Memorial Elementary School
Reentry Safety Protocols
Fall 2020

COVID-19 Protocols Plan for Reopening

Table of Contents

Memorial Elementary School COVID-19 Protocols 20-21

Arrival/Dismissal	**3**
Hallways and Stairwell Travel	**3**
Elevators	**4**
Classroom Setup	**4**
Bathrooms	**4**
Snack Time	**5**
Lunch	**5**
Fire Safety and Evacuations	**6**
Hand Hygiene	**6**
Materials	**6**
Face Coverings	**7**
Physical Distancing	**10**
Recess	**11**
Visitors	**11**

Arrival/Dismissal

General Procedures:

- Students will use hand sanitizer or wash their hands upon entry
- Additional masks will be available at entry if a child forgets
- Staff will monitor entry to ensure everyone properly disinfects their hands and are wearing masks
- The main entrance door (front) will be propped open during entry/exit times as long as there is staff monitoring available to avoid student contact with door handles.

Parent Drop Off and Pick Up

- Parents will use the 140 driveway to loop through the front of the school to pick up their children.
- Parents will remain in their cars, in a looping line, for both drop off and pick up
- When picking up, Parents will display their child's first and last name and grade in the rearview mirror of their car in dark black marker.
- During pick up, staff on duty will call for students as parents arrive via a walkie talkie
- Students will wait for pick up in the gym/cafeteria

Bus Arrival and Dismissal

- We will unload one bus at a time in the back of the building
- Upon arrival students will depart their bus in a single file fashion, front to back, maintaining physical distancing of at least six feet.
- Students will proceed directly to their classrooms and not congregate in any location of the school building.
- School staff will facilitate the disembarking of buses to ensure that there is no congregation of students at entrance points, school foyers, or common areas. During this time, masks must continue to be worn.
- At dismissal time, one bus will be called and loaded at a time.

Hallways and Stairwell Travel

- Students will be escorted during travel throughout most of the school day

- Markings have been applied to main hallway hand within stairwells (at the landing and the bottom of each stairwell) to denote one way traffic and 6 ft. distancing
- The center stairwell is designated as one way up the stairs until dismissal
- Stairways at the ends of the halls will be one way down the stairs
- At dismissal time, all stairwells will have one way traffic down
- Students in Kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 3 will use the stairwell at the front of the building. Grades 2, 4, and SI classes in the back of the building will use the back stairwell
- Teachers will review the expectation of remaining on the right side of the hallway when walking
- Teachers should avoid having their class pass another class in the hallways. Try to stagger passing times

Elevators

Elevators are limited to one adult and/or one student at a time unless additional medical/safety assistance is needed.

Classroom Setup

- Students will have assigned seats in their classroom. Teachers will develop a seating chart to share with the School Nurse to expedite contact tracing
- Teachers will leave their classroom windows open when possible
- Fans may be used, placed near a window blowing in air from the outside
- Excess furniture will be removed from the classroom to allow for proper physical distancing of desks

Bathrooms

- Bathrooms will be stocked with soap and paper towels daily
- Students must wash/sanitize their hands before and after utilizing the bathrooms
- Trash cans will be located near the door to avoid touching handles directly.
- Bathrooms will be cleaned throughout the day, with a log maintained noting date and time of cleaning
- In order to maintain physical distancing in bathrooms, an occupancy limit based on the number of available stalls in the restroom. For our student bathrooms, we will close the middle of the three stalls and maximum occupancy will be two students at a time

- Students will be required to sign out/in on the classroom log in order to track movement in the building
- Signs will be posted at all restroom entrances to indicate the need for students to wait outside until someone exits should the stalls be full.
- Social distancing squares will be placed outside restrooms for students to wait on
- Students will not bring a bathroom pass to the bathroom

Snack Time

- Students will wash/sanitize their hands before and after eating
- Students will eat snack at their desks, remaining seated
- Students will remove their mask and place it on a napkin/paper towel
- Because this is a “mask break” as well, we will limit the break to less than 15 minutes
- A disinfectant solution must be used to clean the desktop area after the snack has been consumed

Lunch

- Students will wash/sanitize their hands before and after eating
- We will have all students facing the same direction, seated two students per table, 6 feet apart.
- Teachers will assign students to seats in the cafeteria using the shared spreadsheet.
- Capacity at each cafeteria table will be 2 students, seated 6 feet apart at the ends of the tables.
- Tables will all face in the same direction, and be spaced 6 feet apart.
- Students will remove their mask for lunch and place it on a napkin. They will remain seated for the duration of the lunch period except in the case of emergency. Masks must be put back on at the end of the lunch period before lining up.
- Students will not wait in line to receive their lunch. Lunches will be delivered to their table.
- We will utilize one entrance and one exit to the cafeteria. Students will enter enter from main door closest to stage. They will exit from door closest to gym
- All tables must be sanitized between lunch periods.
- Teachers will stagger dismissal lines from cafeteria to maintain Physical distancing

Fire Safety and Evacuations

We will continue to follow all fire code and building safety guidelines. With the movement of desks and furniture, we will ensure that desks are not blocking means of egress of an emergency and are adequately spaced from radiators or other heating/cooling elements.

Evacuation protocols related to both fire and safety drills will be coordinated and implemented by both the MURSD and the Upton Fire and Police Departments. During an evacuation drill it is acknowledged that strict physical distancing may not always be possible. In that event, face coverings are even more important and must be utilized. School safety plans must have the following provisions:

- Individual student classes must be kept together during fire drills.
- Because it may not be possible to maintain physical distancing during all portions of a fire drill (i.e., in hallways while actual evacuation is taking place), students and staff must wear face coverings during drills, even while outdoors.
- Changes will need to be made to meeting point designations so that each student group can be located a safe distance from buildings and away from other groups or classes while awaiting completion of the drill.
- For fire drill practice, we will work with a few classes at a time on evacuation procedures.
- In case of true emergency, we would not consider physical distancing top priority. Maintain if possible, but safety is paramount.

Hand Hygiene

Students and staff are required to exercise hand hygiene (hand washing or sanitizing) upon arrival to school, before and after eating, before and after recess, before putting on and taking off masks, and before dismissal, and before and after utilizing the restrooms. Hand washing and sanitizing visuals will be placed throughout the school to remind students and staff of proper handwashing and hand sanitizing procedures.

Materials

- Every effort will be made to ensure that students do not share items. Use of lockers and cubbies to store student belongings will not be permitted at this time
- Students must bring their belongings in a personal backpack and keep that backpack near their respective desk/work area.
- Students may have their own supplies in the classroom for individual use (eg. markers, crayons, pens/pencils, play dough, etc). If individual supplies are

available, such items will be stored individually by each student. Staff will communicate to students and families regarding required materials and arrangements will be made by schools to support students/families who need assistance with supplies.

Considerations for early childhood programs

- All items in the classroom that are shared and cannot be easily cleaned, such as soft and cloth-based materials will be removed (pillows, stuffed animals, sensory tables, playdough, sand, etc.). If allowed for children to bring their own stuffed animal, it cannot be shared.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
- *Learning centers:* Instead of having different small groups rotate, have students remain in one location and have center materials brought to them.

Toys, manipulatives, books

- Paper does not easily transmit COVID-19, but glossy or hard covers may
- After a student has used a book, there should be 48 hours of nonuse before another student uses it.

Face Coverings

Per School Committee Policy EBCFA

The Mendon-Upton Regional School district is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

A face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds and on school transportation, even when physical distancing is observed. Exempted from the policy are students and/or staff as detailed below.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- Has trouble breathing;

- Is unconscious;
- Is incapacitated;
- Cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

In addition, masks or face coverings will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a face mask or face covering. A written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption. Parents may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver.

Additionally, face masks or face coverings will not be required when appropriate physical distancing is enforced:

- During mask breaks
- While eating or drinking
- During physical education classes
- While outside

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse and local Board of Health. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

A student's mask or face covering is to be provided by the student's family. Staff members are responsible for providing their own face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building for in-person learning until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.

Masks/Face Coverings

- All students in all grades will be required to wear masks/face coverings.
- All staff will be required to wear masks/face coverings.
- Masks/face coverings must fit appropriately around the nose and mouth.
- Schools will have disposable masks available for those who need them.
- Gaiters and bandannas will not be allowed as acceptable face coverings at this time, per CDC guidance.

Student Mask Norms

- All students are required to wear masks, unless not possible as noted in the above policy.
- Students should arrive at school wearing a mask and have an extra one on hand, for a total of two.
- Masks can be reusable cloth masks (but must be washed each day) or disposable.
- Masks will be available in each school should a student forget, lose or break their mask.

Staff Mask Norms

- All staff members are required to wear masks while in school.
- If you are alone in your room or space or office, masks can be taken off.
- If you are sharing a room with someone else, keep masks on.

Mask Disposal

- If a reusable mask breaks and needs to be thrown out or if a single-use mask needs to be disposed of, it should be placed into the nearest trash can by the individual who wore the mask.
- The individual should immediately put on a new mask after washing their hands.

Mask Breaks

Time will be built throughout the day for mask breaks. Students will be allowed to request a mask break.

- Indoors: students must be 6 feet apart, classroom windows must be open and the break should be less than 15 minutes long (separate of lunch/snack time).
- Outdoors: students must be 6 feet apart and the break must be less than 15 minutes.
- Ensure proper removal and placement of masks before eating. Masks should be removed by handling the ties or back/ear areas of the mask once seated. Do not touch the outside or inside of the part covering the face. While eating, masks should be placed on a napkin, paper towel, or other container on the table, with the inside of the mask facing up. Masks should be put back on before students leave their seat.

- All students and staff must wash/sanitize their hands before and after removing or applying masks/face coverings

Mask Redirection

Times will occur where masks may slip and are not covering the nose and/or mouth fully, or there may be times when students may inevitably take off their masks.

The following are some language and protocols to use non-punitive measures whenever possible to redirect students when this occurs.

- **Redirect the student in a minimally disruptive manner if possible:** For example, if a student is using a device, is there a way to message the student on the device? Could you gesture covering your face to redirect? Could you do a classwide announcement reminding people to make sure masks are on properly so as to avoid singling a student out?
- **If a student is taking a drink, ascertain that this is being done safely:** (At the right place and right time, adequately distanced, or in presence of others who are all masked).
- **Student is asking for a mask break:** Allow for the expression of feelings (i.e. "I hate wearing this thing"), validate these feelings (i.e. "Yeah, it gets uncomfortable), and offer an alternative (i.e. let them know a mask break is coming up or give them instructions on taking a break safely).
- **If a student removes the mask or does not wear their mask without permission:** We will follow our philosophy of supporting positive behavioral expectations. The process includes:
    - Teacher gives verbal redirection to the class.
    - Teacher gives verbal redirection in private to the student.
    - Teacher conferences with the student in the hallway and reviews the expectation.
    - Counselor, school nurse, and/or school administrator conferences with the student.
    - The student's parent or guardian will be contacted to ensure a collaborative approach to mask compliance.

Physical Distancing

- We will keep **at least six feet of distance** between individuals, as much as possible for as long as possible.
- Classroom seating will provide appropriate, 6 feet of space.
- We will hold class outdoors, if possible, weather permitting.

- We will replace physical greetings such as hugs, handshakes, and high-fives with non-physical greetings such as smiles, waves, and thumbs-ups.
- Desks will be spaced at least 6 feet apart, and facing the same direction, and protocols will be developed to maintain this distance when students are entering and exiting the building and moving throughout schools. Where there are tables, and not desks, chairs will be spaced 6 feet apart.
- Assign students seats. Assigned seating is important because it effectively creates even smaller groups within cohorts which minimize transmission. Assigned seating is also critical for contact tracing measures.

Recess

Physical movement and play is crucial for the health and well-being of our students. Playgrounds can be used with staff monitoring to ensure physical distancing and masking.

- **Hand hygiene:** Hand washing facilities or hand sanitizer will be used upon entering and leaving recess space.
- **Cohorting:** Outside spaces will be designated to separate cohorts and support physical distancing while still providing recess opportunities. Recess will be staggered by times and location whenever possible.
- **Cleaning and disinfecting:** High-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as outdoor play structures, will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily and between use by custodial staff.
- **Physical distancing:** Students will keep masks on and maintain a 6ft physical distance unless standing 10 ft apart in a designated areas

Visitors

- Visitors will not be allowed in the buildings except for pre-approved exceptions or appointments such as contracted service providers for the purpose of special education, required support services.

- All visitors will enter schools through the main office, wearing a mask and using hand sanitizer upon entry. Visitors will be required to sign in electronically using a driver's license and our Raptor system.
- Masks must be worn at all times.
- Visitors will not be allowed to access any parts of the school except for the main office and nurse's office as needed. Designated areas will be set aside for any outside visitors.
- If an item must be delivered to school for students, the item(s) should be clearly labeled with the student name and left on the table outside the main entrance of the school. Administrative assistants will check the table regularly to deliver items to students.