

aces

Educational Center
for the Arts

Fall Reopening Plan

ACES Educational Center for the Arts Fall Reopening Plan

Below you will find the Health and Safety protocols that will be implemented by ACES Educational Center for the Arts to support the continued health and safety of students and staff who return to in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. The protocols below are consistent with the CDC, State and local guidelines, and are designed to minimize the risk of transmission of the virus. The protocols are also intended to support containment and tracing in the event of an incident at ACES Educational Center for the Arts. Please keep in mind that guidance from the State of Connecticut or CDC may change as we move closer to the reopening of school, and therefore, impact the information provided at this time. Feel free to reach out to us with any additional questions.

Health Screening:

ACES requires that staff and students stay home if they have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 symptoms, including fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or above) chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, the new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. Staff and students who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 should also stay home and monitor their health.

The first day that faculty and staff are in session; they will be required to fill out a form that will ask them to respond to several questions and acknowledgments about their health. After the initial completion of the form, faculty and staff (this includes interns and student teachers) will be asked the same questions. Some questions will be asked weekly and others daily. Going forward from the first day faculty and staff are in session, all faculty and staff will continue to attest to their initial responses each day they log in to work. ACES will ask the following questions:

[Questions to be asked weekly \(via paycom for employees; via form completion for interns and student teachers\):](#)

- Have you knowingly had contact (**Contact is defined as being within 6 feet (2 meters) for more than 15 minutes with a person, or having direct contact with infectious fluids from a person with confirmed COVID-19 - for example being coughed or sneezed on**) with a person known to be infected, potentially infected, or exposed to someone infected with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days? (Y/N)
- Have you or someone you've been in contact with traveled domestically or internationally in the last 14 days? (Y/N)

- Have you or someone you've been in contact with traveled to a state designated as a "hotspot" by the State of Connecticut within the last 14 days? (Y/N)
- Have you or someone you've been in contact with attended a gathering where proper social distancing protocol was not followed in the past 14 days? (Y/N)

Question to be asked daily (for employees by signing into paycom every day you are answering "No" to this question; for interns/student teachers when you sign in you are responding "No" to this question):

- Have you had a fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell that cannot be attributed to another health condition in the past 2-14 days? (Y/N)

Please acknowledge the following (for employees by signing into paycom every day you are answering "Yes" to all of these statements; for interns/student teachers when you sign-in you are responding "Yes" to all of these statements):

- I certify, I will follow my employer's COVID-19 policy.
- I certify that all answers are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- I certify that I will contact my direct supervisor immediately should any health concerns arise.

If an employee or intern/student-teacher answers "yes" to any of the questions, ACES will:

- Not let the staff or visitor enter the workplace.
- Immediately separate the employee from other people and arrange transport for home or to a medical facility if indicated.
- Strongly recommend timely testing. If they had close contact with a person with COVID-19, Employees should be tested no sooner than 48 hours after exposure. The employee will contact HR for testing site identification support.
- Not have the employee return to work until the person completed their quarantine or isolation period.
- Staff or students who are sent home or stay home for any of these symptoms will be required to submit a note from their health care provider before returning. Staff or students with negative COVID test should remain home until 48 hours after symptom-free. Staff or students with positive COVID test results should stay at home for 14 days and 48 hours after symptom-free.

Health Screening Students

Protocols for health screening at school are in place, but the most critical screening will be done by parents/guardians. By placing a student with symptoms on the bus or bringing them to school, you are risking the health of all faculty, staff, and students your child comes into contact with. Parents/Guardians, please NOTE that when you put your child on the bus each morning, you are certifying that:

- Your student has **NOT** knowingly had contact (**Contact is defined as being within 6 feet (2 meters) for more than 15 minutes with a person, or having direct contact with infectious fluids from a person with confirmed COVID-19 - for example being coughed or sneezed on**) with a person known to be infected, potentially infected, or exposed to someone infected with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days?
- You or someone your student has **NOT** been in contact with traveled domestically or internationally in the last 14 days?
- You or someone your student been in contact with has **NOT** traveled to a state designated as a "hotspot" by the state of Connecticut within the last 14 days?
- Your student has **NOT** had a fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell that cannot be attributed to another health condition in the past 2-14 days?
- You will follow ACES COVID-19 policies.
- All answers are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- You will contact the school immediately should any health concerns arise.

The health screening at home will put the school in the best position to minimize the risk of transmission and allow us to educate students in-person as safely as possible.

Health Screening continued...

When conducting the screening, ACES schools will use the following protocols:

- Use touchless thermometers to take temperature (If the temperature is 100 degrees or above, staff will be required to leave the building immediately. For students, parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the student as soon as possible.)
- The health screener will wear a face covering and a face shield while performing screening for illnesses.
- ACES schools will implement a sick plan for students and staff who develop an elevated temperature or who may become ill during the school day. The primary components are listed below.
 - Students or staff will be isolated in a room designated for symptomatic people.
 - The areas used by a staff member or student with symptoms will be closed off and will not be used until the area is deep cleaned and disinfected by facilities or designated personnel.
 - Students will never be left unattended in an isolation room.
 - Parents and/or guardians will be called to pick students up from school immediately.
 - If a parent/guardian cannot pick up the student promptly, the school will contact individuals on the student's contact list until a pick-up person is confirmed. If a student is showing severe signs of illness and school is unable to reach a parent, guardian, or person on the contact list, emergency medical technicians will be contacted.
 - The school nurse or designee will identify all students and staff who were exposed to the student/staff member and make information available for the health department if necessary.
 - The building administrator or designee will notify a member of the central office compliance team.
 - Notification to all ACES staff and families impacted will be communicated from the Executive Director's office.
 - If the school gets information indicating the staff member or students tested positive for COVID-19, school administrators will notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and HIPPA.
 - ACES will inform those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home, self-monitor for symptoms, and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.

Suspected COVID 19 incident:

Building/Program Administration:

If there is a student or staff member that is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the building administration:

- Will be immediately isolated per established procedures set up by the Nursing Department at the facility. If you have any questions, please contact Meg Birmingham at mbirmingham@aces.org.
- Will contact the Assistant Executive Director of Schools and Curriculum immediately.
- Will communicate the situation to the Emergency@ACES.org email; this will initiate a response from all departments (e.g., Executive Leadership Council, Head Nurse, Facilities, Transportation, & Security).
- Will prepare staff and family notifications and send out information via ParentSquare.
- Will recommend that the person communicate with their health care provider and be tested for COVID-19. Maintain confidentiality throughout all communication.
- Anyone who has close contact with someone with COVID-19 should stay home for 14 days **after exposure** based on the time it takes to develop the illness. **[COVID-19 testing is recommended.](#)**

ACES Transportation Department Response:

- Students will be dismissed from the facility as quickly as possible with their devices to support distance learning, and staff will be dismissed immediately after students prepared to transition into distance learning the next day.
- The ACES transportation department will coordinate the transporting of non-exposed students to their homes. Students in the same cohort as the suspected student or staff member must be picked up by a parent or guardian.

ACES Facilities Department Response:

- The building will be locked down once everyone has exited the facility.
- **Building is Closed - Do not Enter** signs will be posted at all entrances.

- The building areas that the person came into contact with will be cleaned and disinfected by ACES facilities or other designated personnel per the CDC/Department of Health guidelines.
- Additional actions will be taken based on guidance from the health department and the outcome of the staff or student's COVID 19 test results.

Positive COVID-19 Test Result

If the suspected case is **Positive** or there are **No Test Results** available (ACES will operate as test result is positive in this case): The following actions will occur:

- The school will transition immediately to distance learning.
- Students and staff will not return to school until notified by the Executive Director.

· **Building/Program Administration:**

- Will send any information they receive about the results of the COVID 19 test to the Compliance Team via Emergency@ACES.org
- Will forward copies of the COVID 19 tracing logs to security, facilities, nursing, and human resources via Emergency@ACES.org

Building/Program Nurse or designee:

- Will report the situation to the Local and State Health Department

AC ES Security:

- Will review tracing logs and begin contact-tracing notifications.

ACES Facilities:

- Will close the building.
- Will complete deep building disinfection.
- Will notify everyone when the facility has been disinfected and available for occupancy.

ACES Executive Leadership:

- Within 48 hours will review the incident and the contact tracing information with the local health department to determine which students and/or staff will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days and when the school can reopen safely for in-person instruction.
- Will communicate with sending districts, ACES staff, school/program staff, and families throughout the process and provide regular updates on decisions made.

Negative COVID-19 Test Result

If the suspected case is **Negative**. The following actions will occur:

- The school will transition immediately to distance learning.
- Students and staff will not return to school until notified by the Executive Director.

Building/Program Administration:

- Will send any information they receive about the results of the COVID 19 test to the Compliance Team via Emergency@ACES.org
- Will forward copies of the COVID 19 tracing logs to security, facilities, nursing, and human resources via Emergency@ACES.org

Building/Program Nurse or designee:

- Will report the situation to the Local and State Health Department

ACES Security:

- Will review tracing logs and begin contact-tracing notifications.

ACES Facilities:

- Will close the building.
- Will complete deep building disinfection.
- Will notify everyone when the facility has been disinfected and available for occupancy.

ACES Executive Leadership:

- Within 48 hours will review the incident and the contact tracing information with the local health department to determine when the school can reopen safely for in-person instruction as quickly as possible.
- Will communicate with sending districts, ACES staff, school/program staff, and families throughout the process and provide regular updates on decisions made.

Health, Safety, and Hygiene

Hand Washing

- All ACES schools will have scheduled handwashing several times per day.
- At minimum students will have the opportunity to wash their hands:
 - Upon arrival at school
 - After using the bathroom
 - After breakfast or lunch
 - After participating in outdoor activities

- After any physical activities
- After blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing
- At dismissal before entering the transportation
- **Hand Hygiene Protocols:**
 - Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - Wash hands using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol and be sure to cover all surfaces of their hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Face Coverings

CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are challenging to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies, schools), **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.

Staff and students will wear face coverings in school, on transportation, while they are in class or at a worksite and anywhere else where social distancing cannot be maintained.

The following individuals are exempt from this requirement per CDC guidelines:

- Anyone for whom the use of a face covering would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition (must submit documentation to school nurse);
- A child whose parent, guardian, or person responsible for the child is unable to remove the face covering safely on their face.

Providing Face Coverings:

ACES will provide the appropriate face covering to any student or staff member who does not have one. Face covering includes cloth face covering or face masks. (See below on guidance for face coverings.)

- **Face masks.** Surgical or procedure masks should be reserved for healthcare professionals (HCP), such as the school nurse or school medical advisor, or staff providing direct support to students with special healthcare needs or disabilities.
- **N95 respirators.** N95 respirators should be primarily reserved for school nurses who may be involved in aerosol-generating procedures such as, provision of oxygen via high-flow nasal cannula, nebulizer treatments, and open suctioning. Staff not engaged in providing such procedures may wear cloth face coverings (or procedure mask if available).
- **Face Shields.** Face shields protect the eyes, nose, and mouth from contamination from respiratory droplets, along with masks or respirators.
 - Face shields should be used by staff (such as school nurses) who are involved in aerosol-generating procedures such as the provision of oxygen via high-flow nasal cannula, nebulizer treatments, and open suctioning.
 - Face shields worn with face masks may also be used by staff who support students with special healthcare needs (who are not able to wear masks and who may need assistance with activities of daily living, such as toileting, eating).
 - Face shields may also be worn by students during speech and language exercises when face coverings/masks are not appropriate for the activity.

Protecting high-risk students/educators:

ACES will provide educators with surgical masks and face shields in cases where close contact between educators and students is highly likely (such as when interacting with individual students with disabilities who cannot socially distance independently).

Social Distancing:

Limiting face-to-face contact with others is the best way to reduce the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Social distancing also called "physical distancing," means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home.

ACES will ensure that students are maintaining social distancing to the maximum extent possible. Where distancing is not possible, appropriate face coverings and other protection (such as face shields) will be available.

Social distancing may not be possible to maximum extent possible should be when staff members are:

- Accommodating students with special health care needs or disabilities who may require direct contact (e.g., assisting with toileting or ambulation).
- Conducting health assessments or screenings (e.g., taking a temperature or listening to lung sounds by the school nurse). In these circumstances, appropriate face coverings and other protection will be available and utilized.

All ACES classroom and community spaces will be set up to promote social distancing to the maximum extent possible.

There will be markings set up throughout the school to identify that students and staff are always practicing social distancing.

In situations where social distancing cannot be maintained, the students and staff members will be wearing face coverings (disposable masks, cloth masks, or face shields).

Group sizes

- Individual student needs will determine the exact student to teacher ratio.
- ACES will adjust the group size based on the size of the classroom to ensure that the instructional area is large enough to allow for social distancing to the greatest extent possible.

Mixing of Groups

When more than one adult is required in a classroom, staff will work with consistent teams to minimize cross-contamination of student groups.

- Groupings will be assigned at the start of each day.
- Staff will stay with the same group of students throughout the day as much as possible.
- Students will stay with the same group of students throughout the day as much as possible.
- Staff will keep a log of any mixing that may occur throughout the day. In the absence of a log, ACES will assume that the staff has come into contact with every classroom and respond accordingly.

Distancing in the bathroom:

ACES will:

- designate a separate bathroom for any student that becomes ill
- tape off some stalls or sinks and place a sign indicating they should not be used in bathrooms, where distancing to the maximum extent possible is not feasible
- assign bathrooms by students or classes by zone wherever possible
- determine bathroom occupancy by the number of persons who can use the bathroom while maintaining social distance to the maximum extent possible; therefore, it will vary based on the size and layout of each bathroom
- not allow personal items should be stored within the bathroom (including staff bathrooms)
- attempt to minimize the time in the bathroom
- encourage staff and students to close the lid when flushing in those bathrooms where the toilets have covers

Material Sharing:

ACES will restrict the sharing of educational materials between individuals. These materials include, but are not limited to, books, computers, calculators, writing utensils, and art supplies.

- Material sharing will be monitored closely. Those materials that need to be used by more than one student during the day must be cleaned and sanitized between uses.
- All materials will be appropriately cleaned, disinfected, or sanitized materials at the end of each school day with approved cleaning supplies.

Storage:

- **ACES will** provide each student with a specific cubby or locker to store their personal belongings where possible.

Facilities:

As much as possible, ACES will adjust facilities to minimize the risk of infection:

ACES will:

- Adjust indoor air ventilation to the extent possible with the current HVAC system.
- Use outdoor instruction where safety, weather conditions, and physical space allow.
- Ensure that all water and ventilation systems are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.

ACES Bus Transportation:

- Where there is low transmission risk (Green) in the community, and some restrictions are in place in schools, ACES buses and vans will be available to operate up to full capacity.
- All students and staff on the van will be required to wear a face mask or cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth during transit unless the student or staff member has a documented exemption from wearing a mask. In the event of an exception, the student and/or staff member will be offered the option to wear a face shield.
- The students or staff face covering must be in place before boarding the bus and must be kept in place until they are completely off the bus.

- Students in grades K, 1, and 2 should sit in the front of the bus. All other students should load into the bus from the back row to the front (where the first passengers onto the bus sit in the back row). This will reduce the number of people passengers walk by as they get on the bus and will prevent crowding in the center aisle when the bus arrives for unloading.
- Passenger density will be reduced significantly when there is moderate spread (Yellow) because schools will be employing a hybrid-learning model when in this status. During moderate spread (Yellow), bus passengers will be spaced with family members sitting together, and non-family members should be spaced 6 feet apart utilizing alternating diagonal seating.
- Students must not change seats during the route.
- ACES will employ **temporary monitors** on student transportation at the beginning of the school year to facilitate successful compliance with school health policies on the bus.
- ACES will provide back-up masks if students do not have face coverings when boarding the bus or van.
- ACES asks that parents place face covering on the student before the student enters the transportation. The temporary monitor will assist when necessary, but the employee is there to encourage students to keep their face covering on not to assist because assisting the students will place the temporary monitor in close contact with the student.

Healthy Hygiene Practices

ACES will promote healthy hygiene practices by posting signs on how to "Stop the Spread" in all school buildings in easily seen locations.

Hand hygiene:

ACES will:

- reinforce to staff and children, regular handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds should be done regularly.
- provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer at every school entrance and in every classroom, kept secured in classrooms where children can safely use sanitizer without supervision.

Respiratory hygiene:

ACES will encourage all staff and children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of the elbow.

Training:

ACES will provide training that covers social distancing, cleaning protocols, PPE application, and hygiene practices for all students and staff.

Cleaning & Disinfection

Cleaning logs: ACES will implement the use of cleaning logs to track cleaning frequency at each school.

Bathroom cleaning:

ACES will ensure that bathrooms are sanitized at least twice a day or as needed.

ACES will designate separate bathrooms for different classes where possible. Where not possible, schools will set up schedules for classes to use the bathroom (and thus avoid mixing of classes).

Cleaning practices:

ACES will ensure that bathrooms are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day or as needed and will follow CDC disinfecting and cleansing protocols.

Specifically, **ACES will:**

- use disinfectants correctly
- clean surfaces before use (disinfectants cannot penetrate the dirt barrier)
- use green products (green products are certified by an independent third-party)
- conduct disinfection in the absence of children or periods of lowest occupancy
- use the least amount of disinfectant recommended

In addition to full cleaning and disinfection at least twice daily or as needed, ACES staff will spot-disinfect high-touch surfaces throughout the day. ACES will place signs near sinks reminding students and staff to wash hands before and after using the restroom.

School Closure and Reopening:

The decision to suspend or close a school program for some or all participants will be made by the Executive Director or designee in consultation with the Department of Public Health that supports the town where the school resides. Any ACES school will implement short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. In the event a situation occurs at an ACES school, the programming will convert to distance learning, and the building will be closed to all students and staff for five days. The initial short-term dismissal allows time for ACES and the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school. This will enable the Executive Director, in consultation with the local health department, to determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19. The Executive Director will send out a communication to all ACES staff, families, and school districts affected regularly to keep all stakeholders updated on the situation.

- Schools will initiate recommended CDC cleaning procedures following a confirmed COVID-19 case. Decisions on which, if any, staff should be allowed in the school will be made in collaboration with the local health department and school medical advisor, if applicable.
- ACES administrators will work with their local health department following a temporary closure to determine when students and staff can safely return to schools.

Mandated Reporting

All ACES staff work under the mandated reporting requirements set forth by the CSDE at all times, regardless of the instructional delivery model. Therefore, all staff are mandated by law to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect.

General Questions

For general and/or non-emergent questions about safety and security, contact any member of the Compliance Liaison Team below or email us SAFETY@aces.org

<p>Meg Birmingham Nursing Coordinator/Health Advisor mbirmingham@aces.org 203-498-6800</p>	<p>Tim Gunn Director of Facilities tgunn@aces.org 203-498-6800</p>
<p>Jason Hiruo Director of Safety Jhiruo@aces.org 203-498-6800</p>	<p>William A. Rice Assistant Executive of Schools and Curriculum wrice@aces.org 203-498-6800</p>

School Orientation Protocols

Type	Plan
Parent/Family Orientation	<p>During the week of 8/17, parents/families will receive information about scheduling on-site building orientation on 9/3, 9/4 or 9/8.</p> <p>For those who choose not to attend in-person, recorded orientation materials will be posted to ParentSquare and www.aces.org/ECA and will be available for parents/families to view at their convenience.</p> <p>By viewing the orientation content (in person or recorded) parents/families acknowledge that they have received relevant health and safety information related to school reopening.</p>
Staff Orientation	<p>Orientation videos for staff will be accessed through Google Classroom.</p> <p>By viewing the orientation content, staff acknowledge that they have received relevant health and safety information related to school reopening.</p>
Student Orientation	<p>Students will be offered the opportunity to tour the building with parents/families on 9/3, 9/4 or 9/8, with priority given to first year students.</p> <p>Students will also view the recorded content with parents/families (see Parent/Family Orientation above).</p> <p>Instructors will also review the content of these videos and all reopening procedures and protocols with each of their classes.</p>

Pick up and Drop Off Protocols/Student School Entry and Dismissal Protocols

Because students are transported from their sending schools, it is unusual for large numbers of students to arrive at one time; their arrival times self-stagger. Students will not be permitted to gather in common areas before classes begin (such as on the first floor) and instead will go directly to their departments. When busses arrive late, students will go directly to their departments/classes rather than sign in at the security desk, and attendance will be reported by the instructor to the main office.

At dismissal, students will leave ECA according to a predetermined schedule, to ensure staggered departure times and to eliminate crowding in stairwells and hallways.

Social Distancing Protocols

The number of students and staff in the building each day will be small enough to ensure appropriate social distancing.

School Movement Protocols - (How students will move around the school)

Students will remain in their respective departments, on separate floors, except during break time. Break times will be scheduled to ensure students maintain their cohorts. Outdoor space will be used for breaks, weather permitting.

Mask Break Protocols

To ensure that students remain appropriately distanced while masked, “mask breaks” will occur at appropriate times during instruction. Masks must be worn during breaks.

Classroom Set-up Protocols to Maximize Social Distancing

ECA rehearsal spaces, workshop rooms and studios have little to no typical school furniture. Floors are marked to indicate 6-foot segments to signal appropriate social distance.

Lavatory Usage Protocols

Lavatories will be available to students as needed, with limited occupancy to ensure safe social distancing.

Nursing Protocols

Per ACES guidance.

Educational Programming

Color (Based on Guidance from Governor or Designee)	In-Person	Distance Learning
Green/Yellow	<p>Providing all of our students with access to ECA is imperative. In consideration of the evolving data related to COVID-19 in our state, the variety of plans proposed by our 30 sending districts, and parents'/families' prerogative to continue to keep students at home once school begins, ECA's programming must be flexible and allow students to access and engage in their learning in multiple ways.</p> <p>Per CDC guidance (3/25/2020, p. 9), ECA's hybrid plan "will limit cross-school transfer" of the virus among students "brought from multiple schools." To ensure that all students have in-person education, to ensure maximum health and safety of students and staff, and to ensure that we are able to respond if/when health data changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All instruction will be blended ● Student cohorts in each department will be scheduled for in-school time (tutorials, intervention, small group instruction, etc.). If parents/families opt out of in-person instruction, faculty will provide the same intervention by Zoom (or another similar platform). ● No in-person performances or exhibitions until 100% in-person school resumes. <p>Department-specific schedules for in-person and distance learning will be available as of 8/17. No more than 50% of ECA's student body will be on site at one time.</p> <p>Sending school districts will provide transportation as usual.</p>	
Red	N/A	If schools are required to close, all teaching and learning will happen remotely.