



COVID 19

Reopening Guidelines

and

Polices

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The 2020/2021 school year will be especially different. We realize that a return to school will bring a myriad of feelings and a change in routine after so many months away from the structure and predictability the SLC program offers.

Our staff will model a sense of calmness and self-assurance to students as they reengage with their therapeutic teams. We will help to stabilize students by spending time, modeling expectations, and implementing support systems. Staff will be available to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic with students and the importance of the changes in school policies.

The health and safety of students, staff, administrators and teachers is the top priority relative to the physical reopening of schools. It is reasonable to expect that the protocols recommended by the State and implemented at the local level may change as local conditions related to COVID-19 changes. We assure you we will be regularly monitoring this information and in fact, we have identified COVID 19 Coordinators to oversee this.

There are **three models** that we have considered:

In-Person Instruction Considerations

- In-person instruction means students physically return to the in-person classroom/school environment.

Hybrid Instructional Considerations

- Hybrid instruction includes scenarios in which some students engage in-person and other, engage remote instruction, as well as scenarios in which all students alternate between in-person and remote instruction.
- Having students alternate between in-person and remote instruction can help to decrease class sizes, limit exposure to students, decrease burden on transportation systems, increase physical distancing in classrooms, and help to naturally cohort students into non-overlapping groups.

Remote Instructional Considerations

- Remote instruction means students engage full-time from their home or other safe environment.

After much consideration and guidance from the State, SLC has opted to return to school has on a hybrid model.

- Students will be in person two to three days a week and will be remote on the opposite days.
- Schedules will be distributed based on the program your child is in.
- Based upon safety, we will continue to support families in their choice to keep your child home on remote instruction. If remote instruction is your choice, an IEP team meeting will need to be scheduled.

We will be evaluating the instructional model on a bi-weekly basis to determine the appropriateness of increasing or decreasing in person instruction based upon the health and safety of our students and staff.

We will have plans in place to effectively operate using an in-person, hybrid and remote instructional models, depending on the circumstances in a particular community at any given time. This is likely to be dynamic and may be ever changing based on what is happening at SLC and in New Hampshire at any given time.

COVID 19 Coordinators: Casey Hopkins/Christy Horne/Kathi Harris/Patrice Chandler/Sara Brown

Role Description: The COVID-19 Coordinators are responsible for monitoring guidance, coordinating facility level responses, trouble shooting problems and serving as a liaison with public health and other State and Local Partners.

Community Communication Plan: In the event of an emergency, SLC will utilize **its one call system** (text messages and emails) to alert students, families and staff. Communication about any person suspected to have COVID-19 while at the school will be coordinated with NH DHHS, Division of Public Health Services as details about the specific situation and context will impact public health recommendations and further actions that the school should take to protect students and staff.

Screening Procedures:

- All staff and student absenteeism will be monitored to identify illness patterns
- All staff, students and visitors will be screened daily to rule out any symptoms of COVID-19 or risk factors prior to entering the educational facility.
- **For staff and visitors:** screening will occur on the school grounds just prior to or upon entry
- **For students:** parents should screen their child for symptoms prior to putting them on the bus and students will be screened again upon arrival to school.
- A checklist of symptoms and risk factor screening questions will be provided to parents/guardians in order for them to clearly identify what symptoms and risk factors warrant their student to stay home. See symptoms and risk factors below:
 - COVID-19 is a respiratory illness with [symptoms](#) similar to the flu. Symptoms are typically mild to moderate, but there have been cases of severe illness and death due to the virus. The following symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Congestion or runny nose | Cough | Fever or chills |
| Headache | Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | Muscle pain |
| Sore throat | New loss of taste or smell | Fatigue |
| Nausea or vomiting | Diarrhea | |

Risk Factor Screening Questions:

1. Have you had any symptoms of COVID-19 (see above)?
2. Have you had any contact with someone who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 in the prior 14 days?
3. Have you traveled in the prior 14 days outside of New England (NH, MA, ME, VT, CT, RI)?
4. Have you traveled on a train, bus or plane in the last 14 days?

In the event that any individual responds yes to the above questions or risk factors and are **Symptomatic:**

1. They will not be allowed in the school
2. They will be instructed to contact their healthcare provider
3. They will be instructed to self isolate for 14 days from their last exposure or return from travel.
4. They will not be allowed to return until three days have passed since their last fever and have been symptom free for 10 days.

In the event that any individual responds yes to the above questions or risk factors and are **Asymptomatic:**

1. They will be encouraged to self quarantine for 14 days since their last exposure or return from travel.
- Students will also be screened a second time upon arrival at school and prior to entering their classroom/program.

Evidence of symptoms at school or should an individual become ill/symptomatic at school:

- Staff will be educated about the symptoms of COVID-19, and will monitor students for any signs/symptoms of illness. Staff will immediately contact a Co-Director and the nurse. The student will be moved to the nurse's office for further screening.
- Any person that develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at the education facility **will be masked** if they are over two years of age, **removed from close contact** with others and **be immediately sent home** by private transportation.
- The school nurse will record the symptomatic person's temperature and perform a brief assessment of the person's complaints or symptoms (this becomes important for the purposes of a public health investigation if the person is confirmed to have COVID-19). Any brief assessment can be performed from at least six feet away with the nurse wearing a surgical face mask. If the school nurse needs to be in close contact with the individual (within six feet), they will have personal protective equipment (PPE) on hand.
- If the individual requires immediate medical care, we will 911 for an ambulance and inform emergency medical services about the individual's symptoms.

- We will also call NH DPHS at 603-271-4496 for additional guidance. Communication about any person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 while at the school will be coordinated with NH DHHS, Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) because details about the specific situation and context will impact public health recommendations and further actions that the school should take to protect students and staff from further spread of COVID-19. NH DPHS will also assist in drafting communications about specific situations.

Reporting and Investigating COVID-19 in the Educational Facility

- Any person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should be reported immediately to public health by calling 603-271-4496 (after-hours call 603-271-5300 and ask for the public health nurse on call).
- Public health will conduct a detailed investigation to identify people who may have been in “close contact” with a student or staff member diagnosed with COVID-19 during their infectious period. As part of the public health investigation, investigators seek to identify close contacts starting two days before the person became symptomatic or tested positive for COVID-19 (if asymptomatic)
- ‘Close contact” for the purposes of the public health investigation in New Hampshire is defined as a person being within six feet of the individual diagnosed with COVID-19 during their infectious period for 10 minutes or longer. Depending on individual circumstances, and on a case-by-case basis, public health may identify other individuals considered at risk for exposure.
- Any person who is identified as a close contact or at risk for exposure to COVID-19 based on the public health investigation will be required to quarantine for 14 days from their last day of exposure. Depending on the specific circumstances, this may involve quarantine of only specific individuals (e.g., those sitting next to a person with COVID-19 in a classroom), but could include whole classes (depending on degree or likelihood of close contact, classroom size, age of students, etc.); this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by public health.
- NH public health will work with schools to collect the necessary information (through the schools point-of-contact), interview the person diagnosed with COVID- 19, and potentially other staff involved to gather information to make an informed decision about risk and need for people to quarantine.
- Public health will also assist with school and student/family communication

Screening process upon arrival to school:

- All students should be screened at home before being allowed to travel to school (temperature taken and review of COVID 19 questions)
- Staff will be outside to supervise and to assist with maintaining social distancing.
- Students will exit the bus, one at a time, with masks on and will be screened at the entranceway before entering the building. Buses will wait until the student is screened and has been cleared before leaving the school.
- Once cleared, students will proceed to their classroom. Masks are required until they are in the classroom and seated at their desk

Social Distancing/ Cohorting (Grouping) Students:

- All Desks will be set up 6 ft apart.
- Classrooms will be arranged to minimize close contact (i.e., maximize physical distance) between students. Chairs/desks will be arranged to avoid students sitting in groups.
- Anytime a student is away from their desk, they need to have a mask on (i.e. sharpen pencil, go to bathroom, go outside)
- All desks will face the same direction
- Students will have assigned seating in all classrooms so they are consistently sitting next to the same person. This will aide in identification of students in close contact and potentially lessen the number of students needing to undergo quarantine.
- Classroom activities should be conducted to minimize close contact and avoid groups whenever possible. Any small group activities should be conducted so that students are spaced at least six feet apart.
- Classrooms should be grouped/cohorted together to the extent possible so that students and teachers in one classroom/group avoid interaction (i.e., crossover) with another classroom/group. Depending on the program, we may consider having the teacher move between classrooms instead of students.
- When students need to move between classes, staff will monitor the hallways to encourage students to maintain physical distancing. A hallway movement process will be established. Markings will be visible to allow streamlined flow and minimize congregation in hallways.
- Students will be assigned **individual** lockers. No sharing of lockers will be permitted.
- When possible we will utilize larger school areas for instructional activities (Ex. gyms, outdoor spaces) to maximize physical distancing. Larger areas may also serve as back-up educational spaces in the event a classroom needs to temporarily relocate.
- Staff will maintain at least six feet of physical distancing from other staff in their work environment. In-person group meetings will be limited. Use of web-based conferences/meetings will occur whenever possible.
- Staff will attempt to stay at least six feet from students during educational/instruction time in classrooms as much as possible.
- Non-essential visitors and volunteers will be minimized and will follow the SLC established policies

Physical Management Protocols:

- As always, we will do our best to offer strategies, time, space and alternative areas to avoid any physical interactions with students. However, in the event that safety for staff or student becomes an issue, we will intervene per TCIS techniques. For the safety of all involved, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) will be utilized. For staff, this could include masks, face shields, gowns and/or gloves.
- Following the incident, the team will meet to discuss the safety of continuing in-person instruction. An IEP team meeting may need to be scheduled.
- As always, a Critical Incident will be completed.

Preparing the Physical School Environment

- We have reviewed the CDC's Considerations for Schools, the K–12 Schools Readiness and Planning Tool , American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry and CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfection. These were all used in the development of the SLC's COVID 19 Return to School Plan.
- All cleaning materials will be kept secure and out of reach of students.
- A routine schedule for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched has been developed.

Students

- Students will wear face coverings throughout the day.
- Students will be given mask breaks and will be allowed to have their mask off at their desks but when up and moving around the classroom or hallways, are required to wear a mask.
- Mask breaks will occur throughout the day when students can be six feet apart and ideally outside.
- Face coverings/masks should be provided by the student/family, but the school will have disposable face masks available if students arrive without a cloth face covering.
- The effectiveness of masks and other face coverings is impacted by proper handling and use, and young children are more likely to play with the masks, adjust them or remove them without washing their hands before or after touching the masks and their face, which can potentially put themselves and other students at risk. Staff would also need to increasingly be in close contact with students to provide assistance with face coverings. Older students are likely able to effectively wear cloth face coverings for more extended periods of time. Therefore, use of cloth face coverings likely will differ by age group and grade. However, cloth face coverings should be able to be worn by most students for some periods of time.
- Because of increased risk for coming into close contact with other students in an uncontrolled fashion, SLC requires that cloth face coverings be used when a student is:
 - Leaving the school building
 - Waiting to enter, or entering, the school building
 - Arriving to, or leaving, a classroom
 - Boarding, exiting, or seated on a school bus
 - Traveling in hallways, and transiting between classes or to the restroom
 - Engaged in classroom or group activities where students may come closer than 3 feet of other students or staff

Educators, Staff, and Visitors

- Educators and other staff provide students effective modeling exemplars. As with students, masks for SLC employees will be required.
- Given that visitors may not be members of the local community, SLC will limit/minimize non-essential visitors, and visitors will be required to wear cloth face coverings upon entry to educational facility grounds.

- All employees working with students are required to wear cloth face coverings over their nose and mouth when at the educational facility and six feet of physical distancing may be difficult to maintain (including in the classroom) and/or when caring for potentially vulnerable students with underlying health conditions and disabilities. This includes when indoors in education areas, but also when outdoors where other adults or students are around, and in shared staff areas (e.g., offices).
- All adults dropping students off shall wear a cloth face covering over their nose and mouth when within the educational facility or public spaces where other individuals are present.
- Anyone wearing face coverings should avoid touching their eyes, nose, mouth, or face, or adjust their face covering without first sanitizing hands. After touching face or adjusting face covering, hands will be sanitized.
- The provision of certain services in a school setting, including school nurses or other employees assessing students for symptoms of COVID-19 and services to students with individualized education programs, may require more intense or prolonged student- teacher contact. We will provide more advanced PPE to implement such services.

Proper Hygiene Protocols

- The NH DPHS has developed extensive guidance relative to personal hygiene practices. Such practices will be taught, modeled, and encouraged through instruction, posters and other communications, including communications that help reinforce such practices at home and establish expectations for families and students returning to school.
- Advise students, educators and staff to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and clean hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer (if soap and water are not readily available). Alternatively, cough or sneeze into elbows.
- Staff and students should practice frequent hand hygiene:
 - Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
 - When soap and water are not readily available, alcohol- based hand sanitizer should be used under the direct supervision of staff.
 - Teachers and staff will have an alcohol-based hand sanitizer available in all classrooms/offices. When not in use, hand sanitizer should be kept out of reach.
 - Staff will Supervise and help students needing assistance to ensure they are washing/sanitizing hands correctly, and to prevent swallowing of alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - Hand hygiene will be practiced when arriving at the facility, before and after meals or snacks, before and during meal preparation or service as necessary to prevent cross contamination, after outside time, before and after going to the bathroom, after handling any bodily fluid, before and after medication administration, after cleaning up and handling any garbage, before and after touching a person's face covering or face, and prior to leaving for home.

School Cleaning and Disinfection Practices

Based on CDC guidelines cleaning and disinfection procedures will include the following:

- Cleaning reduces the number of germs, dirt and impurities on a surface. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces.
- An EPA-approved disinfectant effective against the novel coronavirus will be used.
- Each classroom will have anti-bacterial sanitizer dispensers along with appropriate cleaning supplies.
- Alcohol wipes will be used to clean keyboards and electronics.
- A schedule has been developed for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, including toys, equipment, teaching materials, and other surfaces not ordinarily cleaned (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, desks, cubbies, etc.). Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily. If students are moving between classrooms, cleaning and disinfecting classrooms will happen after every transition.
- Materials will not be shared. Each student will be provided a pencil/pen box with required materials.
- We will minimize the potential for the spread of germs in the classroom space by temporarily removing items that are not easily cleaned and not necessary for educational purposes. Use of sensory items may be limited to those that can be easily cleaned and disinfected at the end of the day or more often as needed.
- Staff cleaning will follow the disinfectant manufacturer's instructions:
 - Proper concentration of disinfectant will be used
 - The disinfectant will be used for the required wet contact time and in well ventilated areas
 - Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for each chemical will be used.
 - Disinfectants, sanitizers, and other cleaning supplies are the responsibility of SLC to provide
- Additional Cleaning Protocols in the Event of Confirmed COVID-19
 - We will clean and restore the learning environment so that in-person learning can continue.
 - We are following CDC guidance on how to disinfect our building if someone is sick.
 - Areas where a sick child has been isolated will be cleaned and disinfected after the sick person has gone home.
- If COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member:
 - Areas used by the person who is sick will be closed off. The children remaining in the classroom will be moved to another environment until cleaning protocols can be implemented.
 - Outside doors and windows will be opened to increase air circulation
 - We will clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as classrooms, offices, bathrooms, and common areas.
 - If more than seven days have passed since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.

School Building Use for Non-School Functions

- SLC will limit the use of its facilities for non-school related functions. Approval will be required from Co-Directors and SAU 17 Superintendent.
- Appropriate disinfectant protocols will need to be followed should use be permitted.

Ventilation Systems

- SLC has ensured that HVAC systems are working properly and are configured to increase the circulation of exterior air as much as possible.
- Opening windows and moving instructional opportunities outdoors when the weather is conducive will be utilized.

The Use of Common Areas

- Large group gatherings and congregating continues to be discouraged during the COVID- 19 pandemic. SLC will not be conducting groups larger than **6 indoors and 10 outdoors.**
- Groups may be less than this depending on activity, staffing and dynamics of population.
- Social distancing and wearing of masks will be required.
- When feasible, student and staff cohorts should remain as static as possible by having the same group of children stay with the same staff.
- If possible, consider opportunities to rotate teachers, instead of students, to minimize hallway traffic.
- SLC will provide physical guides, such as tape on floors and signs on walls, to promote social distancing and everyday protective measures to stop the spread of germs.

Review Transportation Policies and Protocols

- Student transportation may be one of the most logistically challenging recommendations to implement. Please refer to your student's bus provider for specific guidelines. Please see attached SLC Transportation guidelines which may differ from other bus companies.

Plan for School Meals:

- Students will bring their own breakfast, lunch and snacks.
- There will be NO sharing of food in any circumstances.
- Students will be eating at their desks in the classroom or outdoor eating will be an option when the weather is conducive.
- Staff will be responsible for operating the microwave during meal times.