



## **Safe Return to School Plan Addendum**

**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.
- C. Orientation Meetings will be held prior to the start of school.
  1. Orientation Meetings will include an opportunity for parents and the student to:
    - view the classroom space
    - drop off school supplies
    - ask questions and seek clarity
  2. The teacher will provide information about:
    - health and safety protocols
    - classroom procedures
    - communication preferences
    - expectations and classroom management strategies
    - curriculum
    - schedules

### **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:
  - 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. With the delta variant, 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 3 days or medically cleared before returning to school. (see: Student Return to School Verification Form)
- D. The Isolation Room will be used to separate symptomatic individuals away from everyone else. Children will be supervised while in the IR.
- E. If the Isolation Room is in use and an additional person needs to use the IR, that person may be asked to wait in an outdoor area until the room is clear and cleaned.
- F. The Isolation Room will be cleaned after each use.
- G. 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 3 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, they will not be allowed on campus for 10 days since the last day they were in close contact with the individual that tested positive.
  - a. If the exposed student, faculty, or staff member experiences symptoms during the 10 days, they will follow the protocol for infected individuals.
  - b. Hope Academy will inform parents, faculty, and staff of an indirect, possible exposure.
  - c. Any areas that the student has been exposed to will be disinfected thoroughly.
  - d. Students and staff that have been in contact with the student will be monitored more closely over the next 3 days, including midday symptoms checks and temperature checks.
  - e. 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 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
  - 2. There have been no symptoms for at least the last 3 days with no fever or symptoms, this must be accomplished without medicine that reduces fever or subsides other symptoms.
  - 3. A negative test result has been confirmed.
- B. Enhanced Cleaning for an Infected Area-Based on CDC Guidelines
  - 1. Access to the area where an infected person has spent time will be restricted for 24 hours.
  - 2. The area will be aired out, if possible.
  - 3. After 24 hours, the area will be disinfected using approved disinfectants.
- C. If the student, faculty, or staff member is tested, we will request that the results be shared with
  - 1. 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 will be quarantined for up to 10 days or as directed by the MSDH.

#### VI. Confidentiality-FERPA and HIPPA

- 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 when policies are enforced.

#### 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. Cleaning solutions will be stored out of the reach of small children.
- C. Rooms and bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized daily.
- D. Faculty and staff will wipe down items or shared surfaces throughout the day.
- E. Gloves will be provided by the school.
- F. Teachers have removed most porous items from classrooms because these items are more difficult to disinfect (i.e. rugs, pillows, soft chairs).

#### 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.
- E. Students will have an assigned desk and remain in one classroom at Level 3 and Level 4. Older students may be asked to clean their own workspace. For example, if a child is working at his/her desk on an art project and the desk becomes sticky with glue or covered with paint or marker, the child may be asked to clean his/her space. Children will not be asked to clean spaces that were used by any other student.

#### VIII. Extracurricular Activities

- A. Clubs and sports will be limited during levels 2, 3, and 4. Each activity will be evaluated based on the ability to keep the children safe by minimizing the spread of germs and mixing of grade levels.
- B. Outside activities of less than 20 students and minimal mixing of grades will be permitted (i.e. soccer, cross country, gardening)
- C. Indoor clubs will not be permitted during Level 3 or 4 at all due to space limitations.
- D. Music lessons may be arranged on an individual basis with Ms. Jones.

#### XIV. Health and Safety Precautions

- A. At Levels 2, 3, and 4, PK-8th grade unvaccinated staff members will wear face coverings indoors at all times and outdoors when in close contact with parents or students. When eating, unvaccinated adults need to provide 6 feet of distance between themselves and others.
- B. Masks are optional for children, unless they are exhibiting symptoms of any contagious virus or are attending extended care with multi-age groups. A note of exception must be submitted by the parent for a student to be excused from wearing a face covering,

XV. Water fountains will be closed during Levels 2, 3, and 4. Students should bring their own water thermos and at least one additional bottle of water for refills each day.

#### XVI. Faculty and Staff Members Daily Checks

- A. Faculty and staff will undergo daily symptoms-checks and temperature-checks prior to the start of school each day.
- B. Faculty and staff will sanitize their hands at the school entry point daily.

#### XVII. Campus Visitors

- A. Visitors will not be allowed on campus, except by appointment.
- 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.
- C. Parent-Teacher or Parent-Administrator conferences will be held by phone or through a virtual platform, such as Google Meets or Zoom during Levels 2, 3, 4, and 5. Appointments for in-person meetings may be arranged under extenuating circumstances.

- D. Drop off and pick up times will be extremely busy times for all personnel, including administration and office staff. If you have any questions or concerns, please avoid contacting them during these times. It is highly likely that we will not be available for calls or visitors during these times because we will be assisting with drop off and pick up procedures.
- E. Hope Academy parents are accustomed to an open campus--walking their children to class, visiting with faculty and staff without appointment, dropping off lunches, forms, etc. as needed. We love that part of our culture, and we recognize that this has been a major shift. However, we trust that you understand that the limits we are placing are for the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff. If you need to drop items off during school hours (forms, a forgotten lunch, medicine, etc.), you may be asked to place it in a designated outdoor space near the cafeteria or office door. Please call the office 228-539-1234 or email [malissia@hopeacademyfg.org](mailto:malissia@hopeacademyfg.org) to let us know you are bringing something. We will retrieve it quickly. If it is something valuable or unsafe to leave (medicine). You may wait at the door until we are present to take the item.

### **DROP OFF PROCEDURES**

#### **Preschool Drop off is staggered-Procedures for PK drop off follow.**

- A staggered drop off schedule is in place. PreK3 and PK4 can be dropped off between 8:00am-8:20am. PreK2 drop off will be from 8:30-8:40.
- Traffic flows in one direction in the parking lot.
- Parking is not permitted in the parking lot before 9:00am.
- Use the back gate, if at all possible to minimize traffic in the neighborhood. The gate will be LOCKED from 9am-2:50pm.
- Maintain speed limits in the neighborhood (15mph) and on campus (5mph).

#### On the Preschool Side:

- Parking your cars on Alphabet Rd. and walking your child to the PK building is not permitted during Levels 2, 3 or 4 to promote social distancing.
- Cars will pull up to the cones along the road in front of the preschool building. Pull far to the right, so that cars may safely pass you on the left, if needed.
- If you must pass someone, please proceed with caution and watch for children and opening car doors.
- **Wait in your car.** When directed to do so, assist your child in exiting the vehicle. Staff members cannot remove children from car seats or vehicles during Level 3 or Level 4.
- As you approach the area where other students are waiting for temperature checks, maintain a distance of 6 feet from any other people in the area.
- A sanitation station will be located at the drop off point, and all students and parents will sanitize their hands prior to approaching the classroom door.
- Only one adult may escort the child to the staff member checking temperatures, and that adult must wear a face covering while doing so.
- Follow the directions of the staff members in front of the preschool building.
- Your child will be escorted to the side door of your child's classroom. The main hallway and front door of the preschool building is off limits to everyone.
- A staff member will conduct a symptoms screening and may ask the parent the following questions:
  - Have you or anyone in your home been exposed to someone with COVID 19?
  - Have your or anyone in your home been diagnosed with COVID 19?
  - Have you or anyone in your home experienced symptoms of COVID 19, especially shortness of breath or fever?
  - Has your child had trouble breathing?
  - Has your child had a fever in the last 72 hours?
  - Has your child taken fever-reducing medicine in the last 24 hours?
- If the answer to any of these questions is yes, the staff member may ask follow up questions and/or may not allow the child to remain at school.
- If the staff member has reason to believe that the child has been exposed to or is exhibiting signs of any contagious illness, they will be asked to return to the vehicle.
- The staff member will record all information, which will be given to administration for review and follow up.

- A staff member will take the child's temperature at drop off.
- If the child's temperature is below 99 F, the child will be admitted to the classroom.
- If the child's temperature is over 99 F, the child will be asked to sit in a designated area inside the door for a few minutes to see if their temperature drops. Because we are using non-contact thermometers, sometimes the child's forehead will measure slightly higher if they have been in the heat/outside for a while.
- If the child is asked to sit for a cool down period, the parent will be asked to step to a designated area or their vehicle and wait for a second temperature check before leaving. Once the temperature is confirmed, a staff member will let the parent know if the child can remain at school or needs to return to the vehicle.

**Kindergarten-6th grade drop off is between 8:00-8:20am. 6-8 grade drop off is between 7:45-7:55am. Procedures for K-8 drop off are as follows:**

- Traffic flows in one direction in the parking lot.
- Parking is not permitted in the parking lot before 9:00am.
- Use the back gate, if at all possible to minimize traffic in the neighborhood. The gate will be LOCKED from 9am-2:50pm.
- Maintain speed limits in the neighborhood (15mph) and on campus (5mph).

On the K-8 side:

- There are 3 spots for cars to pull into under the awning by the cafeteria, pull in to those spots as they become available from the flow of traffic.
- Cars coming from the back gate should stop at the crosswalk for pedestrians and also to wait until spots near the awning open up before pulling forward.
- Remain in your vehicle, unless you must assist your child in exiting the vehicle.
- If you get out of your vehicle, please do not approach the area where other students are waiting for temperature checks. Maintain a distance of 6 feet from any other people in the area.
- Student(s) will approach the cafeteria door and wait on the designated spots until called to have their temperature checked.
- 
- A staff member will screen symptoms and may ask the child the following questions:
  - Have you been feeling sick?
  - Do you feel sick now?
  - Has anyone in your family been sick?
  - Are you having any trouble breathing?
- If the child answers yes to any of these questions, the staff member may ask follow up questions and/or may escort the child back to the vehicle for further clarification.
- A staff member will take the child's temperature at drop off.
  - If the child's temperature is below 99 F, the staff member will give you a thumbs up that all is clear, and the child will be sent to class.
  - If the child's temperature is over 99 F, the child will be asked to sit in a designated area inside the door for a few minutes to see if their temperature drops. Because we are using non-contact thermometers, sometimes the child's forehead will measure higher if they have been in the heat/outside for a while.
  - If the child is asked to sit for a cool down period, the parent may be asked to pull their vehicle into a designated parking spot to wait for results. Once the temperature is confirmed, a staff member will let the parent know if the child can remain at school or needs to return to the vehicle.
- If the staff member has reason to believe that the child has been exposed to or is exhibiting signs of any contagious illness, they will be asked to return to the vehicle.
- A sanitation station will be located at the drop off point, and all students will sanitize prior to entering the building.

**DISMISSAL/PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

Please be patient. This process may take some time. Dismissal begins at 2pm during Level 4 for pk2-8th grade. On Level 3 preschool dismissal begins at 2:25; K-5 dismissal begins at 3:00; and 6-8 dismissal begins at 3:10pm.

- Please be prepared to board children on the passenger side of the car, if at all possible. This will prevent them from boarding on the driver's side of the car where other vehicles are passing.

- Students will remain in their classrooms until called to the pick-up area.
- Parents will remain in their vehicles while personnel guide children to the pick-up line.
- Parents may exit their vehicle to secure their child in a car seat or booster seat properly. Personnel will not be able to assist with this during level 3 or 4.
- Please maintain a distance of 6 feet from personnel and wear a mask if you exit your vehicle to assist your child.
- Please refrain from engaging personnel in long conversations, so that we can expedite the process while maintaining safety standards.
- On the preschool side, please pull your vehicle close to the right side, so that other vehicles can pass you on the left.

\*It is important for you to share drop off and dismissal procedures for any person responsible for picking up or dropping off your child because we know that it may not always be the same parent/relative/friend that does so.

### **EXTENDED CARE PROCEDURES**

We discourage the use of extended care during level 3 and level 4, if at all possible because we cannot avoid mixing groups/grade levels as well as we can throughout the school day. However, we have procedures in place to provide the safest possible extended care experience. These procedures are fluid and subject to change as needed based on new information.

- On Levels 3 and 4 only a limited number of students will be accepted for extended care, this will be based on the order the pre-registration forms are received and based on availability.
- Students over the age of 5 will be required to wear a mask during extended care, unless they are vaccinated.
- Parents should not pre-register their child for Extended Care “just in case” they need it. These spaces are reserved for families that know that they will need it. If you pre-register for Extended Care and your spot is guaranteed, you will be charged for the times you reserved for your child(ren).
- Normal rates and other policies apply as outlined in your Enrollment Contract and the Parent Handbook.

#### **Early Care**

- Early Care begins at 7am until regular drop off time begins.
- Early Care for preschool will be in the PK building.
- Early Care for K-8 will be in the main building.
- Students must be pre-registered for Early Care during levels 3 and 4. Once you pre-register, and your child’s spot is secure, you will receive additional guidelines for dropping off students for Early Care. They are different from regular drop off procedures.

#### **After Care**

- After Care begins 15 minutes after dismissal time (varies by level).
- After Care for preschool will be in the PK building and may extend to the playground.
- After Care for K-8 will be in the main building and may extend to the playground.
- A set of toys will be provided that will only be used by After Care participants.
- Students must be pre-registered for After Care during levels 2 and 4. Once you pre-register, and your child’s spot is secure, you will receive additional guidelines for picking students up from After Care.

### **PROTOCOLS FOR HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES**

State and local regulations regarding travel out of our area and regulations regarding gatherings may result in stricter policies. The High Risk Activities Protocol may be enacted at any given time as deemed necessary. It will be in effect during Level 3 and Level 4 of the plan.

Certain activities, such as travel and attending large gatherings, increase the chance of spreading and getting COVID. Postponing travel and staying home are the best ways to protect yourself and others from COVID. You may feel well and have no symptoms, but you may still spread the virus to others. HA staff members and students who engage in activities deemed to be high risk to our Hope Academy community will not be allowed on campus afterward for a quarantine period.

- Students and employees may not return to school for a full 10 calendar days after any of the following activities:
  - attending a large gathering (i.e. indoor concert/indoor athletic event, wedding, etc.),
  - traveling to an area that includes an overnight accommodation in a multi-family, public facility (i.e. a hotel,

- but not a cabin),
- visiting a major destination (i.e. Disney, Universal Studios),
- using public transportation to travel (i.e. plane, cruise ship).
- After 3-5 days, a quarantined student or employee may choose to take a COVID test, and if the result is negative, may return to campus 7 full days after the exposure activity. Be careful not to take the test too soon, as this could result in a false negative and may not be accepted.
- If the test is positive or if symptoms develop within the 7-day mandatory campus-quarantine period, you must follow the guidelines outlined in the Safe Return to School Plan (Sections II-Symptomatic, Section III-Exposure Protocol and Section IV-Infection Protocol).



### Student Return to School Verification Form

Students must be kept home if they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID or other contagious illness, they have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID, or they tested positive for COVID. If your child has been kept/sent home for any of the three reasons above, you must complete this form PRIOR to their return to school. Complete the form and email it to the Preschool Director at [malissia@hopeacademyfg.org](mailto:malissia@hopeacademyfg.org) or the principal for K-8 at [principal@hopeacademyfg.org](mailto:principal@hopeacademyfg.org). Do not bring your child back to school with the form. The verification process must be completed and approved prior to readmission to class. These guidelines are subject to change based on MDH and CDC recommendations.

Initial each item below. If the answer to any of the questions is yes, you must keep your child at home.

1. Has your child exhibited any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours: fever or chills, unexplained cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, unexplained congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea?

\_\_\_\_\_ No, my child has been symptom free without medicine to reduce fever or symptoms for at least 24 hours.

2. Has your child been in close contact with anyone that tested positive or who you would presume positive based on symptoms in the last 10 days?

\_\_\_\_\_ No, my child has not been exposed to anyone who tested positive for COVID nor have they been exposed to anyone that I would presume positive based on symptoms in the last 10 days.

3. Did your child test positive for COVID or would you presume they were positive in the last 10 days?

\_\_\_\_\_ No, my child has not tested positive for COVID nor would I presume they were positive in the last 10 days.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher/Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's preferred contact info (cell, text, email): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature attests that all of the above information is true to the best of your knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Office Use:

Date form received: \_\_\_\_\_

Date parent notified of clearance: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_

Via \_\_\_\_\_ text/Remind \_\_\_\_\_ call \_\_\_\_\_ email