



*Engage. Inspire. Prepare.*



## AUSTIN MS SHIFTING TO ORANGE COVID STATUS MONDAY, AUG 30th

August 26, 2021

Dear Austin Middle School Parents/Guardians:

Before the school year began, we shared our School Operations (Opening) Plan and emphasized that the four-tiered, color-coded escalating practices would give us the flexibility to adjust and adapt to evolving pandemic-related challenges. We have been monitoring our school's data closely and believe now is the right time to change levels to better address COVID-19 among students and staff.

**Beginning Monday, August 30, 2021**, our school will shift from Yellow to Orange Operating Level (Enhanced Mitigation Practices) until further notice. Level Orange will require us to adapt our procedures for in-person instruction to protect the health and safety of our students and staff.

Our goal is to manage COVID-19 as a community. We have identified many positive cases that were contracted outside of school, but the impact is now being seen in our classrooms and our ability to provide adequate staffing. We are asking the community to join us as we address the case increase and be mindful of activities outside of school. Data regarding COVID-19 cases at our school and other PCSD schools can be found here: <https://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/Page/45777>



### What does the shift to **Orange** status mean?

Our plan will increase safety practices at our school including, but not limited to, the following:

- Increased sanitation of the school facility including disinfectant fogging.
- No large-group meetings.
- Recess/PE will be managed in zones according to group sizes.
- Meals will be consumed in classrooms instead of the cafeteria.
- PTA and after-school events will be rescheduled or shifted to a Zoom format.
- Visitors will be restricted to the front office area of the school building.

Additionally, from this point forward while under Orange operating status, **students identified as close contacts** to anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 must follow this quarantine protocol:

*The following quarantine protocol is based on guidance provided to school districts by the Georgia Department of Public Health.*

**Quarantine (unvaccinated student):** Keep your child at home except in the case of emergency or to be tested for COVID-19. If your child does not experience any COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea), your quarantine may discontinue after 10 days of remaining symptom-free and your child wears a mask in the school setting, if medically able, through the 14-day quarantine period. During the quarantine period, your child may utilize Canvas for class work during his/her absence from school.

**Vaccinated Student (Fully Vaccinated Student or Recovered from COVID-19 with documentation within 90 days):** You may elect to send your child to school during the 14-day quarantine period if the following conditions are met:

- The close contact exposure occurred in the school setting, and
- Your child wears a mask, if medically able, and
- Your child remains COVID-19 symptom-free.

**Monitor:** For a period of 14 days, take your child's temperature twice per day and monitor for any symptoms of respiratory illness. If at any time, your child experiences any symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever (a measured temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or a feeling of feverishness), chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, the quarantined child shall be considered a person with suspected COVID-19 and shall follow the requirements for isolation by the Georgia Department of Public Health: <https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact>, contact your healthcare professional as needed, and keep your child home from school.

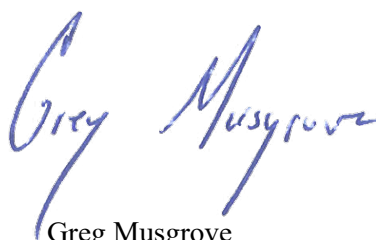
We appreciate your flexibility and understanding as we adapt our plans to maintain the safest possible learning environment at our school. We sincerely hope this change to Orange status will help to mitigate the current challenges with COVID-19 and that we can return to a more normal school setting as quickly as possible. We encourage the entire school community to remain vigilant in our daily lives and to do what we can to slow the spread of COVID-19 both inside and outside of our school campus.

We will keep you updated on our progress, but in the meantime if you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school front office.

Sincerely,



Steve Barnette  
**Interim Superintendent**



Greg Musgrove  
**Principal**