

PHILLY FREE SCHOOL COVID-19 REOPENING PLAN

PLAN OVERVIEW

This plan is expected to be updated as needed, based on changes in city and state government guidelines, guidance from health officials, feedback from the community, and issues and experiences that arise once school begins. This plan will be available to all school families and posted on the school's website, and will be updated accordingly.

SANITIZING AND VENTILATION

- Clean-Up and Health and Safety Clerks ensure proper and frequent disinfecting of frequently-touched items and surfaces, using EPA-approved disinfectants
- As in-person school begins, Clean-Up and Health and Safety will monitor which areas and items in the building get touched most often. Within the first week, they shall determine the frequency of sanitization based upon those findings, to be reexamined frequently and updated as needed
- Committees, Co-Ops, and Officials are, under the purview of the Health and Safety Committee, responsible for ensuring their materials (such as books, music equipment, computers, and art supplies) get sanitized after use
- Clean-Up and Health and Safety shall ensure that hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol-based) will be provided in every room and in other high-traffic areas of the school, and that each sink has an ample supply of soap and paper towels
- Clean-Up shall provide disinfecting cleaning supplies, to be available in numerous, to-be-determined areas throughout the building
- All SM members are expected to sanitize surfaces and items after use
- Building Committee and Health and Safety shall ensure ventilation throughout the building as much as feasible, utilizing HVAC system, open windows, and open doors

HAND WASHING AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

- All people apply hand sanitizer each time they enter the building
- Frequent hand washing and/or hand sanitizing encouraged
- Hand washing mandatory after bathroom use, before eating
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth
- Practice good respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow
- No drinking directly from the water fountain

MASKS AND FACE COVERINGS

- The PFS mask policy will follow the [CDC guidelines for schools](#) (as of 10/5/2022, this means mask-wearing is optional unless the [COVID-19 community level](#) is designated as high).
- Acceptable masks include disposable surgical masks, cloth masks purchased or made from household items, and gaiters. Clothing and household items (like scarfs, t-shirts, or bandanas) in their original form are discouraged. Health and Safety Committee may approve or reject masks/face coverings on a case by case basis
- School will provide backup masks, ear guards, and face shields. Students are suggested to always have a backup mask with them
- Cloth masks should be washed before being worn to school again. If reusing a disposable or non-washed cloth mask, allow the mask to sit in a well-ventilated area of your home for 72 hours before reusing
- Mask sharing is prohibited
- Staff will be available to help students with ways of making their mask more comfortable
- Face shields will be a viable alternative to masks for those with medical, behavioral or other conditions precluding them from wearing masks. Exceptions to mask requirements will be made if wearing a mask is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors.
- Mask breaks shall be permitted while outside and maintaining three feet apart from other people or while eating and maintaining three feet apart from other people. SM members on campus are encouraged to go outside and take mask breaks as often as they need to
- While on a mask break, must rigorously maintain a distance of at least three feet away from others
- Yelling, screaming, shouting, singing, etc. while on a mask break prohibited, unless outdoors, far away from people, and far away from common walking paths
- Yelling, screaming, shouting, singing, etc. indoors is prohibited, even in the mat room and even if you are wearing a mask
- Mask wearing is optional during after care.

SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Must generally stay at least three feet apart from other people
- Indoor physical activities that are more solitary are okay, but the mask needs to stay on
- Health and Safety Committee will limit the number of people allowed in a room and in the building (no more than 60)
- Social/Physical distancing will be a challenge, especially for younger students. When reminding people they are too close to one another, being respectful is the expectation
- Sharing of personal property discouraged, items must be sanitized before changing hands

EATING AND DRINKING

- Eating sessions shall not be prolonged for the purpose of keeping your mask off longer
- The open common area at the front of the building will be the designated eating area, since it will be the most ventilated area of the building. Eating outside will be encouraged. Eating in the kitchen is permitted as well.
- You must disinfect the table you sat at before you leave.

HEALTH SCREENINGS & TESTING

- There will be a thermometer at the front desk for people to take their temperature
- Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or above, or exhibiting symptoms of illness shall be sent home
- Health and Safety, as well as the community as a whole, will be mindful about fostering a culture wherein people who are sick go home/do not come to school

BUILDING VISITORS

- Building guests limited as much as possible, especially during school hours (after hours admissions visits are okay)
- In-person meetings with non-SM members discouraged; virtual meetings whenever possible
- Parents are encouraged to stay outside the building for pickup and dropoff

OUTSIDE AND OFF CAMPUS

- This COVID plan is still in effect off campus, including wearing masks indoors and on public transportation, and three-foot social distancing.
- Must follow guidelines of businesses and other establishments
- SM members encouraged to be outdoors as much as feasible

ENFORCEMENT

- Health and Safety shall post signs in highly visible areas promoting correct hygiene practices and protective measures
- Staff, Health and Safety, and Clean-Up will learn CDC-approved methods and guidelines for proper sanitization
- If someone gets three charges of comply with COVID 19 plan rule within a year, it will be automatically referred to School Meeting to discuss a parent conference.
- Various school clerks and committees will be responsible for being vigilant and ensuring enforcement of this plan
- Just as important will be a broader cultural awareness of the importance of following this plan

POTENTIAL OR CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES

- Students and staff must stay home if they are sick or exhibiting symptoms of illness (COVID-19 or otherwise)
- If a member of your household has COVID-19, you must stay home and test five days after exposure. If the test is negative, you may return to school and must wear a mask for 5 more days. If you otherwise might have been exposed to COVID-19 via a close contact, you may remain at school as long as you follow the CDC exposure guidelines for 10 days by wearing a mask and testing after 5 days.
- What counts as close contact?
 - ★ You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes
 - ★ You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
 - ★ You had direct physical contact with the person (touched, hugged, or kissed them)
 - ★ You shared eating or drinking utensils
- Any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in students, staff, or members of their household must be reported to the school office as soon as possible
- Families will be notified of cases among students and staff as known to the school (with information anonymized)
- The Philadelphia Dept of Health is notified of every positive COVID test in Philadelphia and will be in contact with people who test positive to conduct contact tracing. [Here is a link](#) with how it works and how to ensure a call from the Dept of Health is legitimate
- The Health and Safety Committee will conduct internal contact tracing per the process laid out by the Phila Dept of Health.
- If someone becomes COVID-19 symptomatic while at school, they will wait in a room by themselves until they are able to leave. That room and other areas of the building they had been in earlier will be closed and thoroughly

- ★ They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you
- Staff or Students who have been absent from school because of COVID-19 symptoms or testing positive shall not return to school until they have received negative test results or after 72 hours symptom free without medication.
- disinfecting the school building after school by staff before reopening.
- When someone who was in the school building tests positive or is suspected to have contracted COVID-19, the school will follow [these considerations](#) from the CDC
- The school building will also close under these circumstances:
 - ★ A government mandated closure
 - ★ If school cannot be adequately staffed
 - ★ If School Meeting determines the risk is too high, based on COVID-19 cases in the school community or local area
 - ★ In-person school will automatically close for 5 days if there are 3 or more positive cases of COVID within a 10 day period.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

- The default expectation for attendance will be full-time and in-person
- The Attendance Clerk may grant additional absences and allow virtual school attendance for COVID-related reasons on a case-by-case basis, and must duly report these exceptions to School Meeting
- As always, absences must be reported to the school ([this form](#) is the best way). Email simon@phillyfreeschool.org regarding planned recurring absences

VACCINATIONS

- PFS does not have a COVID-19 vaccination mandate for students or staff

FAMILIES

- Families are required to conduct daily at-home health checks before the student goes to school, including taking temperatures, monitoring for illness and COVID-19 symptoms in particular ([link to CDC list of symptoms](#)), and monitoring for recent exposure to someone diagnosed with COVID-19. When in doubt, stay home!
- School will send email updates to families communicating changes in guidelines, and will maintain open communication in general
- School will be available to provide families with advice regarding prolonged mask wearing, difficulties with physical distancing, etc.
- As sharing personal belongings is discouraged, families are encouraged to label personal belongings with the student's name
- Families should be aware of the possibility of their child being sent home unexpectedly for COVID-19 related reasons, and ensure the school office has updated contact info
- Proper mask-wearing and hygiene practices expected on public transit to school
- School ready to facilitate communication with families to problem solve around transportation
- Families are suggested to consider that when the weather is poor throughout the day, more people will be in the building, and the risk of the virus spreading will be higher
- In sending their children to school, families are encouraged to consider factors such as household members at a higher risk of complications from becoming infected, and if any household members have a high risk of passing the virus along to others
- Families are encouraged to contact the school or request a conference to discuss any thoughts or concerns.

PANDEMIC COORDINATOR AND EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

- The Health and Safety Clerk is the school's official "Pandemic Coordinator", with the Health and Safety Committee as the "Pandemic Team."
- Health and Safety Committee is empowered to remove SM members from school by majority vote, in order to comply with government regulations and maintain safety
- In order to facilitate safety and compliance with government guidelines, the Health and Safety Committee may adjust and make exceptions to this plan. All adjustments to the plan shall be duly reviewed by School Meeting as soon as possible

IF SCHOOL MUST CLOSE

- If PFS must close school, virtual PFS will continue
- Virtual PFS follows the same school calendar, with shortened hours (10:00 to 4:00)
- Virtual PFS attendance still required. You must sign in before 10:15am.
- School discord server active, with various open rooms and private breakout groups
- Other platforms available as an alternative to Discord (Zoom, Google Hangouts, etc.)
- Socializing via official school channels encouraged
- Virtual group activities away from the desk are encouraged (cooking, exercising, ect.)
- Meetings, discussions groups, other activities occur as they come up (including SM and JC)
- Staff available for one-on-one, small group, and large group activities
- Virtual JC following regular guidelines as best it can, potentially a lot more mediation
- Links to the concern form, SM agenda, law book, etc. will be readily available
- Depending on stay-at-home guidelines, staff may travel to various neighborhoods in the city for a mini school meetup at local parks
- See [tuition addendum](#) for info if school is closed for a long period of time

UPDATE HISTORY

(most recent changes at bottom)

- **8/19/2022: Plan approved by School Meeting Executive Committee**
- **9/28/2022**

Added	⇒	• Mask wearing is optional during after care.
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- **10/5/2022**

• All people in building must wear a mask or other appropriate face covering that covers their mouth and nose	⇒	• The PFS mask policy will follow the CDC guidelines for schools (as of 10/5/2022, this means mask-wearing is optional unless the COVID-19 community level is designated as high).
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- **1/11/2023**

• Students and staff must stay home if they have had close contact with a person	⇒	• If a member of your household has COVID-19, you must stay home and test five days after exposure. If the test is
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diagnosed with or suspected to have contracted COVID-19. They may return to school after: (1) two weeks have passed without issue, (2) they tested negative for COVID-19, or (3) the person they were in contact with tested negative for COVID-19, and they themselves do not exhibit any symptoms		negative, you may return to school and must wear a mask for 5 more days. If you otherwise might have been exposed to COVID-19 via a close contact, you may remain at school as long as you follow the CDC exposure guidelines for 10 days by wearing a mask and testing after 5 days.
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- [See the 2020-2021 plan here](#)
- [See the 2021-2022 plan here](#)