



# HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN

Fall 2021

*HMS School for Children with Cerebral Palsy*

*Report updated: August 26, 2021*

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## HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN

FALL 2021

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# “FOCUS ON WHERE WE ARE, NOT HOW WE GOT HERE.”

## INTRODUCTION



The purpose of this document is to introduce our full reopening for fall 2021 to all parents, staff, and our school district partners. This is a work in progress as we address concerns, continue to learn, and provide each of you the information required to help us keep students and staff safe. This document is not designed to answer every question or cover every nuance in opening the building to full day in-person instruction and therapies. Please consider this resource as we share a snapshot of the planning that has occurred throughout COVID-19. We continue to engage in active dialogue with families and staff as we determine the best course of action for getting everyone back and staying back in the building safely.



## **STAFF VACCINE MANDATE**

All HMS staff are required to have their first dose of a Covid 19 vaccine by the start of school in-services on September 8th. A 2nd dose must be obtained no later than October 15th as a condition of continued employment. Staff can apply for a medical or religious exemption. These are closely reviewed and approval is at the discretion of HMS administration.

### **STAFF AND STUDENT MASKING**

- All staff will be masked while indoors. Students will be masked as able.

### **STAFF AND STUDENT TESTING**

- All vaccinated staff and students will be tested once a week.
- All unvaccinated students and any staff receiving a medical or religious exemption will be tested twice weekly.
- The above protocol applies to all non-HMS staff as well including parents, vendors, consultants, interns, volunteers, private duty nurses, and visitors.



## BREAKDOWN OF EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

All classes and therapies will be conducted in person. Should any students need to be out for an extended period of time please contact HMS to inquire what educational and therapeutic opportunities may be available for your child.

## THE RESIDENCE

- Residential students are a vital part of our school.
- The Residence opens in full on Sunday, September 12th.
- Respite stays will be available with careful consideration of the current COVID-19 data at the time of the respite request.



## ENTERING THE BUILDING

- All students- be they traveling via school district bus or personal transportation will be dropped off in the HMS bus entrance at the rear of the building.
- Testing will take place within 30 minutes of arriving on campus.
- Students in main floor classrooms will enter the building through the newly covered ramp to the assembly room where testing will take place.
- No students should be dropped off at the front of the building. If the bus entrance becomes congested or the driveway is congested with busses, we may need the option of front lobby use, but not at this time. For the start of school, we will only be using the rear of the building.

## EXITING THE BUILDING

- All students will exit in the same manner they entered. Weather and caregiver limitations will be considered when using the elevators
- Students on the ground floor will leave through the bus lobby.
- Students on the Main floor will exit via the ramp by the assembly room.
- All end of day student departures will occur at the rear of the building.



## BUILDING MODIFICATIONS

- HMS looks very different than it did in March of 2020.
- The art room has been converted to two different rooms and will be utilized in a variety of ways. Art will continue to occur in classrooms or the assembly room.
- A canopy has been added to the ramp leading to the assembly room.
- Equipment has been removed from rooms to allow for social distancing.
- Plexiglass shields have been placed in areas prone to close contact interactions; namely the front desk area and dividing the tables in the dining room to allow a student and feeding assistant on each side.
- Every space at HMS has been “reimagined”. This provides optimal social distancing, but allows several smaller areas where teachers and students can work one-on-one in a more private setting for a variety of therapeutic reasons.
- A full building air quality study was conducted in the fall of 2020 certifying the building safe for use.
- As a precaution industrial sized HEPA filters were installed in all classrooms.
- Portable air purifiers remain in place in many of the classrooms and therapy areas.
- The new ventilation system in the Gowen portion of the building was completed in July 2021. This improves air quality exponentially as the system circulates and replaces the air volume every hour.



## NOTES FROM STUDENT CARE SERVICES

### (FORMERLY KNOWN AS CLINICAL SERVICES INCLUDING ALL NURSING STAFF & PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANTS)

- During our staff in-service days, HMS nurses and PCAs may reach out to you to review any changes to your student's needs. Feel free to reach out via email in advance of those days if that is easier for you.
- **Social Contract:** much of our reopening is dependent on honest, clear communication from both home and school. We need to know about what signs and symptoms your child might exhibit during the day that are not related to Covid-19. For example: what do your child's seasonal allergies look like? Does your child seem more tired than usual and what might that look like during the day?
- As part of this social contract we will need families to let us know of any potential exposures that may happen while students are home or traveling.
- We recognize that for students who can tolerate wearing a mask, they will need mask breaks and mask changes throughout the day. Please send your child with their preferred masks. We have both adult and child-sized, disposable back-up masks if needed.
- Skin integrity checks under masks and behind the ears will be performed upon student arrival and departure.





## NOTES FROM SPEECH THERAPY

- Please send your students' communication equipment into the building with them each day. Communication equipment may include switches, mounts, communication devices, 3D symbols, etc.
- Students at HMS use alternative and augmentative systems to communicate and to actively participate in their educational program. Most of the students need physical assistance to access their communication tools. Staff may need to be in close proximity in order to provide this assistance. This is also true for physically managing any educational materials for activities. PPE will be worn at all times and staff will wash their hands/use hand sanitizer on a regular basis.
- Sharing of therapy materials (e.g., switches, books, laminated cards, etc.) will be avoided when possible. If necessary, students may alternate the use of materials after sanitation.



## MOVING THROUGH THE BUILDING

- All staff will be mindful of traffic patterns and potential areas of congestion when transporting students throughout, the building and do everything possible to maintain a minimum of 3 feet (6 feet is ideal.)
- Like a typical HMS day students will be moving from space to space and between floors to get to their therapies. As much as possible staff should move to students. When students do need to change location throughout the day the elevators can be used. Elevator use will be kept to one student and one staff member or private duty nurse per student to mitigate the fact that social distancing in an elevator will not be possible.



## SAFE PRACTICES FOR EMPLOYEES

This addendum describes a variety of policies and required practices at HMS School during the current public health emergency. Every employee is expected to follow these rules. HMS reserves the right to make changes to any of these policies at any time.

- We want to reassure staff that HMS has put in place several safety practices and changes around the building, including increased housekeeping schedules. But each employee is responsible as well for wiping down touch areas in their own workspace as much as possible in between cleanings.

### MEALTIMES AND MASK BREAKS

- Mealtimes will depend on the department and program needs. Staff with an office are encouraged to eat in their office. The dining room is off limits for staff dining and is only to be used for students and 1 to 1 nurses.

- Employees with shared workspaces may eat together when no less than 6 feet of physical space is provided for. Extended unmasked time should be limited to eating and not during times of documentation while in the presence of others. When eating at their work station, each employee is responsible for safe practice and sanitation of their work space and washing their hands prior to returning to work.

### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- HMS School will provide all PPE equipment to staff while at work including masks, goggles, shields, gloves, smocks, or other PPE equipment.

- Everyone regardless of their role must wear a face covering that fits and covers the nose, mouth, and chin always. The only exception is for those who have their own office and are alone.

- Employees may wear their own face coverings unless there are other departmental requirements. Please check with your supervisor.



## SAFE PRACTICES FOR EMPLOYEES (CONTINUED)

- Handwashing – Employees are required to wash their hands upon arrival and frequently throughout the day. Alcohol based hand sanitizers are provided by HMS.
- Social (Physical) Distancing – a minimum of 3 feet is expected at all times, 6 feet is optimal.
- Computers and telephones should not be shared.
- Employees will no longer use the timeclock for punching in. Employees are expected to punch in and out on the ESS mobile phone app. If you do not have a smart phone, please contact your supervisor or Human Resources.
- Employees are expected to remain in their own work areas as much as possible and not wander around the building.
- Locker use – practice social distancing when accessing your locker
- We had hoped to resume providing food to all employees, but based on supply issues due to the pandemic we may need to delay resuming employee meals. We will update staff when appropriate.



## SAFE PRACTICES FOR EMPLOYEES (CONTINUED)

- Employees may use microwaves, but must maintain a social distance, must not congregate, and should wipe down the microwave when done using it. Spray cleaner is provided.
- Employees are responsible for the safe storage of meals and beverages in their workspace. Refrigerators have been provided around the building.
- Employees who bring in meals are expected to dispose of trash in the closest trash receptacle. Trashcans are emptied daily.
- Water fountains have been modified to be touchless.
- No handshaking.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Cough or sneeze in your sleeve or a tissue.



## SANITIZING THE BUILDING

- The Facilities department has developed a schedule for deep cleaning areas through the building both during the day and in the evening. Bathrooms will be cleaned several times throughout the day.
- During regular usage, employees are expected to wipe down their workspaces and surfaces regularly using the spray cleaner provided by HMS. Contact Facilities ( x 133) if you require more sanitizer.

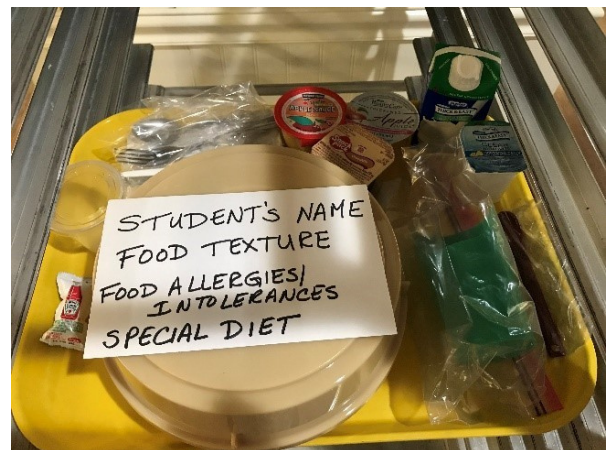
## EMPLOYEE SCREENING

- If an employee is sent home because they have one or more of the symptoms on the screening list, they will be required to use sick or other paid time off while out.
- If an employee arrives with a fever of 100.4 or more, they will be sent home and required to use sick or other paid time off while out. If fever free within 48 hours, the employee may return to work and go through the screening and testing process.
- If an employee is sent home on quarantine due to an exposure from a fellow staff member or a student at HMS sick time does not need to be used and employees will be paid for any missed time.
- If an employee is sick with “cold” or other similar illness, but is not exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, has not been exposed to anyone with COVID-19, HMS reserves the right to have them go home and quarantine in the interest of safety. In that case, the employee will not be required to use sick or other paid time off while out.



## LUNCH, SNACKS, AND FEEDING

- All HMS student meals will be served as contactless as possible.
- All student meals will be prepared in the HMS kitchen by the HMS Food Service staff and placed on individual trays.
- Every item needed for each individual student will be placed on the tray. This includes beverages, eating utensils, cups, desserts, and condiments (See photo on right).
- All food and non-food items will be covered or in a bag of some sort. Nothing on the tray will be exposed.
- Each tray will also have an index card with the student's name, food texture, any food allergies/intolerances and/or special diet (See photo on right). Please note, these cards do not take the place of the diet orders and feeding support plans which are in the black binder on the wall of the dining room.



## LUNCH, SNACKS, AND FEEDING (CONTINUED)

- Although the Food Service department will work diligently to make sure everything provided for each student is correct, it is also the responsibility of the feeder to check the tray for accuracy.

- The meal trays will be placed on a rack or cart and delivered by Food Services to the assigned meal location (See photo on right).



- In addition to the student meal trays, each rack or cart will contain bottles of water and thickened water for students who may need or request additional hydration at mealtime.

- When the student is finished his/her meal, the feeder will place the tray back on the rack or cart. Any item that is disposable should be thrown away. Any item that needs to be washed should be left on the tray. Food Services will bring the rack or cart back to the kitchen at the end of mealtimes for proper washing and sanitizing.

- We have created both safe spaces and practices to make sure all children eat safely. This will include both modification to the cafeteria and the use of several non-traditional spaces, so students have appropriate distancing for eating.

- All staff will be wearing appropriate PPE during feeding.

- Our speech therapists will be conducting evaluations on all students who eat orally.





# COVID-19 SCREENING PROTOCOLS

## Quarantine / Isolation Guidance

### Glossary:

**Quarantine:** The period of time when an individual, who may have been exposed to the virus, avoids contact with others.

**Isolation:** The period of time when an individual, who is infected with the virus, avoids being around others.

**Close contact:** Generally defined as the following: being within 6 feet of an individual who is COVID-19 + (positive) for a total of 15 minutes or more within 24 hours; providing care at home to an individual who is COVID-19 +; having direct physical contact with a COVID-19 + individual; sharing eating or drinking utensils with a COVID + individual; direct contact with the respiratory droplets of a COVID-19 (+) individual (cough, sneeze).

**Fully vaccinated:** 2 weeks after a two shot vaccine series or a single shot vaccine.

**Asymptomatic:** An individual exhibiting no signs of active COVID-19 infection (fever, chills, mild or moderate difficulty breathing, new or worsening cough, loss or change in taste or smell, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained fatigue or aching throughout the body).

The health and safety of students and staff and, maintaining the integrity of the HMS educational and therapeutic program will be priorities in determining how we ensure the safest possible environment to remain open.

You should NOT be expected to quarantine if you meet the following criteria:

- You have had COVID-19 in the past 90 days and have recovered.
- You have had COVID-19 in the past 90 days and remain asymptomatic.
- You are fully vaccinated and asymptomatic.

You SHOULD expect to quarantine if you meet the following criteria:

- You have had COVID-19 in the past 90 days, AND 45 days have passed since the diagnosis AND you are experiencing symptoms after being in close contact with someone who is COVID-19 (+) or is symptomatic for COVID-19 and awaiting test results.
- You are unvaccinated and have been in close contact with someone COVID-19 (+) or who is symptomatic for COVID-19 and awaiting test results.
- You are vaccinated and symptomatic.



## RELEASE FROM QUARANTINE OR ISOLATION

You can be around others:

Asymptomatic COVID-19 (+) confirmed individual (regardless of vaccination status).

- 10 days after symptoms first appear AND
- 24 hours with no fever without using any fever reducing medications (acetaminophen, ibuprofen or naproxen sodium) AND
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.

An asymptomatic COVID-19 (+) confirmed individual.

- 10 days after confirmation test OR
- If the individual develops symptoms during the 10 days, the “quarantine clock” restarts from the day that symptoms emerged.

### Failed COVID-19 screening

**For Staff:** If an individual fails the screening criteria upon arrival for work or has failed the pre-screening process prior to arrival they are expected to report this directly and promptly to the COVID-19 Resource Officer. After a health and wellness interview, to review symptoms is completed, a recommendation will be made at that time with on how to proceed.

**For Students:** Should a student test positive HMS will contact both the family and the school district. The student will be kept in a separate area under the care of HMS staff until arrangements can be made for the student to leave the building. HMS will refer the family to confirmatory testing and the COVID-19 Resource Officer will begin contact tracing while also remaining in contact with the family.



## CANCELING IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION DUE TO COVID-19 EXPOSURES

If for any reason HMS does not have adequate staffing to support in-person programming due to contact tracing or a COVID-19 exposure and needed staff quarantines or excessive staff illness we may need to transition to virtual learning with short notice. Should this come to pass HMS will use the One Call Now system like how weather-related cancellations occur. It will be our intent to not have to utilize this, but we are preparing for that possibility.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Protection, testing, and masking prepared by COVID-19 Resource Officer, Patty Mars

#### **How are we protecting our HMS community?**

- All CDC guidelines, precautions mitigation techniques remain in place.
- 6 feet social distancing (3 feet minimum)
- Masks for all those on HMS property
- Screening prior to admission to the building
- On-site contact tracing
- Dedicated COVID Resource Officer and COVID response team
- Partnership with CHOP Policy Lab and Project ACE- IT
- Routine monitoring of current COVID-19 metric data from each county

*Employees who do not need to be in direct contact with students will perform their job duties in other locations of the building.*



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

Protection, testing, and masking prepared by COVID-19 Resource Officer, Patty Mars

### **What is Project ACE-IT?**

Project ACE –IT stands for Assisting Childhood Education through Increased Testing. Developed by CHOP specifically to address the need for children to return to school during the pandemic, the program has partnered with schools and school officials in all 5 counties to educate, train and provide guidance and direction to schools as we begin the in-person education process.

Part of the reintegration is onsite learning; CHOP has enabled HMS to send our Covid Response Team members to be trained on the Binax Now rapid COVID-19 test. These trained individuals have demonstrated competencies to CHOP standards on the administration of the Binax Now rapid test.

### **How accurate is the Binax Now test?**

98.5% accuracy

### **Who does not get tested?**

Per CDC guidelines, anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days does not get tested but still gets screened. Once the 90 days is completed, onsite testing resumes.

### **I've heard the test is painful. Will it hurt my child?**

With the evolution of rapid testing, the Binax Now test only needs to be inserted into the first 1/3 (1/2 inch or so) of each nostril. Specimens are collected in each nostril by swabbing with a cotton swab (Q-tip size). Each nostril is swabbed in a circular motion for 10 seconds. Most people report their nose running or feeling like they must sneeze during or right after the test, as it tickles the hairs in our nose.

For those students who have oral/ nasal/ facial aversions, every effort will be made to collect a reliable sample as quickly as possible. If you feel this may be a concern for your child, you may help your child understand the process by explaining the test as well as using a cotton swab in or around their nose. This may prepare them for the sensation of the test as well as provide our staff with valuable information when performing the test.

If you are transporting your child arrangements can be made for you to perform the test on your child, especially if you have developed a system or procedure that works for you. Knowing of something that distracts your child may also assist with your child having a more positive experience with the testing procedure.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

Protection, testing, and masking prepared by COVID-19 Resource Officer, Patty Mars

### **Will my child have to wait in the bus or the car until results are confirmed?**

No. Your child will enter through the bus lobby entrance off Chester Avenue (back entrance). Upon arrival they will be screened and proceed to the nurse's station testing area. Quarantining/ sequestering the student is not necessary given the other mitigation techniques we have in place.

### **What if my child tests positive?**

If your child tests positive, they will be referred for confirmatory testing. Quarantine guidelines will be employed, usually 10 days. Your child will also be followed closely by Patty Mars to provide guidance and support in any way possible.

### **What if someone who has worked with my child tests positive?**

If this occurs, you will be notified immediately and referred for testing at an alternate location. HMS does not perform confirmatory testing or testing on those that have symptoms of Covid-19. Onsite contact tracing through our extensive record keeping allows us to expedite the process. All health information is confidential and maintained according to HIPAA federal guidelines.

### **Who do I report to if my child has been directly exposed to someone with known COVID-19?**

Patty Mars is the contact person.

### **Will my child have to wear a mask?**

Yes. Masks are mandatory for 1:1 nurses, parents, staff and students as tolerated.

### **What PPE (personal protective equipment) do staff use?**

All staff must adhere to the following:

- Masks at all times
- Face shield or goggles are optional when working with students
- Gloves when contact with secretions or body fluids likely.

Gowns or smocks when skin to skin or full body contact is likely to occur (transfers, personal care).



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

Protection, testing, and masking prepared by COVID-19 Resource Officer, Patty Mars

### **How is the building being maintained/cleaned between sessions?**

- HEPA filters have been placed in each of the therapy areas.
- Air quality testing performed
- EPA approved cleaning products and apparatus (COVID-19 compliant)
- Clear communications between environmental services, facilities staff, clinical services, and PT/OT staff once an area has been used and requires cleaning.

### **What if my child routinely has a runny nose due to allergies, does that mean they will not be allowed in?**

Not necessarily, if this is a concern for your child, or becomes a concern, please notify Patty Mars, the COVID-19 Resource Officer, or your child's assigned nurse to discuss on a case-by-case basis.

### **If I have a 1:1 nurse but I have a replacement nurse for that day, can they still come in?**

Yes. We will need to be notified as soon as possible. You may call Patty at 484-466-1148 anytime. You can help by asking the agency to fax over the nurse's credentials/attestation form to our HIPAA compliant fax so we have it on site as soon as possible that day.

### **What if my child's 1:1 nurse tests positive and my child tests negative?**

They will both be dismissed from the building.

### **If positive and dismissed for the day, where will my child wait if I can't get there right away, due to traffic or other unforeseen issues?**

Your child will be safely cared for by an HMS nurse or PCA using the medical orders on file and speaking with you for any additional guidance.

### **If we use bus transportation and we are dismissed for positive test, how does my child get home?**

You will need to ensure arrangements have been made for your child's transport home. School district buses have not committed to transporting any COVID-19 (+) cases home.



## ADDITIONAL COMMON QUESTIONS

### **How long will testing and mask wearing be in place?**

Both will be with us a while. Since many of our students are not eligible for vaccination and the virus load remains relatively high, we will need to have mitigation in place. We will continue to follow CDC guidelines and update you on any changes, but we anticipate these policies to be in place for the foreseeable future.

### **Will HMS have large gatherings of parents or guests in the building?**

HMS will not have large gatherings at this time. Caregivers are always welcome at HMS, but we do ask that you notify us of your visit so that we can coordinate it in the most safe and appropriate way within current protocols.

## FOR QUESTIONS:

As was stated at the beginning of this report, this document is a work in progress. The document will also be posted on our website.

Please send any questions or comments directly to [tquinn@hmsschool.org](mailto:tquinn@hmsschool.org).

We plan to continue to amend and extend this document as we learn more and welcome the insight and contributions of the entire HMS community to ensure a successful return to in-person school.

Thank you to all HMS families, staff, district partners and our Board of Directors for their support and guidance during this time. I would especially like to thank all staff that have directly contributed to putting this plan together.

Let's go!

- Tom Quinn, HMS School President

