



July 26, 2021

Dear PCS Families,

What follows is the Health and Safety Plan that Provident Charter School will be submitting to the PA Department of Education this week. Discussions regarding this plan began at the PCS June Board of Directors meeting. In order to complete the PDE required template, the following was considered:

- *unique circumstances of our school
(336 total enrolled; class sizes of 12-15 students, successful mitigation strategies, high percentage of staff vaccinated)
- *guidance from PA Department of Education and Center for Disease Control
- *input from end of year parent surveys
- *input from end of year staff surveys,
- *additional input from our 20-21 extended remote families
- *input from PCS Board member and PCS administrators
- *input from PCS School Nurse and Pandemic Team

This Health and Safety Plan will go into effect Wednesday, July 28, 2021. Among other changes, PCS will now be mask optional for staff and students. PDE does require that all plans are updated every 6 months, however we will continue to monitor the positivity rate in Allegheny County, among other things, and we will follow any mandates that are issued.

Please feel free to email me at mariapaluselli@providentcharterschool.org with questions or concerns.

Enjoy the rest of your summer,
Maria Paluselli
CEO



ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan Guidance & Template

Section 2001(i)(1) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires each local education agency (LEA) that receives funding under the ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*, hereinafter referred to as a *Health and Safety Plan*.

Based on ARP requirements, 90 percent of ARP ESSER funds will be distributed to school districts and charter schools based on their relative share of Title I-A funding in FY 2020-2021. **Given Federally required timelines, LEAs eligible to apply for and receive this portion of the ARP ESSER funding must submit a Health and Safety Plan that meets ARP Act requirements to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) by Friday, July 30, 2021, regardless of when the LEA submits its ARP ESSER application.**

Each LEA must create a Health and Safety Plan that addresses how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff, and which will serve as local guidelines for all instructional and non-instructional school activities during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. The Health and Safety Plan should be tailored to the unique needs of each LEA and its schools and must take into account public comment related to the development of, and subsequent revisions to, the Health and Safety Plan.

The ARP Act and U.S. Department of Education rules require Health and Safety plans include the following components:

1. How the LEA will, to the greatest extent practicable, implement prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning;

2. How the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services;
3. How the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC:
 - a. Universal and correct wearing of [masks](#);
 - b. Modifying facilities to allow for [physical distancing](#) (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);
 - c. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#);
 - d. [Cleaning](#) and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving [ventilation](#);
 - e. [Contact tracing](#) in combination with [isolation](#) and [quarantine](#), in collaboration with State and local health departments;
 - f. [Diagnostic](#) and screening testing;
 - g. Efforts to provide COVID-19 [vaccinations to school communities](#);
 - h. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and
 - i. Coordination with state and local health officials.

The LEA's Health and Safety Plan must be approved by its governing body and posted on the LEA's publicly available website by July 30, 2021.* The ARP Act requires LEAs to post their Health and Safety Plans online in a language that parents/caregivers can understand, or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to an individual with limited English proficiency, be orally translated. The plan also must be provided in an alternative format accessible, upon request, by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Each LEA will upload in the eGrants system its updated Health and Safety Plan and webpage URL where the plan is located on the LEA's publicly available website.

The ARP Act requires LEAs to review their Health and Safety Plans at least every six months during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. LEAs also must review and update their plans whenever there are significant changes to the CDC recommendations for K-12 schools. Like the development of the plan, all revisions must be informed by community input and reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to posting on the LEA's publicly available website.

LEAs may use the template to revise their current Health and Safety Plans to meet ARP requirements and ensure all stakeholders are fully informed of the LEA's plan to safely resume instructional and non-instructional school activities, including in-person learning, for the current school year. An LEA may use a different plan template or format provided it includes all the elements required by the ARP Act, as listed above.

* The July 30 deadline applies only to school districts and charter schools that received federal Title I-A funds in FY 2020-2021 and intend to apply for and receive ARP ESSER funding.

Additional Resources

LEAs are advised to review the following resources when developing their Health and Safety Plans:

- [CDC K-12 School Operational Strategy](#)
- [PDE Resources for School Communities During COVID-19](#)
- [PDE Roadmap for Education Leaders](#)
- [PDE Accelerated Learning Through an Integrated System of Support](#)
- [PA Department of Health - COVID-19 in Pennsylvania](#)

Health and Safety Plan Summary: Provident Charter School

Initial Effective Date: July 28, 2021

Date of Last Review: July 28, 2021

Date of Last Revision: (July 26, 2021) How will the LEA, to the greatest extent practicable, support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning?

Provident Charter School will continue to rely upon a pandemic team with defined roles and responsibilities to support prevention and mitigation policies during the reopening of school for the 2021-2022 school year. This pandemic team will be responsible for facilitating the local planning process, monitoring implementation of the local Health and Safety Plan, and continued monitoring of local health data to assess implications for school operations and potential adjustments to the Health and Safety Plan. As per the ARP Act, this team will review and revise the plan every six months.

Prevention and Mitigation Procedures

Staff and students will continue to enter the building daily through thermal scanners to identify any individual who might be symptomatic with fever. The sanitizing/cleaning procedures, along with the contact tracing/quarantine procedures used in the 20-21 school year will continue, however the following mitigation strategies that were implemented during the 20-21 school year have been revised:

- *The daily COVID screener for staff will no longer be required.
- *Masks will be optional for all students and staff.
- *Restrictions to any visitors will be lifted; 24 hour notice will no longer be required
- *Visitors will have temperature checked and complete a COVID Screener upon entry to the building.
- *Students may bring backpacks, lunch boxes and personal items back to school.
- *Students will eat lunch in the cafeteria and transition throughout the building.
- *There will no longer be an extended remote learning option for students. The only time remote instruction will occur is during a required quarantine.

- 1. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students'**

academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services?

Provident Charter School will return to proximate learning for all students and staff for the 2021-2022 school year. Extended Remote Learning will not be an option.

Any student or staff member who has been vaccinated 2 weeks or longer prior to any exposure, does not need to quarantine.

Continuity of Learning During a Quarantine

There are two types of quarantine that may occur:

1. A student tests positive and that student was in the building. If the student is an elementary student (grades 2-5) the entire class will need to quarantine and those classroom teachers will provide remote instruction that will follow their daily proximate learning schedule. This schedule will include Wilson Language instruction.* Contact tracing will occur to identify other students in the building that may have been exposed. Teachers who have been vaccinated should plan to provide this quarantine remote instruction from PCS. If the student is a middle school student (grades 6-8), contact tracing will occur to identify the students and staff who were exposed, and those individuals who have not been vaccinated will need to quarantine.
2. A student has been exposed somewhere outside of the school. That individual student (and not the entire class) will quarantine and that student will work asynchronously with materials provided by the classroom teacher, and/or work synchronously with a building substitute designated to provide remote instruction/check-ins. Any missed assignments, quizzes/tests for individual quarantines will be excused.

For continuity of learning to be successful, all students, **except students in 2nd grade**, will need to transport their devices to and from school daily. 2nd grade students will be given an additional device to keep at home should the need to quarantine arises. In addition, at the start of the school year, all teachers will prepare maintenance and review work for students to complete asynchronously. These materials will be sent home at the start of the school year (by Friday, September 3, 2021) and remain at home. If and when the need arises to use them, teachers will assign specific work for

students to complete.

**Some students may receive Wilson instruction from other teachers not in the quarantining grade level, and these circumstances will need to be addressed on an individual basis as they arise.*

Students who may need to quarantine can have breakfast and lunches available for pickup or delivery. To support social, emotional and mental health, school counselors, student support specialists, as well as school based therapists can be available to meet with students both in person, or virtually. PCS is unique in that there are a number of administrators, coordinators, supervisors, and mentor teachers who can provide regular and consistent check-ins with all staff. If any staff member has a significant need, they can be connected with the employee assistance program, a service provided through our benefits.

2. Use the table below to explain how the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
a. Universal and correct wearing of masks;	<p>Pennsylvania has lifted the mask mandate as of June 28, 2021. Since masks are recommended, but not required, masks will now be optional for all students and staff at PCS. Masks will also be optional for visitors to the school. Please note that buses are considered public transportation and masks are still required to be worn on buses.</p> <p>Requirement for Face Masks on Public Transportation Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs</p> <p>Provident will continue to keep a supply of student and adult masks for anyone who wants one when they are in the building.</p>

<p>b. Modifying facilities to allow for <u>physical distancing</u> (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</p>	<p>PCS is unique in that most classrooms have 1-2 adults and no more than 12-15 students in each room.</p> <p>Staff and students will be encouraged to maintain 3 feet social distance between each other.</p> <p>Staff and students who wish to maintain a distance will be permitted to do so.</p> <p>Students will return to natural transitions within the building: they will move classrooms when their schedule requires, they will transition to special area classes and the cafeteria, and they will not need to wait until a rest room is empty before entering.</p> <p>Staff trainings will resume in person, as opposed to virtual, since the restrictions on large gatherings have been lifted. Training rooms may have an area in which individuals can sit in a distanced manner for any staff member.</p> <p>Visitors will be permitted in the building, masks optional, without requiring 24 hour advance notice.</p>
<p>c. <u>Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;</u></p>	<p>At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, all staff (e.g., custodians, secretaries, teachers, etc.) will attend an information session that describes the protocol for handwashing, covering coughs/sneezes, and face coverings (https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/fact-sheets.html)</p> <p>Staff will update students on proper hand washing and coughing/sneezing etiquette during the first few days of school. Signs that provide visual reminders for this behavior will remain posted.</p>

	<p>When educating families and staff, Provident will include information from public health organizations like the CDC or DOH on hygiene and disinfection strategies for transmission prevention at home.</p>
<p>d. <u>Cleaning</u> and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving <u>ventilation</u>;</p>	<p>PCS will follow the same cleaning schedule as during the 20-21 school year.</p> <p>Facilities Cleaning Schedule: Common area touch points - 3x per day(morning, afternoon and evening) , Restrooms - 3x per day (morning, afternoon and evening), Classrooms and offices - 1x per day (Evening) For the 21-22 school year, PCS has contracted with a new evening cleaning service with the expectation of better quality cleaning services.</p> <p>Provident classrooms have the proper ventilation including windows. In addition, rooms have fans to circulate the air. Air purifiers will remain in each room throughout the building, and their filters will be replaced prior to the start of the 21-22 school year.</p> <p>For the 21-22 school year, additional fans and air conditioners are being purchased to further improve ventilation in classrooms.</p> <p>Students will have access to refillable water containers, and water bottles. The communal drinking fountains will remain closed.</p>

- e. [Contact tracing](#) in combination with [isolation](#) and [quarantine](#), in collaboration with the State and local health departments;

All visitors will complete the COVID-19 questionnaire form to screen for symptoms & exposure and have their temperature taken prior to entering the building ([Google Form – COVID-19 Questionnaire](#)). Students and staff will have temperature screened daily upon arrival. If temperature is above 100.4 F they will be immediately isolated, masked (if not already wearing a mask), and immediate dismissal will be arranged. Guidance letters will be provided to isolated staff/ student's family ([here](#)) that direct them to contact their healthcare provider and to communicate with the school nurse prior to returning to the building. We will follow CDC guidance when managing the dismissal and return of students/ staff with COVID-19 related symptoms. Procedures are outlined below for a positive COVID-19 case at school and exposure outside of school.

If a person tests positive for COVID-19 (and has been in Provident's building):

1. Provident will immediately isolate the person for dismissal (if present in the building). If currently absent and calling to notify of positive results, the following steps will be the same.

Guidance letter will be given ([I have COVID-19 symptoms, now what do I do?](#)) outlining CDC requirements.

The [CDC: If you are sick](#) with COVID-19 or think you might have COVID-19 instructions include (but are not limited to):

Stay home except to get medical care.

Separate yourself from others as much as possible.

Monitor symptoms and follow healthcare provider instructions.

Seek emergency medical attention as needed (outlined in letter).

The CDC allows affected persons to discontinue isolation when **ALL** of the following are met:

24 hours with no fever **and**

[Symptoms](#) improved **and**

10 days since symptoms first appeared

1. Upon COVID-19 exposure, the CEO will notify staff and families that an individual who tested positive was in the building. If a class Contact tracing will be completed by the School Nurse for all those in close contact with the affected person. CDC exposure guidelines will be used as outlined here: [Considerations for Case Investigation and Contact Tracing in K-12 Schools and Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\)](#)

Less than 6 feet away for greater than 15 minutes.

This exposure includes the two days prior to symptom onset and/or two days prior to the specimen collection in persons without symptoms, until they meet criteria for discontinuing home isolation.

2. Exposed persons will be notified by the school nurse verbally and in writing that they have been exposed to COVID-19 and need to follow CDC guidance ([Exposure recommendations](#)).

Stay home until 10 days after last exposure and maintain social distance (at least 3 feet) from others at all times

Self-monitor for symptoms

Check temperature twice a day

Watch for fever*, cough, or shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19

Avoid contact with people at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19

Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop

If a person associated with Provident (staff/student) is in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 (outside of Provident's building):

1. If an individual associated with Provident has exposure to someone who tested positive for COVID-19, the Provident staff/family member will notify the school nurse.

Guidance letter will be given ([I have been exposed to COVID-19, now what do I do?](#)) outlining CDC requirements.

	<p>The person(s) exposed will need to follow CDC guidance (Exposure recommendations), including:</p> <p>Stay home until 10 days after last exposure and maintain social distance (at least 3 feet) from others at all times</p> <p>Self-monitor for symptoms</p> <p>Check temperature twice a day</p> <p>Watch for fever*, cough, or shortness of breath, or other <u>symptoms</u> of COVID-19</p> <p>Avoid contact with <u>people at higher risk for severe illness</u> from COVID-19</p> <p>Follow <u>CDC guidance</u> if symptoms develop</p> <p>School will not close for exposure outside of the building, but rather that staff/student will follow the above outlined guidance and stay home for 10 days after exposure.</p> <p>1. Contact tracing will not be necessary in this case as the affected person was not in Provident's building. If the exposed staff or student does become ill, they will follow the procedure for COVID-19 positive response as noted above.</p> <p>f. Staff and families should coordinate with School Nurse to plan for return to ensure that CDC guidance is followed.</p>
g. Diagnostic and screening testing;	All diagnostic and screening testing will be prescribed and performed by the individual families' PCP and/or COVID-19 testing centers.
h. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities;	Staff at Provident Charter School had an opportunity to receive vaccinations in March 2021. Approximately 80% of staff were vaccinated at that time. In June 2021, students aged 12 and older, along with their siblings and families, had an opportunity to participate in a vaccine clinic here at Provident Charter School. Families will be encouraged, but not required, to notify our school nurse prior to the 21-22 school year if they were vaccinated, as this has impact on contact tracing should there be a positive case in the building. If an individual is vaccinated, then exposed, they do

	not need to to quarantine. Unvaccinated adults who have not been sick in the past 3 months, will need to quarantine upon exposure.
i. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and	Any accommodations that are required for students with disabilities will be addressed on an individual basis between families and school administration.
j. Coordination with state and local health officials.	Provident Charter School will consider guidance from the Center for Disease Control as well as the PA Department of Health when reviewing and/or revising this Health and Safety Plan.

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **(INSERT NAME OF LEA)** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **(INSERT DATE: MONTH, DAY, YEAR)**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

_____ **Yes**

_____ **No**

Affirmed on: **(INSERT DATE: MONTH, DAY, YEAR)**

By:

(Signature of Board President)*

(Print Name of Board President)

*Electronic signatures on this document are acceptable using one of the two methods detailed below.

Option A: The use of actual signatures is encouraged whenever possible. This method requires that the document be printed, signed, scanned, and then submitted.

Option B: If printing and scanning are not possible, add an electronic signature using the resident Microsoft Office product signature option, which is free to everyone, no installation or purchase needed.