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### ***4141: COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols and Procedures***

Support Services/Health Services

The East Greenwich School District takes the health and safety of its students, staff, and community very seriously. Given the highly-contagious nature of the coronavirus (“COVID” or the “Virus”), a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, EGSD must remain vigilant in mitigating the spread of the Virus within the school environment, and in the community at large. The health and safety of one individual can impact dozens more.

To ensure the District implements health and safety protocols that are in the best interest of all students, faculty, and staff, this Policy is based on information available from Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH)’s [Outbreak Response Protocols](#) and information available from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) , the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), under the direction of EGSD’s consulting pediatrician. It may be modified in a separate EGSD notification based on further information provided by the CDC, RIDOH, and/or other public officials as more information becomes available. Where practicable, links to updated information are embedded below.

The School Committee recognizes that the continued prevalence of COVID-19 and all its variants create a dynamic emergent situation resulting in the potential change in public health and safety recommendations and orders from the CDC, RIDOH, and the Governor of the State of Rhode Island or in the district’s approach to health and safety measures. In the event any mandatory order is issued in this regard, or in the event of an unanticipated change in circumstances in which the Superintendent determines it is necessary to immediately alter the District’s response and notwithstanding this policy, the Superintendent shall amend the District’s response to COVID-19 pandemic and conform with all such orders or recommendations.

## **Proof of Vaccination**

For purposes of complying with quarantine and any masking requirements, all vaccinated EGSD students and staff will provide proof of vaccination to the school nurse or the District's Human Resources Coordinator, as indicated.

## **Face Masks and Face Coverings**

Consistent with CDC and RIDOH guidelines, face masks or coverings are recommended, but shall be optional in EGSD, except when mandated by federal or state law, order, or regulation. After consultation with RIDOH and the District's consulting physician, the Superintendent has discretion to impose a temporary mask mandate district or school wide to protect the health and safety of all EGSD students and staff, subject to the exceptions outlined below.

When required, face coverings shall, at a minimum:

- o cover the nose and mouth and be secured under the chin,
- o fit snugly against the side of your face with no gaps, and
- o may not be seen through or have exhalation valves or vents.

Masks/face coverings should be provided by the student/family; however extra disposable face masks will be made available by the school for students and/or staff who need them.

## **Athletics and Outdoor Activities**

During sports and related activities, all athletes must follow the athletic guidance from the Superintendent (or designee), as informed by the Rhode Island Principals' Committee on Athletics, the Rhode Island Interscholastic League, and public health governing bodies' requirements for individual sports and the current transmission rate.

## **School Buses**

EGSD shall ensure compliance with federal or state order or recommendation. If circumstances warrant, the Superintendent, after consultation with RIDOH and the District's consulting physician, has discretion to impose a temporary mask mandate for school bus riders.

## **Exceptions**

CDC guidelines provide that a mask otherwise required may not be worn: (1) by anyone under the age of two; (2) if it would medically compromise an individual; or (3) by anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. A physician's note cannot excuse mask-wearing; however, it can indicate a condition/disability and the impact it would have on the individual. Individual cases shall be reviewed and documented in accordance with requirements of Section 504

of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

During mask mandates, mask breaks shall occur throughout the day for individuals who are required to wear a mask. Breaks should occur when students can be appropriately socially distanced based on minimum requirements per RIDOH. Mask breaks shall not be withheld for disciplinary reasons.

Should a student willfully refuse to wear a face covering when required, EGSD will take the following steps:

**1<sup>st</sup> offense:** A teacher or administrator shall remind the student of the importance of face coverings in slowing the spread of COVID-19 and encourage compliance with the school and District requirement.

**2<sup>nd</sup> offense:** A teacher or administrator shall again remind the student of the importance of face coverings in slowing the spread of COVID-19 and encourage compliance with the school and District requirement, shall call a parent/guardian, and impose a school-based consequence to encourage compliance.

**3<sup>rd</sup> offense:** The student, parent, and administrator shall hold a conference to determine whether the student will comply with the face covering requirement in order to continue to participate in in-person learning, or whether the student will access classes through an alternative format. A school-based consequence shall be imposed.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection**

To ensure a safe learning and work environment, EGSD shall provide for appropriate cleaning measures and supplies in accordance with District cleaning policies and procedures, as well as disposable surgical masks and additional protective equipment as indicated for employees and students.

### **Mental Health Support**

Families and employees who are experiencing mental or emotional trauma or other psychological challenges due to the effects of COVID-19 are encouraged to seek help from the District's mental health professionals.

Anyone who needs additional support is encouraged to reach out to Kids' Link RI™ a behavioral health triage service and referral network. Kids' Link RI™ is a program offered in collaboration with Gateway Healthcare, Lifespan, Hasbro Children's Hospital and Bradley Hospital, and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help triage children and youth in need of mental health services and refer them to treatment providers. 1-855-543-5465

Employees can contact Coastline: EAP.

### **Daily Screening**

**On annual basis, and upon registration, families will conduct** the COVID Health Check Sign-Off to confirm participation in a daily screening of symptoms. On a daily basis:

- o parents and guardians shall assess students at home;
- o Students exhibiting symptoms of illness are required to remain at home; and
- o employees shall self-screen for potential symptoms, and stay at home if ill.

In the event that a student is symptomatic upon arrival to school, they will report to the school nurse, and the school will contact their parent or guardian for pick-up.

### **When Students and/or Staff Exhibit Symptoms During the School or Work Day**

Upon the discovery of any symptoms that may include, but are not limited to the following, students and employees will be assessed by the school nurse, who will evaluate for potential COVID infection:

- o Fever
- o Chills
- o Cough (new)
- o Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- o Fatigue
- o Muscle or body aches
- o Headache
- o New loss of taste or smell
- o Sore throat
- o Congestion or runny nose (new)
- o Nausea or vomiting
- o Diarrhea
- o Any other symptoms consistent with emerging variants

If the nurse determines that COVID is possible, they will:

- o Mask and isolate students under their supervision to avoid exposing others; and
- o Notify students, parents, guardians, and/or emergency contacts. It is strongly recommended that students identified as potentially COVID-positive are picked up from school within 30 minutes of notification.

### **Disclosure Requirements**

In the event that a student or employee is diagnosed with the Virus, EGSD will notify individuals of closures and restrictions imposed to slow the spread of COVID, in compliance with [the Rhode Island Department of Health's Outbreak Response Protocols: K-12](#).

In accordance with RIDOH guidelines, EGSD will notify local health officials, staff, and families of cases of COVID-19 as well as instances of staff and students coming in close contact with affected individuals, while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Staff will be instructed in accordance with current health and safety guidelines.

### **Return to School**

Students/employees excluded for virus symptoms shall comply with the Rhode Island Department of Health's Outbreak Response Protocols: PK-12 regarding when to discontinue home isolation and quarantine.

### **Visitor Protocol**

To reduce the risk of exposure, EGSD and its schools may limit the number of visitors permitted to enter district facilities. Immediately upon entering the school building, visitors and vendors must review the self-attestation form, and sign the visitor's log with their first/last name, contact number, arrival/departure times, and affirm they are free of symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

### **Travel-related Guidance**

EGSD shall follow RIDOH's guidance on domestic or international travel.

### **Amendments**

Amendments to this policy recommended by the Superintendent may be presented directly to the School Committee for consideration and approval, and may bypass the Policy Subcommittee.

### ***References:***

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,

Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>  
1 (last visited Feb. 11, 2022)

Rhode Island Department of Health, Rhode Island Covid-19 Information,

<https://health.ri.gov/covid/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2022)

Rhode Island Department of Education COVID-19 Updates and Resources

<https://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/AdditionalInformation/Covid19.aspx> (last visited Feb. 11, 2022)

Rhode Island Department of Health Outbreak Response Protocol

<https://www.back2schoolri.com/outbreak-response-protocols/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2022)

Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH): [PreK-12 Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-22 School Year](#) (last visited Feb. 11, 2022)

BH LINK title and date

<https://www.bhlink.org/> (last visited February 11, 2022)

Coastline EAP, <https://www.coastlineap.com/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2022)