

School Re-Opening Frequently Asked Questions

How are schools allowed to have 3 feet in-between desks in schools when the Governor requires 6 feet?

The Ohio Department of Health guidance to the schools is to provide 6 feet of distance *when possible*. This is the standard that all schools are being held to within Medina County and the same requirement of businesses. "When practical" and "where possible" are used in all Restart Ohio documents. If a school cannot meet that distance, they are being requested by Medina County Health Department to use another protective layer.

How will younger children be expected to wear a face mask all day now that the Governor has made them mandatory for all K-12 schools?

If children are not used to wearing a mask at home, it will be more challenging in the classroom. Ideas for parents, such as exploring different mask options and creative ways to practice wearing them at home, can be found here: <https://medinahealth.org/community/current-outbreaks/schools/>

How are you going to ensure that my child is safe at school?

There will be no perfect solution or 100% safety. Each district is putting together options so parents can decide what is in the best interest of their child and family.

How are 46 children allowed on a school bus?

Moving that many children, even with facial coverings, is not without risk. Children will be assigned seats so exposure can be limited and buses will be loaded from back to front to also minimize exposure. None of our schools have enough buses or drivers to operate at 1/3 capacity. It is our hope that parents who use the bus for convenience rather than necessity will choose to self-transport which will reduce the number of riders per route.

My school isn't offering the classes my child needs online, how is that an option?

You will need to express this to your school district to see what can be done. The Health Department is not sure of individual accommodations they can make.

How does the color coding system affect school learning options?

School superintendents and local school boards have the ability to close schools, set calendars, and implement online only learning. The Health Commissioner is a consultant to them and will provide data and trends to assist them in making decisions. At this time the color system is advisory. The Health Commissioner and Board of Health do have the ability to mandate protective measures in an emergency.

What is happening with band, choir, and theatre?

Schools and music instructors are making difficult decisions about performing arts and are working to establish policies that will allow music education to continue as safely as possible. The National Association of Teachers of Singing and the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) have sponsored research. A webinar on results can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWlrV3rCao>

Some reference materials being used include: <https://medicine.uiowa.edu/iowaprotocols/wind-instrument-aerosol-covid-era-covid-19-and-horns-trumpets-trombones-euphoniums-tubas-records>

Why hasn't the Medina County Health Commissioner recommended online schooling only since we were "red" for 3 weeks?

There are seven indicators currently used for the Public Health Advisory System with three more in development. The system was designed to offer a framework to visualize disease spread. It is one of several tools used to determine what is happening in a community. Medina has met the 50 cases/100,000 population but has to date not ever been designated as "high incidence" which is 100 cases/100,000 population.

Is the Health Department working with all schools on plans?

Schools have the ability to submit plans and seek guidance from the Health Department. Assistance is given equally to all public and private schools.

Who should I contact with additional questions or concerns?

We encourage you to reach out to your local school district.