath
- Loss of smell or taste
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches and/or fatigue
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea

See the attached flow charts at the end of this guide for reference as to when a student or staff member may return to school. Please note if the cause has been determined not to be COVID-19, the fever must have abated for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to school.

If a student develops symptoms during the school day, they will be isolated in a designated area away from other students. Parents must pick up their child within 60 minutes. When a parent arrives, the child will be escorted to the parent waiting in the parking lot. If the student has a sibling at school, the sibling(s) will also return home.

If anyone in your household has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the child or staff member should remain at home. We strongly recommend COVID-19 testing when applicable.

Compounding the effort to keep everyone safe, we acknowledge that many staff and students have seasonal allergies which can present with a symptom of COVID-19. If you believe your child may present with allergies this fall, we encourage you to get a letter from your child's doctor stating the symptom(s) your child may have. With that letter on file, we can keep your child at school unless other symptoms occur.

## Taking Temperature

While we understand that thermometers will vary, we will be using no-touch thermometers at school. These tend to read one half to a whole degree low compared with oral thermometers which is why we plan to use 100° instead of 100.4°.

## When COVID-19 testing is positive

[This site](#) can help you find a location to obtain a COVID-19 test.

McGuffey Montessori will contact the Butler County Health Department if a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 for guidance on next steps. A positive test may require that a classroom of children and teachers home-quarantine for 14 days from the date of contact.

McGuffey Montessori will communicate with families when a staff member or student has tested positive, including which classroom, and what steps are in motion.

If a member of your household tests positive for COVID-19, the family must notify McGuffey and their child will quarantine for 14 days. Staff and students will self-quarantine for 14 days if they have had close contact with a COVID-19 positive person. If no symptoms arise during the 14 days, the student or staff member may return to school.

## What Families Can Do

We need your commitment to keep our community safe and our school open. Your diligence, even when inconvenient, will help ensure McGuffey is open for as many students as possible every day. Please do:

- Monitor your family members closely for symptoms
- Keep your child home with a fever of 100° or higher. See the attached flow charts at the end of this guide for reference as to when a student or staff member may return to school. Please note if the cause has been determined not to be COVID-19, the fever must have abated for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to school.
- All students and staff are encouraged to receive a flu vaccination as seasonal influenza shares many of the COVID-19 symptoms.
- After you have read this guide, please reply to the email on behalf of your household that you have read and agreed to comply. **Your reply is due by Monday, August 17 at 9am.**

## Daily Safety Protocols

**Face coverings:** Everyone entering a school building must have a [face covering](#) that stays on without the use of hands. Face masks should be washed at the end of each day, so you may want to own multiple masks to avoid doing laundry daily. Below are our guidelines:

- All students will wear masks upon arrival.
- McGuffey will have disposable masks available in each classroom if needed.
- Staff will wear a face mask.
- Visitors to the school will wear a face mask. McGuffey will have disposable masks in the office if needed. Note: Visitors will only enter a classroom if the facility needs emergency maintenance. Parents may not visit classrooms this year.
- Teachers in each unit will explore safe times to take breaks from face coverings during the day to help mitigate “mask fatigue.”

**Hand washing:** Washing hands is a strong defense to the spread of illness and requires at least 20 seconds with soap. We have supplied access to hand washing including outdoor hand washing stations as well as hand sanitizer in all areas without a sink. Children will be taught how to manage their personal hygiene under these new conditions.

**Lunch:** Lunch will be eaten within the student/teacher cohorts with children at separate eating spaces.

**Classroom supplies:** Students will have their own set of supplies rather than a shared community supply.

**Montessori Materials:** Montessori materials and manipulatives will be cleaned between uses in the classroom. Students may be asked to sanitize hands before and after using some types of materials.

**Cohorts:** All classrooms have moved spaces to make cohorts, or bubbles, with their classrooms.

**Staff:** Additional staff has been hired for each cohort.

**Recess:** Recess times will be staggered to separate cohorts. Only one cohort will be allowed in a zone at a time.

**Ventilation:** McGuffey Montessori has taken significant measures to improve ventilation and air purity in our classrooms. Filters have been upgraded and will be replaced more frequently, fans installed, and windows checked for ease of opening and screens added.

**Cleaning:** Staff will disinfect materials and high traffic surfaces throughout the school day. A certified cleaning company has been hired for after-school disinfection. Water lines were flushed after the March school closure. Reusable cleaning cloths have been replaced with paper towels.

**Outdoor Learning:** McGuffey is fortunate to have copious amounts of outdoor learning space. All classrooms will spend the majority of their day learning outdoors. All classrooms have structures either already in place or purchased to help keep learning materials dry. Supply lists include outdoor gear for students.

**Training:** All staff members received training on illness protocols related to COVID-19.

**Physical Distancing:** Each classroom has ample space for students and staff to be physically distant. Measurement lessons will help children to support and practice social distancing.

**Temperature Checks:** Please check your child for symptoms and fever every day before coming to school. Temperatures of students will be taken upon arrival and before entering the building. Staff will spot-check throughout the day as needed.

## Delayed Start

By delaying the start of school to August 25, we added critical time to complete all the safety measures effectively. We have been working nonstop to open on time. As guidelines have shifted, sometimes on a weekly basis, the implications for school had to be reevaluated and new contingency plans considered. This delay will staff six additional days to prepare spaces and materials and train on new procedures.

## Arrival and Dismissal

Our goal with morning carline and afternoon dismissal is to minimize contact between cohorts while screening each child. Parents will not be allowed in the buildings. We will stagger morning carline to allow for more time, minimize congestion, and reduce the number of people needed in the parking lot.

### Morning carline

- Students arrive at staggered times (details to come)
- All students will wear a mask exiting the car.
- Parents wearing masks will assist children exiting the car when appropriate
- More staff will be on hand to screen students in the staff member's cohort
- Students will be screened for fever and symptoms before the car pulls away. If a temperature is 100° or higher or any COVID-19 symptoms are present, the student (and sibling/s when applicable) must return home. See the flow charts at the end of this guide for reference as to when a student or staff member may return to school. Please note if the cause has been determined not to be COVID-19, the fever must have abated for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to school.

### Afternoon dismissal

- Students will wear a mask from classroom to car
- Parents wearing masks will assist children entering the car when appropriate

## Calendar

Some of our normal curriculum programs will be delayed until spring or fall 2021. Staff have some creative ideas in mind to continue some classroom traditions.

### Events

1. New Parent Orientation (8/19-20/20) socially distanced, separated by classroom
2. New Parent Conferences (8/13/20) via ZOOM
3. Classroom Visit CANCELLED
4. Back to school picnic CANCELLED
5. Glen Helen DELAYED UNTIL 2021
6. Curriculum Night DELAYED UNTIL 2021
7. Harvest Supper DELAYED UNTIL 2021
8. Parent Conferences (11/12-13) via ZOOM
9. Safety Drills BY CLASSROOM
10. Middle School Trip DELAYED UNTIL 2021

### Programs

1. Specials (art, music, spanish, P.E.) DELAYED UNTIL 2021
2. Field Trips DELAYED UNTIL 2021
3. Early Care DELAYED START TBD
4. Extended Day TBD
5. Sing-along DELAYED UNTIL 2021
6. SOAR DELAYED UNTIL 2021
7. Partners Program DELAYED UNTIL 2021
8. Open Doors Program and Grade 3 Transition Program DELAYED UNTIL 2021
9. Cloud Club DELAYED UNTIL 2021
10. Birthday Celebrations CLASSROOM COHORT ONLY, NO TREATS FROM HOME

## Early Care and Ex-day

In light of the complications that a regular school day will hold, we are delaying the start of Early Care and Extended Day until October 5. This will give us time to learn from our school day experiences and adapt accordingly or re-evaluate the feasibility of the programs. This will also help us determine how much time is needed in the afternoon and evening to clean and ventilate the spaces for the start of the next day. Other Montessori schools in our region have canceled these programs for the entire semester.

## Travel

We will follow the [Ohio State guidelines](#) in asking families to self-quarantine for 14 days after travel to states reporting positive testing rates of 15% or higher for COVID-19. We ask that families use caution and their best judgement if there is any concern.

## Communication

How we organize to return in the fall has everything to do with how successful it will be for children and adults. Rather than what is easiest, our task is to hold the needs of the child at the center of every conversation and to imagine how the plan will impact students in all planes of development.

**Families:** We view McGuffey Families as partners in this coming year, as children will likely move from learning in school to learning at home and back again. We are committed to communicating closely with you, from both Nancy and the classroom teachers.

**Students:** There will need to be strong communication with children so they know, understand, and are prepared for the various scenarios for how they will continue to enjoy learning in the coming year. Our plan will be laid out clearly so they are empowered to own it and can step responsibly into the work.

In addition to communicating the plan, all classrooms will integrate the expectations for virtual work and lessons should we need them. Just as there are shared norms in school, there will be schoolwide expectations for the digital experience. We will create expectations and guidelines for our students that you can reinforce at home.

Our suggested remote learning guidelines include:

- No toys during remote learning.
- Come dressed.
- Sitting up is necessary.
- Bring tools and supplies.
- Video will remain on during school meetings
- Google Classroom Chatbox/messaging use will be defined.
- Have a schedule in place for bedtime and wake-up time.

## Conclusion

While this year will be incredibly different, we feel strongly that there are many opportunities for our school and our students to learn and work in new ways.

We will continue to structure our classrooms in ways that support independence and individualized learning. Despite great accommodations, we will be holding true to our principles of respect, adaptability, community, order, independence, choice, and preparation for life.



## Protocols for Responding To Cases Of COVID-19

The intent of this document is to provide an overview of The McGuffey Montessori School's approach to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases on campus.

**Families are required to monitor for symptoms daily.**

The single most important thing to do if any symptoms of COVID-19 are present is to **STAY HOME**. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a cold; please do not assume it is another condition. **WHEN IN DOUBT, STAY HOME.**

### **Suspected case of COVID-19 on campus**

If an individual presents with at least one COVID-19 symptom during the school day:

- In light of the risks presented by COVID-19 and in the interest of the health and safety of students, their families, and McGuffey's staff, if the student presents with one or more symptoms of COVID-19 and there is no definitive, alternative cause immediately identifiable, we will act with caution and treat as a suspected case of COVID-19.
- The individual will be instructed to keep their face covering in place (unless there is a medical reason not to do so).
- The individual will be placed in an isolated area, under the supervision of an adult wearing PPE and remaining six feet away, while waiting to leave campus.
- If the student has a sibling/s, the sibling/s will also be sent home.
- The parents will be notified and must collect their child within 60 minutes.
- Parents should consult with their primary healthcare provider for further diagnosis and testing.
- **Parents or caregivers and all school employees must immediately notify the school if they or if a member of their household is diagnosed with or is presumed to have COVID-19.**

### **Assessment of illness in children**

The flow charts on the following page represent a simplified guide to actions that will be advised in the event of a child presenting with one or more symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

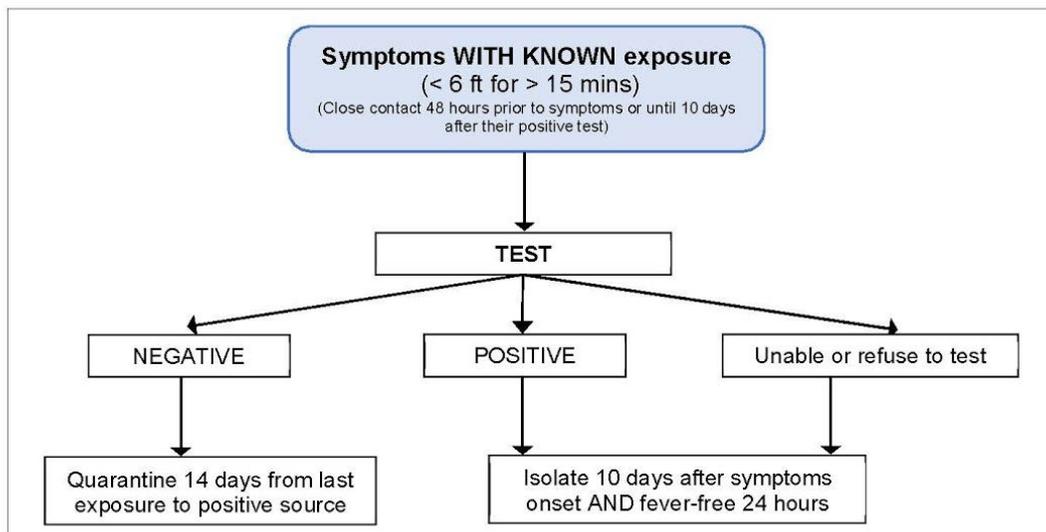
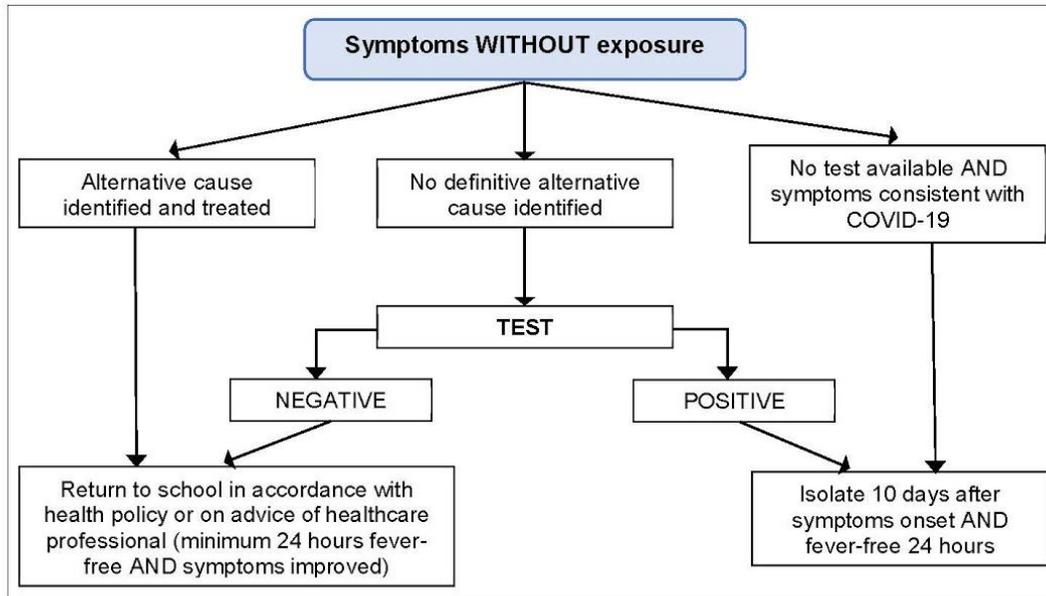
It must be remembered that, in a typical week at school, our staff deals with multiple instances of students with relatively minor ailments, including fever, headache, sore throat and coughs. We will continue to see these minor ailments, unrelated to COVID-19. The challenge in the current environment is that each of these is also known to be a possible symptom of COVID-19. As a result, we will take a cautious approach to handling student illness on a case by case basis.

Where presenting symptoms meet the case definition—even though we recognize that the probability of COVID-19 is slight—we advise that the student is collected from campus and consults with their healthcare provider for further diagnosis and testing. We strongly advise parents to seek testing. As well as seeking guidance from your primary healthcare provider, both the Ohio Department of Health and the Butler County Health Department websites provide useful Covid-19 resources, including details of testing sites. Ohio Department of Health [testing site](#) information.

If no definitive, alternative diagnosis is determined and a test is not available, that student will be required to remain off campus and quarantine or isolate, in accordance with the following charts.

**Parents are asked to notify school as soon as test results are available.**

## Flowcharts to guide action in the event of child illness



We have been advised that a test-based strategy for ending isolation/quarantine is no longer recommended by the CDC in instances of known exposure and will not be deemed sufficient for a return to school.

## Who will need to quarantine or isolate?

Students in the class of a **confirmed** source (determined by a positive test result or assessment of a healthcare provider) will be assumed to have been in **close contact** with the student (or faculty/staff member), and quarantine protocols will be followed accordingly.

In addition to students in the source's class, the school will identify other close contacts, based on the definition of "close contact". All close contacts will be required to quarantine.

The following table provides a guide to the approach that will be taken.

<b>WHAT SYMPTOMS ARE EXHIBITED?</b>  	<b>WHAT WAS THE EXPOSURE?</b>	
	<b>Known close contact exposure</b>  (Source < 6 ft for > 15 mins. Close contact 48 hrs prior to source's symptoms or up to 10 days after their positive test)  e.g. sibling/household contact, child in same "cohort" or classroom	<b>No close contact exposure</b>  (Source > 6 ft or < 15 mins)  e.g. passed in hallway, child in different classroom
<b>Asymptomatic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarantine 14 days<sup>2</sup> &amp; monitor for symptoms</li> <li>Test on initial identification, if possible, OR test if symptoms develop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor for symptoms</li> </ul>
<b>Symptoms of COVID-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Isolate patient</li> <li>Consider alternative diagnoses</li> <li>Test for COVID-19                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If negative: continue quarantine 14 days from last exposure</li> <li>If positive: isolate until at least 24 hours fever free and 10 days after the onset of symptoms</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay home from school while ill and consult with your healthcare provider to consider alternative diagnoses</li> <li>Test for COVID-19 if no alternative diagnosis                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If negative: return to school once recovered (24 hours fever free and symptoms improved, or on advice of healthcare professional)</li> <li>If positive: isolate until at least 24 hours fever free and 10 days after the onset of symptoms</li> </ul> </li> <li>If NOT tested and symptoms are consistent with COVID-19, isolate 10 days from symptom onset and 24 hours fever free</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> If an asymptomatic QUARANTINED patient develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19 at any time during quarantine, the patient should then begin the 10 days of ISOLATION