

Woodland and Powder Mill Schools

Health and Safety Protocols and Procedures for the 2021-2022 School Year

The health and safety protocols are based on DESE Guidelines and coordinating procedures are being developed to implement these protocols in a way that works for the STGRSD community.

1. Masks:

- In accordance with the DESE Mask Requirement issued on August 25, 2021 public school students (age 5 and above) and staff in all grades are required to wear masks indoors in schools. Masks are not required when outdoors. All visitors are also expected to wear a mask in school buildings.
 - The types of masks that will be permitted for use include: disposable surgical masks and washable cloth masks (2 layers are most effective).
 - Masks that will not be permitted include: bandanas and gator style masks.
- All masks and face coverings worn by students must be school appropriate and will adhere to the STGRSD policy, Code of Dress and Grooming.
- Exceptions to mask/face covering requirements will be made for those for whom it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors. Staff seeking an exception should reach out to Anne Larkham, Human Resources Manager. Parents seeking an exception should reach out to the school nurse. School Nurses, in conjunction with the Southwick DPH, will determine accommodations for individual students based on the students' needs and in conjunction with health providers.
- Mask breaks will occur throughout the day. These breaks will occur when students can be three feet apart and ideally outside or at least with the windows open.
- Masks/face coverings should be provided by the student/family, but extra disposable face masks will be made available by the school for students who need them.
- We encourage families to pack an extra reusable face mask for each student daily.
- The district will have available disposable face masks for situations where a mask is soiled or unwearable.
- The district will make available disposable face masks for the staff at DESE's recommended rate. Staff are welcome to provide their own reusable or cloth face coverings also.
- Face shields and plexiglass barriers are additional possible mitigation strategies but do not replace the requirement of mask/face coverings and do not provide adequate protection when used alone. This standard has also been confirmed by the Town of Southwick Board of Health.
- Students will receive training at the start of the school year in the proper way to put a mask on and take a mask off.
- Masks/face coverings are required to be worn by everyone on the bus during transportation.
- If a student refuses to demonstrate expected behaviors (e.g., refusing to wear a mask) we will follow these steps:
 - teacher gives verbal redirection in class
 - mask education
 - counselor conferences with student
 - principal conferences with student
 - parent called to pick up student

2. Physical Distancing:

- The STGRSD is committed to providing a physical distance of three feet when feasible.
- Students will be assigned to classroom cohort groups. When feasible, students will remain within their cohort. This may not be possible during times such as specials, small groups services, or academic interventions.
- Classroom and facility configuration: To the extent possible, desks will be spaced three feet apart and facing the same direction. Students will have an assigned seat and desk. Time spent in small groups or doing partner work will be minimized and to the extent possible three feet of distance will be maintained.

3. Hand hygiene: handwashing and hand sanitizing

- Students and staff will continue to exercise hand hygiene (handwashing or sanitizing) upon entering the school, before and after eating, before putting on and taking off masks, when using the bathroom, after coughing or sneezing, when using electronic devices or other shared equipment, after discarding a soiled mask and prior to putting a new one on, and before dismissal.
- Handwashing: When handwashing, individuals should use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with an individual disposable towel.
- Hand sanitizing: If handwashing is not feasible, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent ethanol or at least 70 percent isopropanol content will be used. Hand sanitizer should be applied to all surfaces of the hands and in sufficient quantity that it takes 20 seconds of rubbing hands together for the sanitizer to dry. Hand sanitizer will be placed at locations that do not have access to sinks.

4. Personal Protective Equipment

- The District will continue to procure the following safety supplies for use throughout the year:
 - Disposable masks for staff
 - Disposable masks for students (at 1 mask per week to supplement masks supplied by parent/guardian)
 - Nitrile and vinyl gloves
 - N95 masks for health and custodial staff
 - Disposable gowns (or substitute), eye protection, and face shields for student programs requiring additional protection
 - Hand sanitizer for wall units and classrooms
 - Electrostatic disinfection devices
 - Disinfection solution and cleaning wipes

- The acquisition of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies will continue to be a challenge for the school system as we will compete with other public-school districts in Massachusetts and throughout the world.

5. Cleaning and Disinfecting the Building:

- All cleaning procedures and protocols are and will continue to be based on guidance from the state.
- Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily or more often if possible.
- Powder Mill and Woodland Schools will receive a deep sanitization process one day a week during on-site operations.
- Custodial staff will be using electrostatic disinfection devices to assist in keeping classroom spaces free from germs. Additionally, a hospital-grade disinfectant will be used by custodians. This disinfectant needs to air dry and may leave a feeling of residue on the surface.
- Cleaning supplies will be provided to staff for use on an as needed basis.

6. Parent and Family Roles:

- Families can help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in our school by checking their children daily for any COVID-19 symptoms. Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves. Unvaccinated individuals and any close contacts presenting these symptoms should contact the school and follow testing and quarantine response protocols. Vaccinated individuals who are not close contacts should follow the testing and quarantine response protocols if they are experiencing symptoms in bold. These individuals may also seek clinical guidance to assess the need for PCR testing if they have other symptoms on this list. COVID-19 symptoms list:
 - **Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills**
 - **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
 - **New loss of taste or smell**
 - **Muscle aches or body aches**
 - Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
 - Sore throat, when in combination with other symptoms
 - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea when in combination with other symptoms •
 - Headache when in combination with other symptoms
 - Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
 - Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms
- Students must be kept home from school if they are sick or have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. In each of these scenarios, the family should notify their school principal that the child will be absent and the reason for the absence. The school nurse will follow-up with the family regarding the child's symptoms. It is important to know that the symptoms of COVID-19 mimic the symptoms of many other illnesses. To protect all students and staff, any symptoms of COVID-19 will be treated as a suspected case until determined otherwise.

- Students who have been instructed to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official should remain at home and notify the school principal.
- STGRSD will be implementing “test and stay” BinaxNOW testing, additional information to follow.

7. Closed campus:

- Until further notice, STGRSD will not allow visitors on the grounds. Whenever possible meetings and conferences will be held remotely. Fall Parent Teacher Conferences will be held via telephone or Zoom.
- When a child is being picked up, a parent or guardian will be screened outside of the building via camera and intercom and the child will be brought to them.
- Attached is a Visitor COVID-19 Symptom Attestation Form. It should be completed by any visitor/vendor who has a need to enter the building beyond a vestibule. See Appendix 1

8. Signage:

- Entrances, hallways and bathrooms will have signs promoting wearing masks, remaining socially distant and the importance of washing hands.

9. Classroom Doors:

- Classroom doors will be kept open to minimize the need for people to touch doorknobs and increase ventilation.
- The lock will be engaged so that in the case of an emergency the door can easily be closed and locked.

10. Lockers (Powder Mill)

- Lockers will be unavailable at the start of the year. Students are encouraged to keep their belongings to a minimum and bring only essential items.

11. Cubbies (Woodland)

- Cubbies will be available at the start of the year. Students will have access to their cubbies on a staggered basis to support social distancing. Students are encouraged to keep their belongings to a minimum and bring only essential items.

12. Lunch and Breakfast:

- Both breakfast and lunch will be available free of cost to all students during the 2021-2022 school year.
- Breakfast will be available at “Grab and Go” tables located at each school entrance.

- Lunch may be in the classroom or in the cafeteria.
- Three feet or more of distance will be maintained while students eat lunch.
- Students will remain with classroom cohort during lunch.

13. Recess:

- Children need to move their bodies and stay physically active. Getting outside for fresh air and movement on a daily basis is important to support physical and mental health. Cohorts will remain separated during recess times and each cohort will have its own assigned recess area. Students should wash or sanitize hands before and after recess.
- During recess students can use traditional recess equipment.
- Playscapes will be used by individual cohorts on a rotating basis with only one class using it at a time. Students will be required to wash or sanitize hands before and after using equipment.

14. Student Dismissal:

- Both schools will again use the Silent Dismissal program. Before the first day of school families will receive their pickup number in the mail. Numbers should be displayed in the front window on the passenger side or hung from the rear-view mirror if you are picking your child up from school.

15. Rest Room Use:

- Prior to exiting the classroom to use the rest room students will wash their hands.
- When reentering the classroom students will immediately wash their hands.

16. Health Office

- In order to keep students, who need to remove face coverings in order to receive scheduled medical treatments safe, the school nurses need to control the traffic flow of symptomatic students in and out of the Health Office area. Students must be triaged over the phone to limit health office visits to individuals with only valid health concerns for additional treatment in the health office. The use of the phone call will assist the nurses in providing an alternate triage location that the student may need to report to first. Whenever possible the nurse will go to the child and triage the student on site.
- Procedures for the health office will include:
 - hand hygiene protocol entering and leaving the office
 - mandated mask or face coverings
 - maintaining physical distancing
 - visits kept to a brief limited time period
 - no visitors or parent pick-up in the health office
 - visits limited to medically indicated reasons only

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