

POMFRET COMMUNITY SCHOOL

SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AND CONTINUITY OF SERVICES PLAN

As part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER), the federal government required that each Local Education Agency (LEA) create a *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*. Such plan was made publicly available in June 2021 and was submitted to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) as part of the ARP ESSER application due in mid-August 2021. The Pomfret Community School Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan was updated for June 2022 as required.

I. Health and Safety Strategies

The Health and Safety Strategies addressed in this plan are subject to change based upon the most current guidance provided by the Connecticut State Department of Education and the Connecticut Department of Health.

Health Practices and Protocols

Pomfret Community School Health Practices

- The Principal in collaboration with the School Nurse will review staff training needs and resources to prepare any needed educational materials for training staff and students.
- Instruction on how to maintain a healthy environment may be provided to students, as needed, which may include:
 - Effective hand washing procedures
 - Application of hand sanitizer
 - Cough and sneeze etiquette
 - Safe donning and removal of facial coverings
 - Effective social distancing

Supplies

- The Pomfret Community School will have appropriate PPE (including masks and gloves) for staff use.
- Students arriving to school will be provided a disposable mask, upon request.
- Classrooms will be provided with access to facial tissues.
- The Pomfret Community School has a supply of chemicals for disinfection and sanitization in accordance with CDC, DPH, and CSDE guidelines. Approved chemicals for application will be indicated within the cleaning protocols developed by the Custodial/Maintenance Supervisor.

- The School health office has a supply of no-touch scan thermometers to conduct screenings for staff and students indicating potential symptoms.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers are located at points of entry and in high traffic regions in corridors in the event that students are unable to wash hands regularly.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers are located in all classrooms.
- All restroom spaces contain supplies of hand soap and disposable paper towels that are refilled throughout the school day.

Immunizations and Health Assessments

- Immunizations:*** The School Nurse will continue to update staff with changes to immunizations to CSDE guidance in accordance with [guidelines](#) from the Department of Public Health issued on June 17, 2020 emphasizing the importance of protecting students by staying up to date on immunizations.
- Health Assessments:*** The School Nurse will continue to update staff with changes to guidance from the CSDE issued on June 26, 2020 outlining the [requirements for Health Assessments](#) prior to students enrolling in school.

Reporting Illnesses and Addressing

Vulnerable Populations

The Pomfret Community School has developed protocols for the monitoring and reporting of student and staff illness. The goal of such protocols is to reduce the risk of spreading or contracting various illnesses while ensuring adherence to privacy and health protection laws.

Illness Monitoring Guidelines

- Families will receive communication based upon protocols established in the [Pomfret Community School Nursing Guidelines](#) outlining appropriate procedures to follow for determining when to avoid sending students to school. Parents should observe and screen their children prior to releasing them to board the school bus or enter a school building for temperatures that are **100 or higher**. Students, staff, and visitors exhibiting a temperature of **100 or higher** are not permitted to enter the school for any reason. Students or staff may return after 24 hours after a fever has dissipated or with documentation from a healthcare provider or documentation of a negative COVID-19 test.
 - Families may refer to CDC guidelines titled, [“When You Can Be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19”](#) or the [CDC Symptom-Checker](#) for additional information.
- Staff or students showing symptoms will be required to remain home and/or be released immediately from the school building. These will include but are not limited to:
 - [HIGH-RISK Symptoms](#) associated with COVID-19 according to CDC Guidelines and other infectious diseases in children
 - Fever (above **100** or per clinical judgement with OR without fatigue/body aches/chills)
 - New unexplained loss of taste or smell
 - Respiratory symptoms (cough, lung congestion, persistent shortness of breath)

- Gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea or vomiting)
- Recommended dismissal will occur when a student or staff member exhibits other related symptoms that cannot be explained by an alternative diagnosis at the Nurse's discretion.
 - Runny nose
 - Sore throat
 - Body aches
 - Headaches

Illness Reporting Protocols

- The school nurse will be the contact person for reporting staff and student illness.
- Parents (and staff) are to inform the school nurse if their child (or the staff member) are sick with COVID-19 related symptoms, particularly if they had a known contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also had contact with the school population.
- If students or staff receive a diagnosis of COVID-19 infection, the School Nurse and Principal will notify the Superintendent of Schools immediately. The Nurse will notify the NDHD ensuring that all privacy and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) confidentiality has been maintained.
- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has provided [guidance](#) that the district is permitted to ask employees, if they are experiencing symptoms of the COVID-19 virus.
- Screening will **not be required** for **all** students or staff entering the school building.
- The school will maintain a template document online that is shared between the school nurse and the principal to report and track cases in staff and students. The documentation will be submitted at the conclusion of each school week to the superintendent's office.
- The district will maintain all information about the staff or student illness as part of medical records while maintaining all relevant privacy laws and regulations.

Material Sharing

- Pomfret Community School will encourage families to review posted back to school supply lists (pens, pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue sticks, calculators, notebooks, etc.) to provide to students prior to returning in the fall.
- Students will wash or sanitize hands prior to utilizing instructional manipulatives for student practice or reinforcement of key concepts.
- Students will wash or sanitize hands prior to utilizing shared classroom spaces such as reading spaces, center stations, or other areas of congregation and maintain allowable physical distance between students.

Use of Face Coverings, Masks, and Face Shields

The Connecticut Department of Health and the Connecticut Department of Education no longer require the wearing of masks in schools. On February 23, 2022, the Pomfret Board of Education

made the wearing of masks optional for students and staff. *The Pomfret Board of Education Policy 4118.237/4218.237/5141.8 Face masks/Coverings is attached.*

Physical Distancing

Protocols to establish and maintain appropriate physical distancing for students and staff will be implemented should data related to illness indicate a need.

Providing clear guidelines, protocols, and expectations to students, staff, and administration will ensure the development of safeguards to promote a safe and high functioning learning environment. These logistical plans will be effectively communicated to promote a sense of ownership and responsibility for the entire school community.

Class Groups and Cohort Teams

- Staff will follow appropriate hygiene measures (hand washing, hand sanitizers) prior to entering instructional spaces.
- Students will wash or sanitize hands prior to entering special classes such as Art, Music, Library, Physical Education and Computers.
- Physical education classes will occur outdoors (weather permitting).
- The Principal will develop schedules that structure passing times to reduce the number of students in school corridors at any one time.

Classroom Layout

- School Administrators will oversee the organization of classroom spaces with maintenance staff to ensure instructional spaces are organized to provide appropriate social distancing between student workplaces, when feasible.

Foot Traffic, Hallways, and Shared Areas

- The Principal will develop a plan to minimize the number of students in hallways during passing periods.
- Use of lockers will be suspended indefinitely to minimize student contact with surfaces and congregation of students in corridors.

Recess/Playgrounds

- All students will have a thirty (30) minute outdoor recess per day.
- Students will wash or sanitize their hands prior to and at the conclusion of recess.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

During the opening days of school students will be reminded to use health protocols related to proper hand washing, application of hand sanitizer, and coughing and sneezing etiquette. Face coverings will be provided to students who request one. Students will wash or sanitize their hands at the start and the end of each recess session.

Hand sanitizers have been installed in all classrooms. Dividers have been installed between sinks and urinals in all lavatories. All air ducts have been cleaned and all filters have been changed. Air conditioners have been installed in all classrooms and in the cafeteria. All lavatories will be cleaned daily.

Students will be required to stay current with all requirements related to immunizations. The school nurse will communicate with families regarding state requirements related to health assessments.

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, Including Improving Ventilation

Professional Training Related to Facilities

- The Custodial/Maintenance Supervisor will ensure that all school ventilation systems are in proper functioning order (in alignment with [Guidance for School Systems for the Operation of Central and non-Central Ventilation Systems during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)) at full capacity prior to the opening of schools for staff in August and that:
 - All ventilation systems will be operated at full capacity one week prior to the reopening of school
 - The air flow is flushed for two hours prior to building occupancy
 - Ventilation systems are operational during school hours

- Routine inspections and maintenance are performed on a regular basis.

Restroom Protocols

The Custodial/Maintenance Supervisor will publish universal protocols for the cleaning and disinfection of restrooms at all schools. All plans will be in alignment with the guidelines set forth through the [Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Schools](#) during COVID-19.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Restrooms will be designated for use by certain areas of the building.
- Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily when the building is occupied.
- Cleaning and disinfection of restroom surfaces will also occur after conclusion of the school day.
- Custodial staff will complete a checklist to document regular daily cleanings of high touch surfaces in restrooms.
- All cleaning products utilized on surfaces will follow [Connecticut School Green Cleaning Law](#).
- Cleaning products will be utilized in well ventilated areas and should follow the manufacturer's stated instructions for use.

Restroom Usage Procedures

- Staff will limit the number of students accessing restrooms at any one time.
- Plexiglass barriers have been installed between sinks and urinals.
- Touch-free paper towel dispensers are provided in all restrooms throughout the school. Trash cans without lids are available in restrooms to minimize contact with surfaces.
- All restroom entrance doors will be propped open to avoid handling of door handles/knobs.

Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine, in Collaboration with the State, Local, territorial, or Tribal Departments

If a student or staff member who has been present in school has a **confirmed diagnosis** of COVID-19, the School Nurse and the principal will notify the Northeast District Department of Health and the Superintendent of Schools. The staff of the Pomfret Community School will take the lead role

in all contact tracing impacting students and staff as appropriate.—In all cases the school will maintain confidentiality in accordance with FERPA, privacy expectations, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). School officials will:

- Conduct Contact Tracing per CDC guidelines
- Notify All Close Contacts
- Provide for Continuity of Education for Students/Staff in Isolation or Quarantine.

The decision to close a room, or school will be made by the Superintendent based upon the particular circumstances and the recommendation of the Northeast District Department of Health. Members of the Board of Education and the State Department of Education will be notified of any school closure.

Diagnostic Screening and Testing

Testing for COVID-19 will be conducted weekly by Quest Diagnostics for students and staff as long as the program is funded. Written parental permission is required for students to participate.

Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to Educators, other Staff, and Students, if Eligible

The Pomfret Community School worked in collaboration with the Northeast District Department of Health, The Pomfret School and Rectory School to provide all staff the opportunity to be vaccinated. Vaccination clinics were held on March 4, 2021 and April 1, 2021 at The Pomfret School. When the Emergency Use Authorization was granted to vaccinate 12 to 15 year olds, the school disseminated information to families related to vaccination opportunities. Pomfret Community School ran a second series of vaccine clinics on November 15 and December 10, 2021. Pomfret Community School will continue to partner with appropriate local health agencies to make vaccinations available as appropriate. Pomfret Community School will also use its communication system to provide pertinent information related to vaccination opportunities.

Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities with Respect to the Health and Safety Policies

Pomfret Community School staff will comply with all federal and state mandates and statutes regarding students with disabilities.

- The district will identify high-risk students that may require remote instruction and/ or blended learning due to underlying health conditions or family members at risk.
- Special education programs may be allowed some flexibility with guidelines as long as the programs follow standards and public health strategies (hygiene, social distancing, and cleaning/sanitizing.)
- For students who need physical assistance with feeding, toileting or activities of daily living, protocols will be established and staff training will occur around safety and PPE.

- For students who exhibit significant behaviors that require de-escalation strategies and emergency safety procedures, protocols will be established and staff training will occur around safety and PPE.

II. Continuity of Services

The administration of the Pomfret Community School intends to open for in-person learning five days per week in the fall of 2022.

Local health indicators and trends will be monitored through collaboration with the Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH) and Connecticut State Department of Education.

Child Nutrition

Compliance Assurances with NSLP, SBP, and After School Snacks

- The EASTCONN Food Service Program will continue to follow National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and School Breakfast Program (SBP) guidelines.
- The EASTCONN Food Service Program will continue to determine eligibility for students needing free and reduced price meals and milk maintaining relevant documentation for claiming methods.
- The EASTCONN Food Service Program will continue to adhere to guidelines for the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) policies for school meals and milk including meal pattern requirements.

On-Site Meal Distribution Services

- In collaboration with the building principal, the EASTCONN Food Service director will outline protocols for student meal access.
- Students wishing to eat breakfast will be provided breakfast upon entering the building at prescribed locations.

Students' Academic Needs

Pomfret Community School will continue to offer a quality academic program for all students. Continuing in the fall of 2022, Pomfret Community School will provide summer school and again offer a series of after school sessions to address any of the learning gaps that are the result of the disrupted educational experiences caused by the pandemic. This program will be funded through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Act (ESSER).

Curriculum revision and professional development will be based upon Model Curriculum developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Social, Emotional, Mental Health and Other Needs

The full range of specialized services provided by special education professionals, the school counselor and the school psychologist will be available to meet the individual needs of students. Co-curricular and athletic opportunities will be reinstated.

In the fall of 2021 “Yoga for Classrooms” will be introduced for all students and will continue to be implemented. This program will also be funded through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Act (ESSER).

Pomfret Community School’s guidance counselor and school psychologist will administer a social/emotional screening tool to identify students in need of support. Results of screening are shared with classroom teacher and parents/guardians and a plan for support will be implemented.

Special Education

- The district will comply with all federal and state mandates and statutes.
- Programming decisions will not be based on a student’s disability category but the student’s developmental level and skills should be considered when required to follow district protocols.
- Special education programs may be allowed some flexibility with guidelines as long as the programs follow standards and public health strategies (hygiene, social distancing, and cleaning/sanitizing.)
- For students who need physical assistance with feeding, toileting or activities of daily living, protocols will be established and staff training will occur around safety and PPE.
- For students who exhibit significant behaviors that require de-escalation strategies and emergency safety procedures, protocols will be established and staff training will occur around safety and PPE.

English Learners (ELs)

- All language instruction education programs for English Learners will continue as well as support to allow them to access academic content.
- Communication with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in English will occur in the language they understand through translation and/or interpretation services.
- Students who are dually identified as ELs and students with a disability will continue to receive support for their ELs needs as well as support for their disabilities.
- All established processes for identification, parental notifications, assessment requirements, and provision of services will be followed.

III. Public Comment

A copy of this plan is posted on the district website. A notice will be sent to all families informing them of this posting and inviting all interested persons to submit written comments, questions, recommendations and feedback.

IV. Periodic Review Process

LEAs are required to periodically review and, as appropriate, revise their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023. Each review must include seeking public comment on the plan and developing the plan after taking into account the public comment.

Below are the dates that LEAs must submit a refreshed or updated plan to CSDE via eGMS. Review/revisit Dates:

- June 23, 2021
- December 23, 2021
- June 23, 2022
- December 23, 2022
- June 23, 2023

V. Understandable and Uniform Format

Federal regulations require that this plan be in an understandable and uniform format, to the extent practicable; is written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provided in an alternate format accessible to that parent.

This document, as well as all subsequent revisions will be posted on the district website in compliance with the timeframe presented in Article IV. of this plan. Each revision of this plan will be publically presented at a meeting of the Pomfret Board of Education. Notice of each revision will be published in the monthly school newsletter and emailed to all families in a Principal's Weekly Update.

To the extent practicable, Pomfret Community School will take the actions necessary to make this plan and all subsequent revisions understandable for all parents.

Appendix

4118.237/4218.237/5141.8 (a)

Personnel -- Certified/Non-Certified

Students

Face Masks/Coverings

The Pomfret Board of Education is committed to providing a safe environment in schools during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Maintaining a safe environment is critical to the District's ability to ensure students remain in a full-time classroom learning environment.

In accordance with guidance and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Education (DOE) and the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) masks are not required in the school setting or on school buses, but students and staff who chose to continue using a mask will be supported.

Allegations of harassment of any person wearing or not wearing a face covering or mask will be promptly investigated in accordance with District policy.

Students and staff with a positive COVID test or high-risk contact exposure must follow the current CDC guidelines with respect to isolation, quarantine and mask wearing.

Students or staff who test positive:

- If they are asymptomatic and continue to have no symptoms, they can end isolation after at least 5 days.
- If they have symptoms of COVID-19, they can end isolation after 5 full days if they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved (loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation)
- They should continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public until day 10 (day 6 through day 10). If they are unable to wear a mask when around others, they should continue to isolate for 10 days.

Students or staff who are unvaccinated and have been exposed to a confirmed positive case of COVID-19:

- If they test negative, they can leave home, but continue to wear a well-fitting mask when around others at home and in public until 10 days after their last close contact with someone with COVID-19.

4118.237/4218.237/5141.8 (b)

Personnel -- Certified/Non-Certified

Students

Face Masks/Coverings

- If they test positive, they should isolate for at least 5 days from the date of their positive test (if they do not have symptoms). If they do develop COVID-19 symptoms, isolate for at least 5 days from the date their symptoms began (the date the symptoms started is day 0). Follow recommendations in the isolation section.
- If they are unable to get a test 5 days after their last close contact with someone with COVID-19, they can leave their home after day 5 if they have been without COVID-19 symptoms throughout the 5-day period. Wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days after the date of last close contact when around others at home and in public.

Guidance Statements:

- *Transitioning to a Model of Routine Respiratory Disease Prevention and Enhanced Outbreak Management and Control for COVID-19 in PreK-12 School Settings*
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Coronavirus/PreK-12-COVID19 Transition-RoutinePrevention-Control_02182022_FINAL.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Coronavirus/PreK-12-COVID19%20Transition-RoutinePrevention-Control_02182022_FINAL.pdf)

- *Considerations for Boards of Education, District Administrators, and Local Decision Makers Regarding Potential Changes to School COVID-19 Policies and Practices*
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TUeXvEWH8KcpVW-dCuk-6ZiLdfaWXQ3v/view>

Policy adopted: December 16, 2020

POMFRET PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Pomfret, Connecticut