



2021-22 COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy

Parent Handbook Addendum

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Overview

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the Whatcom Hills Waldorf School's COVID-19 mitigation protocols necessary to continue in-person learning during the pandemic are documented and communicated with the school community. WHWS will remain in adherence with state and federal mandates. The health and safety of the community is taken seriously and failure to comply with the following policy may result in action by the school, including, but not limited to, suspension from campus.

WHWS has adopted the requirements found within the [Requirements and Guidance to Mitigate COVID-19 Transmission in K-12 Schools, Child Care, Early Learning, Youth Development, and Day Camp Programs](#) provided by the Whatcom County Health Department (WCHD). WHWS will also consider recommendations from the WCHD local recommendations as deemed practicable. WHWS will target adoption of new requirements within seven business days. Changes to these requirements will be summarized by the Health & Safety Committee, including what has changed and if and how the school will adequately meet the updated requirements. This summary will be sent to the WHWS Board of Trustees (The Board) in which time the Board will be able to hold or alter the policy changes as long as any changes still meet or exceed the safety requirements of the state and local health authorities. In the event that the Board does not direct school administration otherwise, by way of motion, special session or other such action, the proposed changes to the policy will be considered approved.

In cases where there is concern that the policy does not reasonably address the potential risk in a particular instance, the Administrative Director or delegate will request and follow the recommendation of the local Whatcom County Health Department. The request and recommendation will be logged and available upon request by guardians, Health and Safety committee and the Board.

This is a living document intended to be a resource for the greater WHWS community during the COVID-19 pandemic. WHWS will update and adjust policies based on the evolving public health situation and the evolving guidance from the state and local health departments.

Community Case Updates

Please look to [this link](#) to find case information for Washington State.

WHWS Policy Frequently Asked Questions

Please see the following [link](#) to view our policy FAQ.

COVID-19 Mitigations

Daily Health Screening

Each guardian **must** fill out the [Guardian Screening Attestation](#) prior to the start of the school year. This is a written commitment to daily at-home health checks and a guardians agreement to not send their student to school if they or someone in the household have any symptoms associated with COVID-19. The form can be found in the Parent Portal. **If a form is not on file, an on-site temperature check will be required.**

Pick-up and Drop-off

Each class will have a designated meeting place for drop off and dismissal. To limit crowding during drop off and pick up, parents and guardians are asked to minimize their time on campus, especially indoors.

Volunteers and Chaperones

All volunteers and chaperones are expected to follow all health and safety protocols when in direct contact with students and must be approved in advance.

- A background check and proof of COVID-19 vaccination are required. Proof of vaccination can be emailed to info@whws.org.

Visitors

All guests are expected to follow all health and safety protocols at any school sponsored event.

Masks

Correct use of well-fitting masks or face coverings protects the wearer as well as others, thereby helping to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

Students, children, and staff will have the choice to wear a mask at school with the expectation that others' choices will be respected. Some may need to wear a mask because they or a member of their household is at high risk for severe COVID-19 disease. WHWS can provide masks when needed.

Students, children, and staff who are immunocompromised, medically fragile, and/or otherwise high risk for severe disease should consult their health care provider about whether or not to continue wearing well-fitted masks.

Air Quality and Ventilation

All school heating systems will meet [ASHRAE](#) recommended air quality standards for COVID-19. Systems will be maintained and operated to ensure continued adherence to these standards and to maximize air quality.

Hand Hygiene

- Students and staff will be instructed to wash hands often with soap and water for **at least 20 seconds**.
- Students will be instructed to keep unwashed hands away from eyes, nose, and mouth and to cover coughs or sneezes.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom and throughout the school with at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Handwashing with soap and water is instructed:
 - After going to the bathroom, playing outside, specialty classes, hand clapping or shaking AND
 - Before preparing or eating food.

Physical Distancing

We will practice physical distancing as much as feasible. This will depend on the students' developmental and physical abilities.

Program Specific COVID Mitigations

Meals

Meals will be had indoors or outdoors distanced as much as feasible.

Singing/ Flutes and Recorders

- Classes may be held outdoors or indoors in a well-ventilated space.
- Students will be distanced as much as feasible.
- Surgical masks with mouth slits will be made available upon request when using instruments.

Play and Performance Protocol

Performance Audience

- During performances performers, support staff and audience members will distance as much as feasible.
 - Audience members are recommended to be seated in “family units”.
 - During school performances, students will be seated in their class groups.

Performance Participants

Screening

To promote full participation in school-sponsored activities, WHWS will offer screening testing upon request.

- Screening testing will be available on the day of the production.
 - Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days and recovered should not participate in screening testing unless symptomatic, at which time an antigen test is recommended.
- Any person with a positive test is required to isolate and will not participate during their isolation period.

Field Trips

- Each field trip will be chaperoned by a teacher and at least two additional adults per class. There may be more adult chaperones if needed.
- Chaperones will be required to agree to follow [Safety and Chaperone Protocols](#).

Additional Precautions

- We have a separate health office for children with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and a different location for first aid or medication distribution.
- Students are outside, as weather and space permits.
- If there are any questions or concerns about health and safety, please reach out to healthandsafety@whws.org.

COVID Case and Symptom Response

Symptom Response

When any **staff member or student** begins to show symptoms of illness please stay home until further notice. See also the [What to do if a Person is Symptomatic](#) flowchart as a reference and notify the school office by calling 360-733-3164 or emailing info@whws.org.

At-School COVID-19 Symptom Onset

If a student or staff member develops signs of COVID-19 while at school, we will separate the person to the designated area, away from others, with supervision, until the person with symptoms can leave campus.

Optional On-Site Testing

We have BinaxNOW rapid antigen tests and Everlywell PCR tests available. Students, staff and household members who are experiencing symptoms of illness OR students and staff members who have a confirmed direct exposure to someone with COVID-19 are eligible for on-site testing. If community members are eligible and need to schedule a test, please call the school office at (360)733-3164.

Local Testing Site Information

For more local testing resources, please see the Whatcom County Health Department [COVID-19 testing information](#).

Isolation Requirements

Isolation

A student, child, or staff who tests positive for COVID-19 is required to isolate at home, regardless of vaccination status. The isolation period is 10 full days from the start of symptoms or the date of positive test. See [Calculating Your Isolation Period](#) for additional information.

The individual may return to school/care after 5 full days of isolation if:

- Their symptoms have improved or they are asymptomatic, AND
- They are without a fever for the past 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications.

AND IF returning to school/care days 6-10, the individual is **required** to:

- Wear a well-fitted mask or face shield with a drape during days 6-10 of their isolation period, consistent with CDC guidance, OR
- Test negative with an antigen or at-home test any day after day 5 before returning without a mask. Testing beyond day 10 is not necessary.

If the individual is not able to wear a well-fitted mask or face shield with a drape, AND does not test negative, they are required to continue isolating through the end of their isolation period.

Washington Department of Health Test To Stay Program

To ensure uninterrupted, full-time, in-person learning, WHWS strongly recommends participation in a Test to Stay protocol in the following situations:

- Higher risk exposures [that happened during high aerosol-generating activities].
- Household exposures.
- Individuals who are at high risk for significant disease.
- During a class or school outbreak.

Test to Stay Protocol

Individuals may continue to attend work, class, child care, and participate in extracurricular activities while completing a Test to Stay protocol, if they:

- Are tested* serially over a 10-day period (e.g., twice per week) of the protocol
AND
- Are asymptomatic.

Individuals completing a Test to Stay protocol are strongly recommended to monitor for symptoms and wear a well-fitting mask when around others. If an individual tests positive for COVID-19 at any time, they must isolate at home and follow DOH isolation guidance.

*Antigen tests, point of care (POC) molecular tests, or at-home tests are acceptable and preferred, given the ability to obtain results within minutes and the need to identify positive individuals and isolate in a timely fashion.

Considerations

Travel

Please remember, our actions and decisions may impact the whole school community. We strongly encourage every individual family to be particularly mindful of travel plans. If someone plans to gather or take a trip, please be sure to choose the safest way possible. Please read the [CDC travel recommendations](#) for more information on traveling safely.

Approval

Approval Workflow

This is a Board policy crafted by the Health and Safety Committee which is a sub-committee of the Board, so the Board is the only approver. Though the Board is the only approver there is Administrative, Board, Collegium and Pedagogical Committee representation on the H&S committee, and the Board approval encompasses that representation.

Review Dates

Pedagogical and Collegium: 2/29/2022

Board of Trustees: 3/21/2022

Glossary of Terms

Close Contact

Someone who was within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive person for a total of 15 minutes or more within 24 hours during the case's contagious period. In a K–12 indoor/outdoor classroom, the close contact definition excludes students who were at least three feet away from an infectious student when both students were consistently and correctly wearing masks. The definition of a close contact may vary in some situations. The local health department makes the ultimate determination of a close contact during its investigation.

COVID-19 outbreak

DOH and the CDC define an outbreak of COVID-19 in a K-12 setting as:

- Multiple probable or confirmed COVID-19 cases comprising at least 10% of students, teachers, or staff within a specified core group.*

OR

- At least 3 cases within a specified core group¹ meeting criteria for a probable or confirmed COVID-19 case;

AND

- Cases have symptom onset or positive test result within 14 days of each other, AND
- Cases were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting (i.e., household) outside of the school setting, AND
- Cases were epidemiologically linked in the school setting or a school-sanctioned extracurricular activity.**

* A “core group” includes but is not limited to extracurricular activity², cohort group, classroom, before/after school care, etc.

** A school-sanctioned extracurricular activity is defined as a voluntary activity sponsored by the school or local education agency (LEA) or an organization sanctioned by the LEA. Extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to, preparation for and involvement in public performances, contests, athletic competitions, demonstrations, displays, and club activities.

High risk for severe disease

People who are more likely than others to become severely ill if they contract COVID-19 infection.

Infectious period

The time period when a person is most likely to spread the virus to other people. Also referred to as when someone is contagious. The infectious period of someone with COVID-19 starts two days before the start of symptoms or is estimated as starting two days before the test specimen collection date if a person with COVID-19 does not exhibit symptoms. The infectious period extends to the end of a person's isolation period.

Isolation

Isolation is when someone who has COVID-19 symptoms, or has tested positive, stays home and away from others (including household members) to avoid spreading their illness.

Vaccinated

Someone is considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, like the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines,
OR
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.

FDA approval of booster shots may be considered as a requirement in the future pending DoH guidance.