

## SY 2021-22 LEA Health and Safety Plans

**LEA Name: Meridian PCS**

**LEA Contact: Matthew McCrea**

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

**Date Generated: 08/10/2021**

### **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 full 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.**

The school has implemented a plan which requires all staff to wear double face coverings as well as requires all students to wear face coverings. Anyone arriving to the building without a mask will be provided a mask prior to entering the building to ensure we are complying with our mask policy. If at any point during the day a mask is soiled or destroyed we will provide the individual with an additional mask to remain in compliance with our policy. We also have mask signs on how to properly wear a mask over your nose throughout the building and send out frequent reminders to staff about this expectation.

Masks are required inside of our school buildings and on school grounds for all staff, students, and visitors unless masks cannot be worn during an activity (e.g., lunch, rigorous outdoor exercise).

### 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.

For students who are unable to wear a mask for the entire school day, accommodations are made based on the medical request. We ensure that these students are socially distance and placed behind a desk barrier to eliminate any possible transmission while in the room with others. For visitors not able or willing to wear a mask, we make accommodations to serve them via phone or via a video conferencing method to ensure we remain safe. Staff are required to wear face coverings at all times unless they are in a space alone. If for any reason a staff member is unable to wear a face covering while in the presence of others, they must seek a reasonable accommodation from Human Resources based on doctor recommendations.

### 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.

The LEA follows the guidance from DOH and OSSE as it relates to 3 feet distance within classrooms and 6 feet distance when eating a meal.

For arrival the LEA screens students upon entering the building by using 4 entry points. Students then proceed to class using the floor markings indicating at least 6 feet distance down hallways and stairs.

Students and Staff inside of classrooms and common areas are distanced from each other by at least 3 feet during instruction time. Both students and staff must continue to keep their face coverings on at all times.

Extra curricular activities follow the same guidelines of keeping their mask on and maintaining at least 3 feet apart. If students/staff are not able to maintain at least 3 feet apart then the interaction must be brief to ensure the safety of all individuals is maintained.

**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.**

The LEA does not plan on mixing any cohort of students throughout the school day except for intervention groups. Schedules allow for students to remain in one classroom and will allow teachers to rotate rooms to ensure students are not mixed, and when mixing is necessary, it is predictable and according to a normally established schedule. If for any reason a student must interact with another cohort, the LEA will track who the students interacted with in case additional contact tracing is needed in the future.

**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.**

Meridian has proper handwashing signage located above each handwashing station inside of classrooms and/or bathrooms. Students and Staff are frequently reminded throughout the day to wash their hands with soap and warm water. Each classroom has scheduled bathroom breaks as well that will allow for students to wash their hands throughout the day.

Meridian will also place signs throughout our buildings to remind students and staff of proper ways to cover coughs and sneezes.

**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 LEA's facilities team implements a schedule in which at the top of each hour restrooms and classrooms with sinks are checked to ensure they have adequate supplies of soap, paper towels and etc. At each entry point of the building the school has installed hand sanitizer centers and also at every common area entry point. These are also checked at the top of each hour to ensure we are well stocked with supplies in each area.

**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.**

The LEA purchased face masks for all staff and students to wear throughout the day. Masks can be requested from our front desk at either school if an individual needs additional masks throughout the day. The school

also has an ample supply of gloves, gowns, and face shields available for staff that require this as a part of their daily job duties or for staff that request these items to feel safe while working with students.

### **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).**

The LEA facilities team completes daily cleaning throughout the day based on a cleaning schedule for each building. This schedule is developed to ensure that all high-touch surfaces are cleaned every 30 minutes. Items housed on individual desk are cleaned frequently by the individual assigned to that desk area by using disinfectant sprays and/or wipes which is provided to staff weekly or on an as needed basis.

Classrooms and common areas are checked and cleaned during student recess throughout the day and also at the end of each day our building goes through a deep disinfection process by our night facilities crew. Any issues arising during the day that requires immediate attention, our day facilities team will complete a disinfecting process to ensure the room and/or area remains safe for students, staff and visitors.

- 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.**

Classrooms and common areas are checked and cleaned during student recess throughout the day and also at the end of each day our building goes through a deep disinfection process by our night facilities crew. Any issues arising during the day that require immediate attention, our day facilities team will complete a disinfecting process to ensure the room and/or area remains safe for students, staff and visitors.

Given our classrooms and buildings go through a deep disinfection process each day, once we are notified of the possible case our team returns to the room to provide another disinfection of the area to ensure we have properly cleaned the area.

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

The LEA has cleaning chemicals dispensers installed inside of both buildings that receive weekly checks by our vendor. The LEA also purchases monthly disinfectant supplies to restock each classroom and/or building. We also implement a back-up 45 day supply of cleaning supplies at all times for both campuses.

**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.**

The LEA facilities team performs weekly checks of our ventilation systems and water systems to ensure they are properly maintained. We also have agreements with our contracted HVAC company and Water Monitoring companies for a month's routine maintenance and visit that provides reports on any issues the school may have as well as providing recommendations on next steps to correct the issue.

**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.**

Please refer to Question 2 in our Health and Safety Plan and Question 1 in our Continuous Education Plan for a response to this item.

**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.**

Individuals who are out of work due to sickness related to or not related to will submit all required documentation to our Human Resources manager to ensure we follow all steps necessary.

Ensuring that all staff and students learn as often on-site as possible, we will not exclude students and staff with COVID-like symptoms if they have provided written or verbal guidance from a medical professional that such symptoms are chronic and unrelated to COVID. To this end, our COVID-19 POC may review all of our daily screening questions to ensure that students or staff with preexisting symptoms have not been exposed.

In some cases, the COVID-19 POC may seek the counsel of the school nurse. The COVID-19 POC will contact DC Health on the same day that we are notified of a positive COVID-19 case.

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

The LEA's Human Resources Manager and/or Director of Operations completes all information required on

the contract tracing form such as staff/student information. This information is submitted back to DC Health in order for them to complete their tracing. Upon completion of the tracing DC Health will send steps back to the school as it relates to the isolation period for individuals deemed as exposed.

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

The LEA sends out communications to families and staff alerting them of any positive case within the school community. Emails do not provide any personal information but outlines the steps in which the school has taken to ensure our school community remains safe.

### **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).**

Currently, the LEA participates in the DC DOH testing of symptomatic and asymptomatic testing handled by our CSS nursing staff. Students are selected on the 10-20% basis of enrollment and tested weekly for results. The school also has a partnership with a testing vendor to have on-site testing available to families and staff located at our Elementary School campus.

Since our testing partnership is done in concert with DC Health and OSSE, results are reported automatically to DC Health at the same time the school receives the results.

**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.**

The LEA currently has held information sessions in which it involved physicians to talk to the staff about the vaccine. We encourage staff frequently to take advantage of the local vaccine clinics in the area as well as to provide proof of the vaccine for tracking purposes.

### **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.**

LEAs will ensure that appropriate accommodations are offered to SWDs with respect to its health and safety policies and procedures by taking the following steps: Meridian will send a letter to all families of students with disabilities to remind them about the safety guidelines (i.e. wearing masks) for returning to school. Families will be given the contact information of several members of the Student Support Team so that they can contact the school if their child needs additional adjustments or reasonable accommodations. The letter will be sent via mail and email. In addition to parent requests, teachers will communicate directly with the Student Support Department to inform the department of any school-initiated accommodation requests. In order to determine the appropriateness of accommodations, Meridian will consult its official health policy and procedures, individual student IEPs, parent and teacher input, and behavior plans and work with families to determine appropriate accommodations.

## **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.**

The LEA will hold townhall meetings throughout the summer and upcoming school year to ensure both families and staff are continued to be trained on safety procedures. Topics will include social distancing, hand washing, pre-screening questions, etc. to ensure we continue to maintain a safe learning environment. Training will be held by school leaders as well as community leaders to ensure we are receiving the most updated information and implementing best practices.

**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.**

The LEA's plan will be monitored by the Director of Operations and the Head of School. Daily walk-throughs of buildings will be conducted by the Facilities Manager and Campus leadership to report any concerns or issues they may have to both the Director of Operations and Head of School. Weekly walk-throughs will be conducted by both the Director of Operations and Head of School to ensure concerns are being addressed and the school remains in compliance with the health and safety guidelines. Campuses that continue to have on-going issues will receive additional support from the Director of Operations to ensure issues are addressed and a plan is implemented to eliminate on-going issues.

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

The LEA plans to continue to hold town hall meetings to discuss key health and safety policies and procedures to families throughout the school year. We also plan to send out weekly newsletters as well as incorporate this information into our family and staff handbooks.

Whenever the school community is impacted by a COVID-19 case, a school wide community email and alert is sent to families and staff alerting them of what steps the school has taken to ensure we are maintaining a safe environment.

Signage is visible on the exterior front doors of each of our campuses to inform visitors of our key health and safety policies prior to them entering the building.