

## SY 2021-22 LEA Health and Safety Plans

**LEA Name: Hope Community PCS**

**LEA Contact: Okiemute Pela**

**LEA Type: Pre-K ; Elementary ; Middle School**

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### **Background and Purpose**

[OSSE's Health and Safety Guidance for Schools](#) is issued for LEAs and private, parochial and independent schools (schools). LEAs and schools must develop and submit to OSSE comprehensive health and safety plans. This plan is intended to provide the public with information on how the LEA will support the safe reopening and operation of school buildings, including guidelines on masking, social distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, and appropriate response to a positive COVID-19 case.

OSSE reviewed each LEA's responses to the questions for clarity, completeness, and compliance with the DC Health and OSSE health and safety guidance for schools and provided feedback to the LEA. Before publication, LEA's were given the opportunity to revise their responses based on OSSE's feedback. LEAs and schools are responsible for incorporating additional or updated public health guidance into their policies and procedures throughout the school year as such guidance is released.

## Face Masks

### 1. Provide the LEA's plan to comply with the requirements to:

- **a. except for specific circumstances (e.g., while eating) articulated in OSSE's guidance, all students, staff and visitors, including those who are fully vaccinated, must wear non-medical face coverings or face masks at all times while on school grounds, on school buses and while participating in any school-related activities, including physical education and sports; and**
- **b. masks must be worn correctly.**

Proper use of facemasks, has been determined by the CDC and researchers to be one of the most effective means of preventing and slowing the spread of COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily transmitted through direct person-to-person contact or through large aerosol droplets exchanged at a close range of approximately 6 feet. Mandatory use of reusable, cloth or disposable face masks by all staff, scholars and visitors (including contractors), including those that are fully vaccinated, will be required at all times while in the Hope Community PCS building. Additionally, parents/guardians must wear face masks for drop-off and pick-up. If a staff member or essential visitor has a contraindication to wearing a face mask, either medical or otherwise, they should not participate in in-person school activities. Scholars, including those who are fully vaccinated, must also wear face masks while on school grounds, on school buses, and while participating in any school-related activities, except in the event of a medical or developmental contraindication. **To ensure that our school is maintaining layered mitigation strategies throughout the day, scholars must wear their masks in the classrooms while seated at physically distanced desks.** Scholars and families are required to wear cloth face coverings during arrival, dismissal, and at all times while moving around the school building. If a scholar participating in in-person activities is unable to wear a face mask throughout the day, mask breaks are acceptable at times in which physical (social) distance can be maintained (e.g., when outside) or during snacks or meals. Families and educators will work with scholars to practice wearing a mask safely and consistently.

Instances when face coverings need to be worn:

- Scholars should wear face coverings at all times while in the school building, and most importantly when physical distancing is difficult (e.g., hallways, restrooms) and always on their travel to and from the school when using public transportation.
- Any visitors that enter the school will be required to wear a face covering on the school grounds and inside the school buildings at all times.

Instances when face coverings should not be worn:

- By anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance; and,
- By children during naptime.

Instances when face coverings do not need to be worn:

- Outdoors when social distancing of at least six feet is strictly enforced.
- By anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone unconscious or unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- By children during naptime.
- When participating in vigorous physical activity (e.g., recess) outdoors if social distancing of at least 6 feet is feasible. When outdoors but *not* participating in physical activity, face coverings must continue to be worn;
- When actively drinking or eating a meal;

- When in an enclosed office that no one else is permitted to enter.
- When giving a speech for broadcast or an audience, provided no one is within 6 feet of the speaker;
- When speaking to or translating for a deaf or hard of hearing person; and
- When required to use equipment for a job that precludes the wearing of a mask and the person is wearing or using that equipment.

Ensuring the safe use of clean cloth face coverings:

- Scholars and staff will bring multiple cloth face coverings with them. In the event that a scholar, staff, or guest does not have a face covering, one will be provided by the school.
- Staff and scholars will exercise caution when removing the covering, always storing it out of reach of other scholars, and wash hands immediately after removing it.
- If a scholar or staff member tampers with the face covering of another scholar or staff member, it should be removed immediately and replaced with a clean one.
- Face coverings will be available to staff, scholars and essential visitors in the event they forget or soil their face covering.
- Staff and scholars will exercise caution when removing the covering, always store it out of reach of other scholars, and wash hands immediately after removing. They will be advised to be careful not to touch eyes, nose or mouth while removing the mask.
- Face masks that are taken off temporarily to engage in any of the aforementioned activities should be carefully folded. The folded mask can be stored between uses in a clean sealable paper bag or breathable container.
- Face masks will be stored in a space designated for each scholar that is separate from others when not being worn. They can also be placed next to scholar on a napkin or with the surface cleaned afterwards.
- Scholar's cloth face coverings will also be clearly identified with their names or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping. Scholar's face coverings may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back.
- As much as possible, school staff will prevent scholars from playing with their or others' face coverings and ensure they are removed and stored safely.
- Scholars, teachers and staff will be taught to speak more loudly, rather than remove their face covering, if speaking in a noisy environment.

**2. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures in the event that a student, staff member, or visitor is unable or unwilling to wear a face mask at all times.**

If a staff member declines to wear a face mask as required, their immediate supervisor is responsible for addressing it with the staff member. Staff members should refrain from addressing non-compliance or perceived noncompliance directly with other staff members, and should instead report issues to their supervisors. If a scholar declines to wear a face mask as required by Hope Community PCS protocols, governmental order or health department mandate, the scholar should be referred to the School Leader. If the situation occurs in a classroom or other academic setting, it is considered a classroom management issue, and the staff member should remind the scholar of the requirement and give the scholar the opportunity to comply prior to referring the matter to the School Leader. Visitors who do not abide by face mask requirements will first be offered a disposable face mask. If they refuse to comply with face mask requirements, they will be asked to leave and given options of how they can be served virtually.

**3. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures to support physical distancing between individuals and within and across groups, including in classrooms, common spaces, during arrival and dismissal procedures, and**

## **during extracurricular activities.**

Creating learning environments and transition environments in the Imagine Hope Community Public Charter School's building that adhere to the recommended physical distancing guidelines is a vital part of maintaining the health and safety of scholars and staff. In order to ensure a stable, positive learning environment, it will be imperative that scholars feel safe and secure in their learning environments.

Physical Distancing will continue to be a vital piece of the overall layered mitigation strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 between teachers, staff and scholars to help keep the Hope Community PCS open, even when a case occurs in the school. Following current CDC, DC Health, and OSSE guidelines, Hope Community PCS will implement the following general physical distancing protocols for the 2021-2022 school year:

- Three feet of physical distancing will be implemented:
  - Between scholars in elementary grade levels while in classrooms; and,
  - Between scholars in classrooms in middle school grade levels. If DC experiences a daily case OR positivity rate indicating substantial community spread, 3 feet of physical distancing will not be implemented without cohorting in these age groups.
- Six feet of physical distancing will be implemented:
  - Between adults (teachers, staff, and essential visitors) at all times during school and school-related activities.
  - Between scholars and adults (teachers, staff and essential visitors) at all times during school and school-related activities.
  - In middle school grade levels when DC is experiencing a daily case OR positivity rate indicating substantial community spread (red), and cohorting is not able to be implemented.
  - During activities when face masks cannot be worn, such as eating. Strategies will be implemented to allow increased spacing between scholars during meal and snack times.
  - During physical education class and while participating in athletics.
  - Between cohorts.
  - In any school common areas outside the classroom.

Following CDC and DC Health guidelines, the following steps will be taken to best promote physical distancing of scholars, staff and all community stakeholders that enter the Hope Community PCD building during the:

### **Traveling to and From School**

- Scholars and staff will be encouraged to maintain at physical distance and to wear a face covering when traveling, and to avoid congregating in large groups at intersections and transit stops
  - Exterior signage will be placed strategically at utilized scholar and visitor entrances and exits to encourage maintaining social distance and use of face masks when traveling to and from the school buildings to stop spread of COVID-
  - When transport vehicles (e.g., buses) are used by the school, drivers will wear face masks and will practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated for other staff (e.g., hand hygiene).
  - To the extent feasible, Hope Community PCS will promote physical distancing and improved ventilation on school buses and shared transport (e.g., leaving empty rows of seats, opening windows).
  - Frequent communication to parents, guardians and all other stakeholders in the Hope Community, utilizing ParentSquare, Class Dojo and social media, will highlight and encourage the continued practices of social distancing and wearing of faces coverings while traveling between school and home.

### **Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:**

- Staggered entrance and dismissal schedules for scholars to ensure social distancing during daily scholar arrival at and dismissal from the school buildings.
- Scholars will be directed to the exterior doors closest to their classroom or homeroom when necessary to

avoid congestion and crowding.

- In circumstances where the closest exterior door to a classroom or homeroom is inaccessible for scholars with disabilities, individualized planning for entry and exit from the school building will be developed.
- Plans for scholar flow and spacing in hallways and other public transition spaces so as to limit potential contact between cohorts of scholars and congestion in hallways and open areas within the school buildings.
  - A lane system will be established
- Additional installation of signage, floor markings and way markers to provide physical guides in the building to encourage and guide scholars and staff in physical social distancing practices;
  - Signs will be posted in highly visible locations, such as facility entrances, school lobby spaces, classrooms, and restrooms
  - Signs will promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs, for example through proper hand washing techniques and proper use of cloth face coverings.

### **Common Spaces:**

- Plexiglas for sliding windows at front office counters
- Sneeze guards/Plexiglas for each counter in offices/lobbies
- Regular safety/compliance checks of social distancing accommodations and practices.
- Staggered use of meeting/congregating areas:
  - Closing of communal-use spaces, such as breakrooms and lounges. When closing of communal areas is not feasible, such as workroom areas, the following provisions will be in place to ensure safety of staff:
    - Staggered usage of the space;
    - Enforcement of strict social distancing between individuals
    - Ensuring face coverings are worn at all times; and,
    - Cleaning and disinfecting between uses.
  - If meeting/congregational spaces must be used, staggered use and disinfection between each use

### **Physical Distancing of Classrooms:**

- To ensure social distancing for scholars and teaching staff in accordance with CDC and DC Health guidelines, the following action will be taken:
  - Maximize spacing between individuals in a classroom, including while at tables and in group and individual activities;
  - Remove nonessential furniture from classrooms;
  - Arrange desks and furniture so that individuals are separated to maintain physical distance;
  - Place scholars head to toe during nap times;
  - Isolation rooms have been identified for scholars or staff who exhibit symptoms to wait until they are able to leave the school building;
  - Procedures for conducting fire drills, responding to fire alarms and other safety evacuation issues in the classroom while maintaining social distancing guidelines;
  - Protocols to limit sharing amongst scholars;
  - Adequate supplies acquired to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (art supplies, equipment etc. assigned to a single scholar) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between uses;
  - No sharing of electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids;
  - Physical education classes will be held outside, weather permitting and scholars will maintain proper distancing using visual cues, using way markers and signage;
  - Playgrounds and other outdoor spaces may be used for more than one group. To the extent possible, each group of individuals will interact only with their own group and not mix between other groups. Each group must have extra physical (social) distance between them and the next group; and,
  - Regular safety/compliance checks of social distancing accommodations and practices,

### **Canceling, Eliminating or Modifying Activities**

Hope Community PCS will implement the same layered mitigation strategies used for classroom activities during physical activity in schools as well as scholar athletics:

- Implement physical distancing of at least 6 feet between scholars during physical education classes, to the maximum extent feasible;
- Masks will be worn at all times while participating in physical education and sports;
- Scholars will be grouped into cohorts for sports practices. The cohorts will not mix, and participants within the cohorts should maintain physical distance from one another and the coaches or trainers;
- Activities in which voices are projected, such as choir or theater, or where wind instruments are used, present greater risk of spread will be cancelled or modified to be outdoors and/or to allow for 10 feet of physical distancing;
- Virtual activities and events instead of field trips, scholar assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings will be considered;
- Allow parents and advocates of scholars with disabilities seeking to observe scholar's receipt of services in and outside of the classroom setting. Schools may condition entrance into the school on compliance with applicable health and safety standards.

**4. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures regarding the use of cohorts for students and/or staff, including steps to minimize interactions between cohorts, as applicable.**

Hope Community PCS' scholars will be into class cohorts that will consist of distinct groups that stay together throughout the entire school day. As physical distancing recommendations have decreased, cohorting will be an important part of maintaining school operations if and when a case occurs in the school. Minimizing mixing between cohorts will decrease the number of scholars and staff that are potentially exposed if a case occurs in a teacher, staff member, or scholar.

- Cohorting of scholars will be implemented to the greatest extent possible to minimize exposure across the school environment.
- Physical distancing recommendations, will be followed within cohorts.
- Cohorts will have minimal to no interaction with other cohorts and remain distinct to the greatest extent possible, as mixing cohorts poses an avoidable risk of exposure if an individual test positive for COVID-19.
- Hope Community PCS will implement the physical distancing practices outlined in this Health and Safety Plan to prevent mixing between cohorts at these times: during entry and exit of the building, at mealtimes, in the restroom, on the playground, in the hallway, and in other shared spaces.
- Cohorts will be maintained for all activities including lunch and recess.
- In grades where scholars traditionally transition between classes, when feasible, teachers and staff will rotate between classrooms, rather than scholars. Such rotation of teachers and staff will be limited to the extent feasible.
  - To the maximum extent feasible, the use of floating staff will be limited to only when necessary; and,
  - To the maximum extent appropriate, Hope Community PCS will maintain consistency of dedicated aide and behavioral support staff when grouping scholars.
  - To the maximum extent appropriate, the School will maintain a single set of related service providers designated to each scholar group, including for the delivery of services inside and outside of the general education setting; and,
  - To the maximum extent feasible, in-person staff meetings will be shifted to virtual. If staff meetings are held in-person, adherence to physical distance and face mask provisions will be enforced.

**5. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures to support handwashing and respiratory etiquette including**

**frequent, proper handwashing strategies and encouraging covering coughs and sneezes.**

Hope Community PCS will reinforce frequent, proper handwashing strategies and techniques by scholars and staff, including washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol can be utilized. To support hand washing and respiratory etiquette, the following protocols and improvements have been implemented by the LEA:

- Installation of touchless soap dispensers in all group and single lavatories;
- Installation of touchless hand sanitizer stations at all entrance doors and classroom doorways;
- Installation of free-standing, portable touchless hand sanitizer stations strategically placed throughout the school building;
- Installation of signs promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs, for example through proper hand washing techniques and encouraging covering coughs and sneezes.
- Educating scholars and staff concerning key times to perform hand hygiene, including:
  - before and after eating food;
  - before and after group activities;
  - after going to the bathroom;
  - before and after putting on, touching, or removing face masks or touching your face;
  - after removing gloves; and
  - after blowing one's nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Staff and scholars will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue when not wearing a mask. Used tissues will be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or if soap and water is unavailable, cleaned with hand sanitizer.

**6. Provide the LEA's plan to make available adequate supplies (e.g., soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissues) to support healthy hygiene practices including, as relevant, in classrooms, bathrooms, offices and common spaces.**

The adequate sourcing and procurement of cleaning and hygienic supplies is a vital part of the Hope Community PCS' Health and Safety Plan, and a successful and safe 2021-2022 school year. Bulk purchases of supplies such as hand soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissue and cleaning/disinfecting supplies have been made through the Hope Community PCS's supplies vendors, in order to meet delivery timeframes and budget consideration. The vendors include such firms as S. Freedman and Sons, Daycon, and Staples. It is clear that purchasing these items in bulk will result in cost savings and better delivery timeframes. The items that are procured include:

- Hand sanitizer
- Hand soap
- Disinfectant wipes
- Paper towel
- Personal tissue
- Cleaning soap and detergents
- CDC-approved disinfectant.

**7. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures to acquire, distribute and support the appropriate use of PPE including gowns/coveralls, gloves, surgical masks, eye protection (face shield or goggles) and N95 masks, as relevant and necessary.**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) use, sourcing and procurement is a vital part of the Hope Community PCS'

Health and Safety Plan for the successful and safe reopening for the 2021-2022 school year. PPE, particularly proper use of facemasks, has increasingly been determined by the CDC and researchers to be one of the most effective means of preventing and slowing the spread of COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily transmitted through direct person-to-person contact or through large aerosol droplets exchanged at a close range of approximately 6 feet. Mandatory use of reusable, cloth or disposable face masks by all staff and scholars (including contractors) will be required at all times while in the School buildings.

Initial PPE bulk purchases were made through the Community Purchasing Alliance in order to meet delivery timeframes and budget consideration. After an extensive survey of PPE suppliers in terms of cost and delivery time frames, it is clear that purchasing these items in bulk will result in cost savings and better delivery timeframes. The items to be procured include:

- Re-usable, cloth face masks
- Disposable face masks
- Nitrile gloves
- Non-contact thermometers
- Hand sanitizer
- Disinfectant wipes
- Clear, plastic face shields
- Coverall or disposable gowns

## **Maintain Clean and Healthy Facilities**

### **8. Provide the LEA's schedule for routine cleaning of rooms, surfaces and objects, including high touch objects and surfaces (e.g., pens, keyboards, elevator buttons, light switches, handles, stair rails, faucets, phones, doorknobs, grab bars on playgrounds).**

As the Hope Community PCS re-opens for the 2021-2022 school year, there will continue to be a strong emphasis on cleaning and disinfecting the facility. Comprehensive implementation of cleaning and disinfecting protocols will be an important piece of the overall strategy to keep scholars and staff safe during their time in the Hope Community PCS building, which will be a significant part of their day. The following Cleaning Plan be implemented, following guidance from the CDC, DC Health and OSSE as the Hope Community PCS building operates with physically-distanced populations:

- Prioritized frequently touched surfaces or objects, to be cleaned, at a minimum, of one time a day:
  - Cleaning and wipe-down, disinfecting of all hard surfaces in classrooms (hard and non-porous materials like glass, metal, or plastic) Facilities will use 70% alcohol or 1/3 bleach per gallon water disinfectant solution
  - Desks, tables, and countertops
  - Keyboards and phones
  - Door frames, doors, and doorknobs
  - Light switches
  - Hands-on learning items and toys
  - Lavatory fixtures and faucet handles
  - Lavatory walls
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched, shared objects (for example, toys, games, art supplies) between uses.
    - Toys, including those used indoors and outdoors, will be frequently cleaned and sanitized throughout the day.
    - Toys that have been in children's mouths or soiled by bodily secretions must be immediately



- set aside. These toys will be cleaned and sanitized by a staff member wearing gloves before being used by another child.
- Machine washable toys should be used by only one child and laundered in between uses.
- Mats/cots must be individually labeled and stored
  - Mats/cots will be placed at least six feet apart while in use and cleaned and sanitized between uses.
  - Bedding will be washable and laundered at least weekly or before use by another child.
  - Mats/cots may be stacked between uses if it is cleaned and sanitized appropriately before stacking.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect thermometers before and after each use per manufacturer's instructions.
- Playground structures will be included as part of routine cleaning.
  - High-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars, play structures, and railings, will be cleaned regularly.
- In the event a space in the school is used for an aerosol-generating procedure (e.g., spaces in which oral or nebulized medication has been administered) will undergo routine cleaning and disinfection.
  - Scholars who receive nebulized treatments will be strongly encouraged to replace the nebulizer with oral inhalers whenever possible.
  - If scholars cannot use or do not have access to an inhaler, nebulized treatments will be conducted outside, if feasible and weather permitting.
  - School staff will work with families and the school nurse to identify opportunities to transition the schedule for nebulized medication administration to before or after school, if medically appropriate.
- Signage will be placed in every classroom reminding staff of cleaning protocols.
- Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep products away from children
- The Facilities Team will ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep products away from children;
- The Facilities Team will continue to be held accountable for maintaining frequency of cleaning and disinfecting through implementation of checklists in classrooms, offices and public spaces for documentation of cleaning and disinfecting these spaces daily.
- Additionally, enhanced whole-school disinfection will take place utilizing electro-static mist sprayers by either the Facilities Team or outside contractors at scheduled intervals each week school is in session. The Facilities Team will identify potential contractors to provide regular whole-school spray disinfection.

*Cleaning schedule on page 11 in uploaded document.*

Additionally, enhanced whole-school disinfection will take place utilizing electro-static mist sprayers by either the Facilities Team or outside contractors at scheduled intervals each week school is in session. The Facilities Team will identify potential contractors to provide regular whole-school spray disinfection.

- 9. Provide the LEA's cleaning and disinfecting protocols in the event that (1) a student, staff member, or visitor develops symptoms of possible COVID-19 while in the school; or (2) if the school is notified that a student, staff member or visitor who tested positive has been in the school.**

#### **Cleaning Schedule If a Scholar or Staff Member Becomes Ill:**

In addition to these routine cleaning requirements, the following protocols will apply in circumstances in which a scholar, staff member or essential visitor becomes ill:

- Scholar, staff member or essential visitor develops symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day or within

24 hours of being in the building, the Hope Community PCS Facilities Team will clean and disinfect the area(s) where they have been within the building.

- Immediately rope off or close, clean and disinfect areas and equipment in which the ill individual has been in contact.
  - If a COVID-19 case is confirmed during the day AND the COVID-19 positive individual is in the facility, then the cohort should be dismissed and the room vacated as soon as possible.
  - It is acceptable for the cohort to remain in the room until the end of the day in the following circumstances:
    - If an individual has symptoms but is not confirmed to have COVID-19; or
    - If a COVID-19 case is confirmed and the COVID-19 positive individual has not been in the facility that day.
  - Once the room is vacated, the Facilities Team will wait as long as possible before entering the room to perform deep cleaning and disinfection of full classroom, and any other spaces or equipment in which the ill individual was in contact. This includes the isolation room after use by an ill scholar or staff member.
    - During cleaning and disinfection, air circulation to the area will be increased (e.g., open doors, open windows, use fans, or adjust HVAC settings).
    - Staff will wear a face mask for all steps of the cleaning and disinfection process. Staff will also wear gloves and follow additional PPE best practices.
  - Staff supporting, accompanying or cleaning up after a sick scholar or staff member will adhere to PPE requirements.
- If a scholar, staff member, or essential visitor develops symptoms of or tests positive for COVID-19 and it has been more than 24 hours, but less than three days, since the individual was in the school building, the school will clean any areas where the individual has been. Disinfection is not necessary.
  - If a scholar, staff member, or essential visitor develops symptoms of or tests positive for COVID-19 and it has been more than three days since the individual was in the building, no special cleaning and disinfection procedures are necessary, and the school will follow routine cleaning and disinfection procedures.

#### **10. Provide the LEA's plan to make available sufficient and appropriate cleaning and disinfection supplies.**

The adequate sourcing and procurement of cleaning and disinfecting supplies is a vital part of the Hope Community PCS' Health and Safety Plan, and a successful and safe 2021-2022 school year. Purchases of supplies such as cleaning solution, CDC-approved disinfectants, air purifier and mister sprayer disinfectant, cleaning rags, sponges and tools have been made through the Hope Community PCS's supplies vendors, in order to meet delivery timeframes and budget consideration. The vendors include such firms as S. Freedman and Sons, Daycon, and Staples. It is clear that purchasing these items in bulk will result in cost savings and better delivery timeframes. The items that are procured include:

- Cleaning solutions and soap
- CDC-approved disinfectant
- HOCL-based air purifier and mister sprayer disinfectant solution
- Cleaning rags and sponges
- Cleaning tools and supplies

#### **11. Provide the LEA's plan to perform necessary maintenance to ventilation and water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) so that they are ready for use and occupancy and are adequately maintained throughout the operating period.**

HVAC upgrades to promote better ventilation throughout school buildings and as a means to filter and mitigate live viruses have been adopted in the Hope Community Public Charter School facility. Improvements to HVAC systems have been utilized to filter, dissipate and negatively impact droplet stability of COVID-19 viral cells. A mechanical engineer consultant was engaged in July 2020 to provide, with the Facilities Team and the School's HVAC technicians, a thorough assessment of the existing HVAC system and made specific, system-wide recommendations for upgrades that will help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The following plan for HVAC improvements has been implemented:

- **HVAC Plan:**

- Prepare and Assess
  - Establish a stakeholder's team
  - Gather HVAC system plans and manuals
  - Review existing maintenance and operations policies and procedures
  - Review available options and best practices for upgrades
  - Assess baseline/indoor air quality, temperatures and humidity by mechanical engineer and measure outside air
  - Assess existing systems and equipment
  - Confirm sequences of Operation Modes
- Determine timeframes and cost impact:
  - Establish budget
- Prepare:
  - Create a statement of work plan with HVAC physical engineer (PE)
- Execute Phase I:
  - Put into place fast, short-term interim adjustments
- Execute Phase II:
  - Mid-to-longer term projects
  - Harden the buildings
- Audit:
  - Engage HVAC PE to audit and re-certify building changes

Assessment of best practices for HVAC improvements to prevent spread of COVID-19, and the specific HVAC systems in the building by a mechanical engineer, has provided the following recommendations:

1. Initial air flushes all spaces prior to occupants re-entering buildings;
2. All HVAC intakes cleaned;
3. Conduct testing and balancing (TAB) of main air handlers and fresh air units, and provide TAB report for review against original system design;
4. Run normal occupied mode for two hours before and two hours after occupancy;
5. Relative humidity in building systems maintained between 40%-60%;
6. Installation of highest-level MERV filters as appropriate on HVAC systems;
7. Purchase and implementation portable disinfectant air purifiers/humidifiers
8. Increase outside air ventilation rates to as much as the HVAC system can accommodate (up to 100%);
9. At no time are fire-rated doors be propped or otherwise left open
10. Increased air change rate to 6 air changes per hour
11. Have HVAC systems set to provide Building Air Flush mode, if needed
12. Evaluated exhaust fans, create a non-occupied air flush routine, particularly in lavatories

### **Water Systems:**

The Facilities Team, on reopening of the Hope Community PCS building, flushed the buildings' water systems following prolonged facility shutdown to ensure that any hard metals contained in sitting water in pipes is flushed through the system, and any potential water-borne viruses, such as Legionnaires disease, are removed following CDC guidance and as described below:

- Flushed hot and cold water through all points of use such as sinks, drinking fountains, toilets, urinals, and showers.
- Water heater set to 140 degrees Fahrenheit and hot water will be flushed at each fixture using hot water until its maximum temperature is reached.
- Additional water using devices, such as ice machines and drinking water dispensers, will be flushed in accordance with manufacturers' instructions

Additionally, traditional water fountains in the building have been turned off and delivered water bottle service implemented, with touchless water bottle stations.

## **Response to a Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Case**

### **12. Describe the LEA's policies and procedures to:**

- **a. Comply with the requirement to not admit or to dismiss any student, staff member or visitor who is COVID-19 positive or otherwise meets criteria for exclusion, per OSSE's guidance; and**
- **b. Dismiss any individual or cohort that is potentially exposed to COVID-19 within the school setting.**

Hope Community PCS will follow the below exclusion, dismissal, and return to school criteria and protocols below:

#### ***Exclusion Criteria***

A scholar, staff member, or essential visitor must stay home, or not be admitted, and must follow the applicable DC Health guidance for isolation or quarantine, if they:

- Have had a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or any of the recognized COVID-19 symptoms in the last 24 hours.
- Are confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Have been in close contact in the last 10 days with an individual confirmed to have COVID-19.
  - Returning to school after 10 days is intended to minimize the risk of transmission of the virus while also minimizing the burden. DC Health guidance allows for schools to continue to implement the more stringent 14-day return to school recommendation if they choose to. Waiting 14 days before returning to school remains the most effective strategy for decreasing the transmission of COVID-19. DC Health strongly recommends that individuals who live or work with someone at higher-risk for COVID-19 (see Section I) quarantine for 14 days.
- Are awaiting COVID-19 test results or have a household member who is awaiting COVID-19 test results.
- Have traveled domestically in the last 10 days to any place other than Maryland or Virginia, unless they did not attend school until tested for COVID-19 three to five days after returning to DC AND received a negative COVID-19 viral test.
- Have traveled internationally in the last 10 days, unless they did not attend school for seven days, got tested for COVID-19 three to five days after returning to DC, AND received a negative COVID-19 viral test.

Scholars or staff with pre-existing health conditions that present with specific COVID-19-like symptoms will not be excluded from entering the school building on the basis of those specific symptoms if a healthcare provider has provided written or verbal documentation that those specific symptoms are determined to not be due to COVID-19.

Provided that they do not currently have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days or is fully vaccinated may be admitted while awaiting COVID-19 test results, after close contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19, when a household contact is awaiting COVID-19 test results, or after travel.

Any individual with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will follow the exclusion criteria outlined above.

Provided that they do not currently have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days or is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 may be admitted immediately after domestic or international travel. They should get a COVID-19 test three to five days after international travel.<sup>3</sup> Any individual with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must follow the exclusion criteria outlined above.

If excluded, Hope Community PCS will encourage scholars (or their parents/guardians), staff, and essential visitors to call their healthcare provider for further directions.

### ***Dismissal Criteria and Protocols***

If a scholar, staff member, or essential visitor develops a fever or other signs of illness, Hope Community PCS will follow the above exclusion criteria regarding the exclusion and dismissal of scholars, staff, and essential visitors.

- For scholars, the school will:
  - Immediately isolate the scholar from other scholars.
    - The scholar should immediately put on a face mask or surgical mask, if not wearing already.
    - A staff member will be identified to accompany the isolated scholar to the isolation area and supervise the scholar while awaiting pickup from the parent/guardian.
    - The staff members briefly responding to the sick scholar in the classroom, accompanying the scholar to the isolation area, and supervising the scholar in the isolation area will comply with PPE best practices per Appendix B.
  - Additionally, the LEA will:
    - Notify the scholar's parent/guardian of the symptoms and that the scholar should be picked up as soon as possible and instruct them to seek healthcare provider guidance.
    - Follow guidance for use of the isolation room below.
    - Immediately follow all cleaning and disinfection protocols for any area and materials with which the scholar was in contact, per Section H: Cleaning and Disinfection.
  - For staff and essential visitors, the school will:
    - Send the staff member or essential visitor home immediately or instruct them to isolate until it is safe to go home;
    - Instruct the staff member or essential visitor to seek healthcare provider guidance; and follow cleaning and disinfecting procedures for any area, materials, and equipment with which the staff member was in contact.

*Isolation Room:* Hope Community PCS has identified two well-ventilated spaces, one on the first floor and one on the second floor of the facility to isolate sick individuals until they are able to leave the school grounds. The spaces are within 100 feet of an exterior entrance and are former office spaces that are self-contained. When safe and weather permitting, sick individuals will be isolated outdoors under appropriate supervision. When in the isolation area, the sick individual will always wear a face mask or surgical mask, be within sight of the supervising staff member, and be physically separated from other individuals by at least 6 feet. Only one sick individual will be isolated in the Isolation Room at a time. The Isolation Room will be immediately cleaned and disinfected after the sick individual departs. Supervising staff will comply with the PPE best practices in Appendix B.

### **13. Provide the LEA's plan to comply with the requirements to:**

- **a. Identify a staff member as the COVID-19 point of contact (POC) to whom families, staff, contractors and vendors should report a positive case of COVID-19 and who is responsible for reporting positive cases of COVID-19 to DC Health;**
- **b. Report any applicable positive COVID-19 case in a student, staff member or essential visitor to DC Health on the same day the school is notified;**

- **c. Not exclude students or staff with pre-existing health conditions that present with specific COVID-19-like symptoms on the basis of those specific symptoms, if a healthcare provider has provided written or verbal documentation that those specific symptoms are not due to COVID-19.**

To ensure a clear and efficient process for communication, Hope Community PCS has identified the Assistant Principal position as the COVID-19 point of contact (POC). This person is responsible for:

- Ensuring the appropriate steps are followed in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19. Families, staff, contractors and vendors will be asked to report a positive COVID-19 case to the COVID-19 POC.
- The POC will ensure that the School has contact information for all contract staff. It is critical that DC Health have reliable contact information in the event of a positive case or close contact among contract staff.
- Acting as the POC for families and staff to notify if a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19.
- The POC will be responsible for reporting all reported positive cases of COVID-19 to DC Health, following established procedures.

The identified COVID-19 Point of Contact (POC) for Hope Community PCS will follow the steps below when notified of a positive COVID-19 case by a family, scholar, staff member or visitor to the School Facilities:

- Collect the following information about the person who tested positive:
  - Their first and last name
  - Their best contact phone number
  - Their job role at the School (if the person is a staff member)
  - The date the person first noticed symptoms (or positive test date if the person does not have symptoms)
  - Date(s) the person was physically present at the facility
  - The physical areas at the facility where the COVID-19 positive person was present during their infectious period
    - If the person was not at the facility during their infectious period, the risk of exposure is minimal, and no further steps are necessary other than continuing everyday precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
    - Encourage the COVID-19 positive person to provide thorough information to the DC Contact Trace Force (or the contact trace force of their home jurisdiction), so that all contacts can be identified and provided appropriate quarantine instructions.
  - Identify potential close contacts (at the facility) of the person who tested positive
  - Close contacts could include scholars, staff members and visitors
  - Collect the following information about close contacts if possible:
    - Their names and best phone number (e.g. from employee roster, bookings)
    - Vaccination status if available
    - Date the close contact last had exposure to the person who tested positive
    - To better understand the positive person's interactions with other people, review additional data sources as necessary (e.g., review schedule/calendar, appointments/bookings/visitor logs, guest lists, seat assignments, video footage).

**The POC will notify DC Health when:**

- A staff member or essential visitor notifies the school they tested positive for COVID-19 (not before results come back);

**OR**

- A student or parent/guardian notifies the school that a student tested positive COVID-19 (not before results come back).

**AND**

- The individual was on school grounds or participated in school activities during their infectious period.
  - The infectious period starts two days before symptom onset date (or positive test date for people who do not have symptoms) and typically ends 10 days after symptom onset date (or positive test date for people who do not have symptoms).

As soon as possible on the same day the case was reported to the school, the school will notify DC Health by submitting an online form on the DC Health COVID-19 Reporting Requirements website ([dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements](https://dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements)) under the section “Non-Healthcare Facility Establishment Reporting.”

While waiting for a response from DC Health, the Hope Community PCS Facilities Team will, as soon as practical, close, clean, and disinfect, as necessary, any areas or equipment that the COVID-19 positive individual may have used.

Students or staff with pre-existing health conditions that present with specific COVID-19-like symptoms will not be excluded from entering the school building on the basis of those specific symptoms if a healthcare provider has provided written or verbal documentation that those specific symptoms are determined to not be due to COVID-19.

#### **14. Provide the LEA's procedures to support DC Health with contract tracing in the event of a positive case of COVID-19.**

To support DC Health with contact tracing in the event of a positive case of COVID-19, Hope Community PCS, through the COVID-19 Point of Contact, will follow the following procedures:

- Collect the following information about the person who tested positive:
  - Their first and last name
  - Their best contact phone number
  - Their job role at the School (if the person is a staff member)
  - The date the person first noticed symptoms (or positive test date if the person does not have symptoms)
  - Date(s) the person was physically present at the facility
  - The physical areas at the facility where the COVID-19 positive person was present during their infectious period
    - If the person was not at the facility during their infectious period, the risk of exposure is minimal, and no further steps are necessary other than continuing everyday precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
    - Encourage the COVID-19 positive person to provide thorough information to the DC Contact Trace Force (or the contact trace force of their home jurisdiction), so that all contacts can be identified and provided appropriate quarantine instructions.
  - Identify potential close contacts (at the facility) of the person who tested positive
  - Close contacts could include scholars, staff members and visitors
  - Collect the following information about close contacts if possible:
    - Their names and best phone number (e.g. from employee roster, bookings)
    - Vaccination status if available
    - Date the close contact last had exposure to the person who tested positive
    - To better understand the positive person’s interactions with other people, review additional data sources as necessary (e.g., review schedule/calendar, appointments/bookings/visitor logs, guest lists, seat assignments, video footage).

**15. Describe how the LEA will notify the school community, as appropriate, of the positive case and corresponding actions taken by the LEA.**

Schools should have communication protocols in place that protect the privacy of individuals and alert families and staff to a COVID-19 case. DC Health will identify close contacts based on its case investigation.

Communication should be completed per DC Health directive and should include:

- Notification to the entire school or the affected classroom(s) that there was a COVID-19 positive case, those impacted will be notified and told they must not attend school, and steps that will be taken (e.g., cleaning and disinfection);
- Education about COVID-19, including the signs and symptoms, available at [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov);
- Referral to the Guidance for Contacts of a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19, available at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance); and
- Information on options for COVID-19 testing in the District of Columbia, available at [coronavirus.dc.gov/testing](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/testing).

DC Health will instruct schools on dismissals and other safety precautions in the event a known COVID-19 individual came in close contact with others at school. DC Health will determine which individuals are close contacts who should be instructed to not attend school for at least 10 days, but schools do not need to wait to hear from DC Health before informing school communities of a known positive case.

If a school identifies a student or staff member with COVID-19 who is in the building, schools should be prepared to dismiss the potentially exposed cohort(s) and they must not attend school until DC Health is able to complete the case investigation.

- The exposed cohort should remain in their classroom and follow routine procedures while they are waiting for their caregivers to pick them up.
- If the school is notified of a case who is not in the building, the affected cohort may remain until the end of the school day.

### **COVID-19 Testing and Vaccines**

**16. If applicable, describe the LEA's current or planned COVID-19 testing protocol for symptomatic and/or asymptomatic students and/or staff, including steps the LEA will take to encourage participation in the testing program. Please include the LEA's plan to ensure that results of such testing programs are reported to DC Health per DC Health's COVID-19 reporting requirements: [dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements](https://dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements).**

N/A

**17. Provide the LEA's plans to support COVID-19 vaccination of staff and students, as eligible, including efforts to encourage participation in public and community-based vaccination opportunities.**

Hope Community PCS plans to continue and adopt the following activities to support COVID-19 vaccination of staff and scholars, as eligible, including efforts to encourage participation in public and community-based vaccination:

- Partnering with local community groups and health partners in vaccine-related activities to promote and implement vaccinations with the Hops Community.
- Arm school staff with resources for answering general COVID-19 vaccination-related questions.
- Promote vaccine confidence among scholars, parents and guardians:
  - Prepare to address questions and address misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine with students and their families by developing or sharing materials from credible sources.



- Preparing a frequently asked question (FAQ) document about COVID-19 vaccines. Include any planned efforts to vaccinate staff, students, and their families through SVCs.
- Include COVID-19 vaccine fact sheets with other information given to parents and caregivers and added to school and school district websites
- Promote well-child visits for routine health needs.

## Students with Disabilities

### **18. Provide the LEA's plans to provide appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities with respect to its health and safety policies and procedures.**

Hope Community PCS will continue to implement specific considerations when serving students with disabilities, and/or other students with particular needs. Hope Community has strived to design educational programming to conform with CDC, DC Health, and OSSE guidance, and in doing so, consideration been given to student's 504 plans, IEPs and conforming with least restrictive environment (LRE) requirements. The LEA will continue to provide, to the greatest extent possible, the special education and related services identified in students' IEPs and the accommodations and related services identified in students' 504 Plans (OSEP Guidance A-1). Regardless of the severity of a student's disability, Hope Community PCS will make every effort to enable full participation of students with disabilities in building activities and to mitigate factors that could discourage participation, such as cost and accessibility. If a student with a disability is excluded from school, Hope Community PCS will provide services consistent with all applicable disability laws.

## Training, Technical Assistance, and Monitoring

### **19. Please provide the LEA's plan to provide training and technical assistance on its policies and procedures to safely reopen schools in accordance with the DC Health Guidance for Schools and the OSSE Health and Safety Guidance for Schools, including:**

- **a. who will receive training and technical assistance; while on school grounds, on school buses and while participating in any school-related activities, including physical education and sports; and**
- **b. the topics that the training and technical assistance will address; and**
- **c. how and by whom the training and technical assistance will be delivered.**

Hope Community PCS will provide training and technical assistance on the policies adopted to safely reopen its facility in accordance with DC Health Guidance for Schools and OSSE Health and Safety Guidance for Schools; this training and technical assistance will be based on that provided prior to building reopening for scholars in April 2021.

All staff members, including teachers, administrators, front-office staff and facilities team members will receive the training and technical assistance prior to the start of the 2021-2022 school year during school start-up professional development, and then periodically during professional development days scheduled throughout the school year. The training and technical assistance will address the following topics:

- Health screening;
- Staggered building entry and departure;
- Recess and physical education policies;
- Fire drill and lockdown procedures;
- Facilities cleaning and disinfecting during the school day;
- Facilities cleaning and disinfecting at close of the school day;
- Lavatory and hand washing protocols;

- Student illness and Isolation Room protocols;
- COVID positive scholar or staff member exclusion, dismissal, and cleaning/disinfecting protocols.

The training and technical assistant will be provided Hope Community PCS' School Leadership Team and Operations staff.

**20. Provide the LEA's plan to monitor the implementation of the health and safety plans at each campus, including how, when and by whom the implementation will be monitored, and how the LEA will respond if a given campus is not adhering to the plan.**

Hope Community PCS will monitor the implementation of its health and safety plans through bi-weekly COVID Compliance Audits that will serve to assess the overall quality of the implementation of these plans, adherence to OSSE and DC Health guidelines, and end results, in terms of prevention of community spread of COVID with the Hope school community. Under this plan, the following actions will take place:

- Review of all mitigation strategies outlined in the Health and Safety Plan, to occur bi-weekly (every two weeks); conducted by the Operations Director and School Leadership
- Evaluation of rigor of mitigation strategies practice, occurring bi-weekly, conducted by Operations Director and School Leadership
- Assessment of readiness to respond to positive COVID-19 case, including cleaning and disinfecting, proper notification and dismissal procedures, to occur bi-weekly; conducted by School Leadership and Operations Director
- Assess outcomes, in terms of reports of any positive COVID-19 cases in the school building every two weeks; conducted by School Leadership.

If it is determined that the LEA is not adhering or following the proscriptions of the Health and Safety Plan, the COVID Compliance Team will evaluate the areas that are judged to be out of alignment, identify gaps in compliance, and provide additional technical assistance and training, as needed.

**21. Describe the LEA's plans to communicate key health and safety policies and procedures to students, families, staff and visitors.**

Hope Community PCS will undertake a multi-pronged and multi-media approach to communicating key health and safety policies and procedures to scholars, families, staff and visitors. To support clear communication with students, staff, and families, Signs have been posted in highly visible locations (e.g., facility entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a face mask). Additionally, Hope Community PCS will continue the following communication activities to the school community:

- Including messages about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families (such as on school websites, in emails, and on school social media accounts).
- Educating staff, students, and families about COVID-19, physical (social) distancing, when they must stay home, and when they can return to school.
- Educating staff on COVID-19 prevention and response protocols.
- Broadcast of regular announcements on reducing the spread of COVID-19 on PA systems and/or daily bulletins.

To ensure a clear and efficient process for communication, Hope Community PCS has identified the Assistant Principal position as the COVID-19 point of contact (POC). This person will act as the POC for families and staff

to notify if a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19; ensure that the LEA/school has contact information for all contract staff, in the event one is confirmed to have or is exposed to COVID-19; and will be responsible for ensuring the appropriate steps are followed in the event of a confirmed case.