



Approved 8/20/2020 by PCCS Governing Board

Pocatello Community Charter School

Pandemics Operations Plan

Guiding Principles

- It is a school's foremost responsibility to create a safe and effective learning environment for all students and staff.
- Most students learn best in-person with their teacher guiding their instruction.
- There is significant value in educating students in strategies for maintaining their own health and the health of other community members during this current Covid19 pandemic or future pandemics which they may experience in their lifetimes.
- It is critical for all members of our community to support the plan for returning to in-person instruction in order for the plan to be successful. **WE ARE CREW.**

Summary

Based on current data and under the advice of the *Southeast Idaho Department of Public Health*, PCCS will hold in-person classes with an option for some students to stay home. Although the school can and will take many precautions to prevent the transmission of Covid-19 (outlined below), it is incumbent on all of the stakeholders, teachers, staff, parents, and children to take precautions at home that will stop the spread of the disease. In particular, we ask that you not send your child to school if they are sick, self-quarantine if there has been exposure to a known case of Covid-19, and notify the school in the event of any exposure. The school will take numerous additional measures to ensure the safety of the students and staff. These are outlined in detail below and will include :

- Face masks required by everyone who does not have a condition preventing them from wearing face masks. For those with a condition preventing the wearing



of a facemask, school administration will work with individuals for any other personal protective equipment which may help prevent transmission.

- Outdoor classrooms when at all possible.
- Plexiglass dividers at individual table workspaces
- No shared school supplies (scissors, pencils, markers)
- Sanitation procedures for items such as computers and media that must be shared
- Hands-free hand sanitizer dispensers in each classroom.
- Individual water bottles will replace water fountains.
- New movement patterns and signage that will minimize the number of and proximity of students in the classroom and in hallways.
- Education of students in regards to the sanitation of personal items and how to distance.
- To avoid extra congestion in the school, visitors will be required to make an appointment with school staff and must wear a mask while visiting the school.

Stay Home Option

While the plan detailed below is intended to create a safe and effective learning environment for all students, PCCS understands no plan can work best for all families. Some students and family members will have particular susceptibility to infection. Therefore, PCCS will allow for a stay home option for students. Students who choose the Stay Home Option, will not lose their place at PCCS.

The Stay Home option will include the following:

- Parents wanting to request the stay home option must write a letter to PCCS or fill out the form including a basic rationale for requesting the stay home option and conditions present to return to in-person learning. Students electing the stay home option will be required to remain in the stay home plan for a minimum of two weeks.
- PCCS will provide basic course work (either in electronic or hard copy format) and instruction (virtually).



- For students with Special Education needs specific accommodations and interventions will be made on a case by case basis with the special education staff and crew leader.

Modifications for In-Classroom Instruction

Social Distancing and Minimizing Cross Contamination through materials management

- The wearing of masks is required for everyone who doesn't have a condition preventing them from wearing a mask. Staff will model when it is appropriate to wear masks, and when it is not.
- To protect our teachers in high risk categories, teachers may elect to require masks of all students who do not have a condition which would prevent them from wearing a mask.
- Students will be encouraged to wear masks at tables. Plexiglass dividers that sit on tables will be in place for extra protection.
- Students bring only what they need for the day into the classrooms including masks.
- Shared materials will be limited
 - Students will have individual cubbies or lockers to hold all of their own supplies and belongings
 - Community supplies such as crayons, colored pencils, and markers will not be available.
 - Students will be taught how to appropriately sanitize shared supplies that are utilized (chrome books, rulers, calculators etc...)
 - Student's will be taught the sanitizer sandwich (sanitize before using, and after finished) when having students collect work, eat a snack, etc
- Teachers will limit the supplies that go back and forth daily (binders, homework, etc..), as well as, teach students how to properly sanitize these supplies.

Sanitation:

- Hand sanitizer will be available in several places throughout the classroom.
- Students will be taught how to sanitize desks and folders during transition times.



- Two sanitation guns will be used throughout the day and after school to ensure classrooms are sanitized when empty.
- Classrooms will be sanitized using the disinfectant gun during student transitions when no students will be in the classroom.

Controlling and Amending Movement patterns in the school

- Limit the number of children that are at multiple places at a time when turning in work, getting supplies, putting supplies away.
- Stagger release times to gather supplies at the end of the day.
- **Protocol for entering from outside:** Stagger each classroom coming into the building a group at a time (Possibly by number with mixed crews. For example All odds 1-9 from all three crews.
- **Protocol for entering the classroom:**
 - Staff not in charge of classrooms will help monitor hallways and train students to enter the building and get supplies from lockers and coat hooks.
 - Teachers in the classroom make sure students: Use hand sanitizer when they come into the classroom, move to their appropriate social distanced area. We encourage crew meetings to be held outside whenever possible.
- Specials will still be in a designated classroom and then just sanitize sandwich it. Specials teachers will rotate and students will remain in the classroom for specials.
 - Library Books will be placed in quarantine for at least three days after being returned to ensure the virus has died.

Education

- Staff and students will be trained on physical distancing, appropriate hand washing and sanitizing, hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and mask use.
 - Students will be taught how to properly sneeze or cough with a mask on.
 - Students will be taught proper protocol for removing and putting masks back on.

Office Strategies and other Non-Instructional Spaces

- Disinfectant wipes/spray near community equipment. Wipe down equipment after use (copier, laminator, microwave, etc.)
- Hallways
 - Students will walk on the right side of the hall



- Class release times will be staggered to reduce the number of students in the halls at any given time. Students will be taught how to walk “social distance style” (no high-fives, no clumping, and talking, etc.) An electrostatic disinfectant gun will be used at the end of the school day
- Lockers will be strategically assigned to students to ensure that social distance is maintained for each crew (staggered assignments so when each crew is released to their lockers they have ample space between them)
- Lockers - doors and locks will need to be wiped and disinfected daily
- Door handles will be wiped down multiple times throughout the day.
- Disinfectant wipes will be provided on the table to wipe the table and chair down after use. (table is a common workspace and lunch space for staff that doesn't have separate classroom/office)
- Offices - all staff who work in an office will be responsible for routinely disinfecting throughout the day (exception, main office - community equipment will be disinfected by the person using them)
 - When meeting with small groups, will follow classroom protocols.
- Inside Morning recess will occur outside whenever possible. When it is necessary to hold morning recess inside, students will go into classrooms.
- Recess games will be limited to students being able to play while adhering to social distancing. Some recess activities may not be allowed at recess personnel discretion.
- Lunchroom - rotating schedule for classrooms, distance students at tables, follow a cleanup routine from the previous protocol.
- Sneeze guards placed in the main office and/or lunchroom as appropriate
- Touchless hand sanitizers place in office, hallways, classrooms, etc
- Student restrooms - will need to be disinfected throughout the day.
- One way direction from the main office to door by the bathrooms

Visitors

Due to current COVID-19 conditions, many school protocols have changed.

If your student is sick and needs to go home, please notify the office when you have arrived and your student will be brought out to your car.

Prior to visiting the building, make arrangements with the crew leader or office staff.

This will help us immensely in crowd control and limiting exposure. Please understand,



we value your relationship with PCCS and our students and we desire to keep everyone as safe and healthy as possible.

Gatherings

- **Fall classroom orientations:** ILT will develop a common PowerPoint with talking points concerning procedures that are school-wide (pick-up procedure, uniforms, etc.)

Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Events (including adventure, fieldwork, service, sporting events, clubs)

- Adventure and fieldwork that can not occur within walking distance of the school will be suspended until further notice.

Communication Strategies to Students, Staff, Parents

- **Educate the community about good hygiene, physical distancing, symptoms of Covid-19, and when to stay home**
 - Checklist for families (when do I keep my child at home?)
 - Checklist for staff (when do I stay home?)
 - Checklist for high-touch surfaces to be disinfected daily
 - Posters to hang in public spaces for social distancing, hygiene
 - Video/pamphlet for families about what they can do at home to help.
 - Communicate to parents the attendance policy in relation to Covid-19.
- **Communication with parents/students/staff.**
 - Communication from the office will go out to families updating them on the status of these procedures and any changes.
 - Emergency information will be delivered using the school's emergency contact services such as mass text messages.

PCCS will follow the guidance of our Local State Health Department, which has established four distinct categories of the proximity and severity of the threat of COVID-19 in our school.

- **Confirmed Case in School**
- **Category 1- No Community Spread**



- **Category 2- Minimal to Moderate Community Transmission**
- **Category 3- Substantial Community Transmission**

Confirmed Case in School, Regardless of Community Transmission

PCCS will implement short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building.

Step 1: Coordinate with the local public health district.

- Contact the local public health district and to determine a course of action
- Begin identifying anyone who may have been in close contact with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case. Close contact is less than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes. While face coverings are believed to reduce the risk, they are not considered as protective for the purpose of identifying close contacts.
- Collaborate with the local public health agency to determine the process for notifying close contacts and instructions for staying home and self-monitoring for symptoms, and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.
 - *Example: local public health may reach out to close contacts via phone for official notification, and the school will disseminate a letter to the school community informing them of the situation.*

Follow local public health guidance for the course of action. Recommendations will be given on a case-by-case basis, and could include the following:

- Exposure to others in the school was *minimal*, no close contacts were identified, and the positive cases should self-isolate and return once criteria to discontinue home isolation and quarantine have been met.
- Exposure to others in the school was *moderate*, a handful of close contacts were identified, and positive cases and close contacts should stay home for isolation.
- Exposure to others was *severe*, multiple close contacts were identified and risk of exposure to larger school community warrants dismissal of in-person learning.

A short-term dismissal of students and most staff for 1-2 days may be recommended.

- Initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school. This allows the local health officials to help the school determine appropriate next steps,



including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19.

- Local health officials' recommendations for the scope and duration of school dismissals will be made on a case-by-case basis using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19.
- During school dismissals, extracurricular group activities, school-based afterschool programs, and large events (e.g., assemblies, field trips, and sporting events) will be cancelled.
- Encourage and practice physical distancing.

Extended school dismissal may be recommended

- Depending on the level of risk and subsequent cases as a result of exposure at school, a longer school dismissal may be warranted.
- Work with local health officials on whether staying open for staff while students stay home is advised, or re-instate telecommuting or other alternative work opportunities.
- The director is not expected to make extended school dismissal decisions or determine when students and staff should return to schools on their own and will work in close collaboration and coordination with local health officials. Students and staff who are well but are taking care of or share a home with someone with a case of COVID-19 should follow instructions from local health officials to determine when to return to school.

Communicate with staff, parents, and students regarding dismissal decisions and possible COVID-19 exposure.

- Include messages to counter potential stigma and discrimination
- Coordinate responses with local public health
- Maintain confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Health insurance portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Outline intended response efforts

Clean and disinfect thoroughly.

- Close off areas used by the individual with COVID-19 and wait as long as possible, up to 24 hours, before beginning cleaning and disinfecting. Open doors and windows if possible.



- Clean all other areas, especially highly touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, lights, desks, phones, keyboards, faucets, sinks. Resource: Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility
- Reinstate strategies to continue education and related supports to students as needed.

Category 1 No or limited Community Spread

Evidence of isolated cases or limited community transmission, case investigations underway, no evidence of exposure in a large communal setting, e.g., healthcare facility, school, mass gathering.

Review, update, and implement the emergency operations plans and reinforce healthy hygiene practices.

- Include strategies to reduce the spread of a wide variety of infectious diseases, physical distancing, and school dismissals that can be used to stop the spread.
- Emphasize everyday preventive actions for students and staff
 - CDC Staying Home When Sick Flyer
 - What To Do If You're Sick
 - CDC Avoid Spreading Germs At Work Flyer
 - Stop the Spread of Germs Handwashing Posters for Children and Teens
 - CDC Cover Your Cough Flyer
- Teach and ensure proper use of cloth face coverings when appropriate while at school.
 - Staff, students, and visitors will wear face coverings whenever 6 feet of distance isn't possible if they do not have a condition preventing them from wearing face coverings.
 - Personal cloth face coverings can be worn, or school can provide for those who do not have one but wish to wear one.
- Parents are expected to conduct daily health screenings of students daily before bringing students to school.

Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts.

- Enhance cleaning of high touch surfaces like doorknobs, toilet handles, light switches, classroom and bathroom sink handles, countertops.



- Ensure that hand sanitizer, soap/paper towels, and tissues are widely available in school facilities.

Monitor and plan for absenteeism.

- Day-to-day reporting (absenteeism) of students and staff, and review for patterns for large increases.
- Encourage students and staff to stay home when sick or when they have symptoms, even without documentation from doctors. Use flexibility, when possible, to allow staff to stay home to care for sick family members, especially for those with the common cold and flu symptoms, which are similar to COVID-19.
- Cross-train staff and create a roster of trained back-up staff.

Assess group gatherings and events.

- Review any planned events (e.g. assemblies, field days, athletic events) and determine if physical distancing strategies can be put place. If not, consider canceling, rescheduling, or modifying. Give special consideration to events that might put students, staff, or their families in close proximity to others from communities that may have identified cases of COVID-19.

Create and test communication plans for use within the school community.

- Create strategies for communicating with staff, students, and their families, including sharing steps being taken to prepare and how the information will be shared in the future.
- Put a system in place for having staff and families self-report to the school if they or their student have symptoms of COVID-19, a positive test, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
 - Maintain privacy and confidentiality.

Require students and staff to stay home if they are sick or have symptoms.

Establish procedures for students and staff who become sick or develop symptoms at school.

- Sick or symptomatic staff and students should be sent home or to a healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are as soon as possible, and keep them separate and isolated from healthy students and staff until they can leave. Following CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others who are sick.



- Schools are not expected to screen students or staff to identify cases of COVID-19. If a school has cases of COVID-19, local health officials will help identify those individuals and will follow up on the next steps.
 - Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

Begin implementing mitigation strategies and plan for when community spread occurs (non-pharmaceutical interventions or NPIs).

- Personal NPIs (e.g. stay home when sick, cover coughs, wash hands, etc.)
- Community NPIs (e.g. social and physical distancing)
- Environmental NPIs (e.g. routine cleaning practices)
- **Review and update leave (time off) policies and excused absence policies.** Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable staff to stay home when they are sick, have been exposed or caring for someone who is sick.
 - Leave policies should also account for employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.
- Develop policies for return-to-school after COVID-19 illness using CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation and quarantine

Provide Staff Training.

- Train staff on all safety protocols.
- Conduct training virtually or ensure physical distancing is maintained during training.

Ensure Consistent Non-School Events Facility Use.

- Share your re-opening and operational plans with other organizations that utilize your school space.
- Require any organizations that share or use school facilities to follow school guidelines.

Support Coping and Resilience.

- Encourage employees and students to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19, including social media if they are feeling overwhelmed or distressed.
- Promote employees and students eating healthy, exercising, getting sleep, and finding time to unwind.



- Encourage employees and students to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling.

Category 2 Minimal to Moderate Community Transmission
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Widespread and/or sustained transmission with the high likelihood or confirmed exposure within communal settings, with potential for the rapid increase in suspected cases.
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If local health officials report there are multiple cases of COVID-19 in the community, PCCS may need to implement additional strategies in response to prevent spread in the school, but they should continue using the strategies they implemented when there was no community transmission. These additional strategies include:

Coordinate with local health officials.

- This will be a first step in making decisions about responses to the presence of COVID-19 in the community. Health officials can help a school determine which set of strategies might be most appropriate for their specific community's situation.

Implement multiple physical distancing strategies. Strategies will be based on feasibility given the unique space and needs of the school:

- Pursue virtual group events, gatherings, or meetings in lieu of field trips, assemblies, special performances, spirit nights, as possible; and promote 6 feet between people if events are held, and limit group size to support appropriate physical distancing.
- Cancel or modify classes where students are likely to be in very close contact. In physical education or other close contact classes, teachers may come to classrooms to prevent classes mixing with others in the gymnasium or music room.
- Rearrange student tables to maximize the space between students.
- Avoid mixing students in common areas.
 - Allow students to eat lunch and breakfast in their classrooms or stagger lunchtimes.
 - Stagger recess times and/or separate recess areas by class.



- Send a few students into the library to pick out books rather than going as a class.
- Restrict hallway use through homeroom stays or staggered release of classes.
- Avoid taking multiple classes to bathrooms at once (e.g., avoid having all classes use the bathroom right after lunch or recess).
- Ensure student and staff groups (cohorts) are static as much as possible (all day for young children, as much as possible for older children).
- Stagger arrival and/or dismissal times in order to limit the amount of close contact between students in high-traffic situations and times.
- Limit nonessential visitors.
- Limit the presence of volunteers for classroom activities, mystery readers, cafeteria support, and other activities.
- Teach staff, students, and their families to maintain distance from each other in the school. Educate staff, students, and their families at the same time and explain why this is important.

Maintain healthy environments.

- Intensify cleaning and sanitizing of drinking fountains.
- The use of cloth facial covering or masks for students is required except in cases where the student has a condition that would prevent them from wearing facial coverings.
- Encourage staff and students to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains, and take steps to ensure water systems and features are safe after prolonged facility shutdown.
- Assess shared objects and space for personal belongings.
 - Discourage the sharing of items that are difficult to clean.
 - Keep the child's belongings separated from others in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
 - Minimize sharing high touch materials where possible (e.g. individual art supplies) or limit the use of supplies/equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
 - Avoid sharing personal items (toys, books, electronic devices).
- Install physical barriers and guides.
- Place sneeze guards or partitions in areas where it's difficult to maintain 6 feet (e.g. reception desks, between bathroom sinks).



- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls to remind students to remain 6 feet apart. Particularly with line formation.
- Modify communal areas.
 - Close communal use shared spaces such as dining halls and playgrounds with shared playground equipment if possible; otherwise, stagger use, and clean and disinfect between uses.
- Adapt food service.
 - Have children bring their own meals as feasible, or serve individually plated meals in classrooms; eliminate buffet or family-style meals.
 - Use disposable food service items (e.g. utensils, dishes). When not feasible or desirable, handle with gloves and wash with dish soap and hot water or dishwasher. Individuals should wash their hands after removing gloves or handling food service items.
 - If food is offered at an event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for attendees. Consider ways to accommodate the needs of children and families at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19.

Honor requests of parents who may have concerns about their children attending school due to the underlying medical conditions of those in their homes.

Category 3 Substantial Community Transmission
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Large scale community transmission, healthcare staffing significantly impacted multiple cases within communal settings like healthcare facilities, schools, mass gatherings, etc.
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Additional strategies should be considered when there is substantial transmission in the local community in addition to those implemented when there is no, minimal, or moderate transmission. These strategies include:

- Continue to coordinate with local health officials. If local health officials have determined there is a substantial transmission of COVID-19 within the community, they will provide guidance to administrators on the best course of action for schools.

Consider extended school dismissals.



- In collaboration with local health officials, implement extended school dismissals (e.g., dismissals for longer than two weeks). This longer-term, and likely broader-reaching, dismissal strategy is intended to slow transmission rates of COVID-19 in the community. During extended school dismissals, also cancel extracurricular group activities, school-based afterschool programs, and large events (e.g., assemblies, spirit nights, field trips, and sporting events). Remember to implement strategies to ensure the continuity of education (e.g., distance learning) as well as meal programs and other essential services for students.