ACES
MILL ACADEMY
FALL RE-OPENING
PLAN

Kerri Gilmore
Principal
Version 1.0
8-3-20
ACES Mill Academy Fall Reopening Plan

Below you will find the Health and Safety protocols that will be implemented by ACES Mill Academy 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 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 any ACES school or program. 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 answers 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 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 visitors 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.

  o Students or staff will be isolated in a room designated for symptomatic people.
  o 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.
  o Students will never be left unattended in an isolation room.
  o Parents and/or guardians will be called to pick students up from school immediately.
  o 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 parent square.
- 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 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

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 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](mailto:Emergency@ACES.org)
- will forward copies of the COVID 19 tracing logs to security, facilities, nursing, and human resources via [Emergency@ACES.org](mailto: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:**
  
  o Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  o 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.
  o 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.

  o 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.
  o 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).
  o 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 walking by others 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meg Birmingham</th>
<th>Tim Gunn</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Coordinator/Health Advisor</td>
<td>Director of Facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:mbirmingham@aces.org">mbirmingham@aces.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<th>Jason Hiruo</th>
<th>William A. Rice</th>
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<tr>
<td>Director of Safety</td>
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## Orientation Protocols:

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<td>Parent Orientation</td>
<td>ACES Mill Academy’s Reopening Plan will be shared with parents prior to students returning to school. ACES Mill Academy Administration will conduct two virtual meetings where the plan will be reviewed, and an opportunity to ask questions will be given. These virtual meetings will occur in two different sessions. Information regarding these sessions will be sent to parents via ParentSquare.</td>
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| Staff Orientation          | **August 31- September 2**  
All ACES Mill Academy Staff will be trained on the Reopening Plan and Procedures prior to students starting. Additional training will occur periodically utilizing Wednesday afternoons as the primary time to conduct these sessions. |
| Student Orientation        | **September 3, 4, 8 (partial days)**  
ACES Mill Academy will utilize partial days to orient students to policies and procedures. A limited number of students will be in the building each day.  
**September 3- yellow and red teams**  
**September 4- blue team**  
**September 8- green team**  
More information regarding these orientation days will be sent out via ParentSquare. |
Pick up and Drop Off Protocols

**Drop-Off:** Parent/Guardian will drop off students at the main entrance of the building. Parent/Guardian will pull their car into the parking lot, remain in their car and phone the school (203-281-6949). A staff member will then go to the entrance to receive the student from the parent/guardian.

**Pick-Up:** Parent/Guardian will remain in their car. Parent/Guardian will pull the car into the parking lot near the main entrance. Parents will phone the school (203-281-6949) upon arriving. A staff member will go to the main entrance where they will check the ID of the person picking the child up and have them sign the student out in the school-issued log. Then the child will be released to the Parent/Guardian.

**Student School Entry Protocols:** Students will exit transportation vehicles, one vehicle at a time. This will be monitored by designated staff. Students will enter the building following ground markers. Students will then relinquish personal items and personal electronics to coat room staff. Students will then proceed through building safety management precautions prior to proceeding directly to the classroom.

**Student School Dismissal Protocols:** Vans/busses will be called one at a time. Students will leave his or her classroom, proceed to the coatroom, gather personal belongings, exit the building, and enter their designated vehicle.

**Social Distancing Protocols:** All classroom and learning spaces have been set up to maximize social distancing in accordance with the CSDE “Adapt, Advance, Achieve” plan dated June 29, 2020. Classrooms are arranged in order to provide each student with their own individual learning space that is spaced as far apart as possible while allowing for all students to be in the learning environment.

**Use of Outdoor Spaces Protocols:**
A sign-up sheet for available outdoor space will be provided. Each class/cohort will sign up for specific times and will follow sanitation guidelines when they are done with the space, ensuring that all areas are clean and ready for the next class/cohort.
**School Movement Protocols:**
All movement in the hallways will be on a limited and as required basis. Movement through high traffic areas are marked with one-way direction arrows. Staff and students should move through the hallways remaining as far to the right-hand side of the hallway as possible to allow for two way flow in areas where there is no alternative. Xs are marked on the ground to ensure social distancing when students are traveling in the hallways.

**Classroom Set-up Protocols to Maximize Social Distancing:**
All classroom and learning spaces have been set up to maximize social distancing in accordance with the CSDE “Adapt, Advance, Achieve” plan dated June 29, 2020. Classrooms are arranged in order to provide each student with their own individual learning space that is spaced as far apart as possible while allowing for all students to be in the learning environment. All desks/learning areas are facing in the same direction.

When required to move into a different phase or reduced capacity, learning spaces will be adjusted, and social distancing increased.

**Lunch Protocols:**
- Students will eat lunch in their classrooms.
- TAD or teacher will go to the cafeteria to pick up the lunches and will bring them to the classroom to pass out to the students.
- The cart being used should be sanitized after each use, and each team/cohort will have its own cart or multiple carts.
- After students are finished eating, they will put their masks back on, and they will throw their trash out in the garbage that is located outside of the classroom.
- Once they throw out their lunches, all students will use hand sanitizer to sanitize hands, and all desks will be wiped down using sanitizer.
- At any point during lunch, if a student needs to leave their desks, they must put their mask back on.

**Recess Protocols:**
A recess schedule will be set up to maximize outdoor recess space while allowing all classrooms to have individual access to space at least once per day. Recess areas will include outdoor field area and portable basketball hoops.

Recess times will be limited to one cohort in space at a time. Staff will station around the recess space to ensure supervision and monitoring of social distancing by students.
Students and staff will be required to wash and/or sanitize hands thoroughly immediately before and after recess time.

All cohorts will be supplied with their own recess equipment. All recess equipment will be cleaned at the end of each day.

**Lavatory Usage Protocols:**
Staff will monitor lavatory usage, limiting availability to one cohort at a time. This will ensure that students from different cohorts are not coming into contact with each other. Before leaving, the lavatory students will wash their hands thoroughly.

**Bathroom Cleaning Procedure:**
Each bathroom will be cleaned two times per day. Cleaning will comply with DPH guidance for cleaning and disinfecting schools during COVID-19, as well as the DCD disinfecting and cleaning guidelines.

Bathroom Cleaning Logs will be placed in each bathroom to document the cleaning.

Principal or designee will periodically check the cleaning logs to ensure cleaning is occurring as required.

**Nursing Protocols:**
If a student asks to see the nurse, the staff will call the nurse's office to ensure a nurse is available before coming down with a student. Staff and students should follow marked signage in the hallways when walking to and from the nurse’s office to maximize social distancing.

If no nurse is available, the staff will leave a phone message. In the event of an emergency, the staff will call the main office.

Designated seating will be established outside of the nurse’s office, where students will wait to be seen. Only one student will be allowed in the nurse’s office at a time.

Medications, including inhalers, will be administered in the nurse’s office. Staff must call down to the nurse to let them know they will be bringing the student to the nurse’s office. The staff member and student will wait in the designated area until the nurse is ready. Once the nurse is ready, the student will enter the office by themselves, and the staff will wait outside in the hallway. After taking medication, students will sanitize their hands and then return to class with the staff.

Staff will be supplied with basic first aid supplies for their classroom for minor injuries, cuts, scrapes, etc.
Students cannot be sent unaccompanied to the Nurses office. A staff member must accompany students.

Please limit unnecessary visits to the nurse’s office. When you phone the office before coming down, please expect to answer questions related to the situation first.

If medication/paperwork arrives from home in a backpack, please call the administration, and they will retrieve it from the classroom.

Staff non-emergent injuries call Telecare 866-730-1143 if you need to be seen contact building administrators, i.e., principal and assistant principal.

**Mask Break Protocols:**
- Mask breaks will be on an as-needed basis. Students will be able to ask for a mask break when necessary but will be limited. If teachers feel that their class needs a built-in break, they will build this into their schedule.
- Each team will have a designated mask break area. (Teams will designate an area within their area to use for mask breaks.)
- Staff will bring the student to the area.
- Staff and student will distance themselves from each other (At least 6 feet away)
- Student will then be able to take off his/her mask for up to 5 minutes.
- After the 5 minutes are up, the student will put their mask back on, and the staff will bring them back to class.

**Educational Programming:**
- Red/Yellow/Green: No transitioning. Keep your homeroom students. We will revisit this throughout the Fall to see if transitioning is possible, but with scheduling need to keep our homeroom students for now.
- Blue: Teachers transition. Students and TADs will stay in their classrooms.
- All lessons should be Google Classroom based. (This will allow for a smooth transition to online learning if the need arises to go to a hybrid model or full virtual learning.)
- When in school, students will have a regular point sheet, and behavior data will be collected.
- Online programs available:
  - iReady (both reading and math)
  - IXL (read, math, science, social studies)
Parents who opt out of in-person learning:

- ACES schools will contact each family who chooses distance learning in the Fall and provide them with information on how to access distance learning by August 21, 2020. Distance learning orientations will be held by each school and program virtually during the week of August 24, 2020.
- Classes will be live-streamed via Zoom, allowing students to join and participate. Teachers and TADs will also be available throughout the day to answer student questions.
- ACES Mill Academy will provide a direction sheet for parents with Google Classroom/Zoom information.
- Students who are new to ACES and do not have a device will receive an ACES device to support their distance learning.

Resource Room/Restorative/Behavior System/Resource Rooms:

- One Restorative Room per pod. Rotate between Behavior Staff (Including BT, BTII & BCBA) and TAD’s in that pod.
- Emphasize escorting students back for safety.
- Student desks will be maximized for social distancing.
- Disinfect after each student leaves the Restorative Room.
- Students may be able to use computers.
- Must bring pencils or their materials.
- All other resource protocols remain the same.

Behavior System:

- Emphasis on behavior staff working with the students in the room if possible. Students may not end up in the Restorative Room after losing points and level and getting an infraction.
  - Emphasize more therapeutic approaches.
  - For marking this: Create a laminated sheet to keep on the students’ desks. If students receive an infraction, mark the sheet. Infractions can be accounted for on students’ individual sheets. Even if the student does not leave the room, he or she will know they are still going to be held accountable for his or her actions (loss of free time, loss of snack, etc.). Each period, the student can wipe it clean and start fresh.
- Maximize as much space as possible between desks in restorative rooms.
- Utilize resource rooms and outside areas, additional behavior staff, and social work staff (when possible) for restorative sheets and minor disruptive behavior.
- Use alternative space restorative for overflow.
• Utilize restorative conversation or scribe the answers instead of worksheets to minimize the sharing of writing utensils when possible. If there is a conversation, utilize google docs, or excel to record.
• Mill Academy will create a New Infraction code for Public Safety. This will include but not limited to refusal to wear a mask, refusal to comply with social distancing guidelines, refusal to take temperature when entering the building, refusal to sanitize/wash hands when asked, etc. The new code will be a 51.
• Desks will be sanitized each time a student leaves. One all surface cleaning during each lunch wave. If students need to utilize the Restorative Room, he or she will be directed to an alternative space.
• Buy Back opportunities will be available for turning around behavior.
• Reinforcement will be in place for students who keep their masks on and follow public safety rules.
• Separate point system for distance learning, student getting points for logging on to live lessons as well.
• Specific time slots for each pod’s reinforcement.

Unified Arts:
• Only students from the same cohort will attend Unified Arts at the same time.
• Classrooms will be sanitized between each class.
• Extended time to sanitize between classes will be worked into the schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color (Based on Guidance from Governor or Designee)</th>
<th>In-Person</th>
<th>Distance Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>In-person</td>
<td>Virtual learning for families who opt to keep kids home will be available. Details will follow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Schedule- A and B groups- A- Mon/Tue B- Thur/Fri</td>
<td>A- Wednesday/Thursday/Friday B- Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday Wednesday - distance learning for all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Distance learning</td>
<td>Distance learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Frequently Asked Questions

Regarding Reopening of Schools

Below you will find a list of frequently asked questions from parents regarding what the opening of schools will look like for the 2020-2021 school year. Please keep in mind that guidance from the State of Connecticut may change as we move closer to the reopening of school, and therefore, impact the answers provided at this time. Feel free to reach out to us with any additional questions.

Cohorting Questions

What is cohorting?

Cohorting is the concept of isolating students to small groups. This enables more effective contact tracing in the event a student or someone in his or her family should become ill. Cohorting also reduces the threat of exposure to the virus by reducing the number of students any one student interacts with. This will also permit cohorts to quarantine, as needed, rather than having to close an entire school or district.

Who is in my child’s “cohort”?

Your child’s cohort consists of the students in his or her team. Students will remain in their cohorts throughout the day, including lunch and essentials arts classes.

How will cohorting be maintained when students are on the bus?

Parents are strongly encouraged, if able, to drive students to and from school. This will allow for the social distancing of students on the bus who cannot rely on someone from home to drive them to school. Cohorts will not be observed on the bus.
Educational Format Questions

What educational options do I have for my child for the 20-21 school year?

At this time, parents can elect to have their child attend school on-site or engage with distance learning.

At what point do I need to decide if my child will attend school in person or remotely?

An ACES survey was sent out via ParentSquare on July 15, 2020. We will review the responses and contact the families who have not responded by the week of July 31, 2020. At any time, parents can decide to move their child from in-person learning to remote learning or back to in-person learning again by informing the school what they are choosing to do at any given timeframe.

If I decide to have my child begin the year with distance learning, will I be able to change my decision and have them attend school in person?

Yes, you will be able to change your mind throughout the year. The new learning status for a student would start on a date and time mutually agreed upon by parent(s) and school officials. This will ensure a smooth transition.

What will the phases look like?

The state is requiring districts to create three phases for the 2020-2021 school year so that we are prepared for whatever scenario we may encounter. These three phases consist of:

- Green- Fulltime in school (parents may choose to engage in learning from home option)
- Yellow- Hybrid learning (blend of in-school and distance learning)- a draft of school phases will be sent out on August 3, 2020.
- Red- Full distance learning-5 days a week
Will my child have the opportunity to attend school 5-days a week?

At this time, for Fall—Yes, if you elect to send your child to school, he or she will attend 5 days a week, fulltime. However, a cohort may transition to distance learning for 14 days at any given moment (depending on exposure).

When will ACES schools release reopening plans?

Over the next few weeks, ACES will share the elements of our reopening plan that have been developed. While we are waiting on further information from the State Department of Education, some elements will be shared on our website and through ParentSquare communications. The ACES Governing Board will vote on the reopening plan on August 13, 2020.

Positive COVID-19 Case Questions

If a child or their teacher is diagnosed with COVID-19, will the entire school be on distance learning or just that classroom?

The cohort of the diagnosed child will pivot to distance learning for 14 days. The district will also consult with local and state health officials who will review cases to determine additional impacts and safety measures. In addition, if someone is sick at home, they should contact that person’s health care provider (HCP) and discuss whether COVID testing is indicated for the individual who is sick.

If COVID is suspected - staff will ideally be tested too. Unfortunately, testing is less available than it was in June, and test results are slower.

If COVID is not suspected (as confirmed by HCP), students/staff can return to school or follow instructions of HCP.

If COVID is suspected or proven, household members stay home for 14 days. This is extended if the student/staff member is diagnosed with COVID during the ensuing days at home with a note from the HCP once negative results are confirmed to return to school.

How will families be informed if a child or teacher is diagnosed with COVID-19?

The families of the students in the classroom cohort where a positive case of COVID-19 has been diagnosed will be informed through ParentSquare and hard copy letter home. Please keep in mind that the privacy of staff and students will be honored, and the names of anyone who has contracted the virus will not be shared.
What would happen if a student in the class travels to a hotspot?

Per Governor Lamont’s guidance, the student would need to quarantine at home, while distance learning, for 14 days. This protocol will take effect if the trip took place within 14 days of the school opening or during the school year.

What if a child’s parent or other family member living in the same household tests positive - how can the school ensure that the child doesn’t come to school?

Ensuring cooperation will depend on communication and partnership between ACES employees, families, and health care providers.

Their provider should instruct any person diagnosed with Covid-19 that household members and close contacts should quarantine for 14 days (or longer if warranted if a household member becomes symptomatic or tests positive for Covid-19.) The school will provide instructions about Covid-19 symptoms and individual responsibility to staff and student families prior to starting school, and periodically during the school year, including reinforcement and updates.

If a cohort has to quarantine because a member of it tests positive for COVID-19, do the siblings of any of the students in that cohort have to stay home/ quarantine as well?

Creating cohorts (groups of students and staff that stay together throughout the day) is one effective way of limiting the spread of the disease. Cohorting also makes it easier to identify close contacts (contact tracing) if somebody in a school tests positive for COVID 19. Testing and quarantine are recommended for anyone who has come in close contact (< 6 feet) for ≥15 minutes in the period from 2 days before symptom onset) with a person diagnosed with COVID 19. People who have had contact with close contact (but not with the person who has or is suspected of having Covid-19) are not required to quarantine.

If a parent of a student tests positive for COVID-19, does that mean that the entire classroom cohort has to quarantine?

Anyone who came in close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID 19, including household members, are instructed to quarantine, self-monitor, and consult with the health care provider. The cohort would not need to quarantine unless they came in close contact with the person who tested positive.

What if a parent works in a hot zone or hospital?

With regard to school attendance, the guidelines for family members of people who work in hospitals are the same as for the rest of the population: Stay home if sick, or if exposed to someone who has tested positive for, or is presumed to have Covid-19. Consult with a health care provider.
If a family has more than one child attending school, will all of them have to stay home if one of them exhibits COVID like symptoms?

Yes. All household members and close contacts of a person with presumed Covid-19 or positive Covid-19 test are expected to quarantine for 14 days following the last day of exposure to the person with Covid-19, to ensure that they don’t get sick themselves and spread the virus to others.

What if the teacher has been exposed, but does not have symptoms or positive test results?

Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus.**

The teacher would be expected to quarantine for 14 days following the last day of exposure to the person with Covid-19 to ensure that they don’t get sick themselves and spread the virus to others.

**Face Mask Questions**

**Is it a requirement for my child to wear a mask at school?**

Yes, per Governor Lamont’s reopening plan, it is a requirement for students and staff to wear masks at school.

**What if my child has a medical/other condition that does not permit him/her to wear a mask?**

1. Mask Exemption will be based on documented, diagnosed health issue including physical, physiological, behavioral, and mental health issues.

2. Exemption decision will be made by the appropriate school professional:
   - School Nurse
   - School Social Worker, psychologist, or guidance counselor
   - BCBA
   - School Principal or Assistant Principal
   - OR
   - Student’s Health Care Provider (HCP)

3. The Student’s parent/guardian and HCP will be informed of mask exemption.

4. Tech Services will create a system of noting and tracking mask exempt status in Power School, including an alert that will appear next to student’s name if mask exempt (Circle with M in the middle and slash through it.)
5. School nurse will briefly document reason for mask exemption in Nurse’s Log in Power School. The person making the decision about exemption (as above) will be responsible for informing nurse of exemption and reason so it can be documented in Power School. (This can be one sentence: “Student exempt from wearing face mask due to ________.”)

Rationale:
The CT Reopening Plan doesn’t define any of the exceptions mentioned. We will make every effort to consider each case professionally and objectively, keeping the guidelines in mind. Trouble breathing could be asthma; incapacitated could be based on cognitive ability; medical reason could include autism or anxiety. Many special education students fall into one or more of these categories.

The CT Reopening plan states:
For anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance, face coverings and masks should not be required, per CDC guidance.
For anyone who has a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face covering, masks should not be required. P 21

AND
Exceptions may also be necessary for certain special education students or other special populations. P22

Can my child wear a mask from home?

It is recommended that parents provide cloth masks to their children. These masks will also allow for easy washing and drying to sanitize.

Should I start having my child get used to wearing a mask for periods of time?

Yes, we encourage parents to begin to help their child become comfortable wearing a mask, by gradually building up their comfort level. Practicing removing masks properly and encouraging children not to touch their masks will also help them become comfortable with these new routines.

Will my child get breaks during the day when he/she doesn’t have to wear the mask?

Yes, under controlled conditions, your child will be provided safe breaks while in the school, including during lunch. In addition, when possible, increased distancing will allow for masks to be removed during physical education class and recess. These procedures will be reviewed with students. This will also include a student’s ability to advocate for themselves when a break is needed. Additionally, the classroom teacher will periodically schedule mask breaks throughout the day to provide opportunities for students to take mask breaks as needed.

What if my child forgets their mask or it breaks?
The school will have extra adult and child-sized surgical masks available if a student does not have one or if their mask breaks. Extra masks will also be on all buses in the event a student does not have one. We encourage all children to have an extra mask sent to school each day, if possible, to ensure that each child has a mask that fits them properly, and they feel comfortable with if a replacement is necessary.

Where will my child store their mask when they are not wearing it?

Masks will be stored in paper bags marked with the child’s name.

Instructional Day Questions

Will my child stay in their cohort all day?

All K-8 students will stay with their cohort of students for all instructional subjects, including arts essentials courses (math, reading, writing, science, social studies.)

Where will they eat lunch?

Students will eat lunch in their classrooms within their cohort.

Can we still buy lunch from the cafeteria?

Yes, the cafeteria staff will package lunches and deliver them to the classroom.

How will recess work?

Students will still have recess every day, the only change is that it will be with their cohort only.

How will the recess equipment be cleaned/ shared?

Each classroom cohort will have their own supply of play equipment to use (i.e. balls, frisbees, jump ropes, etc.). Students will wash their hands before recess and after recess. The play equipment will be cleaned by staff daily.

Will my child still have Unified Arts courses (art, music, etc.)?

Unified arts will still be provided to all students. Protocols will be developed to best support the cohort model. More information will be communicated regarding this question as we receive additional guidance from the state.

Will my child still get small group instruction/ differentiation?
Yes, each classroom has been arranged to provide an area for small group instruction with mitigating strategies.

**My child has an individualized education plan (IEP), what will his/her support services look like?**

The support services are determined by the IEP. It is our full intention to implement the IEP while we are in-person using mitigating measures. Should distance learning be necessary, we will implement the IEP to the greatest extent possible under distance instruction and/or in-person if feasible.

ACES has offered learning flexibility. Parents may express their preferences for in-person learning, distance learning, or a combination of both for the beginning of the upcoming school year.

Students with IEPs will receive FAPE regardless of whether their learning takes place in a school building or from home. If the PPT determines a student requires distance learning due to health reasons, the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) will develop a distance learning plan to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities.

The school-based team will communicate with families. The school nurse and/or case manager will have individual conversations with families of students with medical challenges to talk about the available learning options, their preferences, the need, if any, for homebound services, and any of the family members’ concerns or questions. We encourage parents to reach out to their child's health care provider for precautions to follow for attending classes in school buildings and to share any concerns with the school-based team.

**Will parent meetings, such as 504 or IEP meetings, be in person?**

These meetings will still occur. We encourage these meetings to take place in a virtual format.

**How far apart will my child’s desk be from another student?**

The ACES Facilities Department and Reopening Crews have worked to adjust classroom layouts to meet guidance regarding social distancing.

**Will my child have his/her own device to use in class?**

Each student in grades 6-8 will have their own device designated for them to use if they attend in person or if parents select the distance learning option for their child.
Facilities Questions

What are the ventilation requirements? Are our schools up to the requirements?

Area Cooperative Educational Services or ACES is addressing all school ventilation and air filtering systems in accordance with guidance from the CT Reopening School Adapt, Advance, Achieve document sent to all school districts for school reopening planning purposes. Below are several action items that will be addressed at all buildings:

- Classroom univent systems thoroughly cleaned and filters replaced
- Cleaning of the interior surface of the supply and return ducting associated with the HVAC system. This includes cleaning all diffusers and grilles as well as bathroom exhaust registers
  - Commissioning of all building mechanical systems to ensure they are working to their fullest capabilities.
  - Inspection of all building ventilation systems, both automated and manual.
  - Includes a visual inspection of dampers and all of the controllers and actuators.

How will the building/my child’s class be cleaned each day?

Following guidance from the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, we are currently conducting deep cleaning of our schools during the summer months. We are also developing cleaning protocols for identifying which areas will require routine daily cleaning and which will require cleaning, followed by disinfection.

Building plans for cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces will include:

- Door handles
- Handrails
- Sinks, toilets and fixtures
- Light switches and cover plates

All efforts will be made to minimize contact with common surfaces.

- All building restrooms will be sanitized multiple times daily. Soap and/or sanitizer will be available in the bathroom and throughout the school buildings.
- Frequently touched surfaces and other equipment will be cleaned throughout the day.
- Hand sanitizing stations installed at school entrances and throughout the building
• Continue the training and Implementation of cleaning and disinfecting procedures recommended by the CDC and Department of Public Health
• Third-party training of custodial staff for enhanced cleaning & disinfecting procedures in schools

Areas requiring routine daily cleaning include:

• Outdoor areas such as benches, tables, railings, and play equipment. Do not spray disinfectants on these surfaces, as it is a waste of disinfection products, unnecessarily exposes children using equipment to disinfectants, and is not shown to provide any additional protection above routine cleaning alone. Cleaning of wooden surfaces outdoors is not recommended.
• Areas or items located indoors that are not touched or used frequently, such as floors, walls, windows, carpeting, light fixtures, and air vents.

Areas requiring routine daily cleaning, followed by disinfection include:

“High-touch areas,” which refers to hard surfaces indoors that are routinely touched by different individuals. Examples may include (but not limited to) desks and chairs, doorknobs, countertops, bathroom surfaces, copiers/scanners/fax machines, computer equipment, shared laptops, Chromebooks, or tablets, physical education equipment, locker rooms (benches, showers, and toileting areas), shared break room appliances, handrails, door knobs, and light switches.

Schedules will be developed at each school to complete this cleaning during and after school hours daily.

**Transition Questions**

How will my child learn the new procedures for school so that they are not encountering it on the first day for the first time?

School staff are working on creating guidance specific to parents and specific to students to teach students these new routines and procedures so that they are prepared for the first day of school.

We will communicate these routines and procedures during our Staff/Student Orientation days on September 3, 4, and 8, 2020. Parent orientation days will be provided virtually before the start of the school year.

What are the arrival and dismissal procedures for my child’s school?

Your child’s principal will communicate these routines with families in September.
Health and Wellness Questions

How will I know if I should keep my child home from school because they are ill?

Please review the following [document](#) from the CDC on what to do if you suspect you are ill with COVID-19. For other illnesses such as the flu, etc. it is good practice that students remain home if they have a fever and/or experiencing vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours. Students may return if they remain fever-free without the administration acetaminophen or ibuprofen. ACES will communicate further guidelines at a later time. If it is determined by the school nurse that a child is experiencing COVID-19 like symptoms while in the school building, both the school nurse and the parent will work together in quarantining the child safely and together plan next steps for the proper care of the child and those students and staff that remain in the school.

Will my child’s temperature be taken at school?

ACES is working with local health officials to make a final determination on this. We ask that parents take temperatures at home before sending a child to school each day.

Substitute Questions

How are substitutes trained and vetted in the reopening procedures and protocols?

Substitutes will be required to review and sign off on the safety procedures outlined in our reopening plan.

Parent Volunteer Questions

Will parents still be allowed to come into the building to volunteer for activities?

At this time, we are limiting the number of visitors permitted in the building in order to adhere to contact tracing guidelines in efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19.