



Steve Barnette
Superintendent

Jan. 3, 2022

Dear PCSD Community,

Happy New Year, and welcome back!

Before the school year began, we shared our School Operations (Opening) Plan, which contains specific protocols and general expectations regarding school operations. These expectations were designed with the flexibility to react to current conditions and evolving guidance. With the arrival of the new Omicron variant this winter season, our COVID-19 Task Force has been monitoring our community data, the uniqueness and high transmissibility of this variant, new guidance published by the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH), and the limited availability of testing.

In addition, we are challenged to balance a wide variety of needs, opinions, and expectations among the approximately 18,000 families and 30,000 students we serve. Ultimately, our goal is to keep students in the classroom as much as possible, while maintaining a safe and effective learning environment.

Our School Operations (Opening) Plan was designed with four color-coded escalating practices to adjust and adapt to evolving pandemic-related challenges. At this time, the Paulding County School District will continue at Yellow Operating Level (Preventive Practices). Fortunately, this level was designed with the flexibility we need to address where we are today, based on the available data. However, we want to highlight some of the features of Yellow, as we will be leveraging these protocols and other mitigations to address the current surge in cases.

- As with any communicable or infectious disease, the number of visitors and their location will be managed to mitigate and prevent the spread of COVID-19. The application of these practices may vary depending on location and situation.
- Social (physical) distancing in classrooms and school buildings and school buses should be maintained when appropriate and feasible.
- Student meetings/assemblies may be limited to increase spacing depending on the number of students and size of gym/auditorium.

While we are opening at the high end of the Yellow Operating Level (Preventive Practices), we all need to be prepared to quickly pivot to the Orange Operating Level (Enhanced Mitigation Practices) or Red Operating Level (Digital Learning Days Temporary Closure) as data and information continue to evolve regarding this new variant.



The district's ability to provide adequate staffing for schools is a major factor in these decisions. In addition, it is important to remember that every school environment is unique. As a result, we will continue to address each school individually, and we are committed to providing access to high quality instruction if shifts between safety levels are

needed. All our schools are prepared to shift to Digital Learning Days (DLD) if needed, and our teachers have plans and technology resources to transition to virtual instruction. We know that shifting from in-person to virtual instruction places a burden on families, and we want to assure you that we will make every effort to give parents as much advance notice as possible should such an operational change be necessary.

Our goal remains unchanged; to manage COVID-19 as a community. As a result, we are asking everyone to be mindful of activities outside of school and to monitor for symptoms of illness. It is critical that parents do not send students to school when they are sick and/or showing symptoms. Ensuring that sick children are not sent to school helps keep our schools open, healthy, and safe. When in doubt, please err on the side of caution and do not send students to school when they are sick and/or showing symptoms.

As I mentioned earlier, our School Operations (Opening) Plan has been updated to reflect new guidance provided by the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH). This letter includes a graphic with updated quarantine protocols for both Yellow and Orange Operating Levels. Along with the new quarantine guidelines, please be sure to note the new definition of a “vaccinated individual”.

As a district, we are committed to transparency because parents need to have all the information that is available to make the right decisions for their students. We maintain a public COVID-19 web page where we share the most current data about how the virus is impacting our 33 schools. Link: <https://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/Page/45777>. The information posted there reflects every case we are aware of at that time and is subject to be revised as more information becomes available.

As previously mentioned, there are a wide variety of needs, opinions, and expectations among the approximately 18,000 families and 30,000 students we serve. To the best of our ability, we are trying to manage this as a community. As always, I genuinely appreciate your support as we work together to keep students in the classroom as much as possible, while maintaining a safe and effective learning environment. I know we are all looking forward to an outstanding second semester and can't wait to get started!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Steve Barnette". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" and last name "Barnette" clearly distinguishable.

Steve Barnette
Superintendent



YELLOW QUARANTINE PROTOCOL

FOR STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS CLOSE CONTACTS

Where did close contact with confirmed case of COVID-19 occur?

IN SCHOOL:

VACCINATED

- Monitor symptoms and remain symptom-free.
- If symptoms develop, refer to DPH isolation guidance:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact>

An individual is considered vaccinated:

2-dose series vaccine: if it has been at least 14 days and less than six months since the completion of the vaccine series or received booster.

1-dose series vaccine: if it has been at least 14 days and less than two months since the vaccine or received booster.

The principal or designee may request evidence of vaccination status for a student in order to respond accordingly. Evidence may come in the form of a hard copy or electronic version of medical/pharmaceutical documentation.

UNVACCINATED

- Student may attend school, but must be symptom-free and wear a mask through Day 10.

- If unable to wear/keep mask on, refer to DPH quarantine guidance:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/contact>

- Monitor symptoms and remain symptom-free. If symptoms develop, refer to DPH isolation guidance:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact>

OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL:

VACCINATED

- Monitor symptoms and remain symptom-free.
- If symptoms develop, refer to DPH isolation guidance:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact>

An individual is considered vaccinated:

2-dose series vaccine: if it has been at least 14 days and less than six months since the completion of the vaccine series or received booster.

1-dose series vaccine: if it has been at least 14 days and less than two months since the vaccine or received booster.

The principal or designee may request evidence of vaccination status for a student in order to respond accordingly. Evidence may come in the form of a hard copy or electronic version of medical/pharmaceutical documentation.

UNVACCINATED

- Follow DPH guidance:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/contact>

<https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact>

- **Return Day 6:** if asymptomatic and student wears mask through Day 10. If unable to wear/keep mask on, refer to DPH quarantine guidance linked above.

- **Return Day 11:** No mask required.

Past COVID-19 positive:

If a parent of a student, student, or staff member indicates a past COVID positive experience within the past 90 days, the student or staff member may be eliminated from close contact identification and quarantine requirements. Parent of student, student, or staff member must submit the dated positive test report (not a home test) to be considered immune from being identified as a close contact.



ORANGE QUARANTINE PROTOCOL

FOR STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS CLOSE CONTACTS

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

VACCINATED:

You may elect to send your child to school if the following conditions are met:

- Your child wears a mask, if medically able*, through Day 10.
- Your child remains COVID-19 symptom-free.
- If symptoms develop, refer to DPH isolation guidance:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact>

An individual is considered vaccinated:

2-dose series vaccine: if it has been at least 14 days and less than six months since the completion of the vaccine series or received booster.

1-dose series vaccine: if it has been at least 14 days and less than two months since the vaccine or received booster.

The principal or designee may request evidence of vaccination status for a student in order to respond accordingly. Evidence may come in the form of a hard copy or electronic version of medical/pharmaceutical documentation.

* If unable to wear/keep mask on, refer to DPH quarantine guidance:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/contact>

UNVACCINATED:

Student **MAY NOT** attend school, and must:

- Follow DPH quarantine and isolation guidance:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/contact>

<https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact>

- **Return Day 6:** if asymptomatic and student wears mask through Day 10.

- **Return Day 11:** if asymptomatic. No mask required.

The COVID-19 pandemic requires that we remain vigilant in our daily lives and we appreciate our community coming together to help slow the spread of coronavirus disease. For additional information regarding PCSD's COVID-19 response and protocols, please review our district's COVID-19 webpage at:

<https://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/Page/45777>.

Past COVID-19 positive:

If a parent of a student, student, or staff member indicates a past COVID positive experience within the past 90 days, the student or staff member may be eliminated from close contact identification and quarantine requirements. Parent of student, student, or staff member must submit the dated positive test report (not a home test) to be considered immune from being identified as a close contact.