

Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

LEA Name: The Gray Charter School

Date June 7, 2021

Date Revised Pending

1. Maintaining Health and Safety

For each mitigation strategy listed below (A–H), please describe 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 policies, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks

- **Students and staff will receive training on the purpose and proper use of face coverings.**
- **Face covering mandates will be guided by the CDC, state and local health agencies.**
- School staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under two years of age.
- Students are required to wear face masks unless doing so would inhibit the student's health. It is also necessary to acknowledge that enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities.
- Accommodation for students who are unable to wear a face covering will be addressed according to that student's need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Exceptions to requirements for face coverings shall be as follows: (a) Doing so would inhibit the individual's health. (b) The individual is in extreme heat outdoors. (c) The individual is in water. (d) A student's documented medical condition, or

disability as reflected in an IEP, precludes the use of face covering. (e) The student is under the age of two and could risk suffocation. (f) Eating/drinking.

- If a visitor refuses to wear a face covering for non-medical reasons and if such covering cannot be provided to the individual at the point of entry, the visitor's entry to the school facility will be denied.

Mask wearing will be enforced to the greatest extent possible, based upon the most recent CDC/NJDOE/NJDOE guidance at the time.

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)

The Gray Charter School will allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable. Additional modifications will be made including but not limited to using physical barriers between desks, turning desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other), and/or having students sit on only one side of the table or on opposite ends of the table, spaced apart.

All instructional and non-instructional rooms in school will comply with social distancing standards to the maximum extent practicable.

If applicable, the schools' regarding recess and physical education includes protocols to address the following:

- (a) Stagger recess, if necessary.
- (b) If two or more groups are participating in recess at the same time, there will be at least six feet of open space between the two groups.
- (c) The use of cones, flags, tape, or other signs to create boundaries between groups.
- (d) A requirement that all individuals always wash hands immediately after outdoor playtime.
- (e) Frequent disinfecting of all play equipment used by students.
- (f) Whenever possible Physical Education and recess activities will take place outdoors and incorporate social distancing. In the event that those activities cannot occur outdoors, they will take place utilizing social distancing protocols.
- (g) On scheduled gym days, students will be encouraged to wear PE uniforms to school in order to eliminate clothes changing.

Whenever possible, the school will limit and/or eliminate direct contact with equipment (lessons with no equipment), and will not allow sharing of equipment. If equipment must be shared, the equipment will be cleaned and disinfected between each use. The school district will designate specific areas for each class during recess to avoid cohorts mixing.

Social distancing will be enforced to the greatest extent possible, based upon the most recent CDC/NJDOE guidance at the time.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Custodial staff will prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol). Such stations will be in each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), at entrances and exits of buildings and near toilets.

- Children ages five and younger will be supervised when using hand sanitizer. All classrooms and hallways have been equipped with touchless hand sanitizing stations containing alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol).
- Students will be required to wash hands for at least twenty seconds at regular intervals during the school day and always before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing, and/or sneezing.
- Only when washing with soap and water is not possible will alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) be used until students are able to use warm water and soap.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette will be enforced to the greatest extent possible, based upon the most recent CDC/NJDOE guidance at the time.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

The school facility maintains adequate ventilation, including operational heating and cooling systems. System filter for A/C units will be maintained and changed in accordance with manufacturer recommendations.

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation will be enforced to the greatest extent possible, based upon the most recent CDC/NJDOE guidance at the time.

E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments

All school and district administrators, School Safety Specialists, counselors, and any other staff deemed appropriate by the Executive Director will be provided information regarding the role of contact tracing conducted by State, county, and local officials.

- The Gray Charter School will engage the expertise of the school nurse and that of the City of Newark Department of

Health in the application of contact tracing.

- The school nurse will complete the Johns Hopkins University's COVID-19 Contact Tracing course in accordance with the NJDOE.
- The nurse will continually collect, monitor, and evaluate COVID-19 screening data reporting all positive or inconclusive results as appropriate.
- Staff will be provided information about contact tracing and the protocols the district will follow.

The school has established and will maintain communications with local and state health authorities to monitor levels of positive Covid-19 infection within the community. All confirmed cases of positive Covid-19 infection within the school building and the surrounding community including families outside workers contracted by the school, families and contacts of students and staff, will be investigated accordingly and reported to The City of Newark Department of Health Surveillance and Prevention Division at 973-733-7592, to verify that contact tracing is in effect. The Gray Charter School will assist health authorities in all contact tracing efforts as required by the State Department of Education to identify and act upon pockets of illness that may potentially result in the need for temporary school closure.

- The school nurse is the Chief Medical Officer of the school and shall have the discretion to call a parent/guardian regarding the possible dismissal of any child who appears sick or complains of symptoms that are questionable without visible signs of illness and/or fever.
- Anyone having a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will be considered to have a fever. Temperatures less than 100 and above 99 degrees will be re-taken, as further assessment by the nurse will determine an individual's ability to remain on premises. Anyone who is outwardly ill, or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, muscle, head or body ache, vomiting, or other flu like symptoms should remain home always and wait for further guidance from the school nurse. All individuals, including staff members, exhibiting such symptoms will not be permitted to enter the building, or will be sent home in the event that these symptoms present themselves while in the school building.
- Parents and staff who test positive or live in a household with a person who tests positive, must report those cases to the school immediately. Anyone testing positive or living in the household of a person testing positive, should remain home under quarantine for 14 days beginning from the date PCR test was conducted. The affected individual must be fever-free for a full 24 hours (WITHOUT THE ACTIVE INFLUENCE OF FEVER-REDUCING MEDICINES AND ANTIBIOTICS) upon returning. All treatment regimens must be fully completed and individuals must be without any signs or symptoms of illness before returning.

- Anyone within the household of a person testing positive should undergo PCR testing with proof of a negative result before returning. PCR Testing will be provided at no cost by the Gray Charter School's affiliated lab and results will be provided within one day, after which the school nurse will grant clearance if eligible. Rapid tests will not be accepted for the purposes of returning to the school building however; individuals are welcome to ascertain and provide their own proof of PCR testing if so desired. The school nurse reserves the right to investigate submissions of negative results that appear to be transferred or copied from another source for verification as the health of the greater school community is also of paramount concern.
- Any person who tests negative for Covid-19 but has symptoms of illness or resides with a Covid-19 positive person, will need to gain clearance from the school nurse before returning to the school building.
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments will be conducted to the greatest extent possible, based upon the most recent CDC/NJDOE guidance at the time.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

Requests for diagnostic examination by physicians may be made for circumstances that may include but are not limited to: inconclusive test or screening results, latent development of symptoms following a negative PCR, recurrence of illness within a household, and acute or chronic complaint that warrant more extensive assessment by an outside medical professional. The Gray Charter School's physician Dr. Ricardo Ferraz will be routinely accessible by the school nurse to consult on those cases that are more concerning and assist in the referral process as needed. General health screenings and COVID-19 testing will remain in effect and strictly enforced to the greatest extent possible, based upon the most recent CDC/NJDOE guidance at the time.

G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible

As per CDC guidelines, the school nurse and administration will assist with setting up vaccination appointments for students, family members, and staff who have not been vaccinated, are eligible, and request assistance.

Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students who are eligible will be maintained to the greatest extent possible, based upon the most recent CDC/NJDOE guidance at the time.

All staff and students are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Any unvaccinated person will be required to wear masks at all times while on school property.

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies

The Gray Charter School will meet all obligations to students with disabilities, LEP, need for basic skills support, and all other required or necessary student services to the greatest extent possible. Specific strategies and considerations for these students are critical points of discussion for every return to school scenario.

Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies will be enforced to the greatest extent possible, based upon the most recent CDC/NJDOE guidance at the time and in direct consultation with the school nurse and school social worker.

2. Ensuring Continuity of Services

A. Describe how the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff's social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

A full continuum of services will be in place for all students to ensure continuity. Collaboration with staff and parents will ensure that students are being provided with supports that meet their academic and social emotional needs, with a prime focus on their overall wellbeing. Procedures will be in place to support the whole child through a multi-tiered approach. Counseling, screening and services will be offered. A tiered level approach will be used to address academic, social, and emotional needs. Instruction through the use of a variety of techniques will be implemented to positively support students' mental health and academic growth. The I&RS teams will utilize a collection of data and information to identify, screen, problem solve, engage, and make decisions to positively promote student success. Through various assessment tools, the school will monitor student progress and use tools to remediate instruction as needed. Ongoing evaluation of these supports will be in place to ensure continuity of services for each student. The school will also ensure that SPED, ELL, and BSI student's programs will be followed accordingly and that all students will receive all entitled services as per their plan, including related services.

B. Public Comment

Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comment into account in the development of its plan. Note, the ARP requires that LEAs seek public comment for each 60-day revision to the plan.

During June 2021, The Gray Charter School posted the Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service on its

website in both English and Spanish, at which time the public had the opportunity to comment on the proposed plan. Additionally, the plan was shared with the school-based communications system which provided parents with the additional opportunity for comment.

C. Describe how the LEA ensured that the plan is in an understandable and uniform format; is to the extent practicable written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, will be orally translated for such a parent; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, will be provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.

Important documents will be provided in both English and Spanish, translated by an employee proficient in both languages. If needed, all students have access to laptop computers to assist families in accessing and understanding the plan. People who have questions are encouraged to ask questions in any format available to them: in person, phone, email etc.