**SAFE LEARNING PLAN**

**ECHO CHARTER SCHOOL**

**08.20.20, Rev. 06-09.21**

**Revised COVID – General Information and Health Expectations**

**Communication with Students, Families and Staff**

ECS will utilize JMC (for all school wide communication), email, phone calls, social media and our website to keep all families informed.

Teachers will use JMC, class tag, email, or phone calls to communicate with their families.

**Facilities Protocol**

* Adequate cleaning schedules will be created and implemented by all ESC staff for all classrooms, resource rooms, office, computer lab, restrooms, and gymnasium.
* Custodian will deep clean each room and gymnasium daily.
* Restrooms will be cleaned and sanitized at least two times/day.
* Teachers will ensure students desk surfaces are cleaned at the end of each day.
* Hand Sanitizer will be available in all classrooms and stations will be installed.
* Hand washing routines will be implemented into daily student schedules.

**Health Screening Protocol**

**Monitoring and excluding for illness**

**Handling Suspected or confirmed positive cases**

The contact person will be the director at the school and she will be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns and will help coordinate with Countryside Public Health staff regarding positive cases. All school staff and families will have access to their contact information. We will have a system in place that will allow staff and families to self-report to the school if they or their student have symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 14 days in a manner that is consistent with applicable law and privacy policies (HIPPA and FERPA). We will post signs throughout the school requesting that people who have been symptomatic not enter the building and communication will be sent to our families and communities requesting that they do not enter the building for any reason other than an emergency situation. We will follow the MDH Decision Tree to determine when a student or staff member may return to school following illness or COVID-19 testing. The space we have dedicated to symptomatic individuals is where social distancing will be enforced and cleaning/sanitizing will take place as needed. The administrative assistant and director will be supervising the students who may be in this room waiting to be picked up and they will be wearing a mask.We will implement cleaning and disinfecting procedures as directed by MDH, and notifying them of any confirmed cases. ECS staff will notify all staff, families and the public as needed if a person with COVID-19 was on the school premises while infectious. If there is a positive case with a student in one of the groups, those students will be sent home for isolation and distance learning will begin immediately for that group of students. Students in other groups will not need to be sent home and will continue their learning in person. Any students who have had close contact with the positive case will need to be sent home for quarantine. This would include, but not limited to, contact on the bus or outside the school setting. This process will be communicated to all staff and families.

**Face Coverings**

Beginning on July 25, Executive Order 20-81 went into effect mandating face coverings in all public buildings. All students (K-12) and staff will wear a face covering throughout the day while in the building. Students may wear either a face mask or a face shield. Teachers may choose to wear the face shield during instructional time to allow for more effective teaching. A student or staff member who has a medical condition preventing them from wearing a face covering must supply documentation from their care provider to the office. ECS will follow all recommendations and requirements provided by Minnesota Department of Health and Countryside Public Health.

**Arrival and Dismissal Procedure**

* Busses will drop off students at the front door and students will report to their classrooms to drop off their supplies before going to the cafeteria for breakfast.
* Parents who drop off their children will bring them to the front door and staff will be present to assist in bringing them to their classroom; parents will not be allowed in the school building unless it has been cleared ahead of time for a specific purpose. Parents may drop off students between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Dismissal times will be staggered: students riding the bus will dismiss at 3:45 and students getting picked up will be dismissed at 3:30. Parents are asked to wait outside of the office entrance for their children. We ask parents to follow social distancing guidelines while waiting for their children at the end of the day and exit the parking lot immediately after picking up their children.

**Hygiene Practices**

ECS will ensure the availability of appropriate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors: soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, disinfectant wipes and tissues and strategically place all of these supplies in areas that are frequently used. Staff will build routines of hand hygiene into the daily school schedule for all students and staff, including handwashing and sanitation breaks during or between classroom activities. Staff will teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol by staff and students. Handwashing reinforcements will be during key times including, but not limited to: arrival and dismissal, before-during-after preparing or eating food, after using the bathroom, after blowing one’s nose, coughing or sneezing, and after touching objects with bare hands that have been handled by other people. Education will be provided by health professionals at Countryside Public Health for proper handwashing, proper mask wearing and understanding the COVID-19 virus, the symptoms and steps to stay healthy. This education will be given to all students and staff at ECS.

**Social Distancing**

Classrooms will be spaced 6 feet apart with desks, tables and chairs. Students and staff will reinforce and use markings on the floors to stay 6 feet apart when in the hallways, standing in line, arrival and dismissal times. Non-essential visitors, volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations will be restricted.

There will be no field trips, assemblies, programs or large group gatherings at the school until it is determined safe to do so by health officials.

**In-Person Learning**

In-Person Learning refers to all students back in the school building and social distancing will be followed as much as possible throughout the day. All desks will be facing the same direction, masks or face shields will be worn by everyone in the building.

**Recess**

* Students will wear face coverings when walking to recess and coming back into the building. Students will sanitize their hands on the way out and again when entering the building.
* There will be no contact games, and equipment will be limited.
* Support staff will be supervising students to ensure social distancing when possible.

**Hallway Protocols**

* All Students and staff will wear face coverings when in hallways.
* All students and staff will adhere to the floor markings and signage as posted.
* Students and staff will not be allowed to congregate in the hallways.
* When possible, students and staff should try to follow social distancing in the hallways.
* Lockers will be used for storage of personal belongings and school supplies will be stored in the classrooms.

**Transportation**

* Bennett transportation will be following the capacity limits set by MDE and MDH.
* Parents may transport their children to and from school every day.
* Masks or shields are required to be worn at all times while riding the school bus.
* Students will not be allowed on the bus without a face covering; if they do not have one, the bus driver will have masks available.
* All busses will be sanitized after each route.
* All bus drivers must utilize proper personal protective equipment while driving.
* Please contact Roy Bennett with questions on bussing/transportation.

**Food Service Protocols**

* All food service workers and supervisors will wear masks/shields during breakfast and lunch.
* Tables will be sanitized between each group.
* Students will be required to wash their hands before eating.
* All breakfast/lunch seating will be 6 feet apart.

**Early Learning**

During In-Person Learning, ECS will implement procedures for maintaining social distancing and cleanliness/hygiene, while still allowing for interactive play. Only classroom furniture and materials that can be easily sanitized will be allowed. A system for sanitizing toys will be in place and materials that can be washed will be laundered daily.

**Distance Learning (Family Choice)**

All families are allowed the option of Distance Learning for the 2020-2021 school year. If a family chooses to distance learn, they will need to call and let the school know with a two-week notice. Families will be permitted to change scenarios during a natural break in the calendar. Arrangements can be made by calling the director at school.

**Hybrid learning**

**Distance Learning**

Distance learning definition: Students engaging in distance learning have access to appropriate educational materials and receive daily interaction with their licensed teacher(s). It does not always mean e-learning or online learning. School districts must maintain educational continuity for schools and programs. All school districts must ensure equal access to ALL students.

ECS will utilize chrome books, YouTube and Zoom Video Conferencing, as well as paper packets and learning materials that can be utilized without technology.

**Food Service Protocols**

Food will be provided daily by our school. It will be delivered to your houses at set times each day similarly to our summer food program. We ask that you have a cooler to put it in if you do not plan to pick it up right away. **Please do not waste food.**

**Important Requirements for Distance Learning**

* Daily interactions with families by school staff. This could be a phone call, email, video conference or Zoom meeting.
* Students need to work on all subjects daily.
* Feedback on assignments and support from teachers must be done in a timely manner so adjustments can be made if needed.
* Communication with families and students is key to successful learning. Teachers and parents need to ensure the best way to communicate is shared with each other.
* K-6th grade will use a variety of tools for presenting and instructing lessons.
* All special education students will receive lessons in the format that is on their IEP’s and special education staff will work closely with the students, parents and service providers.
* Teachers at ECS will be available for the students and parents during school hours.
* Attendance will be taken and recorded based on work completion.
* Parents are asked to communicate with their classroom teacher or with the school office if their child is ill and unable to complete school work for the day.
* Grading will be based on work completed and assessments given.

**Mental Health and Wellness:**

ECS staff will work closely with our school psychologist and Countryside Public Health to provide staff, families and students information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness. When we are implementing In-Person Learning, we will provide lessons on important topics such as Resilience, Friendship Skills, Anxiety, Feelings and Coping Strategies. We will communicate to all families additional resources available that can be accessed online, as well as supports and face to face contact with mental health professionals in our area.

**Day Care**

ECHO Charter will provide free child care to children of essential workers while in Distance Learning mode. When we return to in-person learning, child care operations will be suspended.

**ECHO Charter Schools COVID-19 Reporting Process & Protocols**

Procedures for when a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19:

1. Notify the lead administrator (Principal, Maintenance Director, Food Service Director or Activities Director) of a positive case.
2. The administrator will notify the superintendent of the positive case.
3. They will notify MN Department of Health and Swift County Public Health the name of the student or staff member.
4. Any student or staff member who tests positive for COVID will be quarantined for \_\_\_\_\_ days.
5. MDH, MDE, MSHSL and Countryside Public Health will work with the superintendent to make a decision about the plans for a class that has a COVID-19 positive case. This decision will be based upon:
	1. Was the class intermixed at any time?
	2. Was social distancing followed?
	3. Were masks worn?
	4. What was the length of exposure?
	5. Is additional sanitizing required that would require a different plan for class?
6. The principal will notify families that there is a positive case within the classroom (using the district template). Note: MDH defines close contact with others that is within 6 feet for more than 15 consecutive minutes.

**Exceptions to changing a classroom:**

* 1. If the classroom has maintained social distancing.
	2. Exposure unrelated to class and the student was not at class after exposure.
	3. Exposure was less than 15 consecutive minutes in a class.