



Safe Return to School Plan 2022-2023

The contents of this document are subject to change based on the most recent information and guidelines released by health organizations.

I. Determining Level

- A. The Head of School in collaboration with the Board Chairman will determine the Safety Level (1-5) based on the most current information provided by the CDC, MSDH, and local authorities.
- B. Hope Academy is a fully independent school, therefore we are not required to follow closure mandates for schools. We are free to make our own choices within the limits of the local, state and federal laws/ordinances.
- C. It is our goal to continue on-campus, in-person instruction as much as possible, while mitigating risks by heightening our cleaning and sanitizing, social distancing, educating children about proper hand hygiene and other safety measures, and minimizing the number of contacts per person.

II. Preparing for the Start of School

- A. School will be deep cleaned and sanitized prior to the start of school.
- B. PPE and cleaning supplies have been stocked ahead of time.

III. Exhibiting Symptoms

- A. Students, faculty, or staff members that exhibit or report any of the following symptoms while on campus will wait in the Isolation Room until they can be picked up or tested for COVID:
 - Fever or chills
 - Unexplained cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Unexplained headache
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Unexplained congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- B. COVID-19 symptoms seem to present at first more like a cold with a runny nose, sore throat and other upper respiratory infection symptoms. Hope Academy will be vigilant in identifying and excusing students and employees from school that present these symptoms. When a staff member or student exhibits symptoms, they will remove themselves or assist the child out of the classroom immediately. Then, the staff member will call the office for assistance.
- C. Students or staff who have experienced any of the above symptoms must be symptom-free for 24 hours without medicine, test negative, or be medically cleared before returning to school.
- D. The Isolation Room will be cleaned after each use.
- E. Personnel and the parents of students that have been in close contact with the symptomatic person will be notified. They will be monitored and have midday temperature checks for the next 5 days.

IV. Exposure Protocol

- A. If a student, faculty, or staff member has been in close contact (closer than 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 Hope Academy will inform parents, faculty, and staff of an indirect, possible exposure.

- a. Any areas that the student has been exposed to will be disinfected thoroughly.
- b. Students and staff that have been in contact with the student will be monitored more closely over the next 5 days, including midday symptoms checks and temperature checks.
- c. If the student, faculty, or staff member is tested, we will request that the results be shared with HA, and we will inform parents of the results. See “Confidentiality” section for more information.

V. Infection Protocol

- A. If a student, faculty, or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19, they will not be allowed on campus unless TWO of the following conditions have been met:
 1. At least 5 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
 2. They have been fever free for 24 hours without medicine and symptoms have significantly improved.
 3. A negative test result has been confirmed.
- B. Upon return without a negative test, the infected person must wear a mask for 5 days.
- C. If the student, faculty, or staff member is tested, we will request that the results be shared with HA, and we will inform parents of the results. See “Confidentiality” section for more information.
- D. Students and personnel that have been in close contact (closer than 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer) with the infected person, then they will be monitored for 5 days.

VI. Confidentiality-FERPA and HIPAA

- A. Confidentiality will be maintained, but it is difficult for students and faculty members not to realize that someone has been absent for an extended period of time. Because we are a small school, it is reasonable to expect that most families, faculty, and staff will deduce what has happened, but employees will not share the names of infected or exposed individuals without their express permission.
- B. Students and employees are not required to provide proof of vaccination at this time, but those who do not provide proof will be presumably unvaccinated, if new policies are adopted.

VII. Daily Cleaning and Sanitizing Procedures

- A. High-touch areas, such as doors, door handles, faucets, shared toys, etc. will be sanitized frequently using disinfectants approved/recommended by the CDC/FDA.
- B. Gloves will be provided by the school.
- C. Rooms and bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized daily.
- D. Faculty and staff will wipe down items or shared surfaces throughout the day.

VII. Handwashing

- A. Teachers will provide direct instruction in proper handwashing techniques the first day and week of school.
- B. Students will be reminded and directed to wash their hands before and after eating, using the restroom, and returning from outdoor activities.
- C. Sanitizer will be available and students will be encouraged to use it frequently, especially after the teacher notices the child sneezing or coughing, rubbing their nose, placing their hands/fingers near or in their mouth, etc.
- D. Personnel will assist younger students in proper handwashing and use of sanitizer.

XIII. Health and Safety Precautions

- A. Masks are optional for children, unless they are exhibiting symptoms of any contagious virus or are returning after a 5 day quarantine after having tested positive for COVID.

XIV. Campus Visitors

- A. Visitors will not be allowed on campus, except by prior approval, appointment, or when otherwise stated for special events.
- B. If an appointment is made, visitors will be symptoms-screened, temperature-checked and must wear masks. They must also sanitize their hands upon entry.